Appreciative Inquiry As a Developmental Tool

Wendy Duncan, Ph.D. FNAP CYT500

Traditional Process for Development

Problem Identification

Planning

Action

Assessment
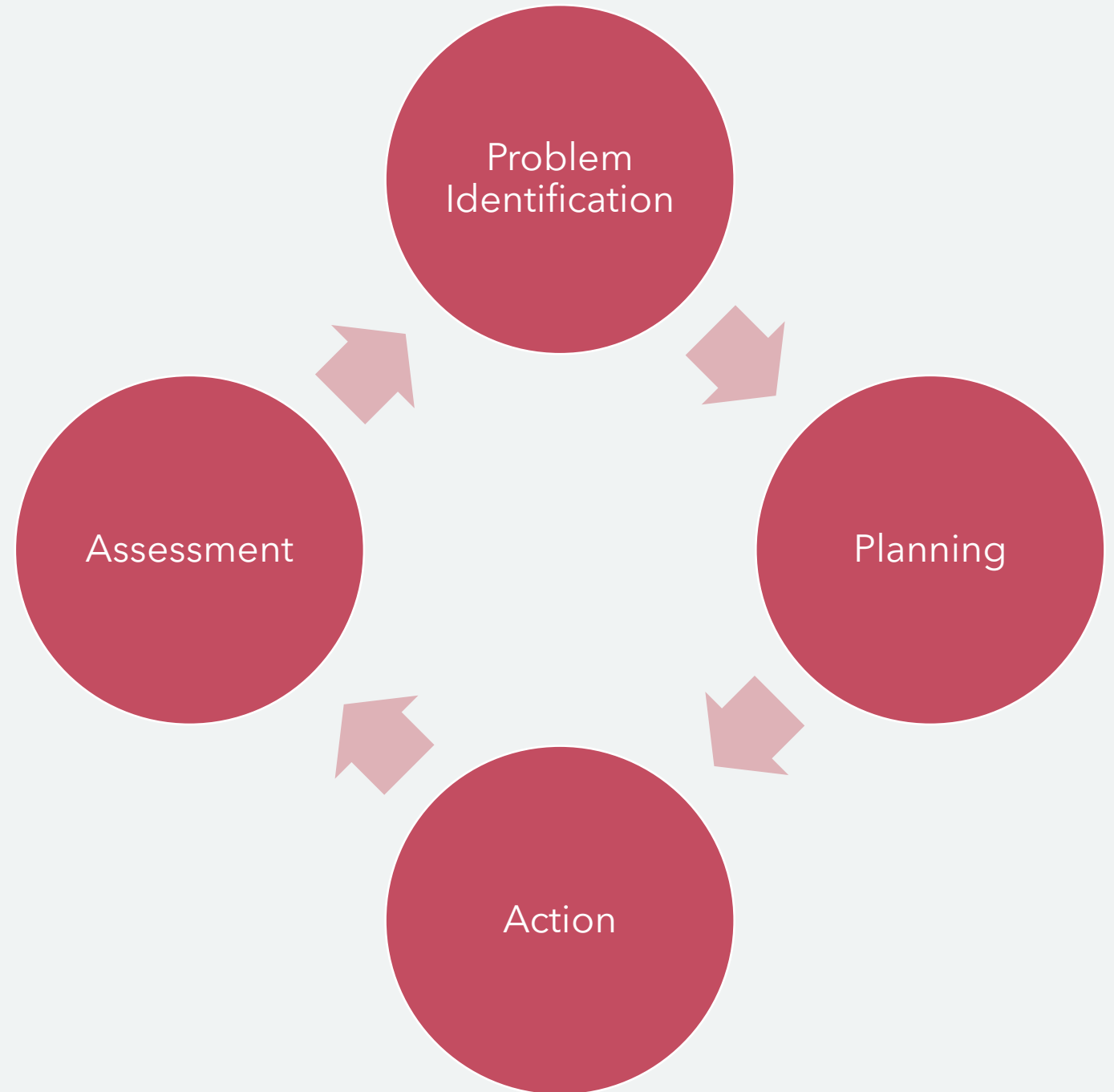
Basis for Traditional Process

- The world is hostile, requiring a constant struggle for survival

- Error leads to death

- Life is an accident, one of many random events

- Must dominate, control

Pitfalls of Traditional Approach

- Evidence that a focus on issues and problems generates a "fixed" mindset.

- A fixed mindset, proposed by Stanford professor Carol Dweck in her book Mindset, describes people who see their qualities as fixed traits that cannot change. ... Those who hold a fixed mindset believe that they are either good or bad at something based on their inherent nature.

