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Appreciative Inquiry Participant's Understanding and Meaning Making of  
Transformative Experiences and Transformative Learning

Kelley D Wood

Faculty Assessor: Steven Schapiro

School of Human and Organizational Development

Fielding Graduate University

## 16 Abstract

17 Current research on the practice of appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider 1986;  
18 Cooperrider and Watkins 2000; Cooperrider and Whitney 2000; Mohr, Smith et al. 2000;  
19 Schiller 2002; Trosten-Bloom 2002; Van Buskirk 2002) shows that participants report  
20 transformations in their meaning schemas, ways of being, attitudes, values, and behaviors  
21 that are consistent with stages of transformative learning as described by Mezirow (1978;  
22 1990; 1991; 2000). While this research makes it evident that transformations consistent  
23 with transformative learning occur for participants of appreciative inquiries these  
24 participant's experiences are not compared to theories of transformative learning, theories  
25 of adult learning, or theories of adult development.

26 In this exploratory, qualitative, and descriptive research, I describe how  
27 appreciative inquiry participants understand and make meaning of their transformative  
28 experiences. In addition, I compared these understandings and meanings to Mezirow's  
29 transformative learning theory. Two of the six research participants expressed or  
30 indicated transformative learning as defined by Mezirow. I have found that the  
31 experience for five of the six participants was positive and involved personal learning and  
32 growth. For all six participants it was an opportunity to gain new skills and make new  
33 contacts or collaborations. The research participants also involve AI in their personal and  
34 professional lives. I found that for two research participants, Mary and Chris the AI event  
35 caused them to re-examine a disorienting dilemma, which caused them to experience  
36 negative emotions. It is noteworthy that participants who expressed transformative  
37 learning had experienced a disorienting dilemma, which may have instilled a sense of  
38 readiness in them. Participants who expressed a positive experience or TL had in

39 common mentoring relationships resulting from their participation. These relationships  
40 for one TL participant included both being mentored by the AI facilitator and mentoring  
41 others using AI principles.

42 This research may contribute to increased understanding of how appreciative  
43 inquiry may affect individual learning experiences during the event, and may catalyze  
44 transformative learning for the participants during and after the event.

45 *Keywords:* Transformative Learning, Adult Learning, Adult development, Appreciative  
46 Inquiry, Qualitative analysis, Exploratory, Descriptive, Grounded Theory.

47 Introduction to the Study

48 *“Appreciation is a wonderful thing: it makes what is excellent in others belong to us as*  
49 *well.”* Voltaire

50 While conducting an appreciative inquiry (AI) as an experiential exercise for a  
51 graduate level class I observed some similarities between the student’s experiences and  
52 Jack Mezirow’s model of conditional stages of transformative learning (TL) (Mezirow  
53 2000, p.22). In subsequent classes I discussed with the student’s their experiences during  
54 each stage of the AI and found an informal correlation between the AI summit  
55 (Cooperrider and Whitney 2000) and the stages of TL. In Table 1 the AI summit (event)  
56 is compared to TL to show there is an opportunity for the student to address one or more  
57 stages of TL during the event.

58 *Theoretical Construct*

59 *Transformative Learning.*

60 The theory of transformative learning (TL), as defined by Mezirow (1978; 1990;  
61 1991; 2000), is a model for transforming problematic frames of reference into new and  
62 more dependable frames of reference. TL occurs through a process of critical self-  
63 reflection, reflective dialogue, and reflective action, in which deep-seated assumptions  
64 are questioned, new assumptions are tested for validity, and new assumptions are  
65 integrated into a new reality for the learner. Mezirow postulates that these reflective  
66 processes occur through ten stages: a disorienting dilemma, self-examination of feelings,  
67 a critical assessment of assumptions, and the recognition of one’s discontent and the  
68 process of transformation are shared. The stages continue as the student begins an  
69 exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions, planning a course of

70 action, acquiring knowledge and skills, provisional trying of new roles, building  
 71 competence and confidence, and a reintegration into one’s life (Mezirow 2000). While  
 72 these steps are experienced in a variety of orders all ten stages must be satisfied to  
 73 accomplish TL (Mezirow 1990; 2000).

74 *Table 1 Comparison of appreciative inquiry and transformative learning*

AI Summit	Conditional stages of TL
Summit Topic	A Disorienting Dilemma
Appreciative interviews: Who are we at our best	Provides the conditions for fostering a critical assessment of assumptions
Positive Core Map: Continuity Search: local, industry, global timelines	Provides the conditions for fostering a critical assessment of assumptions, Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame, Recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared
Sharing of, enlivening and enacting the dream	Exploration of new roles, relationships and actions, Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plan, Provisional trying of new roles, Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
Large group design of organization, selection of high impact design elements, crafting of provocative propositions	Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plan, Provisional trying of new roles, Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships, A reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective
Generation of possible actions, selection of inspired actions, form emergent task groups	Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plan, Provisional trying of new roles, Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships, A reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective

75  
 76 These transformations result in the acquisition of new perspectives, attitudes, and  
 77 behaviors integrated into new roles and relationships as these changes are integrated into

78 the subject's life (Mezirow 1978; 1990; 1991; 2000). These transformations are evident  
79 both to the participant and to others.

80 In the classroom and other learning environments, TL is practiced with groups of  
81 learners. Learners may not be at the same point of readiness for TL. Research (Lytle  
82 1989; Cesar 2003) of TL shows not all learners will experience stages of TL. Only those  
83 who experience the first nine steps will meet the final stage of TL: a re-integration into  
84 the participant's life. Research has also shown the transformational learning of the  
85 individual may lead to greater transformations for the other members (O'Hara 2005) and  
86 the individual's transformation may co-emerge with the organization's transformation  
87 (Scott 2003). Yorks and Marsick (2000) in their case study of learning programs stated  
88 individual transformational learning should be a goal of all organizational learning  
89 initiatives, despite the possible conflict between the goals of the individual and the  
90 organization.

91 If individual transformation might lead to greater organizational transformation  
92 then organizational development initiatives might increase the opportunities for more  
93 successful outcomes. With this in mind, it might be useful to understand how TL might  
94 be experienced and reported in the literature of organizational development. To narrow  
95 the scope of this research I will review of the literature of AI, one of many organizational  
96 development initiatives.

97 *Appreciative Inquiry.*

98 In the field of organizational development, appreciative inquiry (AI) is recognized  
99 as a method for catalyzing or achieving lasting change in the team, group, organization,  
100 or community. AI is an organizational development method introduced by Cooperrider in

101 1986 as a means of dialogic discovery with the purpose of uncovering the egalitarian  
102 organization (Cooperrider 1986). Guiding AI are five principles: the *Constructivist*  
103 *Principle*, the *Principle of Simultaneity*, the *Poetic Principle*, the *Anticipatory Principle*,  
104 and the *Positivist Principle*. These principles are applied through a 4D design model.  
105 The four elements of this design are: *Discovery*, *Dream*, *Design*, *Destiny* (Cooperrider  
106 and Whitney 2000).

107         The literature of AI shows that individuals do experience transformations in  
108 perception, attitude, and behavior that can be compared to TL. These transformations  
109 have a positive and beneficial effect on the organization as a whole as seen in the  
110 following studies. Bushe and Khamisa (2004) found that many of these studies represent  
111 organizations, which exhibited signs of transformation consistent with transformational  
112 learning resulting from appreciative inquiries. At the organizational level, these  
113 transformations consist of a major shift in the state of being or the identity of the  
114 organization, developed a persistent generative metaphor, and developed a new set of  
115 background assumptions.

116         These case studies of appreciative inquiries also resulted in individual  
117 transformations consistent with TL including increased confidence and competence in  
118 addition to increased transfer of learning and data (Mohr, Smith et al. 2000). These  
119 transformations improved gender relations, and appreciation for gender issues (Schiller  
120 2002), and lead to increases in morale, profitability and sustainability (Trosten-Bloom  
121 2002). Personal transformations in relation to past experiences, others best experiences,  
122 and the organizations traditions are also reported (Van Buskirk 2002) but it is not made

123 explicit that all ten of Mezirow's stages are met in any of these case studies (Mezirow  
124 1978; Lytle 1989; Mezirow 1990; 1991; 2000; Cesar 2003).

125 *Research Questions*

126 My primary research question is:

127 How do participants of AI events understand and make meaning of their  
128 experiences during the event, and is there a correlation to TL? This question will be  
129 explored and described by using an open-ended lightly structured interview question.

130 Of secondary interest to this research question are the following questions, which  
131 will be explored using open-ended moderately structured interview questions to compare  
132 Mezirow's theory of TL to the experiences of AI participants.

133 How does TL theory describe these experiences and the understandings and  
134 meanings resulting for AI participants?

135 How does AI's focus on positive emotions compare to the emphasis in TL theory  
136 on the examination of feelings of fear, anger, guilt, and shame?



## 137 Literature Review

138 *Transformative learning*139 *Transformative learning history and context.*

140 Mezirow's (1978) theory of TL has its beginning in his study of adult women who  
141 returned to the classroom after an extended absence. Mezirow's research revealed these  
142 women had experienced significant changes in their meaning perspectives and their ways  
143 of being. His research findings suggested these experiences might be similar to the  
144 experiences of other adult learners. Since 1978 much research has been done to show  
145 TL's application to many other situations: adult learning (Mezirow 2000), curriculum  
146 development (Taylor 2000) group learning (Imel 1999), and organizational learning  
147 (Yorks and Marsick 2000).

148 TL refers to transforming a problematic frame of reference to make it more  
149 dependable in our adult life by generating opinions and interpretations that are more  
150 justified (Mezirow 1990; 1990b).

151 TL occurs through a process of critical self-reflection, reflective dialogue, and  
152 reflective action. Critical reflection is the cornerstone of this process and is initiated  
153 when the individual is confronted with a disorienting dilemma that causes a questioning  
154 of the deep-seated assumptions that make up the individual's meaning perspective.  
155 Mezirow uses the term meaning perspective to define a frame of reference or a collection  
156 of meaning schemas.

157 A meaning perspective is a habitual set of expectations that constitutes an  
158 orienting frame of reference that we use in projecting our symbolic models and

159 that serves as a (usually tacit) belief system for interpreting and evaluating the  
160 meaning of experience (Mezirow 1991).

161 A meaning perspective is a structure of assumptions that are used to assimilate  
162 past experiences into expectations of new experiences defining our attitudes, establishing  
163 our view of our world, and guiding our actions. Mezirow notes that there are three types  
164 of meaning perspectives: *Epistemic*, *Sociolinguistic*, and *Psychological*. Mezirow  
165 theorizes that TL is a cognitive rational process, and can only truly be transformative if it  
166 effects a change in the cognitive nature involving reasoning, critical reflection, and a  
167 critical dialectic. For Mezirow TL is essentially an epistemic TL experience.

168 Reflective dialogue is the process by which the individual tests the validity of or  
169 justification for these assumptions and is a negotiation with others to develop a  
170 consensual validation of the assumptions that make up the frame of reference. Reflective  
171 action is action based on the critical self-reflection of the previously held assumptions  
172 and is intended to integrate the resulting new set of assumptions (Mezirow 2000).

173 Mezirow postulates that these reflective processes occur through a ten stage  
174 process. While these stages were experienced in a variety of orders and depths, all ten  
175 stages must be satisfied to accomplish TL.

- 176 1. A disorienting dilemma
- 177 2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame
- 178 3. A critical assessment of assumptions and relationships
- 179 4. Recognition of one's discontent and the process of transformation are  
180 shared
- 181 5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions

- 182           6. Planning a course of action
- 183           7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
- 184           8. Provisional trying of new roles
- 185           9. Building competence and confidence in new roles and relationships
- 186           10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's
- 187                 new perspective (Mezirow 1990; 1991; 2000).

188           It is interesting to note that Mezirow's TL calls for an examination of emotions

189           that are construed as negative, while Cooperrider's AI is designed to focus on positively

190           construed emotions. This could prove to be a significant difference between the two

191           theories in this study. Antonacopoulou and Gabriel's (2001) study explored the extent to

192           which emotions and learning are interdependent and highlights many of the subtleties of

193           individuals' reactions to change. The authors note that there is a predominance of

194           research and literature on the negative emotions involved in change efforts, but that little

195           research has been done on the role of positive emotions in organizational change.

196           Another interesting characteristic of TL is that those who experience it are

197           conscious of their change in perspectives, and others can recognize that a fundamental

198           change has occurred in them also (Scott 2003). While research on AI reports individual

199           transformation it does not report of others noticing the transformation.

200           *Summary of transformative learning.*

201           TL is the change in the meaning schemas, accompanied by changes in ways of

202           being, resulting in new perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors integrated in new roles and

203           relationships as these changes are integrated into the subject's life. TL takes place

204           through critical self-reflection, reflective dialogue, and reflective action, over a series of

205 ten stages (Mezirow 1978; 1990; 1991; 2000). Lytle (1989) and Cesar's (2003) research  
206 shows that while most students will experience some of the stages of TL not all students  
207 will experience all ten stages of TL. Lytle shows us that a student must experience all  
208 nine previous stages before they will be able to experience stage ten, a reintegration of  
209 the learning into their life (Lytle 1989).

210         Yorks and Marsick (2000) confirm that TL does occur in organizational learning  
211 initiatives. Yorks and Marsick recommend, despite the possible conflict between the  
212 organization's goals and the individual's goals, TL be a goal for the individuals involved  
213 in organizational learning initiatives. O'Hara (2003) finds that group and individual  
214 transformations co-mingle, leading the individuals participating to a higher state that  
215 enables deeper learning and transformations of greater impact for both.

216         Scott (2003) proposes that social transformation is a result of changes at the  
217 individual level, happening in an interrelationship where transformation of the social and  
218 personal co-emerge simultaneously. Scott and O'Hara's findings describe the  
219 interdependence between organizational transformation and individual transformation. If  
220 TL does occur at the organizational and individual level and personal and organizational  
221 transformation are interdependent, then individual TL might be a result of participation in  
222 organizational development initiatives.

223         Mezirow's theory of TL is not a complete and universal theory of adult learning  
224 and development so this research will consider other theories of TL, transformation, adult  
225 learning, and adult development. Theorists such as Gould (1979) Cranton (1994), Kolb  
226 (1984; 1985), Boyd (1989; 1991), and Dirkx (2000; 2001) may describe the experience of  
227 AI participants as well as, or more fully than Mezirow.

