

# Systems Thinking Applying Positive-Core / Appreciative Inquiry Methods

Applying Whole-System Thinking in Implementing Positive, Sustainable Change

## OUTLINE, 1-day Program

### Introduction and Course Overview:

More than ever before leaders need to have exceptional skills to respond to the complex, systemic challenges facing their organizations. Structuring a change process to effect positive, sustainable change, however, is a new knowledge area for many leaders. Called “Whole System IQ (*intelligence*)”, this knowledge area will be developed in this program by applying the *Whole Field Alignment* model embedded within the 4-step *LEAD* process.

*Whole Field Alignment* guides leaders in assessing and gathering data about the entire organizational system. It then becomes a tool for ensuring that your change intervention is positive and systemic.

The *LEAD* process of Positive-Core/ Appreciative Inquiry Change supports efforts in ensuring receptiveness and readiness. LEAD is

LEARN – inquiry into what is working and vital, identifying strengths.

ENVISION– focusing and building on strengths as the foundation for a new vision.

ALIGN – integrate future intentions into organizational systems NOW

DELIVERING – implementing positive change throughout the system.

New and enhanced leadership capability in whole system, positive change is required when deeply held beliefs are challenged, when the values that made an organization successful become less relevant, or when legitimate yet competing perspectives emerge. Many efforts to transform organizations through mergers and acquisitions, restructuring, improving processes, or strategy work falter because leaders fail to grasp what it really takes to shift and sustain change throughout their organizations– a critical mass.

This program is designed to increase your systemic assessment and intervention skills, addressing whole persons, teams and groups, and organizations involved in local, regional, national and global communities. It will greatly impact your ability to make a positive contribution to your organization and the community it serves.

## **Program Content**

### Achieving sustainable results when applying Systemic Positive-Core/ Appreciative Inquiry methods for change.

The expected outcome of the *Systems Thinking: applying Positive-Core/Appreciative Inquiry* methods for change is an organization that has affirmed its strengths and fundamental values, used that information to engage in envisioning a collectively desired future, and moved forward towards enacting that vision in daily work life.

### Why identifying systemic patterns and working at deeper levels is important.

One valuable outcome of whole system transformation is an increase in the joy and spirit of people at work, an unleashing of their creative flow. This happens when a diverse mix of people becomes a single-minded, one-hearted group. This is the magical accomplishment that occurs when, with a shared view of the future, people embrace a commitment to one another and to the work of achieving that future.

### Sustainable change: requirements for critical mass

Unlike that now familiar one-time event model, a well-designed whole-system change process guides an organization as it considers and makes changes in multiple aspects of its system concurrently.

### Whole Field Alignment

*Whole Field Alignment* illustrates the interconnectedness of elements that define the organization. Using the model, and thinking of each of the three frames as a window through which to gaze into the organization's life, a leader and his or her team can analyze the organization as a system with interrelating parts.

### Leadership for a Healthy World

At the heart of *Systems Thinking, applying Positive-Core/AI methods* for change is the idea that each of us is striving to be a leader – in our homes and families, at work, and in our communities. We want our lives to be a positive contribution to the world, a valued legacy.

Having a sense of self worth, hope and capability are central to becoming such a leader. They are the source of personal health and well-being, and the basis for what we believe makes possible healthy systems at every level: individual, family, group or team, organization, community or global agency.

### LEAD

The Positive-Core whole-system change process draws from Appreciative Inquiry, a theory of how to build a compelling future based on current strengths

and what's already working. Whole system, Positive-Core / Appreciative Inquiry change have been used as the foundation for positive change in individuals and organizations throughout the world.

The "LEARNING" and "ENVISIONING" phases of POSITIVE-CORE / AI Change, suggests a path for you to take with your employees, with the goal of achieving "ALIGNMENT" with your collective vision. Then together you can "DELIVER" on your commitment to create an even more vital way of achieving your goals.

This segment will introduce the *Going Beyond positive and negative*, and the *Power of the positive question: reframing using your appreciative/good 'eye'*.

### Presenters:



**Sherene Zolno**, internationally known business consultant, executive coach, and educator, works extensively with leadership teams and has developed for them the *Leadership for a Healthy World™* model – now used to guide leaders in their internal coaching, mentoring and leadership practice. Her structure for change, the *Timeline for Tomorrow*, is being utilized as the basis for transformational change efforts in major organizations across the US, Canada, Russia and in Southeast Asia. She was an early proponent and teacher of Appreciative Inquiry, and has used the AI framework in her consulting practice for nearly 20 years, developing the unique integration of positive and whole system change.

As chair of the Leadership Institute of Seattle's graduate program in "Leadership and Organization Development", she introduced the most current thinking and skills to students, contributing to a 'positive revolution in change' within the Organization Development (OD) Profession. A frequent speaker and contributor in the field, she recently spoke (and was published) on "Getting Smart About System Change," at the OD Network's National Conference, and on "Appreciative Leading: seeing our way to a healthy world," for both the International OD Association conference in Canada, and the AI World Conference in Nepal.

Ms. Zolno has served in positions of leadership in corporations, nonprofits and government, authored numerous articles and monographs for professional publications, and is often asked to speak at business meetings, psychological conferences and leadership programs. She has served on the faculties of Santa Ana College, the University of San Francisco, Seattle University, the American College of Medical Practice Executives, and Bastyr University / LIOS (Leadership Institute of Seattle).



From his background as the leader and Chief Executive Officer of several major healthcare organizations, **Rick Skillman** brings a unique perspective to his consulting and training practice. His focus is on how leaders can align sound business judgment with a stance for respect, hope and capability directed to employees at every organizational level.

His coaching revitalizes leaders' commitment and positive intentions, helps build strong teams, and encourages breakthroughs in financial and performance outcomes.

Mr. Skillman has successfully led major physician groups, hospitals and regional systems for over 30 years. He has been invited to speak at numerous organizations about his approach, including the American Society for Training and Development, and the California Lawyers Association. He is a graduate of Princeton University,

holds a Masters Degree in Business (Finance) from California State University in Fullerton, and is a Life Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

He has recently completed *Memoirs of a CEO: leading with heart and soul*, a book about his personal journey as a healthcare leader. (Now available as an e-book through [www.proactionassociates.com](http://www.proactionassociates.com).)

Learn more about the presenters' work and about The Leading Clinic's programs by visiting The Leading Clinic website, hosted at: [www.proactionassociates.com](http://www.proactionassociates.com)

**Suggested reading on the website, see under ProAction Associates/ Publications/ Articles:**

**Getting Smart about System Change: developing Whole System IQ (*intelligence*)**

**Toward A Healthy World**

**Appreciative Inquiry: New Thinking at Work**