



Collective Chaordic Spirit

**An Owing Member Initiative
of the Chaordic Commons**

An initial draft report to the Owing Members of the Chaordic Commons
Presented at the Chaordic Commons Annual Gathering
July 11—13, 2003



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Chaordic Commons Purpose

The purpose of the Chaordic Commons of Terra Civitas is to develop, disseminate and implement new concepts of organization that result in more equitable sharing of power and wealth, improved health, and greater compatibility with the human spirit and biosphere.

The intent of the Collective Chaordic Spirit initiative is to support and further this purpose.



Appreciations

I am deeply grateful to the hundreds of people who have given us their time and have trusted us with their stories. Collective Chaordic Spirit was named to embody the collective nature of our initiative, to highlight that it is focused and organized around chaordic concepts, and to appreciate that it is inspired and supported by Spirit.

Among the dedicated participants in Phase I of Collective Chaordic Spirit, many have given far beyond expectation or commitment. I send all of you special thank you notes.

To the Design Team – Beth Moscov, Claudia Haack, Stephen Meng, Steve Nyland and Leslie Smith, you are proof positive that passion and personal presence coupled with deep interpersonal connection, opens us to the field of all possibilities. Your intelligence, loving kindness and hard work have produced more than we imagined in record-breaking time. May all that you have given be continually iterated and returned to you through our spiral.

To our Advisors – Sally Mahè, Tom Hurley, Harlan Cleveland, Lonnie Weiss and Diana Whitney, your straightforward guidance and seasoned advice spiced up our project design, provoked us ponder complex questions, and helped us stay on purpose.

To the Funders and In-Kind Contributors – Thank you Trustees. Your faith in CCS and the seed funding you provided turned our dream into a reality. Casey Hughes, your gift of CHANNELmatch for real-time, online sharing of documents as they are being created, increased collaboration and elevated our data analysis process to the cutting edge. Jo Norris, your ever-present loving support, abundant generosity and the financial contribution of the Rim Institute, lifted CCS and me to new heights.

To the CCS Interviewers – Your expertise and skill have simultaneously grounded and expanded the interview experience, bringing forth rich stories and learning. Thank you for finding and interviewing such amazing people and doing tons of diligent work to record and summarize what they said.

To the Data Analysis Team – How fun to learn together and generate results so quickly. I hope that each of you have received as much value for your own your own professional practices as you have given.

To Beth Moscov – Your inspired leadership, your giggling guidance, the sheer volume and efficiency of your work, and your technological savvy, brought qualitative data analysis alive for all of us.

To our supporters – Reuben, Danielle, Katie, Mike, Becky, Jonathan, Sam, Julie and John, you have kept the home fires burning so that we could travel the Appreciative Chaordic frontier. Vivian, Bonnie, Tamara, Carol, Cattryn, Cristi, and Debby, your support fueled our journey.

To Dee Hock – Your pioneering spirit and the *Birth of the Chaordic Age* awakened inquiring minds, prompted us to participate in the evolution of successful chaordic organizing, and called us to link people and organizations in a web of shared learning. We are very grateful.

A special appreciation to those we interviewed – Your stories have touched our hearts and inspired our minds. You have contributed to an emergent body of knowledge about how people chaordically organize for the benefit of all. Thank you for giving us hope. We will be learning from you for a very long time.

Thank you Spirit.
In Loving Gratitude ~ Namaste,

Christine Whitney Sanchez
June 28, 2003



In July 2002, a group of people gathered for the Chaordic Commons Annual meeting. They discussed opportunities and challenges for growing chaordic organizations, including their own, and puzzled over how to best proceed.

Based on their shared purpose statement, recommendations emerged from this puzzlement that became the inspiration for guiding how to proceed: "To **develop, disseminate, and implement** new concepts of organization that result in more equitable sharing of power and wealth, improved health, and greater compatibility with the human system and biosphere". What a worthy inspiration!

The idea emerged to conduct a **WORLD WIDE CHAORDIC APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY** to learn more about successful existing chaordic activity in organizations and to spark a positive chaordic epidemic throughout the Commons and Far Beyond.



The idea was shared with others.
 We thought out loud with each other.
 We dreamed full blast with each other.
 We talked with colleagues and friends at home.
 We received input from many, many sources.

September, 2002.... the first concept paper was written. It described the concept, the AI methodology, and a visual process map. The project was named **COLLECTIVE CHAORDIC SPIRIT** to embody the collective nature of the initiative, declare that it would be focused and organized around chaordic concepts, and that it would be inspired and supported by spirit.

October 2002.... The concept paper was posted on the Chaordic Commons website in order to share *the big picture* and to invite participation by Owning Members

Learn about the *Collective
Chaordic Spirit initiative*
www.collectivechaordicspirit.com
 Join us!



RSVP.....

- Owning Members responded to the website invitation
- Owning Members responded to the idea at the November, 2002 meeting
- We all engaged via email, phone, and in person with interested people

We now had a design team and a project

Happy New Year!

On New Year's Day, 2003, an email was sent to everyone who had expressed interest in the Collective Chaordic Spirit initiative. *Within an hour people began responding enthusiastically.*



Collectively Build the Idea

1/7/03—First draft funding proposal
 Involve others.....Keep talking about the project...
 Share the concept paper... Describe levels of project involvement.... Get help editing and refining the proposal

1/15/03—First CCS conference call
 Community building
 Discussing the project and sharing possibilities
 Deciding what to ask for at the CCCo meeting

- Time with CC Council of trustees to present proposal
- Seed funding

2/6/03—First Face-to-Face Project Team Meeting
 Build community and share hopes
 Let agenda emerge chaordically
 Prepare for our CoT funding proposal presentation
 Discuss present and future



Owning members attended a breakout session at the Owning Members meeting 2/7/03. Owning Trustees were engaged in dialogue regarding the CCS initiative. The updated proposal was presented, questions were responded to, and input was gathered for the final funding proposal that was to be formally presented at the Council of Trustees meeting.

“Christine requested that \$25K be allocated to the Collective Chaordic Spirit to cover preparation and training for 150 – 200 interviews with the twin objectives of furthering the project and of increasing the Commons’ capacity. Enhanced capacity would enhance the potential of attracting future funding for the initiative. As a condition of support from the Commons, Christine will work out an agreement whereby intellectual property collected by the interviews would be made available to the owning members. The Collective Chaordic Spirit Design Team will develop criteria for selecting interviewers and interviewees and will actively seek mavens and connectors from the owning member pool.”
From the 2/9/03 CoT Minutes

Christine presented the proposal 2/9/03. After discussion, Tom Hurley said, “Everyone in approval please hum”.



The room was filled with humming and unanimous approval was granted.



There was little time for celebration. People hit the ground running!



Chaordic concept and appreciative inquiry experts Sally Mahe, Tom Hurley, Harlan Cleveland, and Lonnie Wiess agree to become CCS advisors.



Criteria for CCS initiative interviewers are established.



Chaordic Commons Owning Members are invited to become interviewers for the project.



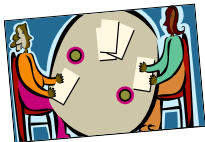
Appreciative inquiry listserv members are invited to apply for becoming interviewer for the project.

2/21/03.... Interviewer candidates are interviewed and selected.

3/13/03.... Project team selected.

3/18—3/19.... Appreciative Chaordic Inquiry Orientation held in Phoenix.