228 *Appreciative inquiry*

229 *Appreciative inquiry history and context.*

230 The field of organizational development has promulgated many organizational  
231 change and intervention models since Trist and Emery's Bristol-Sidderly search  
232 Conference in the early 1960's. A few examples of these are the Search Conferences,  
233 Participative Democratic Design, Preferred Futuring, Future Search, Whole-Scale  
234 Change, and AI. These models are often based on Lewin's field theories of social  
235 organizations and his belief that an organizational change would require an un-thawing,  
236 changing, and refreezing of the organization (Weisbord 1987; 1992; Lewin 1997;  
237 Holman and Devane 1999). As outlined in the section above organizational change  
238 requires an organizational design for change, and an individual level of awareness to  
239 accomplish TL at an individual level. I will discuss the theories, design, and methods of  
240 AI to discuss it as an appropriate organizational initiative for this research project.

241 AI's use as a group intervention method has grown exponentially since  
242 Cooperrider introduced the concept in 1986. AI was used as a means of dialogic  
243 discovery used to uncover the egalitarian organization (Cooperrider 1986). Cooperrider  
244 states AI's basic premise as:

245 Human systems construct their worlds in the direction of what they  
246 persistently ask questions about, and this propensity is strongest and most  
247 sustainable when the means and ends of inquiry are positively correlated.

248 The single most prolific thing a group can do, if it aims to liberate the  
249 human spirit and consciously construct a better future, is to make the

250 “positive change core” of any system the common and explicit property of  
251 all (Cooperrider 2002, p. ix).

252 Cooperrider’s theory of AI is more than a method of appreciative questioning or a  
253 positive mindset. Cooperrider proposes AI is a new paradigm for viewing our  
254 relationships with knowledge and learning capital in organizations and other social  
255 relationships. AI applies its unique philosophy through five principles (Cooperrider  
256 1986; Srivastva and Cooperrider 1999; Cooperrider, Sorrensen et al. 2000; Fry and  
257 Barrett 2002). *The Constructivist Principle*: meaning, knowledge, and learning are  
258 constructed through “discursive interchanges and social interactions, through processes of  
259 negotiation, conflict, improvisation, and the like (Gergen 1999)” thus the way we know is  
260 fateful. *The Principle of Simultaneity*: inquiry and change in organizations are not  
261 separate incidents but are the self-fulfilling destiny of the questions we ask and the  
262 images of the future that they provoke, change begins with the questions we ask and at  
263 the moment we ask them.

264 *The Poetic Principle*: Organizational systems are not closed books but are  
265 narratives constantly unfolding in a never-ending story, constantly being co-authored by  
266 its members, and AI writes the next chapter in that story. *The Anticipatory Principle*: In  
267 human systems the anticipated or projected future state influences the expectations,  
268 language and behaviors of the members, thus deep change is a result of changing the  
269 system’s imagery of the future. *The Positivist Principle*: Hope, interest, motivation,  
270 caring, positive effect and social bonding, long lasting and sustainable change are a  
271 response to the unconditional positive question. Positive inquiry creates positive  
272 anticipation, positive images of the future, and leads to positive response freeing

273 members of the system to construct a new positive reality and positive expectations,  
274 positive language, and positive behaviors (Cooperrider 1986; Srivastva and Cooperrider  
275 1999; Cooperrider, Sorrensen et al. 2000; Fry and Barrett 2002).

276 *Discovery* is a search to understand the "best of what is" and "what has been."  
277 Discovery begins with collaboration in creating appreciative interview questions and  
278 constructing an appreciative interview guide. AI questions are written as affirmative  
279 probes into an organization's positive core, in the topic area selected. They are written to  
280 generate stories, to enrich the images and inner dialogue within the organization, and to  
281 bring the positive core more fully into focus.

282 *Dream:* is an exploration and envisioning what might be in light of the best of  
283 what the system might be. Participants express their hopes and dreams in sessions that  
284 enable them to think beyond their current boundaries and experiences of the past.

285 *Design:* Participants design through dialogue the ideal future state for the system,  
286 or what should be. These plans often begin with 'provocative propositions', which  
287 expand the expectations of what their organization should be aligning the positive past  
288 with the highest potential.

289 *Destiny:* Participants commit to plans and action steps that will create and sustain  
290 the highest potential of the organization, co-constructing the future designed above, and  
291 leading to 'inspired actions (Cooperrider, Sorrensen et al. 2000; Cooperrider and Whitney  
292 2000; Ludema, Whitney et al. 2003).

293 AI is delivered in many guises and methods, ever evolving from the basic 4D  
294 design process (Whitney 1998). Some practitioners start with a Fifth D: Define, in which

295 the facilitators and the client organization clearly define the topic or focus of the AI in  
296 advance of the event (Leadership 2000).

297 *Appreciative inquiry and transformation.*

298 Bushe and Khamisa (2004) in a meta analysis of 20 AI case studies searched for  
299 the presence or absence of transformational change. The authors defined transformation  
300 in the context of their study as a major shift in the state of being or the identity of the  
301 organization, developed a persistent generative metaphor, and developed a new set of  
302 background assumptions. This is very similar to Mezirow's definition of TL. Not all  
303 case studies examined by Bushe and Khamisa offered evidence of a transformation. In  
304 the cases studied, 35% reported cases transformational outcomes and in all of the positive  
305 cases new knowledge, models or theories, and a generative metaphor, which compelled  
306 action, resulted. Bushe and Khamisa also found 83% of the positive cases used an  
307 improvisational approach to the destiny phase of the AI.

308 Bushe and Khamisa's focus is on the organization and its transformation. Many  
309 of the author's they cite do discuss individual reports of transformation as an outcome of  
310 participation in appreciative inquiries. Since these studies are focused on organizational  
311 transformation they do not specifically compare their findings to theories of adult  
312 learning and development. I will discuss some of the transformations reported in these  
313 research projects individually below.

314 Mohr, Smith, et al in their case study, report changes in behavior and attitude, an  
315 increase in confidence and participation, along with an increase in the transfer of learning  
316 and data in their case study of an intervention based on AI (Mohr, Smith et al. 2000).



317 It was a bit like doing rehearsals. Now I have greater confidence in what I'm  
318 doing. I feel assurance about my own decisions. Now I ask more confidently in  
319 real life (Mohr, Smith et al. 2000).

320 While Mohr, Smith, et al report transformations consistent with TL they do not  
321 report of participants experiencing all ten stages of TL (Mezirow 1978; Lytle 1989; 1990;  
322 1991; 2000; Cesar 2003).

323 In Schiller's case study reports of changes in the perceptions, attitudes and  
324 behaviors of the members of an organization toward issues of gender and the women  
325 members of that organization are cited, including integration into the lives of  
326 participant's (Schiller 2002).

327 Individuals reported that the AI way of thinking and asking questions affected  
328 other parts of their lives, including profoundly changing their relationships with  
329 their families. "This works," said a human resources manager. "I tried this at  
330 home with my kids. Now I am ready to try it at work (Schiller 2002)."

331 Schiller's study is important for showing AI can lead to the integration of  
332 transformation into the participant's life but does not report all of Mezirow's ten stages of  
333 TL (Mezirow 1978; Lytle 1989; 1990; 1991; 2000; Cesar 2003).

334 Trosten-Bloom's case study describes changes in perception and ways of being  
335 that led to an organizational change that had an effect on both the internal and external  
336 stakeholders of the Windows fashion Division of the Hunter Douglas Company, which  
337 included dramatic increases in morale, performance, profitability, and sustainability  
338 (Trosten-Bloom 2002).

339 Our key finding is that AI gives people the experience of personal and collective  
340 power. It gives them practice exercising power – and doing so responsibly, for  
341 the good of the whole. Having once experienced this liberation of power and the  
342 effect it has on their lives and the world, people are permanently transformed  
343 (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom 2003).

344 Trosten-Bloom shows that these transformations are sustainable over several  
345 years (Trosten-Bloom 2002), but does not report of participants experiencing all ten  
346 stages of TL (Mezirow 1978; Lytle 1989; 1990; 1991; 2000; Cesar 2003).

347 Van Buskirk's (2002) case study provides an analysis of an AI conducted in an  
348 urban school system includes a discussion of the individual transformations that resulted  
349 from the AI experience.

350 Its power is exerted through three transformations: (1) it transforms perceptions of  
351 how individuals relate to their past experiences in the organization, (2) it  
352 transforms how they relate to the best experiences of others, and (3) it transforms  
353 how they relate to the cherished traditions of the organization (Van Buskirk  
354 2002).

355 Van Buskirk attributes these individual transformations to the shift from a  
356 negative to positive resulting in the positive aspects becoming explicit rather than tacit.  
357 Privately held assumptions become public, and energy, creativity, and spontaneity are  
358 unleashed to reframe the new vision of the organization at its best (Van Buskirk 2002).  
359 These individual transformations described by Van Buskirk also indicate TL as defined  
360 by Mezirow but do not report if any of the participants experienced all ten stages of TL  
361 (Mezirow 1978; Lytle 1989; 1990; 1991; 2000; Cesar 2003).

362           The studies outlined by Bushe and Khamisa (2004) confirm that transformations  
363 do take place at an individual level. The also confirm stages of TL are experienced by  
364 participants of appreciative inquiries. These studies, however, do not show that any of  
365 the participant's have experienced all ten stages of TL as described by Mezirow  
366 (Mezirow 1978; Lytle 1989; 1990; 1991; 2000; Cesar 2003). Schiller's (2002) study  
367 reports AI participants have integrated their transformations into their lives, implying all  
368 ten stages have been experienced by some participants of the AI. Schiller's study has not  
369 made explicit that these participants have experienced all ten stages of TL.

370           *Summary of appreciative inquiry.*

371           The literature of AI shows that individuals experience transformations in  
372 perception, attitude, and behavior that can be compared to TL. Mohr, Smith, et al (2000)  
373 found these transformations resulted in increased confidence and competence in addition  
374 to an increased transfer of learning and data. Schiller (2002) reports improved gender  
375 relations, and appreciation for gender issues. Trosten-Bloom (2002) reports increases in  
376 morale, profitability and sustainability. Van Buskirk (2002) reports transformations in  
377 relation to past experiences, others best experiences, and the organizations traditions.

378           Bushe and Khamisa (2004) found these studies represent organizations, which  
379 exhibited signs of transformation consistent with transformational learning: a major shift  
380 in the state of being or the identity of the organization, developed a persistent generative  
381 metaphor, and developed a new set of background assumptions. The case studies in  
382 Bushe and Khamisa's meta analysis also report individual transformations consistent with  
383 TL but do not show all ten stages being experienced by the participants of the  
384 appreciative inquires studied.

385 In this section, I have discussed AI outcomes for the organization and for the  
386 participants and found them similar to TL. In the next section, I will discuss the  
387 relationship between AI and TL.

388 *The relationship between appreciative inquiry and transformative learning theories*

389 The experiences of individuals participating in organizational development and  
390 the experiences of individual participating in appreciative inquires are similar to TL as  
391 described by Mezirow. In this section, I will describe the possible theoretical correlations  
392 between AI and TL by comparing the 4D design of the AI summit, as defined by  
393 Cooperrider, et al. (Cooperrider and Whitney 2000) and the phases of TL as defined by  
394 Mezirow (1981).

395 The AI summit is focused on a specific topic, which could be construed as a  
396 disorienting dilemma in TL. In the AI summit's discovery phase the appreciative  
397 interviews, positive core mapping, and the continuity search create a climate of critical  
398 assessment of assumptions and self-examination of feelings along with developing the  
399 recognition that their desire for change and the process of change are shared. It is of  
400 interest to my research that AI causes the participants to self-examine their positive  
401 feelings of hope, strengths, competencies, relationships, etcetera, while TL encourages  
402 the self-examination of fear, anger, guilt, and shame.

403 In the AI summit's dream phase the participants are encouraged to share, bring to  
404 life, and enact their dreams. This provides summit participants the opportunity to explore  
405 and provisionally try new roles, relationships, and actions. In the summit's design phase,  
406 the participants select high impact design elements and craft provocative propositions.  
407 This affords them a chance to acquire new knowledge and skills and build their sense of

408 competence and their sense of confidence in their new roles, relationships and courses of  
409 action. In the AI summit's destiny phase participants generate lists of possible actions,  
410 select inspired actions, and form emergent task groups to begin a reintegration into their  
411 lives their new perspectives.

#### 412 *The gaps in the literature*

413 It is apparent that during an AI, transformation for some participants co-emerges  
414 with the organization's own transformation and that these transformations are consistent  
415 with TL. It is also possible that the AI summit enables TL for some of the participants.  
416 While this review of the literature supports these conclusions, I have not found research  
417 that specifically compares Mezirow's theory of TL to the experiences of participants of  
418 organizational development initiatives, in particular AI.

#### 419 Summary of the literature review

420 TL is a transformation of meaning schemas, which takes place through three  
421 reflective processes: critical self-reflection, reflective dialogue, and reflective action, and  
422 they occur over ten stages. These transformations result in the acquisition of new  
423 perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors integrated into new roles and relationships as these  
424 changes are integrated into the subject's life (Mezirow 1978; 1990; 1991; 2000). These  
425 transformations are evident both to the participant and to others. Many, but not all  
426 participants will experience TL, and only those who experience the first nine steps will  
427 meet the final stage of TL: a re-integration into the participant's life (Lytle 1989; Cesar  
428 2003). Individual TL should be a goal of all organizational learning initiatives, despite  
429 the possible conflict between the goals of the individual and the organization (Yorks and  
430 Marsick 2000). For the TL of the individual leads to greater transformations for the other

431 members (O'Hara 2005) and the individual's transformation co-emerges with the  
432 organization's transformation (Scott 2003).

433         Mezirow's theory of TL is not a complete and universal theory of adult learning  
434 and development, so this research will consider other theories of TL, transformation,  
435 adult learning, and adult development. Theorists such as Gould (1979) Cranton (1994),  
436 Kolb (1984; 1985), and Boyd (1989; 1991) may describe the experience of AI  
437 participants as well as, or more fully than Mezirow. These theorists among others will be  
438 considered when analyzing the data collected in this research project.

439         The literature of AI shows that individuals experience transformations in  
440 perception, attitude, and behavior, which are comparable to TL. These transformations  
441 have a positive and beneficial effect on the organization as a whole. Bushe and Khamisa  
442 (2004) in their meta analysis of AI case studies report organizations, with participants  
443 exhibiting TL. At the organizational level, these transformations consist of a major shift  
444 in the state of being or the identity of the organization, developed a persistent generative  
445 metaphor, and developed a new set of background assumptions.

