

Appreciative inquiry

What is it?

- A tool for involving participants in project planning, design and evaluation
- A way of asking questions, starting from what is positive instead of what is missing
- A chance for people to express their own dreams and collaborate to find common ground

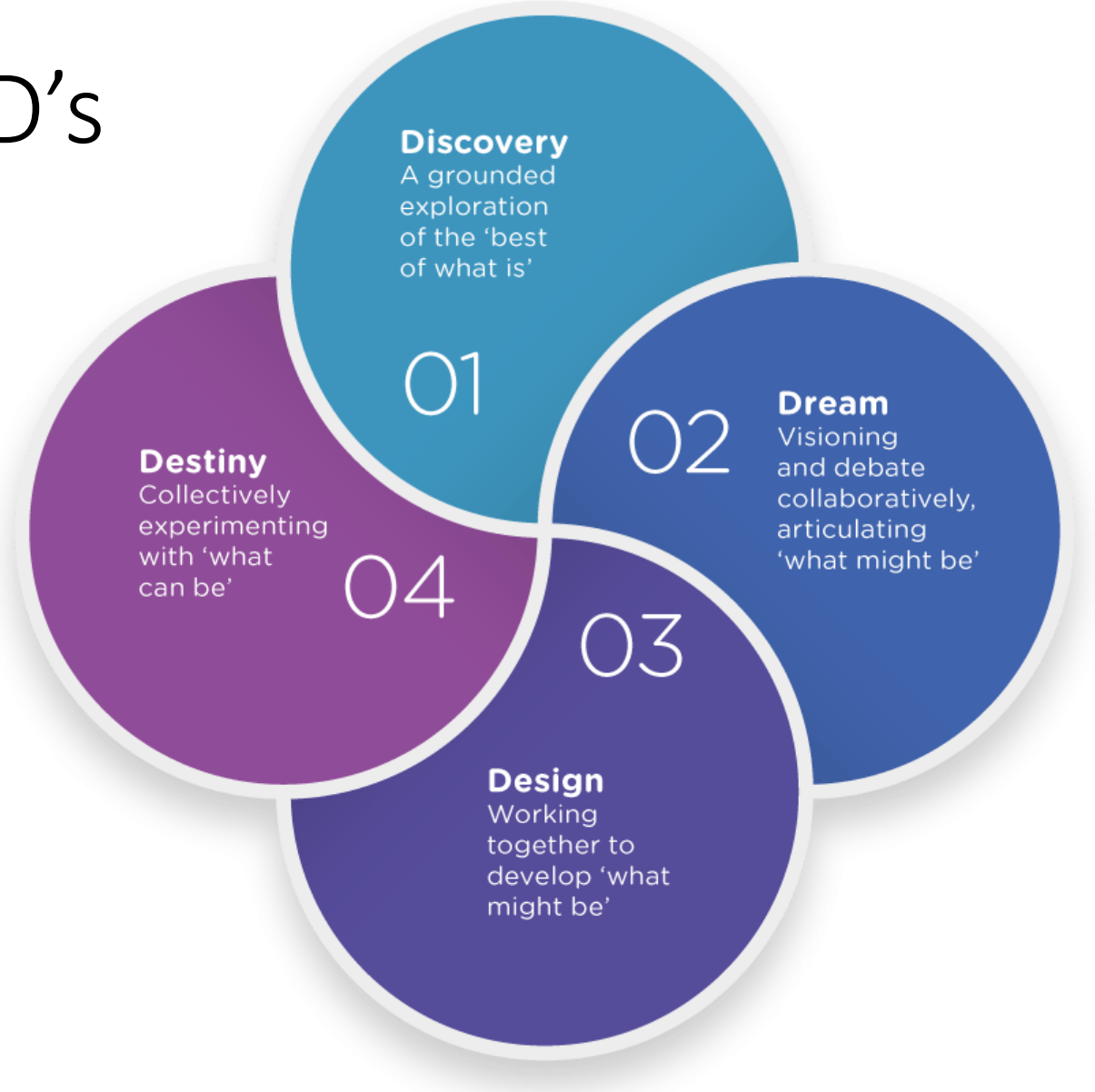
Instead of asking...

- What is the problem here?
- Do you want a new children's service?
- Why is the service not being used?

Try...

- What is great about living here?
- What is your dream for your children?
- What is the best thing about the service?

The 4 D's



Principles

- Start by building relationships and trust
- Focus on what works well, what people value, what matters most
- Be flexible and encourage participation
- Ask non-judgemental questions and be curious
- Don't deny difficulties/negativity – help people turn them into positives
- Encourage experimentation
- Support people to take actions forward themselves

Is it a good fit for you?

- Focus on feelings and personal experiences
- Caring for people
- Bringing people together to share stories and dreams
- Hearing lots of different ideas
- Building relationships
- Encouraging common ground instead of competing opinions
- Involving people and helping them use their skills to participate

Some challenges

- It is hard to keep people talking about positives – they will bring their worries and anger too
- It takes time and people need to listen to each other
- It requires real acceptance of a participative approach to planning
- It needs to be very flexible and there will be lots of changes as you go through the process
- The methodology is often made very complex and theoretical
- It may not suit all cultures

It does not have to be perfect

- Use some elements to bring people into a positive mindset
- Then you can move into ordinary planning if you need to
- Any positive questions are good
- Listening to each other's real experiences is good
- Accept some negativity and try to turn it into a positive if you can
(What is your dream for this being better? How can we get there together?)

Some questions to ask – in your team

Discover

- What have you been most proud of achieving this week?
- What part of your work makes you feel most alive?

Dream

Imagine that in 3 years' time we are working at our best as a team.

- How does this make you feel?
- What are the things that have made that possible?
- What achievement are you most proud of?

Some questions to ask – in your team

Design

- What are the things we can do to make that future a reality?
- What are the first steps we need to take?

Destiny (or delivery)

- Is there an action you can take to help us achieve this?
- Who else could help you?
- How can we excite them about this dream?

Discovery exercise

Think of a situation where you have been working at your best. Where you really made a difference. Where you were fully engaged and using all your abilities to create something positive, and were successful. Something you can take pride in.

Tell your neighbours about this. Just tell them the story of what's happening, or happened and what makes you feel good about this particular event or incident.

Neighbours listen for what made this both possible and successful. What was it that made a difference?

Reflection

What has changed for you in the last 20 minutes?

- Energy
- Mood
- Knowledge
- Feelings
- Relationships

Is there anything you can learn for your own work?

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