- When a person with a fixed mindset is presented with problems to overcome, they often develop negative affects towards the activity and their performance in the activity – and seek to avoid it
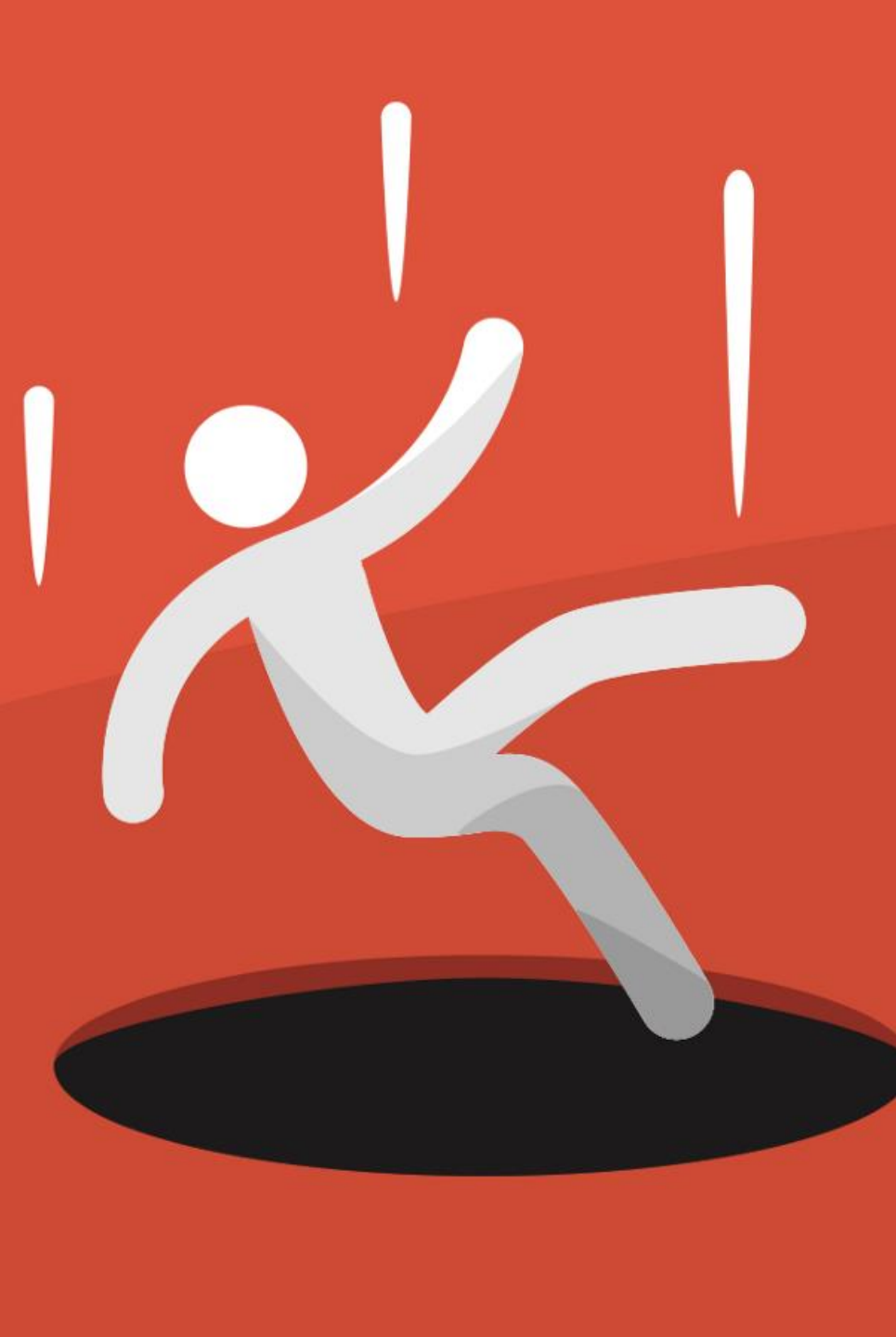
Appreciative Inquiry

- Appreciate

  Recognize the quality, significance or magnitude of

  To be fully aware of or sensitive to

  To raise in value or price

- Inquiry

  The process of gathering information for the purpose of learning and changing.

  A close examination in a quest for truth.

Appreciative Inquiry Approach

- Appreciative Inquiry is a collaborative and highly participative approach to **seeking**, **identifying**, and **enhancing** the **"life-giving forces"** that are present when a system or individual is performing optimally in human, economic, and organizational terms.

Basis for Appreciative Approach

- Life is about invention, not survival

- We're here to create, not defend

- Everything is in a constant process of discovery & creating

- Life organizes and seeks systems so that <u>more</u> may flourish

- Life is a great playground we make up as we go

Evidence

- When we capture positive imagery internally and make it visible, it starts to drive change in a self-directed way. It creates a sense of focus.

- Changes a teacher's image of a student, and their behavior changes toward the student, improving student performance

- In sports, vivid visualization of high-quality performance accelerates learning

- The study of problems creates an increase in the number and severity of problems. But the opposite also occurs.