RIM Institute donates 10K to CCS



3/21—6/20... Phase 1 interviews conducted. Over 112 interviews were conducted during this time. The stories are rich and the data is compelling.

6/13-6/14... Data analysis team meets in Boulder Creek (4 meet face-to-face; four join virtually). Initial findings, implications, and probing questions are determined. Outline for our booklet is completed. Overview of our Annual Gathering presentation is completed



6/26/03.... “Collective Chaordic Stories and Findings” publication entrusted to printers.

7/10/03... CCS Interviewers prepare for presentation



Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh..... and here we are. Grateful and connected.

Abstract

Collective Chaordic Spirit (CCS) is a landmark inquiry that is identifying, describing, and sharing stories of vibrant chaordic coordination and organizing from around the world. The research design employed Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as the methodology for gathering data. AI seeks to find “the best of what is” from past positive experience in order to study factors that lead to success.

Phase I resulted in data from over 112 interviews. The initial findings and analysis of the data indicated the following: chaordic organizing occurs abundantly and naturally, there are many examples of improved business results due to chaordic organizing, chaordic organizing seems to foster a focus on positive interdependent interactions between people. Additionally, through our interviews we learned that the language used to describe experiences of chaordic organizing varied greatly and is different from the lexicon of the Chaordic Commons.

Phase II goals include refining the research model, expanding our research by another 600 interviews, gathering data from more countries, and in languages other than English.



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What We Set Out To Do

Collective Chaordic Spirit (CCS) sought examples of chaordic organizing that exist within human systems in order to study and learn more about the elements for success. We employed the action research methodology of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to gather data to study. During Phase I of the project a team of 25 trained volunteers interviewed 112 leaders and change agents. From the data we sought to understand how people worked together to create functional and facilitative relationships and superior business results in examples of unplanned chaordic organizing. We also sought examples of intentionally structured chaordic organizations to study. Our intent is to identify characteristics within successful chaordic organizing that can be understood, adapted, and adopted in the contemporary world to help fulfill the purpose of the Chaordic Commons - to develop, disseminate and implement new concepts of organization that result in more equitable sharing of power and wealth, improved health, and greater compatibility with the human spirit and biosphere

The findings from these interviews are being compiled, analyzed and shared with others through a variety of publications and presentations. Our initial Phase I findings are shared in this document.

The project will move into Phase II to validate and expand the findings through additional interviews. Details will be more fully defined after key findings of Phase I have been more fully identified. The efforts will culminate in emergent theories and practices about positive, chaordic organizing, leadership, and human capacity.

In addition to studying chaordic organizing as researchers, involvement in this project is offering many CCS members a real-time experience of chaordic organizing that is informing us beyond our data. Some of these experiences are detailed in appendices (see Appendices A and B).

Collective Chaordic Spirit is a self-organized substantially volunteer based research effort that was initiated by Owing Members of the Chaordic Commons following their First Annual Meeting in 2002. CCS has been supported financially by the Chaordic Commons, the Rim Institute, an anonymous donor, and by the volunteer and in-kind contributions of over forty people (see Appendices C, D, and E).



The discoveries from the research are discussed in the following two sections: overarching patterns from the interviews and key themes that emerged from the content analysis of the data.

Overarching Patterns From the Interviews

Chaordic Organizing Abounds

We found that the experience Dee Hock originally described as “chaordic” is common. It’s natural, it’s effective and people do it unconsciously - often without permission. Each person we interviewed easily resonated with the chaordic experience in vivid terms and stories.



Echoes from the Field

“You can move an institution forward without ‘killing’ the people in it. You can engender a spirit of creativity.”

“There is an aliveness and intensity to life. You have to be aware when you’re on the edge. You can’t sleepwalk when you’re on the edge.”

Echoes from the Field

“It moves them to a different place and they see their work in a different way. The ‘tilt’ happens.”

“Often peak experiences come out of hitting bottom when all the garbage and pretension and role-playing are stripped away.”



Language Is the Leverage

We found that the language used by the Chaordic Commons was not used by interviewees when they described their experiences of chaordic organizing. The ideas were the same but their language was different.

We feel that this initial finding holds significant opportunity for the Chaordic Commons. By using the descriptive language that our interviewee’s shared, the “chaordic experience” can be more clearly articulated, communicated, understood, and shared. This will enhance our ability to pass on this knowledge in useable language in order to achieve our purpose.



Focus on People, Relationships, and Practices

The interviewees mentioned the following as elements that contributed to successful chaordic organizing: a) stretching to the edge, b) getting things done, c) a complex web of connectedness, and c) business results. These findings mirror the CCS story of our own individual and group process.

A) stretching to the edge

Interviewee’s frequently talked about “needing to go to the edge” or “stretching out of their comfort zone”. It was described as an experience that felt internally chaotic but provided the most learning and most creativity. Leaders offered ways to balance the internal feelings of fear and discomfort by providing themselves and their employees with extra support during these times. Cited supportive behaviors employed in times of chaos or being on the edge were listening to employee’s, trusting employees, and helping to remove any obstacles on the path of success.

Echo from the Field

“I experienced a moment of clarity in an out-of-control situation, that turned the situation on its head.”

B) getting things done

Another common pattern was the one we termed “getting things done”

under which we coded anything people said they did to make a chaotic experience happen. We hope to develop these in the next phase of the project to create a road map for ways to organize chaotically and especially to sustain that way of dynamically organizing (see Appendix F).

Echo from the Field

“We committed an audacious act by setting out to do the impossible, and then we were challenged and just had to do it.”

Echo from the Field

Leadership all over the place is inherently the situation in any university. As a University President or Dean, for that matter, you don't tell the guy who's teaching about ancient Egypt how to do that. You just try to create the conditions for him to have the maximum exposure and that enough students take his course.”

C) complex web of connectedness

“Getting things done” is enhanced by a “web of connectedness” that runs across the dimensions of people, purpose, principles, practices, process, and products. It is sometimes characterized by deeply held shared purpose, principle-based behavior, distributed leadership, and the interdisciplinary use of richly diverse perspectives and skills.



Echo from the Field

“First we talked about being leaderless and then we realized we were leader-full.”

D) business results

We found that people experienced concrete and measurable increases in efficiency, increases in customer satisfaction, decreases in time spent from idea to product delivery, increases in job satisfaction, decreases in employee turnover, and increases in program success (see Appendix G).

Echoes from the Field

“A very meaningful outcome is that since the group was formed, teen pregnancies have been cut in half.”

“...turning around a \$3 M deficit and a troubled program.”

“Over 10,000 people attended that event, and all the bills were paid.”

“She reduced the debt, coordinated a 5 month team investigation, terminated a coach, started new programs, hosted the Super Bowl and a Div. 1A Basketball Championship AND still remained Senior V.P. of Student Affairs.”