446         These appreciative inquiries resulted in individual transformations consistent with  
447 TL, including increased confidence and competence in addition to increased transfer of  
448 learning and data (Mohr, Smith et al. 2000). These transformations improved gender  
449 relations, and appreciation for gender issues (Schiller 2002), and led to increases in  
450 morale, profitability and sustainability (Trosten-Bloom 2002). Personal transformations  
451 in relation to past experiences, others best experiences, and the organizations traditions  
452 are also reported (Van Buskirk 2002). None of these studies report all ten of Mezirow's  
453 stages were met (Mezirow 1978; Lytle 1989; 1990; 1991; 2000; Cesar 2003).

## 454 Research Method

455 The purpose of this research is to explore and describe how participants of  
456 organizational development initiatives understand and make meaning of the  
457 transformations they experience during an AI. I am also interested in how those  
458 understandings and meanings compare to the theory of TL as defined by Mezirow  
459 (Mezirow 1978; 1990; 1991; 2000). How does TL describe these experiences and the  
460 understandings and meanings resulting for AI participants? It will be of interest to  
461 compare AI's focus on positive emotions (Cooperrider and Watkins 2000; Cooperrider  
462 and Whitney 2000; Cooperrider, Sorrensen et al. 2000) and TL's requirement to examine  
463 feelings of anger, guilt, and shame (Mezirow 1978; 1990; 1991; 2000).

464 This is an exploratory, qualitative, and descriptive research. Since this is a  
465 qualitative study, my analysis will include open and axial coding for themes, which will  
466 suggest categories and patterns in the data. My interest was in interviewing people who  
467 have experienced transformations in their attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, relationships, or  
468 actions resulting from participation in an AI. It was my intent to discover and explain  
469 how AI participants understand and makes meaning of these experiences. Then compare  
470 those experiences to the theory of TL to discover new knowledge of how practitioners  
471 might foster or encourage TL.

472 This research may inform the theory of TL by increasing our understanding of  
473 how TL may occur resulting from participating in organizational development initiatives,  
474 such as the AI. This research may also inform the practice of AI by showing increased  
475 attention to individual experiences may be helpful to the AI event's goals, and may

476 increase its likelihood of successful implementation. This research may also indicate  
477 further research and new directions for research in TL and AI.

478 *Research Design*

479 This study consisted of semi-structured in-depth interviews. These interviews  
480 provided the research participants with the opportunity to discuss in depth the meaning  
481 they made of their AI experience in relation to Mezirow's theory of TL while allowing  
482 the interviewer the opportunity to pursue emergent patterns and themes that were of  
483 interest to the study.

484 Since this study is exploratory and qualitative in nature, its purpose will not be to  
485 validate theory or to determine a truth, but is intended to describe and categorize the  
486 research participant's experience of understanding and making meaning of their  
487 transformative experience resulting from participating in an AI. This approach allowed  
488 the exploration of emergent patterns and themes and for incorporating the early findings  
489 into the data collection process in several iterations of data analysis as is common in  
490 qualitative research.

491 *Sample Selection.*

492 I approached facilitators of AI events to recommend research participant referrals  
493 and posted a request on the AI List Serv. This sample will consist of primarily self-  
494 selected participants who feel they can speak to the topic of this research. I will select a  
495 sample population of 6 research participants from these respondents. Refer to Appendix  
496 A for the recruitment script.

497 Before beginning the interview or collecting any data, I read the implied consent  
498 document to the participant. A thorough explanation of how confidentiality and security



499 of data was addressed was discussed. The participant chose to complete the informed  
500 consent forms or chose not to continue with the interview. Individuals who chose to sign  
501 the informed consent form were thanked for their willingness to participate in the  
502 voluntary study and were given a signed copy of the form. Those individuals that choose  
503 to decline to participate are thanked for their consideration. Refer to Appendix B for the  
504 organizational consent form and Appendix C for the Informed Consent Form.

505         The sample of 6 research participants is a valid number of interviews to provide  
506 the basis for informing my dissertation research design and interview protocol, along  
507 with providing practice in data collection and data analysis. The data collected from a  
508 sample population of this size, provided for a rich and fertile analysis illustrating  
509 important patterns, themes and categories related to the research questions. A larger  
510 population might have revealed other patterns, themes, and categories. The themes and  
511 categories developed in this research may be of use to further research. This is an  
512 acceptable limitation to the study proposed.

513         *Interview Protocol.*

514         I asked the research participants some basic background questions, which might  
515 also suggest some patterns or themes for future research. Refer to Appendix D for the  
516 Background Questionnaire.

517         The interview protocol included open-ended and lightly structured questions as  
518 determined by the purpose of this research study. Wengraf's (2001) model of  
519 interviewing ranges from *Unstructured*, used in building models and theories, to *Fully*  
520 *Structured*, which are used to test models and theories. Between the two extremes are  
521 *Lightly Structure* interviews and *Heavily Structured* interviews. Unstructured or semi-

522 structured interviews are best suited to iterative interview sessions where the first session  
523 is focused around one open-ended interview question that is designed to uncover the  
524 unconscious subtexts used by the subject. After analysis of this interview, the researcher  
525 returns using a semi-structured interview and questions that are still open-ended but are  
526 designed to elicit more specific answers. As the researcher develops a model or theory  
527 they can then return for another interview which will be more structured expecting much  
528 more specific answers which will support the model or theory or will expose its  
529 weaknesses (Wengraf 2001; Patton 2002).

530         Since the literature review suggests a theory that TL, or a form of learning that  
531 resembles it, does occur in the AI event, and I planned to meet with research participants  
532 once, I should not use an unstructured interview protocol. Using Wengraf's (2001)  
533 model, I will not use a heavily structured interview protocol. To meet the requirement of  
534 both building my theory and testing the emerging theory I asked an initial opening  
535 question, which was open-ended and allowed the research participants to tell their own  
536 story of participating in the AI event. Then I used moderately structured interview  
537 questions that uncovered whether or not their experience compared to Mezirow's model  
538 of TL. These interview questions required probing or clarifying questions, which  
539 Wengraf calls interview interventions (Wengraf 2001). While this section of the  
540 interview was moderately structured, I did not prepare specific questions as interventions.  
541 I listened for keywords that the research participants use and use them to probe or clarify  
542 my understanding of the research participant's response. These questions were also  
543 framed in the language of the research participant and not in the language of the theories  
544 of TL and AI. Refer to Appendix E for the Interview Protocol.

545 *Research participants*

546 In this study, I interviewed 6 research participants: Mary, Chris, Hillary, Annie,  
547 Sophia, and Laurent. Mary is a nursing manager at All Children's Hospital where they  
548 culture was very negative and stressful resulting from the emotional toll of caring for a  
549 large number of terminally ill children. Mary questioned her qualifications and ability to  
550 perform her job at the level of her co-managers. She reported low self-esteem, and was  
551 being treated for depression. She had also gained a large amount of weight, which was  
552 affecting her ability to communicate and work with others. Mary was required to go to  
553 the AI event and had no idea of what to expect.

554 Chris is a student at Southern University and is the president of a local non-profit,  
555 the Music Heritage and Resource Center. Chris, in her previous position as a crisis  
556 counselor, was attacked and raped by a group of unknown men. After this event Chris to  
557 became 'gothic and fatalistic' and caused her to adopt a controversial viewpoint, which  
558 lead to her leaving this position and returning to the university for an advanced degree.  
559 Chris was fearful of others, gained weight, and was markedly introverted.

560 Hillary is a senior research assistant at the Hopewell School for orphaned  
561 children. She was experiencing a sense of confusion about her role, and the usefulness of  
562 her work at the school. She had recently returned from maternity leave and had a new  
563 manager. Hillary is also studying for her Doctorate in Psychology at Fielding Graduate  
564 University. The managing director of her section had recommended that she attend AI  
565 training as professional development. She read about AI in detail before she attended the  
566 training and was looking forward to the training.

567 Annie is a professional development coach who attended AI training and later was  
568 included on the team that led an AI event at All Children's Hospital. Mary participated  
569 in this same AI event. Annie was very concerned that she would conduct herself well in  
570 the eyes of the senior consultant and the client organization. She spent a month preparing  
571 for the event and learning her role and responsibilities.

572 Sophia is a well-known and veteran AI practitioner who participated in an AI  
573 event sponsored by a local professional organization. Sophia was primarily interested in  
574 observing the facilitator of this event and using it as an opportunity to express further her  
575 positive attributes. Sophia had high expectations of the event and the facilitator.

576 Laurent is an AI facilitator and professional coach, who at the time of his  
577 participation was a graduate student at Pennington University. He was both a co-  
578 facilitator and a participant at the AI event. Laurent, along with his classmates, received  
579 a day of AI training and introduction to the issue being addressed with the client  
580 organization with a well-known AI facilitator. Laurent was initially apprehensive of the  
581 AI approach to problem solving and doubted its effectiveness.

582 *Data collection.*

583 Data was collected through interviews conducted face to face in a suitable setting  
584 that ensured privacy, safety, and space for reflection. The interviews were also  
585 conducted by phone or over the internet with instant messenger. I recorded and  
586 transcribed the interviews prior to analyzing them for patterns and themes. During the  
587 interviews, I paid attention to vocal inflection, body language, hesitations, and silence for  
588 indications of how to proceed or if clarifying or probing questions would be helpful. I  
589 notified the research participants of my observations and ask them to verify their meaning

590 to ensure they were not misunderstood. I listened for both explicit and implicit messages  
591 during the interview process. Clarifying and probing questions were only be used to  
592 clarify a key question for a participant or to probe deeper into a participant's response.  
593 The interview was conducted in a manner that gave the participant enough freedom to  
594 speak honestly from their experience while maintaining enough control of the interview  
595 to address the research topic. Sequencing of the key questions and use of the probing  
596 questions depended on the research participant's responsiveness and receptiveness.

597 I did not require assistance during this study, but if I had required assistance in  
598 transcribing or analyzing the data, those who assisted would have been asked to sign a  
599 Professional Assistance Confidentiality Agreement. Please refer to Appendix F for the  
600 Professional Assistance Confidentiality Agreement.

#### 601 Data Analysis

602 Data analysis was based on transcriptions of the interviews, notes made during the  
603 interviews and summarized afterward, and by my reflection on the data after the  
604 interviews. I analyzed the data collected in this research over the respondent's complete  
605 interview in a holistic approach. Interpretation of segments of the respondent's story was  
606 made against the whole transcript ensuring that the research participant's words are kept  
607 in context. The analysis of the data collected in this research is interpretive and intuitive.  
608 I will introduce the research methods used in this data analysis here further describing  
609 and explaining the method of analysis in sections below.

610 For the data analysis, I used a method suggested by Glaser and Strauss, grounded  
611 theory, which uses a constant comparison of concepts in the data to develop hypotheses  
612 and eventually a theory grounded in the data (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and

613 Corbin 1998; Glaser 2002). While this research is not intended to develop a theory, the  
614 rigor of this method will lend validity to the findings.

615         Based on a review of relevant empirical studies and relevant literature I did two  
616 rounds of open coding. I first coded for concepts in the data keeping them ‘in vivo’ so  
617 they reflect the research participants own words and thoughts. Then I analyzed the data  
618 by clustering concepts into related groups. Next, I used axial coding based on axes of  
619 relationship suggested in the data (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998;  
620 Glaser 2002). Later in the second coding, I analyzed the data for expressions or  
621 indications of Mezirow’s three reflective practices and ten stages of TL and further coded  
622 the data by comparing the results for each of the research participants. Last, I  
623 triangulated the data by comparing the results of both coding sessions to discover themes  
624 or patterns in the data.

#### 625 *Discussion of the background questionnaire data*

626         The sample population consisted of five women and one man ranging in age from  
627 35 to 50. Two participants were students; one participated and co-facilitated an AI event,  
628 the other participated in a classroom experiential exercise. Two research participants  
629 were AI facilitators. One participant was a senior research assistant and one participant  
630 was a nursing manager. All currently involve AI in their professional and personal lives.  
631 Two research participants attended voluntarily, the remaining four research participants  
632 were encouraged or required to attend

633         The sample population also represented the following industry categories:  
634 Healthcare, Education, Community, Not for Profit, and for Profit. Two research  
635 participants were introduced to the client organization on the first day of the AI. One

636 participant was involved with the client organization for one month prior to the AI event.  
637 The two students were members of their school cohorts or classes for one year. The  
638 remaining research participants were members of their organizations for one to eleven  
639 years. The average membership is over four years.

640 Four of the research participants experienced a full 4D cycle of the AI, while two  
641 research participants experienced only two of the AI stages. One research participant did  
642 experience another stage named *Define*, which is used by some practitioners in advance  
643 of the AI. The length of time since the research participant's AI ranged from six months  
644 to 6 years. The average length of time since the research participants were in the AI  
645 event is over three years.

#### 646 *Discussion of the data*

##### 647 *Open coding for concepts and conceptual clusters.*

648 In my initial open coding, I read each transcript individually, and then I read each  
649 one after the other. I conducted an initial open coding for common concepts, signs of  
650 emotion, and key words that were informed by my conceptual framework and review of  
651 the literature. Then I read each transcript and made note by highlighting and underlining  
652 concepts. I used a process of constant comparison in which I moved back and forth in the  
653 data until I developed conceptual categories using the research participant's natural  
654 language, or "in vivo" code. These categories were later clustered into related discrete  
655 codes (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998).

656 Then I used axial coding based on axes of relationships suggested in the data to  
657 discover intersections and commonalities between the clusters of codes. In this stage of  
658 the analysis, it is important to be aware that the researcher is beginning to interpret or

659 abstract the data. I attended to my personal biases to prevent influencing responses, or  
 660 any implicit data interpretation during the coding process. I was careful not to form  
 661 hypotheses during the open and axial coding, which might have prevented a complete  
 662 integration of the data into themes (Glaser 2002). As a third step in the data analysis I  
 663 began to sort the clustered categories into broader themes that reflected the underlying  
 664 relationships between the categories. At this stage the data began to integrate and suggest  
 665 themes and patterns (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998; Glaser 2002).  
 666 Refer to Table 2 below.

