



ELEVATE
KANSAS
A Health Coalition Community

Beyond the Surface

**Asking the Right Questions &
Moving to Action**

July 30, 2025



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KANSAS

A Health Coalition Community

Uniting Coalitions to Advance Health

elevatekansas.org



Sunflower Foundation



**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
INSTITUTE**



Kansas



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Community Development Forums

Register Today!



DATES & LOCATIONS

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

- **Chanute**, September 9, 2025
- **Dodge City**, September 30, 2025
- **Topeka**, October 7, 2025
- **Colby**, October 21, 2025
- **Newton**, October 27, 2025

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration opens on July 21, 2025

COST: \$25.00 per person (lunch included)

To Register, Scan Here



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



QUESTIONS? CONTACT:

ElevateKansas@wichita.edu

<https://elevatekansas.org/>



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- All microphones have been muted. Please enter your questions/comments into the chat.
- Handouts will be shared via the Zoom chat during the presentation.
- Slides and resources will be shared via email after the session.
- Presentation recording and resources will be housed on elevatekansas.org
- Application Lab immediately following this presentation

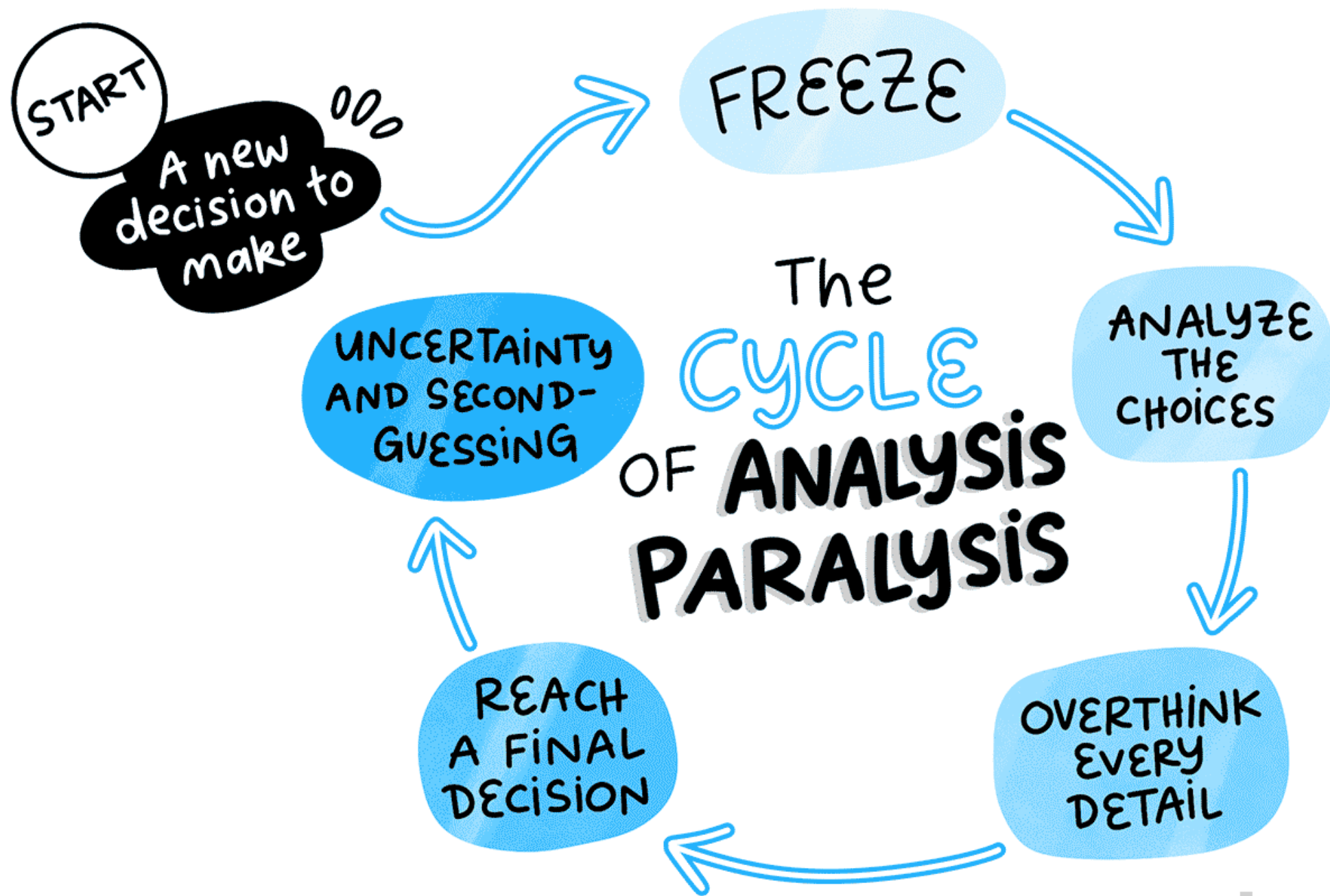
Beyond the Surface:

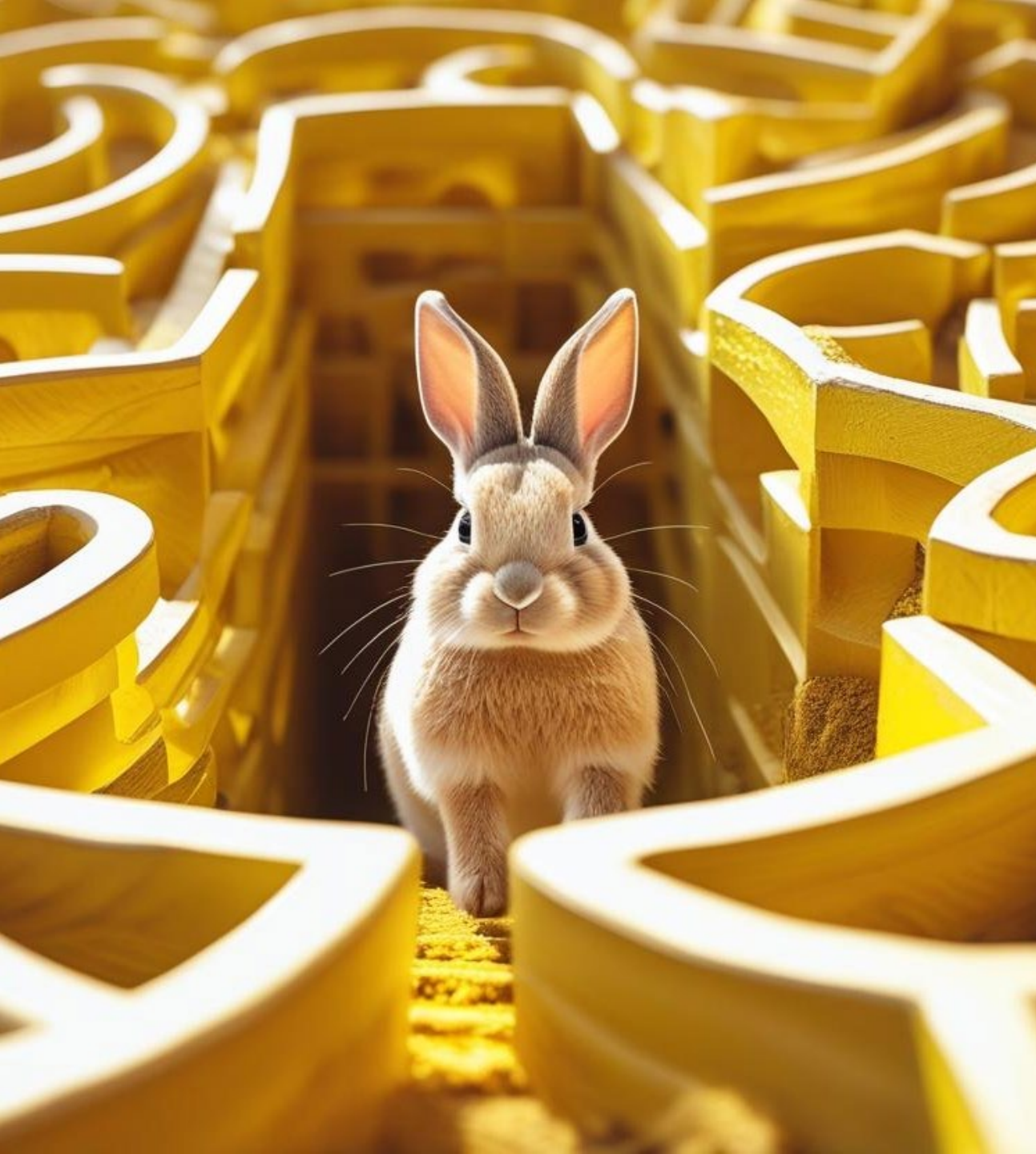
Asking the Right Questions and Moving to Action

Jessica Smith | Program Manager | WSU CPHI

Vanessa Lohf | Program Specialist | WSU CPHI







Appreciative Inquiry

What do we want more of?

Powerful Questions

What makes a question “powerful”?

Moving to Action

How do we move forward?



What is the “right” question?