Key Themes From the Content Analysis

Working with data in qualitative analysis allows for an emergent process. We started with ideas of what we might expect but soon had an abundance of ideas from what the interviewee's said in their own words. Through our initial thinking and our reading of the interview summaries we came up with a total of 88 nodes (themes) that were repeated throughout interviews. After our initial coding, we first looked at the themes repeated most frequently to determine whether there were any immediate relationships between them or with our initial questions or theories about chaordic organizing. Much of our current interpretation will be expanded upon in the coming months, using this initial look at our huge database of detailed information as a starting point (see Appendix H). Each of the themes falls into one or more of the following categories:

Characteristics of *people* who gravitate to chaordic systems

Courage	Commitment	Trust
Passion	Sustainable	Flexible
Respect		
New role leads to hands on learning		
Strong connections with the universe		
Sharing knowledge to create something		

Characteristics of *interactions* between people cited in chaordic experiences

Trust	Passion	Flexible
Sustainable	Respect	Community
Shared vision	Interdisciplinary	Commitment
Self organizing	Sense of urgency	Free flow of information
Diverse participation	Leaderful systems	Conflict is actively resolved
Distributed leadership	Principles based system	
Strong connections with universe		
Sharing knowledge to create something		

Characteristics of chaordic *systems*

Team	Learning	Purpose
Flexible	Feedback	Sustainable
Passion	Community	Self organizing
Sense of urgency	Shared vision	Interdisciplinary
Diverse participation	Clear structure	Interdependency
Principles based system	Leaderful systems	Shared leadership
Fractalization experience	Multiple right answers	Mutual accountability
Leadership through inquiry	Distributed leadership	Autonomous yet cohesive
Strong connections with universe		
Something bigger - higher purpose		
New role leads to hands on learning		
Sharing knowledge to create something		



Analysis of the Data

Through our initial probing we found that the data could be grouped in at least two ways. We have only had a single month to work with this data. In the coming months we will have a chance to work more deeply with it (see Appendix I).

The first framework to emerge from the data is based on themes that seemed to be related to describing: 1) characteristics of *people* attracted to working in chaordic systems, 2) the characteristics of *interactions* between people during chaordic experiences, and 3) the characteristics of chaordic *systems*.

Descriptive phrases to indicate characteristics of people attracted to working in chaordic systems are in yellow ovals.

Descriptive phrases to indicate characteristics of interactions between people during chaordic experiences are in blue ovals.

Descriptive phrases to indicate characteristics of chaordic systems are in orange ovals.

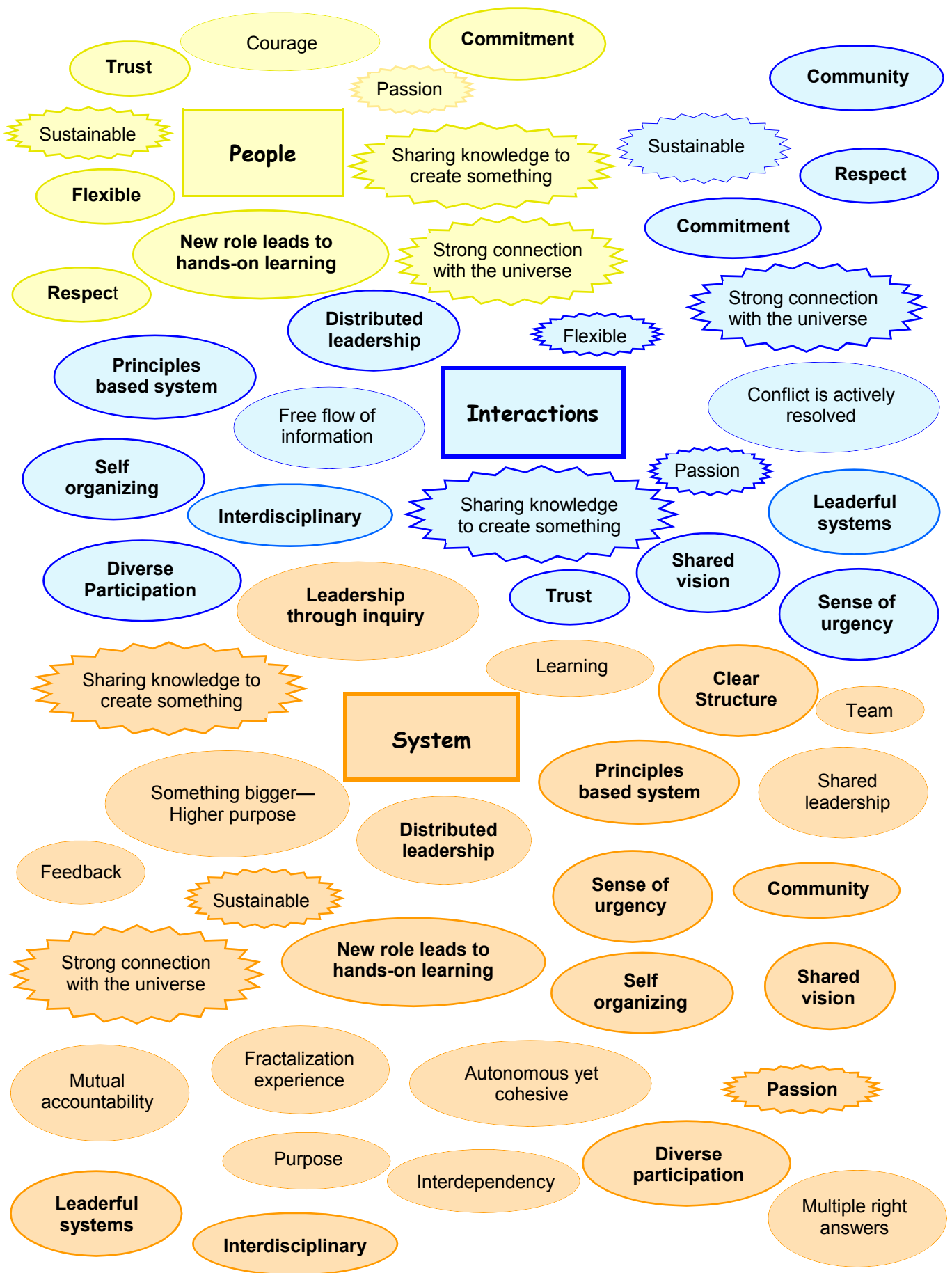
Some of the characteristics overlap or are included in slightly different ways in more than one of the categories. Each of these descriptive phrases are terms interviewees used. Each represents a file in NVIVO, the software used to organize and retrieve data, where we can simply click on the icon and see all the text encoded. In the future we will examine the names of the categories to determine the best phrasing by asking the question “what was used most often by the interviewee to describe this experience?”

Descriptors found in one theme are not in bold font and have a thin outline.

Descriptors found in all three themes are in spiked ovals.

Descriptors found in two themes are noted with bold font and a heavy outline.

Model One



Proposed Model Two

There are suggestions in our data that the unbundled Chaordic Commons principles are a useful part of a good business model. We are developing a graphic version of this model to illuminate this. For your reference, here is a copy of the unbundled principles. They can also be found on the Chaordic Commons web site (www.chaordic.org) or on our own web site (www.collectivechaordicspirit.com).

Participants within the system and each and every part will:

Honor the basic participants' and parts' right and obligation to:	When working with others will:	Work as a system to:
Determine their own needs and identity and follow their own judgment and instincts.	Educe rather than compel behavior.	Remain open and welcoming to new participants and parts.
Voluntarily organize with others to pursue their goals.	Resolve conflict without violence.	Keep (or shift) power, functions, resources, etc., at the smallest or most local part that includes ARAP.
Create new parts of the system.	Freely and fully exchange information.	Ensure diversity and health.
Protect what is important to them, what belongs to them, and their privacy.	Honor obligations.	Create no intrinsic advantage for any part of participant, nor create an intrinsic disadvantage.
Exercise self-discipline.	Deliberate and make decisions reasonably representing ARAP, without any subgroup dominating.	Promote development and growth.
	Grant only sufficient authority and powers to enforce agreements and undertake initiatives.	Remain coherent and disciplined as a whole.
	Govern themselves in accordance with these purpose and principles.	