667 *Table 2. Initial open coding*

Concepts	<i>Clustered Concepts</i>	Stage of AI Event
anxiety, 'if you are open it can change your life', 'I was searching for something', 'I want what others have', 'I am not as good as others', others are happy, mistrust, skepticism, management doesn't embrace this, this is absurd, first timer's high as facilitator, ready to change, frustration, crisis and confusion with current role/ID/usefulness, preparation, defining roles and workload	<i>Beginning</i>	Beginning
positive experience, energy, engaging, PEACE, fascinating, human spirit and growth, appreciative, absolutely amazing, refreshing, I enjoy, tears, laughter, adventurous, active participant, making a difference, best moments, higher point, emotions were strong and specific, 'oh my goodness this is working', stimuli and reinforcement, positive feedback, really powerful, expansion, interesting, significant, understanding, engaged, catharsis, anger, softening, tears, authentic, aware of others emotions, opened my eyes, optimal experience, discovering, leveraging strengths	<i>Sensations and insights</i>	During
forgiveness, reconciliation	<i>Forgiveness</i>	
Very energizing experience, energy, a simple inquiry is very understanding, smarter use of energy	<i>Energy</i>	
opening up, a real awakening	<i>Opening up</i>	
focused on learning/interviews/topic/data collection, was a tiring process, data pulling was a grind, focus on learning clouds awareness of self	<i>Focus</i>	



mentoring relationship established, accessibility of mentor, established mentoring program, sharing what it means to be a _____, sharing values	<i>Relationships: Mentoring</i>	Result
others notice and comment, 'you've changed', 'you're different', new friends are there for me, camaraderie, not the only one, comfortable with others, new ways to be with people, changed relationships, closer relationships, relationships are no longer confrontational, loss of friends who cannot accept new perspective, viewed as a 'Pollyanna', This is something to share with others, 'I felt myself literally blossoming', Like a sunflower turning toward mentor, awareness of others, motivation to improve self and others, modeling AI, mentoring	<i>Relationships: Others</i>	
appreciative, energy, clarity, inspired, deeper, hit home, made me feel, much happier, more open, more real, PEACE, I enjoy, its OK to feel I need to be hands on, I was taught many lessons	<i>Personal Attributes and Insights</i>	
Actively involved in issue resolution, one day I just tried it, planned to challenge myself, viewed as a personal development phase, what can I offer? what do I have to offer? Talking AI, Using AI, Inspired to use AI, Accepting AI, Find places to use it, Keep up morale, Willing to accept responsibility, gave up leadership, accepted leadership	<i>Personal Actions</i>	
new perspective, different perspective, paradigm shift, change in perspective, changed way I saw myself, see it differently, I am a changed person, reclaimed my former self, turning point	<i>Change</i>	
encouraged others to use AI, Sharing through mentoring, happy to share trauma, share in healing time with other victims, its OK to share, share AI with others, mentoring to share values, mentoring to share meaning of work, job, organization	<i>Sharing</i>	
AI is absurd, mistrust, not embraced, skeptical, mistrustful, negative culture, negative, hostile, un-motivating, stagnant, decreased morale, no volunteers, no extra work, not engaged, older members, no passion, at a bifurcation point, loss of AI champions, thought we could make it better, sad, now see organization's value, we are now there for the organization	<i>Organization</i>	
Continued participation in AI, continual process, life long learning, you have to live it, continued involvement	<i>Learning and Process</i>	
emotional connection, reconnection, reclaiming self, reclaiming childhood, reconnection, dots being connected	<i>Connection</i>	
its OK to tell victim stories, storytelling, love to tell stories, rich legacy of organizations and job	<i>Storytelling</i>	
Better able to cope with trauma, able to make positive use of tragedy, share my tragedy with others through AI	<i>Tragedy and Trauma</i>	
committed for the long term, recommitted, really committed	<i>Commitment</i>	

we create our own realities, we shape our realities,	<i>Reality</i>	
focus on the strength/best/positive	<i>Focus</i>	
professional growth, competence, reinvest in self, experience, increase in knowledge and skill, gain in skills and knowledge, opportunity to model AI, opportunity to learn, access to resources	<i>Opportunity and Professional Growth</i>	
The peace which paseth all understanding', awareness/conviction of a higher purpose, spiritual connections	<i>Spiritual</i>	
confidence, grown stronger, brought out the best in me, validated	<i>Confidence</i>	
I want to do something with this, intention to act/plan, public commitment, private commitment	<i>Forward Intent</i>	
making a difference, made a difference, know why we need to help, synergy, say what we feel like, 'back to what I love'	<i>Results: General</i>	

668

669           The open and axial coding revealed a large number of concepts. After the initial  
670 coding, I coded the transcripts by clustering concepts into related groups. I coded the  
671 following clustered concepts: *Beginning, Sensations and Insights, Relationships:*  
672 *Mentoring and with Others, Personal Attributes, Sensations and Insights, Personal*  
673 *Actions, Change, Sharing, Organization, Connection, Learning and Process, Tragedy*  
674 *and Trauma, Commitment, Reality, Focus, Forgiveness, Acceptance, Opportunity and*  
675 *Professional Growth, Spiritual, Energy, Opening Up, Learning, Confidence, Creating,*  
676 *Results: General.*

677           As I clustered these concepts, I realized that the clusters related to the  
678 participant's experiences at the beginning of the AI event and others related to the  
679 participant's experiences during the AI event, and still others related to a participant's  
680 experiences after the AI event and I coded the data accordingly. The initial coding for  
681 concepts and conceptual clusters compared to stages of the participant's experience can  
682 be seen in Table 2.

683 For Example, Mary said, “Overall, I am appreciative and look for the best myself  
 684 and in others. It’s changed my relationships in my family, socially and professionally.  
 685 It’s refreshing and I do things now that I enjoy.” This statement yielded the concepts  
 686 *appreciative* and *I enjoy*, which I coded into a clustered concept I labeled *personal*  
 687 *attributes*. This also yielded the concept of *changed relationships*, which I coded into the  
 688 clustered concept of *relationships*. In the axial coding, I placed *personal attributes* and  
 689 *relationships* in a theme labeled *results*, which represented concepts Mary expressed as  
 690 resulting from attending the AI event.

691 *Coding for transformative learning in the data.*

692 I created a key to code the data for expressions of or indications of Mezirow’s  
 693 three reflective practices and his ten stages of TL, including the how the research  
 694 participant’s reported the AI event effected them. This code key comprised of 14 points  
 695 relevant to TL. I placed these codes into five categories: *reflective practices*,  
 696 *examination of self, examination of roles and relationships, planning according to the*  
 697 *new perspective, reintegration of new perspective* further reducing the data. I read each  
 698 transcript and marked passages that expressed or indicated a reflective practice or a stage  
 699 of TL. I then compared transcripts to ensure that each transcript was coded consistently  
 700 with the other transcripts. I then noted which reflective practices or stages of TL were  
 701 expressed in each transcript. Refer to Table 3 below.

702 *Table 3. Coding for transformative learning in the data*

		Mary	Chris	Hillary	Annie	Sophia	Laurent
1	AI experience expressed or indicated? E-, NE, PE, ETL?	ETL	ETL	PE	PE	E-	E-

REFLECTIVE PRACTICES							
2	Did they experience Critical Self Reflection?	X	X	X	X		X
3	Did they experience Reflective Dialogue?	X	X				
4	Did they experience Reflective Action?	X	X	X	X		
	Subtotals	3	3	2	2	0	1
EXAMINATION OF SELF							
5	A disorienting dilemma?	X	X	X			
6	Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame?	X	X				
7	A critical assessment of assumptions and relationships?	X	X	X	X		X
8	Recognition of one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared	X	X	X		X	
	Subtotals	4	4	3	1	1	1
EXAMINATION OF ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS							
9	Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions?	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	Provisional trying of new roles?	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	Building competence and confidence in new roles and relationships?	X	X	X	X		X
	Subtotals	3	3	3	3	2	3
PLANNING IN ACCORDANCE WITH NEW MEANING SCHEMA							
12	Planning a course of action?	X	X	X	X		X

13	Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans?	X	X				
	Subtotals	2	2	1	1	0	1
REINTEGRATION OF NEW MEANING SCHEMA							
14	A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective?	X	X				
	Subtotals	1	1	0	0	0	0
	Totals	13	13	8	7	3	6

703

704 For example, Chris expressed *critical self-reflection* in her analysis of herself.

705 She characterized herself before the AI event as:

706 I... was, uhm, (laughter) ... gosh you know what word comes to my mind first is  
707 Gothic (laughter) I mean, that is like the first and foremost word, but it was really,  
708 uhm, was almost fatalistic. And it really was fatalistic, but it was kind of like this  
709 idea that I'm not fatalistic but realistic. And very critical. And I am still and I  
710 would still characterize myself as critical, but it is a criticalness that serves me in  
711 a better way than what it did before. Chris.

712 After the AI event Chris described herself, "My mom was just so excited that that  
713 I finally had some sort of peace, uhm."

714 And I will never make sense out of it. But the appreciative inquiry, allowed me a  
715 different way to talk about rape and sexual assault. It actually stirred up some  
716 problems within the, the rape and sexual assault movement, because I was talking  
717 about allowing the women to tell their stories and not just the victims. And while

718 the whole movement perpetuates victimization, like you should feel ashamed.  
719 And you know, what we create our own realities, and we should say what we feel  
720 like.... Yes, uh-huh, you really changed from like talking about what the  
721 movement said somebody in my situation should feel like, to actually stating what  
722 it was that I felt and knowing it was OK to feel that and to share that.

723 Then I compared each transcript for stages expressed or indicated in common, and  
724 for stages not expressed or indicated in common. This coding suggested four categories  
725 based on their summary of the AI event experience. The four categories I used for  
726 coding this section were labeled: Negative Effect (E-), Neutral Effect (NE), Positive  
727 Effect (PE), or Expressed Transformative Learning (ETL). *Negative Effect* will refer to  
728 participants who expressed a negative change in their perspectives and expectations of  
729 the future, which they attributed to their participation in the AI event. No research  
730 participant expressed or indicated a negative effect from participating in the AI event.

731 *Neutral Effect* will refer to participants who expressed that the AI event left their  
732 perspectives and expectations of the future unchanged. For example, Laurent said:

733 Yeah, but I don't know if it is attributable to this event or appreciative inquiry, I  
734 have gone through a lot of growth in the last three or four years and a lot of  
735 changes. How much of that is appreciative inquiry and that experience? It's  
736 impossible to relate to. Laurent.

737 Sophia said it this way:

738 No, no. no there wasn't any kind of change some of the people I didn't even know  
739 and you know my practice is, is to do exactly what I was mentioning with you  
740 earlier, in that the amount of their success is proportionate to the amount that I can

741 dream their success, so when I chose to, so when I choose to focus my energy on  
742 something that it is from an energy potential. Sophia.

743 *Positive Effect* will refer to participants who expressed a positive change in their  
744 perspectives and expectations of the future and attributed it to their participation in the AI  
745 event. For example, Annie said,

746 I have gotten better, and that confidence, and [the] confidence I have has made it  
747 more possible for me to increase [my] knowledge and experiences to take me to  
748 the next levels. So, I have something to share with others. So, I think that the  
749 personal summary is, 'I have grown and gotten stronger. Annie

750 Hillary said:

751 Yeah, yeah, right, yeah. The first thing I would say is that appreciative inquiry  
752 has, appreciative inquiry has reconnected me with my own childhood. I mean my  
753 childhood was the last place I felt like I was really alive. So, it has enabled me to  
754 live again fully in a way that I defined as meaningful and useful to the world.

755 And, probably pleasing to God. I think that says it."

756 *Expressed Transformative Learning* will refer to participants who expressed a  
757 positive change in their perspectives and expectations of the future, which they attributed  
758 to the AI event. Mary and Chris also expressed or indicated Mezirow's three reflective  
759 practices and ten stages of TL. For example, Mary said:

760 I am a different person, and [I] have spent the past two years talking about AI, and  
761 using it where ever it fits both professionally and personally. I think its just part of  
762 me, and I find myself encouraging others to look at thing from what it is that they  
763 do well. When I talk with a nurse or have to council a staff person, I start out with

764 what they are doing right...it's so different when you start a conversation this way  
 765 instead of the usual confrontational method. Mary  
 766 Chris said of her experience, “. I think, I honestly will tell you, I am a change  
 767 person because of being introduced AI.” Chris also said, “That AI was kind of the  
 768 impetus to start this biological change and the biological changes changed my mental  
 769 makeup.” Mary and Chris also expressed or indicated the three reflective practices and  
 770 the ten stages of TL. Refer to Tables 3 and 4.

771 This sample yielded no participants with Negative Effect, which is not surprising  
 772 since the research participants were self-selected as people who experienced change  
 773 during an AI event. There were two participants who expressed Neutral Effect, which  
 774 might be considered surprising since the research participants were self-selected as  
 775 people who experienced change resulting from participation in an AI event. The data  
 776 yielded two participants who expressed Positive Effect, and two participants who  
 777 Expressed Transformative Learning. Refer to Table 4.

778 *Table 4. Comparison of transformative learning data*

Expressed Transformative Learning	Points Expressed or Indicated	Points Not Expressed or Indicated	
Mary	2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14		
Chris	2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14		
ETL Points Expressed or Indicated In Common	2,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14	ETL Points Not Expressed or Indicated in Common	0
Positive Effect	Points Expressed or Indicated	Points Not Expressed or Indicated	



Hillary	2,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,13	3,6,14	
Annie	2,4,7,9,10,11,12,13	3,5,6,8,14	
PE Points Expressed or Indicated In Common	2,4,7,9,10,11,12,13	PE Points Not Expressed or Indicated in Common	3,6,14
Neutral Effect	Points Expressed or Indicated	Points Not Expressed or Indicated	
Sophia	8,9,10	2,3,4,5,6,7,12,13,14	
Laurent	2,7,9,10,11, 12	3,4,5,6,8,12,13,14	
NE Points Expressed or Indicated In Common	9,10	NE Points Not Expressed or Indicated in Common	3,4,5,6,13,14
Negative Effect	none are reported in this research		

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Analyzing the data in this manner led to some interesting insights into the experiences of the research participants. There were no reported experiences of E- in the participant's reported experiences. The participants who experienced PE or ETL experienced all four stages of the AI 4D cycle. The two participants coded as experiencing NE only experienced the first two stages of the AI 4 D cycle: *Discovery and Dream*. The two research participants who experienced ETL did express or indicate all ten of the stages of TL and made use of the three reflective practices. This agrees with Mezirow's (Mezirow 1990; 1997) assertion and the research of Lytle (1989) and Cesar (2003). The research participants who were coded as PE experienced most of the 14 codes, but neither expressed or indicated (3) *Reflective Dialogue*, or (6) *Self-examination with feelings of anger, shame, guilt, and fear*. The two research participants who were coded as NE did not express or indicate: (3) *Reflective dialogue*, (4) *Reflective action*, (5)

792 *Disorienting dilemma, (6) Self-examination with feelings of anger, shame, guilt, and fear,*  
793 *(12) Planning a new course of action, or (13) Acquire knowledge and skills for*  
794 *implementing one's plan.*

795         Next, I analyzed the data based on the five categories of TL: reflective practices,  
796 examination of self, examination of roles and relationships, planning according to the  
797 new perspective, reintegration of new perspective. I will discuss the comparison of each  
798 TL experience type found in this research, ETL, PE, NE. Refer to Table 3.

