



The Council for Health &
Human Service Ministries

United Church of Christ

An Appreciative Approach to Leadership

Leading with Curiosity, Mindfulness, and Positivity

2020 CHHSM 82nd Annual Gathering: Justice and Grace –Together

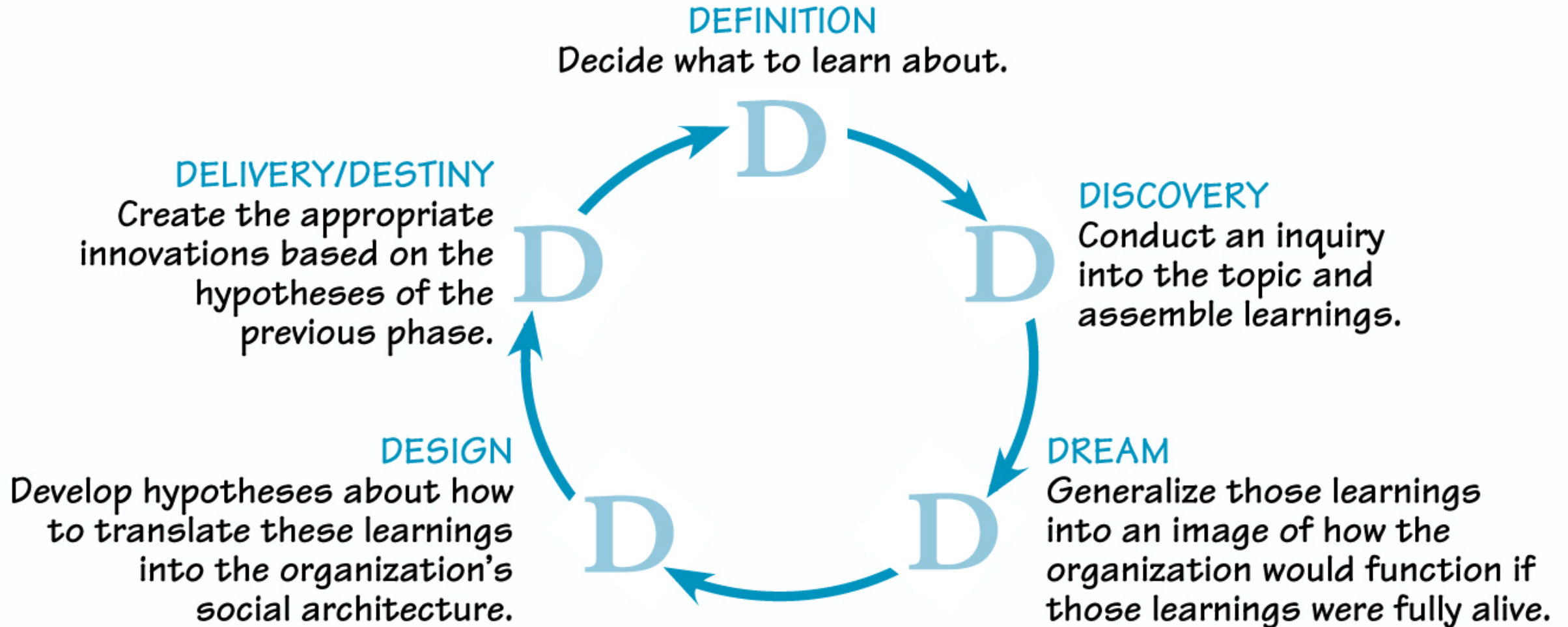
The Tadpole and the Frog



Appreciative Inquiry



Appreciative Inquiry



Appreciative Inquiry: The Principles

- Constructionist Principle - understanding that our metaphors and our language make our reality
- Positive Principle - positive inquiry leads to positive emotions, beliefs, behaviors, and outcomes
- Simultaneity Principle - asking or thinking about a question elicits change in the moment that it is considered
- Poetic Principle - see the self or organization as a story that is constantly being written; an open book
- Anticipatory Principle - our image and beliefs of the future guide our actions in the present

Appreciative Inquiry

- We tend to exacerbate that which we focus on, e.g. problems.
- Consulting to Coaching
- Organizations are comprised of PEOPLE
- Interconnectedness - Not just a whole. Not just individuals. BOTH
- The approach is more important than the methodology

Appreciative Inquiry

- Rooted in Stories - Individual narratives and Corporate narrative
- About PEOPLE
- Requires Mindfulness
- Builds on the Positive - “Appreciative” - empowering people
- Requires Curiosity - “Inquiry”

Mindfulness

- Our thoughts are not our own and are not reality
- The stories we tell ourselves become our own reality (especially about others and about ourselves)
- Prevents us from being stuck in rigid systems
- Allows us to be fluid and act/react as we need to while being more PROACTIVE and less REACTIVE
- More proactivity leads to less conflict
- Regular self check-ins: What story am I telling myself right now? How might this story affect how I act?

Exercise: Mindfulness from the Balcony

- Suffering, ballgame, and a beer
- Recall a challenging situation with a colleague or subordinate in your organization.
- What stories were you telling yourself about that person?
- How might letting go of those stories or telling other stories allow for healthier dynamics?
- How might those healthier dynamics lead to better performance as an organization?

Coach Approach to Leadership

- Assume nothing
- Stay curious - constantly be asking questions, both out loud and to yourself. This prevents the formation of assumptions and concrete “realities”
- Don’t always be the expert
- Ask WHY?
- Socrates and the Oracle: Keep learning and this knowledge will allow you to fill in the places that curiosity will reveal to you.

Thoughts or Questions?