Interviewee Profile

Our interviewer team turned in over 112 interview summaries (see Appendix J). Those we interviewed represented the following:

- GENDER - Our ratio of women to men was a little less than equal with slightly more women than men (Males=49; Females=60 not all interviewees listed gender).
- AGE - Our interviews represent age ranges from teenagers to people in their 90's, with a majority following in the 40-70 age bracket.
- GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION - Their stories took place in North America (US and Canada), Central and South America, Australia, Europe, Russia, China, the Middle East, Africa, and more.
- FIELDS - The fields represented include military, government, finance, education, consulting, health care, transportation, computer technology, mining and other heavy industry, advertising, film, television, environmental protection, social services/non profits, and religious organizations.

Planning For and Using Researcher Bias

We attempted to control for bias in two ways. The first control for bias was through the diversity of interviewers and interviewees. To look for particular interviewer bias, we could examine documents by name of interviewer. If a particular theme only occurred in those documents, we could take a deeper look at possible bias. We did find that one interviewer's work seemed to reflect a particular bias and we pulled those interviews out of the larger data analysis. The second control for bias was having a large number of divergent thinkers look at and evaluate the work at various times. We controlled for coding bias by looking at the coding in diverse ways. We had multiple people working on the coding. We were able to compare how two or three researchers coded a single document to determine if there was similarity.

However, underlying the question of bias is an assumption that researchers are separate from their work and that preventing bias is a real possibility. Qualitative work, Appreciative Inquiry, and complexity theory are all based on an idea of interconnectedness (see Appendix K). We actively admit that we cannot prevent ourselves from affecting our results, and we deliberately make use of that in our interviews. We hope to leave our interviewees with a better understanding of the word chaordic and the ideas of how their ability to organize chaordically helps them excel as a leader.



CCS operates chaordically

Our own CCS process was chaordic – we consciously worked with the unbundled principles of chaordic organizing and the principles of Appreciative Inquiry (see Appendix K). Each person has been doing what they do best, successfully self-organizing and working with others and co-creating extraordinary results in service of the purpose of the Chaordic Commons.

CCS is a vehicle for meaningful contribution

Participating in CCS has given us a community of contribution – we have appreciated being able to give something positive and hopeful to the world. A contributor to our project sees Collective Chaordic Spirit as a “beautiful movement, capturing the energy and life-giving forces of chaordic systems.”

Inspiration and hope result from CCS

We have been inspired witnesses to the tremendous amount of grounded optimism, faith, hope, and leaderful activity that is occurring all around us on a day-in-day-out basis. While hearing the inspiring success stories from our interviewees, we were simultaneously experiencing our own chaordic success.

CCS creates connections

We have been amazed at the potential breadth and depth of linkages that CCS has uncovered and stimulated. Organizations such as Society for Organizational Learning, the Future Education and Research Center in China, and groups interested in Knowledge Management and Innovation Circles have expressed an interest in the work of CCS and the Chaordic Commons. Early discussions around partnerships are arising. For example, the Taos Institute may be interested in partnering with Chaordic Commons to explore the convergence of social construction and chaordic organizing.

Within the Chaordic Commons, there is a desire to use the CCS to foster the spirit of collaboration, to contribute to the Sustainability Framework and the Strategic Inquiry, and to make use of the “virtual front porch” for facilitation of our growing connections.

CCS is productive

The reciprocal relationship between CCS and Chaordic Commons has resulted in:

- CCS interviewers joining the Chaordic Commons as active Owning Members.
- CCS attracting and supporting participants to the 2003 annual gathering.
- The Chaordic Commons coming alive for many of those interviewed.
- We have begun collaborations with other people and groups as discussed by the Council of Trustees, in the February 2003 meeting. These collaborations have led to early but enthusiastic discussions about a joint international conference/think tank.
- An Appreciative Chaordic Inquiry Technology Toolkit has been created. Change practitioners from the Chaordic Commons and Appreciative Inquiry communities have already begun to ask for technical advice for their projects.
- We have started work on a booklet for change agents, presentations for conferences, and a book that shares more of our findings and chaordic success stories.



Closing Reflections

We have come more than full circle. Owing Members at the Chaordic Commons First Annual Meeting in 2002 inspired Collective Chaordic Spirit. Returning our initial results to the 2003 Annual Gathering of Chaordic Commons Owing Members marks the end of Phase I. The energy and momentum that has been generated by CCS has propelled us to the next rung of an evolutionary spiral.

We have simultaneously been practicing and researching what we collectively preach – that chaordic organizing supports people who are geographically dispersed, to actively engage their passion by self-organizing with others around shared purpose and principles. Well over half the members of the current CCS Project team have indicated a strong interest in making a continuing contribution to Phase II of the project and many others have come forward who want to participate more directly. Early thinking about Phase II sets Fall 2003 as the launch for 600 Appreciative Chaordic Interviews that will validate and build on our findings from Phase I and looks toward an International Frontiers of Chaordic Theory conference. Both will continue to grow the body of chaordic theory, knowledge and practice.

There is no shortage of passionate and skilled people who are willing to give their time and talent to the future of Collective Chaordic Spirit and the Chaordic Commons. We are earnestly seeking the treasure to support our work.

Data → Information → Knowledge → Wisdom

The interview data that was collected by the twenty-five CCS interviewers has been translated and bundled into information by the Data Analysis Team. By processing that information and writing this document, the Design Team has brought forward some emergent knowledge that is based on our findings. As a Chaordic Commons community, Owing Members will give their input, share their stories and deepen the knowledge - double loop learning and chaordic organizing at their best. Together we will generate wisdom as it applies to our collective future. With new energy, hope and support, we will launch Phase II of Collective Chaordic Spirit.

Ultimately, Collective Chaordic Spirit is about stories – individual stories and the larger story. It is about people who proactively work together toward a more equitable sharing of power and wealth, improved health and greater compatibility with the human spirit and biosphere.

We invite you to join us!



Appendices



Appendix A Collective Chaordic Spirit Interviewer Orientation

The CCS Initiative reflects the first cycle of a spiral. The initial seed began at the Chaordic Commons Annual Meeting of 2002. This meeting used Open Space Technology to grow a communal awareness of what the CC is and what our next steps as an organization should be. At the end of this meeting, the facilitator, Christine Whitney Sanchez, was looking at the final sticky wall from the back of the room.

“In that moment, I knew that there was one thing we could do that would simultaneously develop and disseminate chaordic concepts while finding out how people were implementing chaordically. By conducting a world wide Appreciative Inquiry (AI) into chaordic organizing we would build a body of knowledge about whether chaordic systems exist within formal systems, we would study and learn what works, and we would deepen the vision and clarify the spirit of what the Chaordic Commons is here to do.”

A worldwide Chaordic Appreciative Inquiry could:

- Address the three most supported recommendations on the sticky wall (Develop, Disseminate and Implement)
- Spark a positive chaordic epidemic
- Discover and raise awareness of current successful chaordic activity around the world
- Involve people from around the world
- Help Chaordic Commons Owing Members connect and contribute around shared meaning
- Build the Chaordic Commons community.