799         *Reflective practices.* The ETLs, Mary and Chris, expressed or indicated all three  
800 reflective practices: critical self-reflection, reflective dialogue, and reflective action. The  
801 PEs, Hillary and Annie, expressed or indicated critical self-reflection and reflective  
802 action. Sophia (NE) did not express or indicate any of the three reflective practices.  
803 Laurent (NE) expressed or indicated critical self-reflection.

804         *Examination of self.* The ETLs, Mary and Chris, expressed or indicated the four  
805 points included in this category: a disorienting dilemma, self-examination with feelings  
806 of fear, anger, guilt, and shame, a critical assessment of assumptions and relationships.  
807 Hillary (PE) expressed or indicated three of the points in this category: a disorienting  
808 dilemma, a critical assessment of assumptions and relationships. Annie (PE) expressed  
809 or indicated only one point in this category: a critical assessment of assumptions and  
810 relationships. Sophia (NE) expressed or indicated one point in this category, a critical  
811 assessment of assumptions and relationships. Laurent expressed or indicated one point in  
812 this category: a critical assessment of assumptions and relationships.

813         *Examination of roles and relationships.* Mary (ETL), Chris (ETL), Hillary (PE),  
814 Annie (PE), Laurent (NE) expressed or indicated the three points in this category:

815 exploration of options for new roles, relationships, provisional trying of roles, building  
816 competence and confidence in new roles and relationships. Sophia expressed two of the  
817 points in this category: exploration of options for new roles, relationships, provisional  
818 trying of roles.

819 *Planning according to the new perspective.* The ETLs, Mary and Chris,  
820 expressed or indicated both points included in this category: Planning a new course of  
821 action, and acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans. Hillary (PE),  
822 Annie (PE), and Laurent (NE) expressed one point in this category: planning a new  
823 course of action. Sophia (NE) did not express or indicate either point in this category.

824 *Reintegration of new perspective.* Only Mary and Chris, ETLs, expressed or  
825 indicated a reintegration of a new meaning schema.

826 Analyzing the data by category of TL in this way reinforces Mezirow's theory  
827 that one must experience all ten stages of TL to reach the tenth stage, a reintegration of a  
828 new meaning schema (Mezirow 1978; Mezirow 1997; Mezirow 2000) and the research  
829 findings of Lytle (Lytle 1989) and Cesar (Cesar 2003).

830 *Triangulating the data*

831 As a third step, I separated the clustered concepts based on the four experience  
832 types the coding for TL revealed. I triangulated the data by comparing the results of the  
833 comparison of the data to TL with the clustered concepts developed in the initial coding.  
834 Refer to Table 2. I separated the clustered concepts by the experience types, ETL, PE,  
835 NE, E-, suggested in the comparison with TL and then linked them in a hook and eye  
836 fashion (Fischer 1988; Creswell 1994; Booth, Colomb et al. 1995), which resulted in  
837 Table 5. Next, I looked the clustered concepts in common between experience type as

838 suggested by the comparison with TL. This revealed some higher order patterns in the  
 839 clustered concepts developed from the two sections of coding, which resulted in Table 6.  
 840 When I compared Table 6 to the original data, I found that not all clustered concepts  
 841 applied to all members of the experience type. At this point, I sorted the data again  
 842 clustered concepts in common by research participant. Refer to Table 7.

843 *Table 5. Common clustered concepts in the data.*

	Expressed Transformative Learning	Positive Effect	Neutral Effect
Common Themes	Ready for/open to change: Positive experience: Experienced emotions personally: Re-examined prior disorienting dilemma: Learning and growth: Reconnection , or Connection: Positive change in relationships: Others notice: Mentoring: Sharing: Peace: Changed physically Change: Creation: Act on new perspective: focus on positive	Ready for/open to change, or New beginning: Advanced preparation: Positive experience: Experienced emotions personally or Reported emotions in others: Adventurous: Significant experience: Did not express re-examination of disorienting dilemma: Learning and growth: Reconnection, or Connection: Positive change in relationships: Others notice: Mentoring: Sharing: Changed physically: Peace: Acting on new perspective or expressed intent to act on new knowledge: Focus on positive or Focus on opportunity	New beginning: Advanced preparation: Positive experience: Reported emotions in others: Adventurous: Significant experience: Did not express re-examination of disorienting dilemma: Learning and growth: Connection: Change: Creation: Expressed intent to act on new knowledge: Focus on opportunity

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845 *Table 6. Common clustered concepts by experience type.*

ETL, PE, NE	Positive experience: Learning and growth: Positive change in relationships
ETL, PE	Ready for/ open to change: Experienced emotions personally: Positive change in relationships: Reconnection: Others notice: Mentoring: Changed physically Sharing: Peace: Act on new perspective: Focus on positive

PE, NE	New beginning: Advanced preparation: Experienced strong, specific emotions in others: Connection significant experience: Did not express examination of disorienting dilemma: Expressed intent to act on new knowledge: Focus on opportunity
ETL, NE	Change: Creation
ETL	Re-examination of a prior disorienting dilemma
PE, NE	Advanced preparation: Adventurous: Significant experience

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847 *Table 7. Common clustered concepts by research participant.*

Mary, Chris, Hillary, Annie, Laurent	Positive experience: Learning and growth
Mary, Chris, Hillary, Annie	Mentoring
Mary, Chris, Hillary	Ready for/ open to change: Experienced emotions personally: Positive change in relationships: Reconnection: Changed physically: Others notice: Sharing: Peace: Act on new perspective: Focus on positive
Annie, Sophia, Laurent	Reported emotions in others: Connection: Focus on opportunity
Annie, Laurent	Beginning: Advanced preparation: Significant experience: Intent to act on new knowledge
Mary, Chris	Re-examined a prior disorienting dilemma

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849 This triangulation of the data revealed two clustered concepts common to the  
 850 reported experiences of Mary, Chris, Hillary, Annie, and Laurent. All the research  
 851 participants expressed that their experience of their AI event was that this was a Positive  
 852 experience, and involved learning and growth.

853 *Positive experience.* Mary indicated that this was a positive experience in  
 854 summarizing what the AI event meant to her. “It’s a continual process for me but one that  
 855 has really made a difference in my life and hopefully in the people I come in contact

856 with.” Chris expressed that the AI event was a positive experience also, “Then there was  
857 definitely a change, but it was a change in, er, how I started to look at things and that  
858 people around me started to notice that I was dealing with things in a much more positive  
859 and constructive way and at that point.” Hillary indicated a positive experience saying,  
860 “So it has enabled me to live again fully in a way that I defined as meaningful and useful  
861 to the world.” And Hillary said more directly, “Yes, it was a positive experience.” Annie  
862 indicated that the AI event was positive for her saying, “It validated me in my own eyes  
863 in the eyes of a client in the eyes of the professional community as being of a certain  
864 caliber and being confident to work on a project.” Laurent indicated that the AI event  
865 was a positive experience also, “I guess it was affirming. I had a hunch, but I had not  
866 anticipated. But it when I saw it happen. It opened up the whole side, and I brought forth  
867 a little more confidence in me.”

868 *Learning and growth.* Mary indicated learning and growth reflected in how other  
869 people saw her, “Now I feel that others see me as a positive confident person.” Chris  
870 expressed learning as a lifelong process, “It’s kind of inspired in me this kind of lifelong  
871 learning process, is kind of constantly looking at where can I make things better, working  
872 to make things different.” Hillary Expressed the need for continual learning:

873 Well the only thing is that I feel, it feels so big some days so powerful, and such  
874 useful thing, and a living thing, that I second-guess myself. And I say I know,  
875 have you read everything? And maybe this is just my personality. I know this is  
876 how I am, too. It is just so huge that you want to know that you are doing this in  
877 the right way and the way that is supposed to be done. Hillary.

878 Annie expressed learning and growth as personal development:

879 I have gotten better and that confidence and confidence I have has made it more  
880 possible for me to increase knowledge and experiences to take me to the next  
881 levels.” Laurent expressed growth as personal development, “It is given me, and  
882 in time, and I can't say it was the individual event that changed me, but the more  
883 I'm exposed to it the more I become resourceful and confident and I'm a little  
884 smarter. And I don't mean that to be... You know, smarter, but there are certain  
885 specific things just smarter about how I use my energy, in terms of change  
886 process, and so on. Annie.

887 Laurent also said, “Well I am more capable, more competent... I am more, wise  
888 perhaps?”

889 There is one clustered concept common to Mary Chris, Hillary, and Annie:  
890 mentoring relationships. Mary, Hillary, and Annie established mentoring relationships,  
891 which were informal arrangements with the facilitator of the AI event. Chris and Mary  
892 also became either an informal or a formal mentor to others after the AI event.

893 Mary indicates an informal mentoring relationship with the facilitator of her event  
894 But it has also been a process that I have continued to work on...and have stayed involved  
895 with the AI consultants so that I keep up the motivation”. Mary expressed that she had  
896 become a mentor in her workplace.

897 It took me a while but I found a place to use AI as part of a mentoring program fro  
898 nurses that I developed with another nurse. We teach a 4 hour workshop to train  
899 nurses to be mentors, and we spend the last hour talking about our personal  
900 experiences, our values, what it means to be a nurse, and we tell stories. Everyone  
901 loves it. It's emotional and it connects us. And the biggest impact it has in helping

902 mentors see why we need to help the novices, why nursing has a rich legacy that it so  
903 important to pass on. I also believe that nurses love to tell their stories and talk about  
904 what brings them back day after day...its not the pay, benefits or hours...no one ever  
905 asks them these questions and we always run out of time with many stories untold!  
906 Mary.

907 Chris indicates an informal mentoring relationship with friends in the rape and  
908 sexual assault movement:

909 And I still have friends within the movement that some are trying to put forth this  
910 perspective and I've given them kind of some AI reading materials. You know,  
911 this is how you can use it. Chris.

912 Hillary expresses an informal mentoring relationship with the facilitator of her AI  
913 event:

914 I'll go back to my consultant. She is more or less mentoring me at this point she  
915 doesn't set foot on campus but she sort of back channels with me on projects.

916 And she says to me there is nothing, you are not going to damage anything and  
917 just know that what you're doing is good. It is just a function of me getting more  
918 time with it and getting the returns. Hillary.

919 Annie was able to use the lead facilitator of her AI event as a mentor during the  
920 event.

921 Susan on the other hand I think she just is, she doesn't have to tell people, she is,  
922 and even if you don't know what is, AI. You know that you want to work with  
923 her and be with her. And you know that if it's not work as this kind of a enjoyable  
924 experience consequently you [are] encouraged, you model [her]. I found myself



925 modeling Susan. I felt myself literally blossoming under her care and attention.  
926 Not that she was giving me 24-hour support. In fact I don't spec out the hours.  
927 Again, I think Susan is clearly masterful in the delegation and she values her  
928 personal time and family time. So she didn't do an excessive amount of  
929 handholding but she did the right amount and always said if you need to tell me  
930 for 20 minutes fine. So, something super prepared. Annie

931 There are ten clustered concepts common to Mary, Chris, and Hillary: Ready for/  
932 open to change, Experienced emotions personally, Positive change in relationships,  
933 Reconnection, Changed physically, Others notice, Sharing, Peace, Act on new  
934 perspective, Focus on positive. I will indicate each point with quotes from each research  
935 participant's transcript.

936 *Ready for/ open to change. .*" For example, Mary went from feeling 'mistrustful'  
937 that 'this is absurd' to 'tears and laughter' became happier' 'sadness' "I felt sad' and 'I  
938 feel stronger and more satisfied.' Mary said about her readiness for change:

939 Oh, I openly tell others about the process, and that I was at a point where I was  
940 searching for something in my life, and that appreciative inquiry came at a time  
941 when I was ready to hear it and embrace it. Mary.

942 Chris indicated being open to change also:

943 I was really struggling, and I was constantly living in fear, that I put on a lot of  
944 weight, which was strange because I had come back from studying abroad in  
945 Ghana and I was at the best physical shape of my life. I was studying drumming  
946 and dancing while I was there. Now my whole world was upside down. I was 60

947 pounds heavier and put on the weight really quickly and was pretty much trying to  
948 figure out how to work through that. Chris.

949 Hillary indicated her readiness for change in this passage about preparing to go to  
950 her AI event:

951 And the point then when I went to NEW BEGINNINGS at the time I was  
952 planning a trip. My dad has a best friend from college, who is a glider pilot, and  
953 my dad is a small plane pilot. And he said would you like to go on a glider ride  
954 when you're out there? In the past I would've said no and stood firm on it. I  
955 would've said no. The first point is, my dad says do you want to do this? I say no  
956 then hours later I think, 'oh gosh' and I, I wake up and think what did I just say?  
957 So I rethink this and I go back to my dad a couple days later and say I really  
958 thought about this and I think I would really like to do the glider ride. Hillary  
959 *Experienced emotions personally.* Mary summarized her emotional experiences  
960 resulting from the AI event

961 Depressed. I was sad, felt sorry for myself, looked at others and wished that I had  
962 a life like theirs...overweight and physically drained. On antidepressants. Now, I  
963 still have a few pounds to lose but otherwise, I am content, positive, more  
964 satisfied and grateful for all that I have. Off antidepressants, happier overall. Now  
965 I feel that others see me as a positive confident person. Mary.

966 Chris went from feeling fearful to happier and feeling a sense of peace.

967 I was really struggling, and I was constantly living in fear that I put on a lot of  
968 weight, which was strange, because I had come back from studying abroad in  
969 Ghana and I was at the best physical shape of my life. Chris

970 That was even difficult, and [I] went through a period where I was really afraid,  
971 where I was really afraid of all... My gosh, I can't believe you're so afraid of  
972 people (laughter). Chris.

