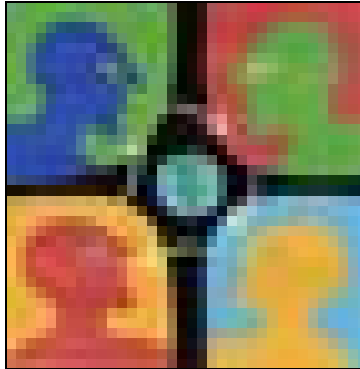


## Words Create Worlds, August 2005



**AIFTerS,**

**Let's congratulate Susan Belgard and Elizabeth (Liz) Robinson who are now certified AI Facilitators!**

**Susan** <susan@coachinngthefullpectrum.com> participated in AIFT, Sacramento. A lawyer and a coach, she facilitated an inquiry with a group of family law practitioners from the U.S. and Canada who want to apply the collaborative resolution skills they have honed in family law matters to other substantive civil law cases: e.g., personal injury, intellectual property, contract disputes, securities law violations. On a volunteer basis, six people participated in the inquiry. Their topic was "Expanding the Extraordinary Benefits of Collaborative Family Law to Other Civil Cases." The group came up with three strategic initiatives to advance the Dream they co-created: (1) Collaboration with commercial mediators; (2) Training in Collaborative Law (CL) civil cases; and (3) Integration of CL into law school curriculum. We look forward to hearing the results of those initiatives!

**Liz** <Elizabeth\_robinson@telus.net> was a participant in AIFT, Nanaimo. A management consultant, she facilitated an inquiry with a group of 30 public health nurses in Vancouver, BC. The topic the core group of seven nurses chose was "Creative and Strong Committees." After modifying the Generic Interview Guide, making it specific to the inquiry topic, the group came together and did paired interviews. In small groups, they created five Provocative Propositions and more than three dozen strategic initiatives, two of which were to develop a Guide Book (how to lead committees), and to celebrate the committees' successes. In terms of results, here's a testimonial from one of the participants:

*"...there's definitely a change on the Committees. I am enclosing...a binder for what a meeting guide should be, including a summary of "celebrating our year-end successes. We want to continue with a yearly "celebrating success" document that is a summary of*

*activities the committee took on. We will also put this together for an internal Vancouver Coastal Health conference that is happening next year - as a poster presentation."*

Liz said that her 'personal best' experience was working with the core group ahead of time, i.e., choosing the positive topic and developing the interview guide. "It saves so much time in the long run, and contributes greatly to the success of the process."

## **Two invitations to community college AFTers**

(1) **Tuesday, November 1**, is the deadline for submitting a proposal for presenting at the American Association of Community College (AACC) convention April 21-25 in Long Beach, California. If you are planning to attend, please submit a proposal (online only) on how you are using AI at your college. I know you're all busy, but it's very important for you to share your stories of success with other community college leaders!

(2) Some of you may have read (even contributed) to an earlier book written by Charles Miller and me that was published in 2004 by the League for Innovation in the Community College called *Appreciative Inquiry in the Community College: Early Stories of Success*. I am now in the process of writing a second book with the tentative title of *Appreciative Inquiry in the Community College: Stories of Positive Change*. The earlier book focused on how community colleges were getting started with AI. Now I'd like to share stories of small or large **personal, group or organizational positive changes** that have come about or are coming about as a result of the paradigm shift, away from problems, moving toward possibilities. For instance, in an inquiry, groups create strategic initiatives/intentions/bold ideas to advance their Provocative Propositions or Dreams and individuals develop Commitments. What positive changes have resulted from those initiatives and commitments? The stories might focus on changes in: (1) the formal organization, (2) key partnerships/relationships, (3) culture and conversation, or (4) any positive change in other arenas. I'd like to hear from you between **November 7 and 21**--the two-week period I am setting aside to develop the chapter outline. You don't need to submit a draft of your story or stories yet; just give me an idea about what they'll be about. To get you started thinking, here are some ways of thinking about arenas or domains of change:

**Formal organization:** Ways we move, assign and develop people; The tasks we give people; Recruitment/retention strategies; Who makes what decisions; Rewards/recognition practices; Physical layout; Our goals and measures; Our tools and equipment; Our evaluation processes; Mechanisms we use within to stay linked; How people are grouped together; Processes for understanding the "business" context and setting priorities.

**Key relationships/partnerships** (internal and external): External suppliers/organization relationship; Employee/management relationship; Client/provider relationship; and Relations with regulatory agencies.

**Culture and conversation:** Conversations we hold; Assumptions we carry; Stories we live and tell; Language we use; Our behavioral messages; and Embedded invitations.

**Positive changes in other arenas:** Anything else you care to share!

Please send me your ideas in an email or as a word attachment no later than **November 21. You and your community college will be given full attribution in the book.** Thanks!

## Announcing a new article and a new book

• *Using an Appreciative Approach to Organizational Self-Assessment*, by Nancy E. Stetson, Ed.D., Consulting Today, October 2005. This article talks about how to use AI in self studies for accreditation and/or other organizational self-assessment processes. If you'd like a **free copy**, let me know and I'll send it to you as a pdf file.

• *Dynamic Relationships: Unleashing the Power of Appreciative Inquiry in Daily Living*, by Jacqueline M. Stavros & Cheri B.Torres. <http://www.dynamic-relationships.com>.

And here's my favorite new quote: "**Good stories have wings** and, like birds, they fly from mountaintop to mountaintop." Romanian proverb

Best Wishes,



Nancy Stetson

Editor, Words Create Worlds