On October 15 2002, the initial concept paper was posted on the Chaordic Commons website under “Owning Member Initiatives.” The project was named COLLECTIVE CHAORDIC SPIRIT to embody the collective nature of the initiative. The concept paper proposed to deliberately use:

- Social epidemic concepts in Malcolm Gladwell’s *Tipping Point*.
- Appreciative Inquiry research methodology
- Chaordic organizing project methodology

On January 1 2003, Christine sent an email saying, “Happy 2003! Collective Chaordic Spirit came over me today. You are receiving this email because over the past several months you have expressed an interest in the Collective Chaordic Spirit initiative.” The project proposal was attached with an outline of projected steps, timelines and costs. The email described the levels of project involvement and set up the first CCS Project Team conference call.

Within one hour, people began enthusiastically responding. This kind of quick and abundant response became a characteristic of this project and was repeated when we sent only two emails out to gather our interviewer candidates and then again when we began our search for interviewee’s.



Collective Chaordic Spirit Interviewer Orientation, continued

As the first of many meetings began, three important community-building procedures evolved. Later, from our data, we were able to see these as critical elements in creating a listening environment in which trust could flower and community take root.

- Check-in – Each person takes a few minutes to share what will help them become fully present and able to openly participate
- Emergent Agenda – everyone can add to or change the agenda to meet emerging needs.
- Getting clear on direction, agreements, and commitments then letting go and trusting that people would follow through.

Our interviewer and design teams met together in Phoenix in February. Here we continued to set the tone for rest of the project. All team members agreed to work towards the Chaordic Commons Purpose and Principles. The 25 of us worked together to build the interview questions (called the protocol in AI).

When we began with our very first check-in, we introduced ourselves and shared what drew us to Collective Chaordic Spirit. This was the day before the U.S. Invasion of Iraq. We expressed:

- Gratitude for this opportunity to touch the world in a positive way
- Humanity is one spirit
- We can bring chaordic organizing alive
- Intelligence emerges as the system connects to itself in diverse and creative ways
- Ignite/cultivate an innate sense of good
- Learning is an emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual process
- This project makes perfect sense
- The marriage of Chaordic Concept and Appreciative Inquiry was going to produce a beautiful new baby
- The future is born in webs of human conversation
- Compelling questions encourage collective learning
- Networks are the underlying patterns of living systems
- Peace
- Making conscious collaborative ways of engaging and conducting business

It was generally agreed that we had found our tribe.

With the first presentation of this work, through this document and the presentation at the Chaordic Commons second Annual Meeting, we anticipate climbing another turning of the spiral into the second phase of our CCS Owning Member Initiative.



Appendix B
The Interview Experience
Steve Nyland

It became clear very early that conducting the Collective Chaordic Spirit interviews resulted in much, much more than data gathering. We had purposefully used an appreciative interview approach to raise interest and awareness of chaordic activity while simultaneously gathering examples of it. Now, with over 112 interviews currently in the database, we are certain that one of our findings is about the process itself. It seems that sharing in this appreciative way reaffirms that we are human and connected, that people have had success together and have made things work well, and that many examples given in the interviews had chaordic elements in them. The word “chaordic” pales in comparison, however, to the actual words and descriptions we heard in the echoes from the field.

Overwhelmingly interviewees recounted experiences of deep, meaningful, and powerful social connections with the interviewers through these conversations. Interviewees shared some astonishing accomplishments, often in support of a cause greater than themselves. While chaordic principles and language may not have always been clear to them, chaordic experiences certainly were as their stories flowed. As people shared their stories and their wisdom they tapped into energy and hope. They seemed to relish telling the stories and they most often talked about things that mattered to them.

While not specifically part of the inquiry protocol, many interviewers asked the interviewees their impressions of the chaordic inquiry process. Many times the interviewees offered unsolicited feedback. There was excitement in their reflections on the process. There was also often a sense of appreciation as they slowed down and took the time to reflect on their memories of times where people gathered together to get some good work done, balancing order and chaos in the process.

With interviewees sharing and interviewers relating to chaordic-like experiences, both parties seemed to reach a place of knowing not otherwise achievable in such a short space of time, if at all. Even at this early stage we can optimistically conclude that dynamic organizing is happening, we do know what it is, and the potential is great and largely untapped!



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Collective Chaordic Spirit Community, continued

Interviewers, continued		
Sherene Zolno	Seattle, WA	
Theresa Ditton	Phoenix, AZ	
Susan Rhodes-Yenowine	Denver, CO	CC Owing Member
Luis Kong	Sonoma, CA	CC Owing Member
Funding Teams		
Kathy Covert	Herndon, VA	CC Owing Member & Trustee
Kantha Shelke	Chicago, IL	CC Owing Member & Trustee
Ramon Wagner	Milwaukee, WI	CC Owing Member & Trustee
Melody Monroe	St. Louis, MO	CC Owing Member
Christine Koehler	France	
Supporters		
Reuben Sanchez	Julie Nyland	Vivian Skirpek
Jonathan Kessler	John M. Smith	
Selected Interviewees		
The Right Reverend William E. Swing	Harlan Cleveland*	Tom Hurley*
Diana Whitney	Frances Hesselbein*	Daniel Kim*
Gloria Feldt	Carol Sanger	Tamara Woodbury*
Greg Vaughan*	Irene Jacobs	Reverend Marian Kelley
Jo Norris	George Bays	David Isaacs*
Jonathan Reams*	Phil Dolph	Girl Scouts – AZ Cactus-Pine Council, Inc. Chaordic Structure Team
Jonathan Speier	Joan Jaeckel	Bill Hinely
Diamon Sweeney	Daniel Kirkpatrick	Dick Metcalf
Joan Airoidi	Dorie Belisle	John Hatten
Michelle Long	Stephanie Hopkins	Tom Glenn
Sharon Buck	John Travis, M.D	Carla Diamond
Dr. Barbara Berry*	Megan Tschannen-Moran	John Barnfield
Alan Huggins	Skip Bowen*	Dan Leahy
Bretta Beveridge	Cea Ishidawa	Rick Skillman
Robert Arnold	Mike Angel	

*CC Owing or Subscribing Member



Appendix D Seed Funding Sought

On February 4, 2003, the Collective Chaordic Spirit proposal was emailed to the Trustees. An excerpt from the 2/4/03 email states: "On behalf of the Collective Chaordic Spirit Project Team, I will be asking for seed funding during our Council of Trustees meeting. Receiving immediate financial support from the Chaordic Commons will enable us to complete Phase One of the project by the Annual Meeting this July. The Collective Chaordic Spirit Project will immediately serve the Commons in these ways:

As a result of the interviews, dialogue will increase among members, resulting in enhanced connectivity, which will in turn increase shared knowledge .¹

As a result of over 200 conversations about personal experiences with chaordic activity, individuals will anchor their understanding (develop) and ability to talk about (disseminate) the value of new methods of organization and the Chaordic Commons.²

Maps of Owing Member assets and assets of the nodes (naturally occurring connector points) will link people in partnerships within and beyond the commons that serve humanity and the biosphere.³

Weave the web of relationships within the commons and between Chaordic Commons and aligned partners.⁴

Illuminate ideas and natural pathways for chaordic partnerships.⁵

Identify what Owing Members from all representative countries and origins (fields), most want and need from the Chaordic Commons.⁶

Grow knowledge about the emergence of chaordic systems around the world, which might welcome contact from Chaordic Commons outreach efforts.⁷

Catalyze commitment among a critical mass of Owing Members through their participation in Phases I and II.⁸

Grow and make collectively conscious the body of knowledge about chaordic activity and the Chaordic Commons.⁹

Act as a hub of member interest that will spin off other Owing Member Initiatives.¹⁰

¹ Accomplished

² Accomplished with over 150 interviews completed in Phase One. To date, 112 have been received by the Data Team.