973 So I was happy to have someone like, now I can laugh about it. I was happy to  
974 have someone like who's been sexually assaulted, because we've never had  
975 someone who's been through the whole healing process with someone. It was  
976 like horrible things that were happening all at once. Chris.

977 And I have to admit I was like much happier. Chris.

978 My mom commented on this the most, like my mom would, I'm trying to think of  
979 what my..., mom was just so excited that that I finally had some sort of peace,  
980 uhm. Chris.

981 Hillary experienced emotions personally also:

982 And that's what happened in the NEW BEGINNINGS training was in the  
983 community of the other folks in this training it was a time of creating joy and  
984 imagining the possibilities and the creativity that existed it just filled me with  
985 utter joy. And I guess the other example is, that there really comes a feeling, I  
986 don't know if you want to call it a feeling, but you really feel an incredible  
987 energy. Hillary.

988 *Positive Change in relationships.* Mary's relationships changed personally,  
989 socially, and professionally:

990 Overall. I am appreciative and look for the best in myself and in others. It's  
991 changed my relationships in my family...socially and professionally....I gravitate  
992 towards more positive people socially now as well. Mary

993 For Chris it was a change in her role in the Music Resource and Heritage Center:  
994 Well now, I'm in a leadership position, I mean, I was probably considered the  
995 informal leader. Now I am a formal leader, and I'm really closer to them. So that  
996 has kind of changed, I guess. It's nice these are my friends, and they're there for  
997 me, regardless of what happens and are not the friends you would be expecting  
998 me to have and that gives me a new perspective regardless. Chris.

999 Hillary found a new way to relate to her parents:

1000 I really wanted to study forgiveness and that part of things with my folks has been  
1001 while I had a really great childhood like everybody there's parts where I think  
1002 why did things have to be that way....And so instead of doing this blame game  
1003 thing. I ask what's been good about your life, and how was it affected my life and  
1004 that's very rich very rich. Hillary.

1005 *Reconnection.* Mary expressed her sense of reconnection this way:

1006 By the way, I gave up my leadership job and now do patient care fulltime. I find  
1007 that it was those bedside encounters that have taught me many lessons about the  
1008 human spirit and strength, and so I have gone back to what I have always loved  
1009 the most, hands on care and the pottery I did in college 30 years ago! Mary.

1010 Chris indicated reconnection through her descriptions of herself before she was  
1011 assaulted: "So before that I was kind of the funny girl. So, I was like, that that's the role  
1012 that I played." Chris.

1013 I was really struggling, and it was constantly living in fear that on a lot of weight,  
1014 which was strange because I had come back from studying abroad in Ghana and I

1015 was at the best physical shape of my life. I was studying drumming and dancing  
1016 while I was there. Chris.

1017 Chris described how she felt after applying the AI principles to her life:

1018 After that, I felt much freer to be fun and I don't know, this is tough. (pause).”

1019 Then Chris describes herself through the activities she now partakes in, “I lost  
1020 most of the [weight], I started like, ah, rock climbing and doing physical things  
1021 like running, that were really productive. Chris.

1022 Hillary expressed a sense of reconnection to herself:

1023 The first thing I would say is that appreciative inquiry has, appreciative inquiry  
1024 has reconnected me with my own childhood. I mean my childhood was the last  
1025 place I felt like I was really alive. Hillary.

1026 *Changed physically.* Mary began a physical change directly after the AI event  
1027 resulting from action plans she made during the AI event. Mary said:

1028 There was something about being there and all the good that came of that  
1029 workshop that gave me the motivation to start doing some work on myself...I  
1030 weighed 250 lbs, and two days after the workshop, I started a weight loss  
1031 program...I just felt stronger and motivated in a way that I never expected. Mary.

1032 Chris expressed a dramatic physical change in her appearance also:

1033 And I was able to take that perspective into work from to work from a place of  
1034 building from where I was in that process and the weight began to drop off and  
1035 granted I haven't lost all of it. I lost most of the [weight], I started like, ah, rock  
1036 climbing and doing physical things like running, that were really productive. That

1037 AI was kind of the impetus to start this biological change in the biological  
1038 changes change or mental makeup. Chris.

1039 Hillary expressed this through a new hairstyle:

1040 And around the same time I got a new haircut. It was a bit different for me  
1041 because I generally get a pretty conservative haircut. This is a little more  
1042 flamboyant, or whatever the word is you want to use. Hillary

1043 *Others notice.* Mary indicated that others noticed a change in her by saying,  
1044 “Now I feel that others see me as a positive confident person.” Chris said, “My brother  
1045 will even say ‘Oh my God, yeah, you've changed.’ He was just amazed at some of the  
1046 work that I have done.” Chris also said:

1047 But I may, may get most of the comments from my family. It was like, ‘You've  
1048 changed your different here much happier,’ nothing too profound. Chris

1049 Hillary found that people on the campus of the Hopewell School, where she  
1050 works commented often on changes in her. Hillary described it this way:

1051 So I started to get feedback from people ‘Well you look great’ ‘What are you  
1052 people doing in research?’ I mean it was really just a funny thing, and you know  
1053 initially I was "I like the hair, I don't like the hair" but people, why do people keep  
1054 on picking this out with me? Hillary.

1055 Hillary attributes this to a new state of being:

1056 And it all just came crashing down on me what I think was happening with people  
1057 who were saying this to me is that they were picking up on me ‘being AI’ because  
1058 I was being in a different way. Hillary.

1059           *Sharing.* Mary found a way to share AI with her coworkers, “It took me a while  
1060 but I found a place to use AI as part of a mentoring program for nurses that I developed  
1061 with another nurse.” Chris began sharing AI principles through advocating a new  
1062 perspective on sexual assault:

1063           And I was able to start doing some advocacy work from this point this point of  
1064 this is what happened to me and yeah it stinks. And I will never make sense out  
1065 of it. But the appreciative inquiry, allowed me a different way to talk about rape  
1066 and sexual assault.

1067           Chris also shares AI resources with her friends in the crisis counseling field, “And  
1068 I still have friends within the movement that some are trying to put forth this perspective  
1069 and I've given them kind of some AI reading materials. You know, this is how you can  
1070 use it.”

1071           *Peace.* Mary indicated peace in her sense of satisfaction and happiness:

1072           I was always seeing what I didn't have in comparison to others, and now I can  
1073 really say that I look at where I am, what I have accomplished, and have reached  
1074 a point of being satisfied and happy. Mary.

1075           Chris's mother noticed a sense peace Chris found after the AI event:

1076           My mom commented on this the most, like my mom would, I'm trying to think of  
1077 what... My mom was just so excited that that I finally had some sort of peace,  
1078 uhm. Chris.

1079           Hillary expressed peace:

1080           And my guess, the other thing that is hard to explain is, since NEW  
1081 BEGINNINGS, there have been points where I have felt, I've heard this in the

1082 Bible, have you heard this? ‘The peace which passeth all understanding’. Do  
1083 you know this? There have been points where felt that kind of peace and when  
1084 you feel that kind of peace very much like a transformation in AI. Hillary.

1085 There are three clustered concepts common to Annie, Sophia, and Laurent:  
1086 Reported emotions in others, Connection, Focus on opportunity. I will indicate each  
1087 point with quotes from each research participant’s transcript.

1088 *Reported emotions in others.* When asked about emotions she encountered Annie  
1089 responded:

1090 Yes I think the example... I may, may not have been entirely clear that the  
1091 example of, ah, the person that sort of said she saw vision in the great hall the  
1092 lecture hall that there [would] be more pictures of African-American woman she  
1093 was applauded. But I don't know, we didn't specifically discuss the subject of  
1094 diversity but I think there were people who just spontaneously even responded to  
1095 her energy and her passion in the way that she presented. It was inclusive rather  
1096 than separatist that was just one example. Annie.

1097 Sophia replied:

1098 There were people who were, people who, a few who had fairly cathartic things  
1099 happening, so there were tears for a few. There was a softening of hearts and a  
1100 deeper sense of breathing deeper, so we can understand each other differently. At  
1101 the same time there were people who got angry that had some anger issues from a  
1102 more hard-core point of view. Sophia.

1103 Laurent reported:

1104 I think it was quite, it was a similar thing for a lot of other people doing the



1105 interview themselves and so on. I think we did the interviews in pairs or threes.

1106 As we had only so many client people to speak to, but, ah, yeah, I was sure to...

1107 Some are in a mixed bag, as with anything is a bit of enthusiasm and then the

1108 work of the follow up. And as with any process. It's hard to maintain an

1109 enthusiasm all way through it and think that's about all I can say about that.

1110 Laurent.

1111 *Connection.* Annie said, "The fact that I got to work with an overall great person

1112 and I think a great practitioner of AI and a great consultant." Annie also said:

1113 Based on accessing resources, based on having an opportunity to learn from a

1114 masterful appreciative consultant, and having lots of opportunity to model

1115 effective appreciative consultation and facilitation. Annie.

1116 Sophia indicated connection in new collaborations by saying, "Now look here's a

1117 whole roomful of people I can go to that I didn't know before, before I walked in here, so

1118 that would have expanded." Laurent found a connection between AI and his spiritual

1119 values:

1120 And uhm, just the methodology itself. The philosophy and what it does really

1121 matched the processes I'd been through with my spiritual practices. So it was for

1122 me, a great alignment, and I felt this great relief, because I found something that

1123 my values totally aligned with. Laurent

1124 *Focus on opportunity.* Annie expressed a focus on opportunity, "And an

1125 opportunity to learn and an opportunity do further reach is a powerful one". And Annie

1126 said:

1127 Based on accessing resources, based on having an opportunity to learn from a  
1128 masterful appreciative consultant, and having lots of opportunities to model  
1129 effective the appreciative consulting and facilitation. Annie.

1130 Annie also said, “The fact that I got to work with an overall great person and I  
1131 think a great practitioner of AI and a great consultant.” Sophia indicated a focus on  
1132 opportunity in this statement:

1133 Yes, there was, oh, one or two people there that I really very much wanted to  
1134 speak with more. And there were, there were some I observed, some people  
1135 interacting and I liked what I saw in the interaction so I got curious about that.

1136 Sophia

1137 Laurent expressed his focus on opportunity when he spoke of his AI event  
1138 experience as a member of his class at Pennington University when he said:

1139 It was like an appreciative inquiry and how to do a consulting job basically.”

1140 Laurent indicated that this opportunity had meaning for him when he said, “And I  
1141 found in appreciative inquiry and especially meeting Jane, because Jane had done  
1142 some work with the Dalai Lama, and stuff, and so we really connected. Laurent

1143 There are four clustered concepts in common between Annie and Laurent:

1144 Beginning, Advanced preparation, Significant experience, Intent to act on new

1145 knowledge. I will indicate each point with quotes from each research participant’s

1146 transcript.

1147 *Beginning.* Annie expressed beginning by stating that the AI experience was a  
1148 starting point for her by saying, “And it really was sort of a launching pad, or jumping  
1149 pad.” While Laurent phrased it as a change in his understanding:

1150 But our class is not an ongoing, it is just a different, is not like a day in and day  
1151 out experience of working a job, interesting... Yet it was the beginning of  
1152 opening up to levels of understanding around change and, creating what we call in  
1153 Yogic terms an awareness shift, about how many ways we look at change.

1154 Laurent

1155 *Advanced Preparation.* Annie spent a month preparing to assist in the facilitation  
1156 of her AI event. Much of the data in her transcript discusses the planning phases of this  
1157 event. For example, Annie said:

1158 I was asked at the very beginning when she was making her final sales call and  
1159 that participated in the initial AI experience for a number of nurses so they could  
1160 feel comfortable with this experience and the initiative that was happening in the  
1161 hospital. I reviewed handouts. I reviewed the agenda. Annie.

1162 Annie also described her work with the core client group in advance of the AI  
1163 event:

1164 Then the next step was the contracting signed. And the team, there was a third  
1165 person as part of the team of these consultants, while is really working together to  
1166 spec out the contract, get it signed. Then we started theories of training events so  
1167 that people could get familiar with AI. So that people also had you uhm, a chance  
1168 to work with the questions and people understood their role in interviewing. At  
1169 the same time we had some workshops and training for the core group. And  
1170 begin to work with a core group through the next few months to capture the  
1171 stories which were coming out to work with a core group. Annie.

1172 Laurent spent a day preparing to act as a co-facilitator with his class and a well-  
1173 known AI facilitator:

1174 And, uhm, Jane came in with us and she worked with us for one full day and she  
1175 was there for a couple of days. But she only worked with us for one full day to  
1176 walk us through the process to let us experience, and she used the 4D model,  
1177 which is the model that is most used these days....So we went through most of the  
1178 process that day, and we at the same time. It was like an appreciative inquiry and  
1179 how to do a consulting job, basically. So, during that process for the day, we  
1180 developed the process we were going to use with Montreal Air and Travel.

1181 Laurent

1182 *Significant experience.* Annie indicated the AI event was a significant  
1183 experience. Annie said, "I think it just brought out the best in me." Annie also said, "So  
1184 that was transformative in that it was a real turning point in my mind of being a real AI  
1185 consultant." Annie summed up the AI event's significance by saying, "So that is kind of  
1186 what it did to me. It validated me in my own eyes in the eyes of a client in the eyes of the  
1187 professional community as being of a certain caliber and being confident to work on a  
1188 project." Laurent expressed the AI event was significant saying:

1189 And it's funny because it's because, ah, appreciative inquiry, since that point, has  
1190 become one of the underpinnings of my practice in ways that I've expanded and  
1191 stretched and so on. And you know, the initiation into it was really significant,  
1192 but I didn't quite get it all. And now as I understand it more I turn back and I see  
1193 what a turning point that experience was. Laurent.

1194 *Intent to act on new knowledge.* Annie expressed an intent to act on her knew

1195 knowledge saying:

1196 I looked at what it would take to be aware of a project of that scope, outside of the  
1197 hospital environment. What would I need to do to be ready for the next one from  
1198 a business standpoint? Set an expectation that was something I was going to do  
1199 frequently at this level. Annie.

1200 Laurent indicated the intent to act on this new knowledge saying, “. I feel very  
1201 confident, and so it's a whole new philosophy of change I can really embrace...”