Comparison
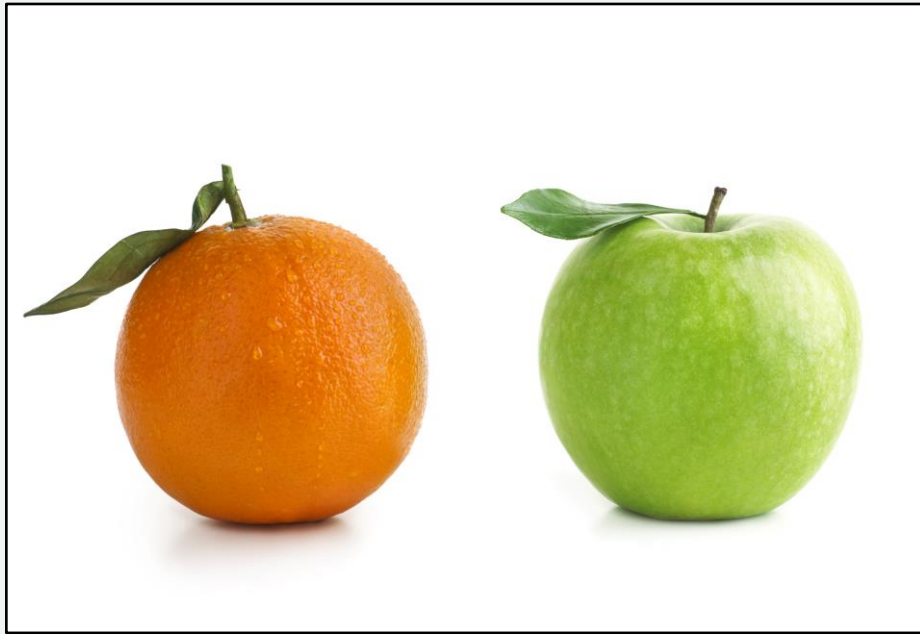
Problem Focus

- What to fix.
- Underlying grammar = problem, symptoms, causes, solutions, action plan, intervention.
- Analyzes things into pieces, guaranteeing fragmented responses.
- Slow! Takes a lot of positive emotion to make real change.
- Assumes we are constellations of problems to be overcome.

Appreciative Focus

- What to grow.
- New grammar of the true, good, better, possible.
- "Problem focus" implies that there is an ideal. AI breaks open the box of what the ideal is first.
- Expands vision of preferred future. Creates new energy fast.
- Assumes we are sources of infinite capacity and imagination.

AI is not THE solution ... It is a tool in your toolbox

The Appreciative Inquiry Process

Let's play with the process

AI Interview

- You will be partnered with another participant in a zoom breakout room
- Use the interview guide to interview your partner
- Take notes and feel free to use the prompt questions
- Switch roles about halfway through the breakout session.
- When the interview is complete, complete the summary sheet.
- Share with your interviewee what you learned that most interested you and thank the person for her or his time.
- You will have 30 minutes.
- When we return, be prepared to share your greatest discoveries.

Interview Questions

Discovery

1. What is it that you love the most about your personal life or career?
2. What is it that fundamentally drives you in life, and persist in your career or personal endeavors?
3. What talents do you have that you are most grateful for?
4. How have they helped you get where you are today?
5. What influences have inspired you throughout your life? In what ways have they provided you with existential guidance and a mental framework to develop your best self?

Dream

1. What purpose do you most wish to fulfill in your career or personal life? What is so wonderful about this dream?
2. What would it look like, concretely?
3. How would this accomplishment affect others and the world around you?
4. What would make you most proud of this?

Design

1. What are some ways that you brought this dream to life?
2. How did others help you?
3. How did you overcome obstacles?

Destiny

1. What is it that you can start doing today that will increase the likelihood of making this dream come true?
2. Who can help you?

Summary Sheet

1. What did you hear the person describing in the interview as her or his life-giving forces?

2. Identify three to five major themes or patterns that emerged from the interview?

3. What were the most quotable quotes that came from your conversation?

4. Please summarize what you heard, felt, or saw as the interviewee's strengths.

References

- "What is Appreciative Inquiry" by Joe Hall & Sue Hammond, www.thinbook.com

- Appreciative Inquiry: Change at the Speed of Imagination, by Jane Magruder Watkins and Berhard J. Mohr.

- Appreciative Inquiry: A Constructive Approach to Organization Development and Social Change, 2001 Cape Cod Institute Workshop by David Cooperrider and Marge Schiller

- Appreciative Inquiry: Igniting Transformative Action," by Bernard Mohr. From The Systems Thinker, Volume 12, #1, 2001, at www.pegasuscommunications.com.

- Other Resources:

  AI Listserve at ailist-admin@mail.business.utah.edu

  AI Commons website at http://appreciativeinquiry.cwru.edu/

  AI Consulting Organization is just getting started: a global network of AI practitioners at www.aiconsulting.org.