³ Not accomplished to date. When the communication infrastructure is fully operational, we can partner with CCIT to accomplish this.

⁴ Accomplished. As we go to print, we are in conversation with potential co-sponsors including the Taos Institute and the Society of Organizational Learning for an international conference on self-organization and social construction and learning communities.

⁵ Accomplished. Members of the Project Team have spun-off additional collaborations and have been working with other projects within the Commons. CHANNELmatch represents huge for benefit collaboration.

⁶ We have reached 15% of Owing Members. We were hindered by privacy issues, which have since been resolved. We anticipate a higher number of Owing Member interviews in Phase Two.

⁷ Accomplished and growing.

⁸ Accomplished for Phase One. Over half the Interviewer Team will be present at the 2003 Annual Meeting.

⁹ Accomplished and continuing.

¹⁰ It is too early to determine at this stage. We anticipate that after hearing more detail about this Owing Member initiative, other Owing Members will initiate their own projects.



Appendix E
Seed Funding Approved for the CCS Initiative

- 4.1 Christine requested that \$25K be allocated to the Collective Chaordic Spirit to cover preparation and training for 150 – 200 interviews with the twin objectives of furthering the project and of increasing the Commons' capacity. Enhanced capacity would enhance the potential of attracting future funding for the initiative.
- 4.2 As a condition of support from the Commons, Christine will work out an agreement whereby intellectual property collected by the interviews would be made available to the owning members.
- 4.3 The Collective Chaordic Spirit Design Team will develop criteria for selecting interviewers and interviewees and will actively seek mavens and connectors from the owning member pool.

CCS Project team members, Christine Whitney Sanchez and Claudia Haack recused themselves from voting. Unanimous approval for CCS funding was *hummed* by remaining Trustees. CCS had struck a harmonious tone!

Appendix F Getting Things Done!

The other most used node (theme) was the one we termed “getting it done” under which we coded anything people said they did to make a “chaordic” experience happen. We hope to develop these in the next phase of the project to create a “road map” for ways to organize chaordically and especially to sustain that way of dynamically organizing.

What the interviewee’s said, in their own words:

“My job is to prime the pump by reducing barriers. My job is to facilitate the group not tell them what to do.”

“Leaders need to be a source of knowledge. Their job is to grow this knowledge and share it with the community. When leaders seek power they stifle the organizations ability to learn.”

“It sometimes just takes the right questions for the individual creativity to emerge. Find the people who are interested in the issues and let them come up with the solution.”

“People are given permission to make mistakes.”

“Many people over the years have contributed to the building of the physical plant; and consequently feel a degree of ownership and responsibility for it,”

“Imagine a large funnel representing infinite possibility on one side. It narrows on one side into a pipe representing the concrete plan and then opens back up into a bulb, which represents more possibilities. The goal is to take the infinite possibilities, then run down as fast as you can.

If you don't do the funneling you lose it. On the other hand, if you become too rigid too early you miss out on many ideas that could be vastly better than the initial ideas. It is all timing. If order arises out of chaos the product is harmonious and then your ready to step in with more chaos for stimulating more creativity.”

“Creating an insane deadline but then giving the support to actually pull it off, then checking in almost impatiently because it is critical. It is a mix of being impatient and demanding results and giving support though removing barriers and encouragement.”

“They all had the same goal, despite their diversity, and the group was a very safe environment, which was critical to their collaboration.”

“With groups, the process of discovering together is relationship building. Once this kind of interaction is experienced, they can't go back comfortably to the traditional ways they had interacted”



Getting Things Done! Continued

“What causes something to be an epidemic and have a great, positive impact is in the design at the very beginning. Designing from a tangible point of view will create something with a limited life. Versus something designed from identity, purpose, strong theories or values, which will be deeply rooted and more likely to be sustained. If that identity or purpose is “flawed” or “evil” in some way, that will affect the outcome. Hitler and his Third Reich is an example of this. The other sides of the coin are outcomes generated from Gandhi or Martin Luther King. Design and from where it originates is key to all outcomes. So it is important to examine and catch any flaws early in the process. What’s small in the beginning will be present in a much larger scale later.”

Being on the edge, being the lone spear-header was ‘juicy’ for ***. He said it was like sailing a boat, when the boat is keeled nearly over and you are just a few degrees from capsizing, It’s only then that you are getting the greatest speed, but you are closest to losing it. “When you are at your maximum, you are also at your most vulnerable. But being that uncomfortable puts the pressure on you to find a solution.”

“In the process **** saw that listening as a learner and not as a critic was essential.”

“A leader must be personally developed to understand they have the best people around them and not feel threatened by that.”

“We allowed it to occur so leader-like behavior bubbled up throughout the system. People my age can sometimes squelch or make people feel threatened when they show leader-like behavior. Others allowed me to make mistakes; they focused on what I was doing well. I strived to do the same, but it did not always happen, but it was a clear goal for me.”

“By making the people on the front lines a part of this process action team, they began to take a different kind of ownership for everything that was happening.”

“Because of the culture, the enormity of the task at hand, and the passion of each, they created an environment that allowed each person to evoke their best “selves” to make a difference. They invented that kind of “organization” there because nothing else would have worked. It was absolute necessity.”

“ _____ has an incredible results orientation but they have to be aligned with the purpose and the principles so that they have integrity and also so that things can manifest.”



Appendix G Chaordic Business Results

The theme/node that seemed most remarkable to us in many ways was the one in which we encoded measurable business results from working in a chaordic way. Here are excerpts of the results people found when working in this fashion:

“When I became the new chief of operations at Bank ****, we were writing off un-reconciled differences at a rate of \$.5 M a month. Checks would have to pass through dozens of steps to be processed. **** called all the “players” together to go step by step through the process to see where efficiency could be gained. No one was the “demon”. With everyone at the table they were able to streamline the process and gained a position of having the lowest rate of un-reconciled differences. The staff turnover rate was 80%. There were high recruitment costs, high errors and high training costs. Top management believed it was a given the nature of the beast. The result: the turnover rate dropped back to the average level in the bank. There was a reduction in training costs and the un-reconciled differences went down.”

“She went back and started the first school using the principles of NVC (non-violent communication). It was so successful that the European Union gave them money to start four more schools each in Israel and Palestine. Those schools would be connected to schools in Serbia and Italy. They were doing so well that when **** became the Prime Minister, he saw that there was much less violence in these schools, so he created a national commission with this principle as the head. They now have gotten their training into over a thousand schools. Somewhere around seventy schools have been radically transformed, with teachers and schools working in partnership. Recent research shows fifty-percent decrease in measures of violence in these schools.”

“It was March, 1976, and I was a news director. I was working to move this station’s ratings from last place to first. We had a chance to cover the Winter Olympics and wanted to put together a special newscast. We did it, we moved from last to first place.”

“Our town is small. We only had a week to market things and we had 450 people show up.”

“A very meaningful outcome is that since the group was formed, teen pregnancies have been cut in half.”

“turning around a \$3 M deficit and a troubled program.”



Chaordic Business Results, continued

“Over 10,000 people attended that event, and all the bills were paid.”

“She reduced the debt, coordinated a 5 month team investigation, terminated a coach, started new programs, hosted the Super Bowl and a Div. 1A Basketball Championship AND still remained Sr.VP of Student Affairs.”

“The end result was a highly effective program that spanned management in a diverse organization of over 10k people.”