1202 The triangulation of the data revealed one clustered concept that is shared by  
1203 Mary and Chris, who were coded as ETL. Mary and Chris each examined a disorienting  
1204 dilemma that existed for them prior to their participation in the AI event. Mary describes  
1205 herself before the AI event, “Depressed. I was sad, felt sorry for myself, looked at others  
1206 and wished that I had a life like theirs... Overweight and physically drained. On  
1207 antidepressants.” Mary explained how the AI event was instrumental in fostering change  
1208 in her life:

1209 I began to see that I did not value me... I was always putting others first, doing  
1210 everything for everyone else, but wasn't caring for myself the same way. I think it  
1211 was that I didn't value myself in the way that I do now. I am more positive, I am  
1212 much more aware of letting others know when they have done a good job, I am  
1213 happier but because I have taken the time to value myself more and realize I  
1214 needed to take time to be as good to myself as I was to others. Somehow through  
1215 the AI process, I could see that I did not appreciate the things that I was doing  
1216 good in my life, I was always putting myself down, and felt that I didn't measure

1217 up to others. Going through this process helped me to see that I deserve to care for  
1218 me, and I lost 70 lbs the year after this process and really became a happier and  
1219 more appreciative person overall. Mary.

1220 Chris began our interview discussing an AI event that she facilitated at the music  
1221 Resource and Heritage Center. When I began to ask about changes in herself compared  
1222 to who she was she mentioned her first introduction to AI in a classroom exercise at  
1223 Southern University. I asked Chris to describe the physical and biological changes she  
1224 mentioned happened after participating in this first AI event. Chris then talked about  
1225 what she was like before the first AI event and the disorienting dilemma she re-examined  
1226 after that AI event.

1227 Well uhm, yeah, that's fine uhm, but what I was struggling with, yeah, what I was  
1228 struggling with was that I work for a rape crisis center. And while I was working  
1229 for the rape crisis Center and was actually attacked and raped myself and I do  
1230 know the group of men that it was or anything like that. It was this, I mean, it's  
1231 obvious that anything is traumatic as that is going to have an effect. I was really  
1232 struggling, and it was constantly living in fear that I put on a lot of weight, which  
1233 was strange because I had come back from studying abroad in Ghana and I was at  
1234 the best physical shape of my life. I was studying drumming and dancing while I  
1235 was there. Now my whole world was upside down. I was 60 pounds heavier and  
1236 put on the weight really quickly, and was pretty much trying to figure out how to  
1237 work through that. I even stayed with the rape crisis Center, which was even  
1238 unhealthy. Because of some other things that were happening. So I was happy to  
1239 have someone like, now I can laugh about it. I was happy to have someone like

1240 who's been sexually assaulted, because we've never had someone who's been  
1241 through the whole healing process with someone. It was like horrible things that  
1242 were happening all at once. And I was at the appreciative inquiry three years  
1243 afterwards. And I was able to take that perspective into work from, to work from  
1244 a place of building from where I was in that process and the weight began to drop  
1245 off and granted I haven't lost all of it. I lost most of the [weight], I started like, ah,  
1246 rock climbing and doing physical things like running, that were really productive.  
1247 That AI was kind of the impetus to start this biological change in the biological  
1248 changes change or mental makeup. Does that make sense? Chris.

1249 *Summary of the triangulation of the data.*

1250 Triangulating the data by comparing common clustered concepts to the  
1251 experience types suggested by TL in the data, then comparing it again to the individual  
1252 transcripts revealed some interesting patters in the data. Mary and Chris shared one  
1253 clustered concept. They re-examined a disorienting dilemma that existed prior to the AI  
1254 event. Mary made this re-examination during the AI event. Chris indicated beginning  
1255 the re-examination after her participation, but indicated that the AI event was the  
1256 impetus. Mary and Chris both indicated that this was an ongoing process. Five research  
1257 participants indicate a positive experience at the AI event along with a focus on learning  
1258 and growth may be significant. Another significant pattern may be mentoring  
1259 relationships. Four research participants expressed or indicated they were involved in  
1260 mentoring relationships, with three of the four research participants being mentored  
1261 informally by the AI event facilitator and two of the four research participants mentoring  
1262 others.

1263           Three of the four participants who were coded as ETL or PE, Mary, Chris, and  
1264 Hillary, share in common some clustered concepts. They were ready for or open to  
1265 change, reported experiencing emotions personally, had positive changes in their  
1266 relationships, felt a sense of reconnection with themselves. In addition, they expressed  
1267 change in their physical appearance, others in their lives noticed that there was a change,  
1268 each felt a need to share AI with others, experienced a sense of peace, acted on their new  
1269 perspectives, and changed their focus to the positive. This may be significant when  
1270 compared to Annie, Sophia, and Laurent, who reported emotions in others when asked  
1271 about emotions they encountered rather than express emotions they felt. They also  
1272 expressed a sense of connection to others, as opposed to the sense of reconnection to  
1273 themselves that Mary, Chris, and Hillary expressed. Another interesting point is that  
1274 Annie, Sophia, and Laurent were focused on the opportunity to learn, to work with well-  
1275 known AI facilitators, or to collaborate with others who attended the AI event.

1276 *Summary of the data analysis*

1277           In an initial coding of the data I used open coding for concepts in the data. These  
1278 concepts were kept in the research participant's natural language. I then used axial  
1279 coding to develop clusters of these concepts. This revealed several clustered concepts:  
1280 Beginning, Sensations and Insights, Relationships: Mentoring and with Others, Personal  
1281 Attributes, Sensations and Insights, Personal Actions, Change, Sharing, Organization,  
1282 Connection, Learning and Process, Tragedy and Trauma, Commitment, Reality, Focus,  
1283 Forgiveness, Acceptance, Opportunity and Professional Growth, Spiritual, Energy,  
1284 Opening Up, Learning, Confidence, Creating, Results: General. I then categorized these



1285 clustered concepts by the stage of the AI event as expressed by the research participants,  
1286 Beginning, During, and After.

1287 In a second coding of the data, I categorized the research participants by the type  
1288 of experience they indicated they had resulting from their participation in the AI event,  
1289 positive, neutral, or negative. Then, I compared the data in the transcripts to Mezirow's  
1290 three reflective practices and ten stages of TL. This sort suggested to me four experience  
1291 types as expressed by the research participants, Expressed TL, Positive Effect, Neutral  
1292 Effect, and Negative Effect. Mary and Chris indicated that they had a Positive effect  
1293 resulting from their participation in the AI event, and expressed or indicated Mezirow's  
1294 three reflective practices and ten stages of TL.

1295 Last, I triangulated the data by comparing the clustered concepts to the transcripts  
1296 of each research participant, which revealed that five research participants viewed the AI  
1297 event as a positive experience, and that it involved learning and growth. Four research  
1298 participants expressed that they had initiated mentoring relationships resulting from their  
1299 participation in the AI event. Mary (ETL), Chris (ETL), and Hillary (PE) shared ten  
1300 clustered concepts: Ready for/ open to change, Experienced emotions personally, Positive  
1301 change in relationships, Reconnection, Changed physically, Others notice, Sharing,  
1302 Peace, Act on new perspective, Focus on positive.

1303 Annie (PE), Sophia (NE), and Laurent (NE) shared three clustered concepts: they  
1304 reported emotions in others, connection, and were focused on opportunity. Annie and  
1305 Laurent also had four clustered concepts in common: beginning, advanced preparation,  
1306 significant experience, intent to act on new knowledge. Mary and Chris shared a

1307 clustered concept that may have significance. Mary and Chris re-examined a disorienting  
1308 dilemma that existed prior to their participation in the AI event.

1309 Conclusions

1310 The literature review of TL describes TL as a transformation of meaning schemas,  
1311 which makes use of three reflective practices, critical self-reflection, reflective dialogue,  
1312 and reflective action and takes place throughout ten non linear stages. These  
1313 transformations result n the acquisition of new meaning perspectives, attitudes and  
1314 behaviors. The data collected from two research participants shows that they used the  
1315 three reflective practices and experienced all ten of the stages of TL. These participants  
1316 expressed or indicated changes in their perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors. The review  
1317 of the literature of AI shows that some of its participants experience transformations in  
1318 their perceptions, attitudes and behaviors. These transformations are consistent with TL.

1319 Before the AI event, Mary did not value herself, or care for herself. Mary was  
1320 overweight, depressed, on medication, and searching for meaning in her profession.  
1321 Mary was required to participate in an AI event at All Children’s Hospital, which was  
1322 intended to counter the negative and mistrustful culture prevailing at All Children’s  
1323 Hospital. After the AI event, Mary began taking care of herself and stopped comparing  
1324 herself unfavorably to her peers. Mary began a weight loss program, resulting in a loss of  
1325 70 pounds, focused on expressing a positive attitude, despite being labeled a ‘Pollyanna’,  
1326 and initiated a mentoring program using the AI principles and storytelling to teach senior  
1327 nurses the value of mentoring. Mary attributes these transformations in her perspectives,  
1328 attitudes and behaviors to participating in the AI event.

1329 Chris was ‘gothic, fatalistic, realistic and overly critical’ and had adopted a  
1330 position advocating the sharing of her healing, after being raped and assaulted, with the  
1331 clients of the crisis center where she worked. Chris had gained weight, become fearful of  
1332 others, was not her usual outgoing and ‘funny girl’ personality. Chris became a divisive  
1333 factor at the crisis center and lost many of her friends in the crisis counseling field. Three  
1334 years later Chris participated in an AI event as an experiential exercise in a graduate  
1335 class, at Southern University. Chris found the exercise unremarkable, but the principles  
1336 of AI intrigued her and after some contemplation decided to ‘just do it’ and put the AI  
1337 principles into action. Chris found a new way to share her position on sharing the healing  
1338 process between counselors and victims in sharing the stories of victimization. Chris also  
1339 shares AI with the friends she has maintained in the crises counseling field, offering  
1340 herself as a resource, and by giving speaking engagements. Chris also has become more  
1341 like her usual self, engaging in ‘positive and constructive’ physical activities, lost weight,  
1342 and changed the focus of her MPA to a Master’s of Liberal Arts, which allows her to  
1343 combine her interest in AI, organizational development with art and music.

1344 The transformations these two women have expressed indicate that they have  
1345 experience TL and they indicate that their transformations are directly related to their  
1346 participation in an AI event. It is important to note that Mary and Chris re-examined a  
1347 disorienting dilemma that existed prior to the AI event. Mary re-examined her personal  
1348 sense of value to herself and her organization. Mary began this process of re-  
1349 examination during her AI event. Chris re-examined her position advocating the sharing  
1350 of healing and her own personal response to the rape and assault. Chris began her  
1351 process of re-examination after her AI event. Both Mary and Chris indicated that this

1352 was an ongoing process, which they have maintained for at least eighteen months after  
1353 their respective AI events.

1354 Mary and Chris were involved in mentoring relationships as an outcome of their  
1355 participation in the AI event. Mary has maintained a mentoring relationship with the  
1356 facilitator of her AI event and Mary has established herself as a mentor by initiating a  
1357 program to guide mentors in her workplace using the AI principles and storytelling.  
1358 Chris has become a mentor to her contacts in the crisis counseling field and through her  
1359 speaking engagements.

1360 While most of the research participants indicated that their AI event was positive  
1361 and involved learning and growth some other traits may prove significant when analyzing  
1362 Mary and Chris's experience. Mary and Chris were ready for or open to change, the  
1363 expressed emotions that they experienced personally, they experienced positive changes  
1364 in their relationships, felt a sense of reconnection to themselves, they changed physically,  
1365 others noticed changes in them. Mary and Chris also felt compelled to share their new  
1366 perspectives and the principles of AI, The felt a sense of peace, they acted on their new  
1367 perspectives, and began to express and focus on positive attitudes and behaviors. Mary  
1368 and Chris attribute these transformations to their participation in the AI event and living  
1369 the principles of AI. Mary and Chris's participation in an AI event may have fostered or  
1370 catalyzed their transformative learning experience.

1371 In addressing my primary research questions: How do participants of AI events  
1372 understand and make meaning of their experiences during the event, and is their a  
1373 correlation to TL? How does TL theory describe these experiences and the  
1374 understandings and meanings resulting for the AI participants? I have found that the

1375 experience for five of the six participants was positive and involved personal learning and  
1376 growth. For all six participants it was an opportunity to gain new skills and make new  
1377 contacts or collaborations. The research participants also involve AI in their personal and  
1378 professional lives.

1379           In addressing the secondary research question: How does AI's focus on positive  
1380 emotions compare to the emphasis in TL theory on the examinations of feelings of fear,  
1381 anger, guilt and shame? I found that for two research participants, Mary and Chris the AI  
1382 event caused them to re-examine a disorienting dilemma, which caused them to  
1383 experience negative emotions.

1384           Practitioners of TL might investigate AI as a means of fostering or catalyzing  
1385 transformative learning experiences for their students. AI may assist students by  
1386 fostering a positive outlook and a sense of confidence. Coupled with mentoring  
1387 relationships, and a commitment to reflective action may lead to the successful  
1388 integration of new perspectives, attitudes and behaviors for their students.

1389           Practitioners of AI might find that focusing on completing the 4D cycle,  
1390 encouraging mentoring relationships and commitment to action plans may foster or  
1391 catalyze TL for the participants of their appreciative inquiry events, and ensure the  
1392 longer-term success of the initiative.

1393 *Implications for my dissertation research*

1394           I have gained much rich data and have discovered many important themes and  
1395 patterns in this pilot study. This is the result of the interview protocol, coding the  
1396 interview transcripts for concepts, coding for expressions and indications of TL, and  
1397 triangulating the results of the two coding processes. While there is much revealed in this

1398 study, I see some room for improvement, especially in the interview protocol. I will  
1399 adapt the interview protocol to explore the patterns and themes expressed in this pilot  
1400 study. The questions will also be less direct, more open-ended, and will contain less of  
1401 the jargon of the theories, in particular the words participating and experience, which  
1402 confused some of the research participants.

1403 I will ask future research participants about relationships that may have supported  
1404 or sustained their experience of transformative learning. Mentoring relationships may be  
1405 as important as the reflective practices in enabling transformative learning. I will also  
1406 include questions about the research participant's focus or the intent of their participation  
1407 in the AI event. I will also be interested in discovering how motivated they are to act on  
1408 their new skills, knowledge, or perspectives.