“In my last start up. I felt I knew all about manufacturing and wanted to go and create a model of effective manufacturing. While the objective is to get business results, I wanted to play out a vision for a flexible, fast, scalable manufacturing process for the next wave. Working with the team members we communicated the vision and they felt they were part of a grand experiment. The manufacturing team felt good. We focused on cost, quality, and delivery. The feedback from our suppliers was that we had really got it right, and my personal mission was accomplished.”

“The Navy just couldn’t believe that we could accomplish what we did (in costs and time)” **** found ways to cut overhead from 90% to 41%, and pay off all the creditors before the Shipyards closed. “It was a great achievement. I wasn’t sure I could accomplish it, but I did.”

“The result was increased freshman retention. They designated a residence hall as a “freshman” hall and put programs “in the way” of students to help them succeed. It was one person’s idea, but he talked with everyone and brought them together. They came up with the ideas and he supported them, particularly the contrary things. He used early adopters to get support. People support what they help create.

“A leader is not egocentric. They focus on issues. They find people who share a vision and provide a tracking system to measure results.”



Appendix H The Data Collaboration Story - Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis is a way of working with relatively unstructured data, especially data that isn't appropriately reduced to numbers. Researchers using this model are often looking for questions and insights to emerge rather than going in with a preconceived hypothesis. Since our hope was to look for examples of chaordic activity at the same time we were trying to better define what that might look like, this seemed like a good method. It allowed us to interview over 110 people, many of whom had never heard the word chaordic, and to allow the data, themes and ideas for further research to emerge. Fields that typically use qualitative data analysis include social and health sciences, business and market research, information, legal, political and historical studies, life histories and policy evaluations. Some of the methodologies that work well with this research include grounded theory, phenomenology, action research, and discourse analysis. In addition, action research is often the best choice for a pilot study when the research questions need to be refined enough to speak to further research design.

On the deepest level, qualitative analysis was most appropriate for our project because of the parallels with chaordic theory. Chaordic theory is built upon complexity theory and chaos theory. Complexity theory speaks to the power of what happens at the edge of chaos and order. In chaos, there are sometimes catalysts that begin to make some sort of action happen. Enough of these catalysts, and the actions begin to become structure. Some people refer to this as emergence.

Abundant Data Revealing Patterns

Our interviews provided us with hundreds of pages of information. Most interviews provided 3-5 pages of information. This resulted in almost 450 pages of sheer raw data. To make sense of this simply by looking at each one and reading them and gathering general impressions would be chaotic. NVIVO allows us to create links in data between documents that would otherwise seem unrelated. It does this through the function of "nodes." We can "code" a document by reading through a single interview and marking important passages.

The next step is to look at what patterns emerge. Once the documents are coded we can call up any number of relationships, view the documents at the related nodes to confirm or disconfirm the relationship, build visual models of these relationships, and on and on. For this first phase, we found that we could look at the data from at least four, maybe five different models. We developed two of them for presentation and discussion in the early document.

Live and Online – Chaordic Data Analysis Process

After finding and deciding upon a data analysis model, the real work began. How do we work with analyzing this data? Especially since we live in such geographically diverse locations? To meet this need, I introduced the use of the tool, CHANNELmatch, thanks to the generosity of Chaordic Commons Owing Member, Casey Hughes. CHANNELmatch is an online collaboration tool. With this, I could share my computer with all those present at an online meeting. We met three times before the meeting in person. The first meeting on May 15 was attended by 15 of our 25 interviewers. We concurrently worked around a virtual table while our bodies were in France, Canada, and all over the US. It soon became clear that, even with these great tools, we couldn't include as many people as were interested in participating in the data analysis.

Macintosh users had an immediate challenge. CHANNELmatch is not set up to be used with their operating system. Thankfully, later we found that certain software for the Mac can be used to simulate the PC environment and allows use of CHANNELmatch.



The Data Collaboration Story - Qualitative Analysis, continued

Another immediate issue was that not all our interviewers had access to a phone line and computer line simultaneously – meaning they needed to choose between how they wished to communicate with the rest of the team when attending meetings. Data analysis culminated in a three-day meeting with four of us meeting in person and four others joining virtually and by phone. Two days later Steve Nyland and I had a short online meeting to finalize initial themes/nodes.

CCS Data Analysis Best Practices

Best practices that evolved out of this collaboration:

- a) We scheduled meetings at a variety of times so that more of our schedules and time zones could be accommodated.
- b) We used a variety of communication tools – email lists, online collaboration in real time, phone, private email.

We learned how to tell those on the phone calls what the rest of us were seeing on the screen for those who could not access CHANNELmatch we also found tools to overcome some of these issues.

What was most powerful about this process is that we stopped needing to be linear in our thinking and our collaborative process. We had originally created a timeline that all interviews needed to be in by May 15 so that we could begin to work with the data. By being able to work in such diverse ways, we were able to integrate the last interviews that were rescheduled due to conflicting schedules or other issues. Ultimately, being flexible allowed us to move from only 60 interviews completed and in the database on March 15 to the 112 we have today.

CHAORDIC COMMONS OWNING MEMBERS - We were able to interview about 15% of the current Owing Members of the Chaordic Commons. Our initial goal to target Owing Members was complicated by issues of privacy and available information. Our intent in Phase Two is to interview more Owing Members since we have streamlined and smoothed out many of the blocks that kept us from fulfilling this part of our project goal.



Appendix I Live and Online – Chaordic Data Analysis Process

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Appendix J
Interview Protocol for CCS Appreciative Inquiry

Remember a high-point (or peak) experience in your personal or professional life - a time when you have been most alive and engaged.

Please tell me that story. Describe the situation.

- What were you and others doing?
- What was the outcome?
- What were the ingredients of this experience that made it meaningful?
- How have you applied what you learned during the experience to other situations in your life?

Without being modest, what do you value most about?

- Yourself
- Your work
- Working with others

- Remember a time when you were part of a successful collaboration. Please tell me the story. What were the underlying conditions that allowed the collaboration to work well?
- Tell me about the people involved, including you. What were the attitudes, behaviors and actions that made the success possible?
- How would you characterize the interactions among all the players? How did group members share information?

In *Good to Great*, Jim Collins documented that highly successful leaders embody a paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will. Outstanding leaders produce sustained results by inspiring leadership at all levels. In other words “leaders who make leaders” create organizations filled with people who see themselves as free, capable and inspired to their highest performance.

- Describe a time where surprising success was achieved when power and authority was distributed throughout the organization or community.
- What primed the pump for leader-like behavior to bubble-up throughout the system?

Achievement beyond expectation depends on an individual’s ability to connect their day-to-day tasks with heart-felt passion. When people are exuberant about their work, success takes on amazing and magical outcomes.

- Please tell me about a time when you have experienced success that was driven by your own unyielding and unbridled passion. What were you passionate about? What role did your passion and commitment play in helping you achieve success? How did you feel? What made it feel rewarding?



Interview Protocol for CCS Appreciative Inquiry, continued

- People tend to be much more creative when stretched out of their comfort zone, beyond the order of things to the edge where things “get a little chaotic”! These are exhilarating and energizing experiences from which great thinking and ideas flow.
- Think of a time when you felt alive and “at the edge”, where you accomplished exciting and creative things. How and why could this event happen? ? What “set the stage” to make it happen?
- What conditions existed that fostered creativity? What kind of specific actions made the success possible?
- Were there other times that you had similar experiences? If so were the conditions the same? If different, how so?
- Imagine it’s 10 to 20 years from now and the world is a different place. Power and wealth are more equally shared, and the human spirit and environment are sustained and nurtured.
- How did this happen? How did we get here?
- What events and steps led up to these changes?
- What actions did you and others take?
- What contributions are you most proud of?