1409 I will include a suggested new interview protocol in this paper, please see  
1410 Appendix G.

1411

1412

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- 1541
- 1542

1543

## Appendix A

1544

### Recruitment Script

1545

*Verbal recruitment script.*

1546

As a doctoral student in the School of Human and Organization Development

1547

with the Fielding Graduate University, I am recruiting interested people who have

1548

participated in an AI to volunteer to participate in my dissertation study. Your

1549

organization was referred by (X), who facilitated an appreciative inquiry with your group

1550

or organization. Your group or organization has given me permission to solicit people to

1551

interview. The facilitator and your group or organization will not know if you choose to

1552

participate in the study or not.

1553

I am interested in talking to people who have experienced changes in their

1554

attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, relationships, or actions resulting from participation in an

1555

appreciative inquiry process. I want to learn how you understand and make meaning of

1556

these different experiences. In my dissertation research, I will analyze whether or not the

1557

understandings and meanings from some or all of the research participants adheres to our

1558

current understanding of a theory of transformative learning.

1559

I will be conducting confidential interviews that will take approximately 60-90

1560

minutes of your time. We could meet at a location that is convenient to you that would

1561

ensure privacy and be free of distraction. I will be taking notes and I will audio record

1562

the interview solely for academic and research purposes. The research data will be stored

1563

and evaluated in a way that will prevent your interview responses from being connected

1564

to you.

1565           You will have an opportunity to review the entire transcript and to remove any  
1566 portions of it that you choose. In addition, you may choose to withdraw from this study  
1567 at anytime, without any penalty and all of your data will be removed from the study and  
1568 destroyed. If you choose to participate in this study, you will receive a summary of the  
1569 results if you choose.

1570           If you are interested in participating in this research, we can set up a time to  
1571 conduct the interview, which will include further explanation of confidentiality and a  
1572 thorough explanation of the informed consent materials.

1573

**Appendix (B)**

1574

**Organization Written Consent For Recruitment Letter**

1575 Dear Mr. Wood,

1576 This letter is to serve as permission from *Anycorp, Inc.* to recruit potential

1577 research participants from our organization from those who participated in our

1578 Appreciative Inquiry *Event*. Please feel free to discuss your research to any of the

1579 members of *Anycorp, Inc.*

1580

1581 We at *Anycorp, Inc.* are willing to allow any member of our organization to

1582 participate without their feeling coerced or to fear any reprisal for disclosures made

1583 during the confidential interview and follow up processes. *Anycorp, Inc.* relinquish any

1584 right to know who among our members has expressed interest in, was recruited to

1585 participate, or was not recruited to participate in your research.

1586

1587 *Anycorp, Inc.* respects the confidentiality of the research participants. *Anycorp,*

1588 *Inc.* members who willingly participate in your research will have the right to refuse to

1589 disclose their participation in your research or the details of their interactions with Kelley

1590 D Wood for the purpose of his research project.

1591

1592 We will mention your research project at organization meetings and distribute

1593 your contact information to all members who participated in the Appreciative Inquiry

1594 *Event*.

1595

1596 With regards,

1597

1598 Senior Level Executive

1599 Anycorp, Inc.

1600

**Appendix (C)**

1601

**Informed Consent Form**

1602

**Appreciative Inquiry Participant's Understanding and Meaning Making of**

1603

**Transformative Experiences and Transformative Learning**

1604

My name is Kelley D Wood and I am a Human and Organizational Development

1605

doctoral student with Fielding Graduate University, Santa Barbara, California. I am

1606

conducting this research study and I can be reached at:

1607

1608

Kelley D Wood

1609

256 Route 5 South

1610

Norwich, Vermont 05055

1611

(802) 356-2166

1612

[kdwood@hotmail.com](mailto:kdwood@hotmail.com)

1613

1614

The research supervisor for this study is Dr. Steven Schapiro and he can be

1615

reached at:

1616

1617

Dr. Steven Schapiro

1618

School of Human and Organizational Development

1619

Fielding Graduate University

1620

2112 Santa Barbara Street

1621

Santa Barbara, CA 93105

1622

805-687-1099

1623

1624

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Kelley D

1625

Wood, a doctoral student in the School of Human and Organization Development at

1626

Fielding Graduate University, Santa Barbara, CA. This research involves the study of

1627

how participants understand their transformative leaning experiences in appreciative

1628

inquiries, and is part of Kelley's Fielding course work and may be included in his

1629

dissertation research. You have been selected for this study because you have participated

1630

in an AI in your organization. The facilitator of that appreciative inquiry has

1631

recommended that I solicit participants for this research from your organization and your

1632

organization has agreed to allow me to ask for research participants from the participants

1633 of that appreciative inquiry. No one will know who has chosen to participate or who has  
1634 not chosen to participate in this research.

1635 This study involves a basic background information questionnaire, an interview, a  
1636 possible follow up interview, and a debriefing and verification of my findings to be  
1637 arranged at your convenience, each of which is expected to last approximately of 1 – 1.5  
1638 hours. The total time involved in participation will be approximately 1.5 – 2 hours

1639 The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous.  
1640 The informed consent forms and other materials will be kept [separate in locked file  
1641 cabinets, on a computer with special encrypted access. The audio recordings will be  
1642 listened to only by the researcher and Faculty Supervisor, Dissertation Chair and possibly  
1643 a confidential Research Assistant or transcriptionist, who will sign the attached  
1644 Professional Assistance Confidentiality Agreement.

1645 I will provide a pseudonym for any quotes that might be included in the final  
1646 research report. You will also have the opportunity to review a transcript of your  
1647 interview and remove any material you do not wish to have used by the researcher. In  
1648 addition, the audio recordings, and all related research materials will be kept in a secure  
1649 file cabinet and destroyed five years after the completion of the study. The results of this  
1650 research will be published in the researcher's dissertation [or used in a Knowledge  
1651 Assessment paper] and possibly in subsequent journals or books.

1652 You may develop greater personal awareness of your own personal and  
1653 professional learning and development goals resulting from your participation in this  
1654 research. The risks to you are perceived to be none, or minimal. There is a possible  
1655 chance that you may experience some emotional discomfort during or after the interview.  
1656 Should you experience such discomfort, please contact the researcher at the phone  
1657 number listed above and, below for a list of therapists.

1658 You may withdraw from this study at any time, either during or after the  
1659 interview, without negative consequences. Should you withdraw, your data will be  
1660 eliminated from the study and will be destroyed.

1661 There is no financial reward for participating in this study.

1662 In addition to discussing the preliminary results with the researcher by phone, you  
1663 also may request a copy of the summary of the final results by indicating your interest on  
1664 the attached form.

1665 If you have any questions about any aspect of this study or your involvement,  
1666 please tell the researcher before signing this form.

1667 Two copies of this informed consent form have been provided. Please sign both,  
1668 indicating you have read, understood, and agreed to participate in this research. Return  
1669 one to the researcher and keep the other for your files.

1670 The Institutional Review Board of Fielding Graduate University retains access to  
1671 all signed informed consent forms.

1672 I have read and understand the above and agree to participate in this study.

1673 NAME OF PARTICIPANT (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

1674 SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT: \_\_\_\_\_

1675 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1676 Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the study results, please send a copy to:

1677 NAME OF PARTICIPANT: \_\_\_\_\_

1678 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

1679 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

1680

1681 Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research,

1682 Kelley D Wood  
1683 256 Route 5 South  
1684 Norwich, Vermont 05055  
1685 (802) 356-2166  
1686 [kdwood@hotmail.com](mailto:kdwood@hotmail.com)

1687

1688 The research supervisor for this study is Dr. Steven Schapiro and he can be  
1689 reached at:

1690

1691 Dr. Steven Schapiro  
1692 School of Human and Organizational Development

1693 Fielding Graduate University  
1694 2112 Santa Barbara Street  
1695 Santa Barbara, CA 93105  
1696 805-687-1099



1697

**Appendix (D)**

1698

**Background Information Questionnaire**

1699

Each potential participant will be asked to complete a basic background information

1700

questionnaire before being selected for interviewing. The basic background information

1701

questionnaire follows:

1702

How is your group or organization characterized?

1703

For profit      Not for profit

1704

Education      Health Care

1705

Community based

1706

Did you volunteer or were you required in some way to attend the AI event?

1707

Volunteer      Required

1708

What is your position with this group or organization?

1709

\_\_\_\_\_

1710

How long have you been associated with this group or organization?

1711

\_\_\_\_\_

1712

How long has it been since the AI event?

1713

\_\_\_\_\_

1714

**Appendix (E)**

1715

**Interview Protocol**

1716

1. How would you say you have changed since you participated in the AI?

1717

2. Was the AI's stated topic relevant or important to you before the AI?

1718

3. Before the AI did you think others shared your sense of the topic's

1719

relevance or importance?

1720

4. Did the AI lead you to a new understanding of the topic?

1721

5. How would you rate the topic's relevance or importance to you after the

1722

AI?

1723

6. Do you think others share your sense of the topic's relevance or

1724

importance after the AI?

1725

7. Did you gain any new insights or knowledge resulting from your

1726

participation in the AI?

1727

8. Did you gain any new insights or knowledge about others, or their

1728

attitudes, thoughts and behaviors?

1729

9. Did you critically reflect on your attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors

1730

concerning the AI's topic during the AI?

1731

10. Did you engage in dialogue that was reflective of your attitudes, thoughts,

1732

and behaviors concerning the AI's topic during the AI?

1733

11. Did you try out any new roles or relationships during the AI?

- 1734 12. Did the AI assist you in feeling more confident in taking on new roles or  
1735 relationships?
- 1736 13. Are you now more or less willing to take on a new role in your personal  
1737 life?
- 1738 14. Are you now more or less willing to engage in a new relationship in your  
1739 group or organization?
- 1740 15. What emotions did you experience or encounter during the AI?
- 1741 16. Did you create any action plans during the AI?
- 1742 17. Did you critically reflect on any action plans you made or committed to?

1743

**Appendix (F)**

1744

**Professional Assistance Confidentiality Agreement**

1745

1746

**Title of Research Project:** Appreciative Inquiry Participant's Understanding and

1747

Meaning Making of Transformative Experiences and Transformative Learning

1748

1749

Kelley D Wood, School of Human and Organizational Development, Fielding Graduate

1750

Institute, Santa Barbara, Ca

1751

1752

I have agreed to assist Kelley D Wood in his research study of how participants of an

1753

appreciative inquiry make meaning of their transformative learning experiences during

1754

the event in the role of [research assistant, transcriptionist]. I understand that all

1755

participants in this study have been assured that their responses will be kept confidential

1756

and anonymous. I agree to maintain that confidentiality and anonymity. I further agree

1757

that no materials will remain in my possession beyond the operation of this research

1758

project and I further agree that I will make no independent use of any of the research

1759

materials from this project.

1760

1761

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1762

1763 Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1764

1765 Title: \_\_\_\_\_

1766

## Appendix (G)

1767

### Suggested New Interview Protocol

1768

1. Lightly structured open-ended question.

1769

a. I would like you to tell me in your own words about your

1770

experiences in the (insert the name of the AI event), such as how

1771

you came to participate and what it meant to you to participate, or

1772

attend?

1773

i. What did you think or feel as it began?

1774

ii. Was there a purpose or issue that the AI event was centered

1775

around?

1776

iii. Can you describe for me significant events that might have

1777

occurred?

1778

iv. Who was involved?

1779

2. Moderately structured open-ended questions.

1780

a. What were you thinking about or focused on during the (insert the

1781

name of the AI event)?

1782

b. Do you think there were any changes in your relationships,

1783

personally or professionally, you have experienced since you

1784

attended the (insert the name of the AI event)? Would you

1785

describe those changes for me?

1786

i. Did you lose or gain any friends or colleagues after

1787

attending the (insert the name of the AI event)?

- 1788 c. In what ways might you have changed since you participated in  
1789 (insert the name of the AI event)? Please describe how you feel  
1790 about those changes.
- 1791 i. Can you tell me what influence or affect those changes  
1792 have had for you?
- 1793 ii. Was this unexpected?
- 1794 d. How would the people close to you characterize you before you  
1795 participated in (insert the name of the AI event)?
- 1796 i. Would you describe yourself differently after attending?  
1797 ii. Can you share an example?
- 1798 e. Has anyone commented or noticed a difference in you since you  
1799 attended the (insert the name of the AI event)? What do they  
1800 notice?
- 1801 i. How do you explain these changes to others if they  
1802 comment on them to you?
- 1803 f. Did you feel or express any emotions during the (insert the name  
1804 of the AI event) and how did express them?
- 1805 i. Would you share an example of those emotions with me?  
1806 ii. What context did they occur in?  
1807 iii. Is there something that you would attribute these emotions  
1808 to?  
1809 iv. How would you describe other people's emotions?

- 1810 v. Were these emotions negative, positive, strong?  
1811 Overwhelming?
- 1812 g. Did you become aware of any personal issues or problems during  
1813 the (insert the AI event)?
- 1814 i. How would you describe the size and complexity of these  
1815 issues?
- 1816 ii. How would you describe your interest in resolving these  
1817 issues or problems?
- 1818 iii. Can you share an example with me?
- 1819 h. Do you have any stories you can share of people you developed a  
1820 sense of camaraderie with at the (insert the name of the AI event)?
- 1821 i. Or since the (insert the name of the AI event)?  
1822 ii. Did you find this surprising? Comforting?
- 1823 i. How would you characterize your role in the organization that you  
1824 attended the (insert the name of the AI event) with?
- 1825 i. In what ways have your interactions with the others in  
1826 (insert the organization's name) become different, or  
1827 remained the same?
- 1828 j. Can you tell me about times you shared anything you learned or  
1829 felt after attending (insert the name of the AI event)?
- 1830 i. How would you describe your relationship with the person  
1831 you shared this with?



- 1832 k. Did you feel inspired or motivated to commit to any action plans  
1833 since you attended the (insert the name of the AI event).
- 1834 i. How would you characterize your commitment to these  
1835 action plans?
- 1836 ii. Would explain or describe those plans to me in some  
1837 detail?
- 1838 iii. When did you begin to act on those plans?
- 1839 iv. Did you feel some pressure to act on these plans?
- 1840 v. Would you say it was external or internal?
- 1841 vi. How have you sustained your interest in those plans?
- 1842 l. Did you think of spirituality during the AI event?
- 1843 i. In what context did that occur?
- 1844 m. In what ways would you say attending (insert the name of the AI  
1845 event) has influenced or affected you personally?
- 1846 n. Would you like to choose an alias or pseudonym for me to use  
1847 when referring to you in my research?
- 1848 i. Your organization?  
1849 ii. The AI Event?
- 1850 o. Is there anything I can do for you before we end this interview?  
1851