(For Chaordic Commons Owning Members or those who are interested in CC)

How would the qualities of behavior and conditions of success that you’ve just described show up in the Chaordic Commons if it were fully alive for you?

- What could you offer to other Owning Members or to the commons as a network of Owning Members?
- What can the Chaordic Commons offer you as an Owning Member?



Appendix K
Six Principles of Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Adapted from the following two books:

Watkins, J., & Mohr, B. J. (2001). Appreciative Inquiry: Change at the speed of imagination. (pp. 37-39) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Whitney, Diana L., Trosten-Bloom, Amanda; Cooperrider David L. (2003). The Power of Appreciative Inquiry: A Practical Guide to Positive Change. (pp. 53-70) Berrett-Koehler.

The Principles of AI informed our journey as interviewers, data analysis team members, and design team members. The following paragraphs define each of the principles and include a way each manifested in CCS activity.

The Constructionist Principle: words create worlds

Knowledge and organizational destiny are interwoven; the way we know is fateful. Awareness of this concept enables change. We create what we can imagine.

CCS – We realized that language is the leverage in chaordics. Through our interviews it became apparent that the language interviewees used to describe chaordic organizing is very different from the language of the Commons. In order to build leverage and help move chaordic organizing principles forward, we can choose to adopt the language of the people we interviewed.

The Poetic Principle: we can choose what we study

An organization's past or present or future is an endless source of learning, inspiration, interpretation and possibility. We can inquire into anything and any living human organization. The important point is that we can study any topic related to human experience in any human system. We can inquire into the nature of alienation or the nature of joy. We can study moments of creativity and innovation, or moments of debilitating stress. We have a choice!

CCS – We chose to inquire into positive experiences with chaordic organizing in order to learn and study what works. We could have chosen to study “what makes chaordic organizing challenging?”, but didn't. We believe that, by choosing to inquire into positive organizing forces, we encourage that story to grow.

The Principle of Simultaneity: inquiry is change!

The seeds of change are embedded in the first questions we ask. One of the most impactful things a change agent does is to articulate questions. The questions we ask set the stage for what we “find”, and what we “discover” creates the stories that lead to conversations about how the organization will construct its future.

CCS – We realized the paramount importance of the wording and the timing of every question in each interview process. Some of us found that questions are more effective when preceded with an opening that “sets the stage” for the questions. It's a learning and experimentation process that informs subsequent interviews.



The Anticipatory Principle: image inspires action.

Habits of the collective imagination, habits of the mind, habits of the heart guide images of the future. Images are relational, public property, dialogical. Organizations exist, in the final analysis, because people who govern and maintain them share some sort of shared discourse or projection about what the organization is, how it will function, and what it is likely to become. The positive images of the future guide people's actions in the present.

CCS – For us, as researchers, the images given to us by the people we interviewed became part of who we are. They become part of you as you read and participate in the process. Their positive images of the future guide us to act, not only in the present, but inspire us to continue our research and get the results to people in order to develop, disseminate, and implement knowledge about chaordic organizing.

The Positive Principle: positive questions lead to positive change

Positive affect is just as contagious as negative affect. There is power in positive questions; the affective side of transformation; the dynamic of hope. Positive and grounded inquiry is an antidote to cynicism. Sustaining change requires both a positive outlook and social bonding. Successful change requires hope, excitement, encouragement, teamwork, and the sheer joy of doing meaningful work.

CCS – Using the positive approach of AI is one way to help fulfill the Purpose of the CC to develop, disseminate, and implement “new” concepts of organizing learned about through our research of successful examples in the field.

The Wholeness Principle: wholeness brings out the best

The experience of wholeness is one of understanding the entire story and is the result of people being able to access each other's differing perspectives and interpretations. The Wholeness Principle leads people to higher ground rather than common ground. Organizationally, it means engaging all stakeholders in the room for change.

CCS –Thanks to Beth Moscov and her connections, we have been able to experience the positive power of technology to engage all the stakeholders in the room. It has brought a wholeness to our experience and to the way the CCS project has been informed. People have been able to contribute their considerable skills to meetings and to documents even though we're miles, and sometimes continents, apart.



Appendix L Probing Questions

1. True listening can bring clarity, understanding, and insights. The existing “command and control” management paradigm lessens many managers’ ability to involve their people in decision-making, and truly listen. Managers, programmed in this mental model, act as though (whether knowingly or not) they carry the “weight of the world” on their shoulders. Involving people and their ideas then, could even be perceived as a sign of insecurity and weakness in their role. Chaordic, or dynamic organizing, is characterized by freedom in dialogue, idea generation, and distribution of power to implement. Thus the command and control mentality can work at cross-purposes with chaordic principles.

- Tell me a story about a time when you encouraged listening, in yourself and others, which resulted in “success at the edge”. What did it feel like? What results were generated?
- Can you remember times when you may have restricted listening, even unintentionally, and what that felt like? What were the results in quality of decisions and business performance terms? What are the implications for creating dynamic organizing?

2. It is insufficient to plant a tree and then urge it “grow”. Being provided with the elements it needs to grow actually determines its success. Elements such as water, soil, nutrients, and sunlight work together, interdependently, needing more or less of each in combination over time, to facilitate growth of the tree. This is true in most dynamic systems, and applies equally as well to organizing to achieve some purpose together. As marketing and sales generate orders, for example, other parts of the system stand “in relation to” marketing and must be ready and able to respond. In this way the purpose for organizing, to deliver products and services let’s say, creates customer loyalty and business success. Deficiencies in one or more of these areas can lead to unpleasant results, over time, as their impact ripples out over the business.

We suspect, and early data indicate, there may be some essential, interdependent elements, that come together to create the space for, and enhance, chaordic/dynamic organizing. These include self-organizing at all systems levels (self as individual, self as group or team, and self as organization), and broadly understood language. It seems reasonable to expect likewise that deficiencies in any of these areas can enhance, or limit, successful, sustainable dynamic organizing.

- Imagine a time when you experienced dynamic organizing at its height or peak. What were the key elements that “made it work”? What were the cause and effect relationships of the elements?
- How did they interact? How did you keep them in balance and create success?



Probing Questions, continued

3. The purpose of the CCS research is still unfolding. It may either be 1. to find ways that move organizations toward chaotic behavior, or it may be 2. to find ways to “open up the system” to discover the self-organizing that either already exists (as supported by early data from Phase 1 interviews) or is waiting to happen, at all levels of systems.

- Imagine a time when dynamic organizing was alive and well in your organization or community. How did you get there? What happened?
- What steps did you take? What conditions did you observe that facilitated success? What are the implications for refining the CCS purpose in Phase 2?

4. Storytelling is a powerful tool, in life and in organizations. An appreciative eye observes that organizations are like an open book, brimming over with stories of success and mystery. The beauty of storytelling is the richness people add just in the hearing. By conjuring up similar experiences they further embellish, and add richness to, the story with feeling, sights, and sounds from their own experience. Appreciative interviews during Phase 1 bear this out. Most everyone commented on the power of asking questions that allowed them to relive the high times and high successes.

- What are the implications for further research? For successful dynamic organizing? Day-to-day practices?
- Phase 2 interviews?



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