One that is connected to your coalition’s goals.

Helps you:

- Understand the topic
- Focus on what matters
- Decide where to focus first

Is there a decision to be made?

If so, what is it?

What are we hoping to understand to make that decision?

How will this information help us do our work better?



Ap-pre'ci ate, v.,

1. The act of recognizing the best in people and the world around us;
2. Affirming past and present strengths, successes, and potentials;
3. To increase in value... e.g. The economy has appreciated in value

Synonyms: valuing, prizing, esteeming, honoring

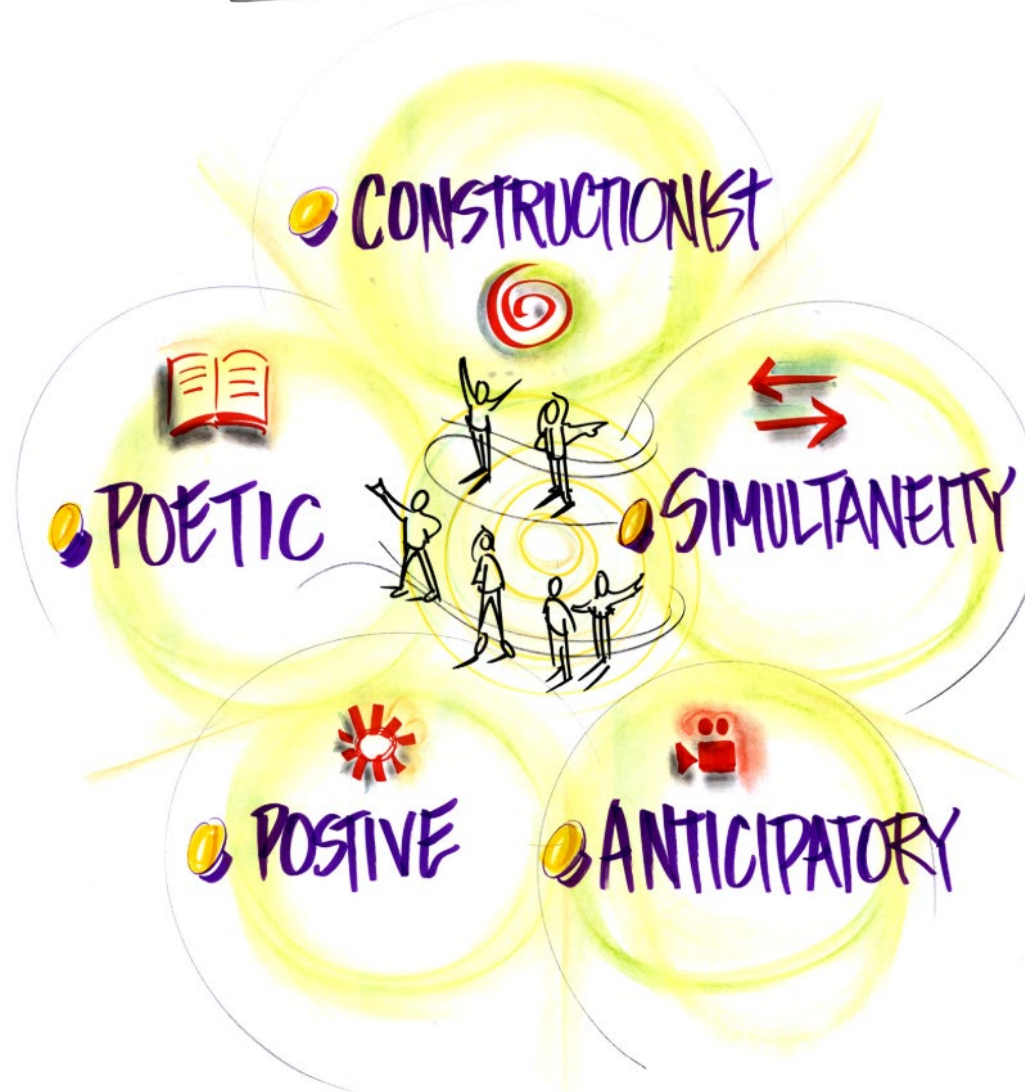
In-quire, (kwir) v.,

1. The act of exploration and discovery
2. To ask questions; to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities

Synonyms: discovery, search, study, systematic exploration

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

The PRINCIPLES



The 5-D cycle of Appreciative Inquiry

Definition

"What do we want more of?"

Choose an appreciative topic.

Discovery

*...appreciating
"the best of what is"*

Tell stories about what's working well. What assets do we have?

Dream

...imagining "what could be"

*Create shared vision
of a preferred future.*

Design

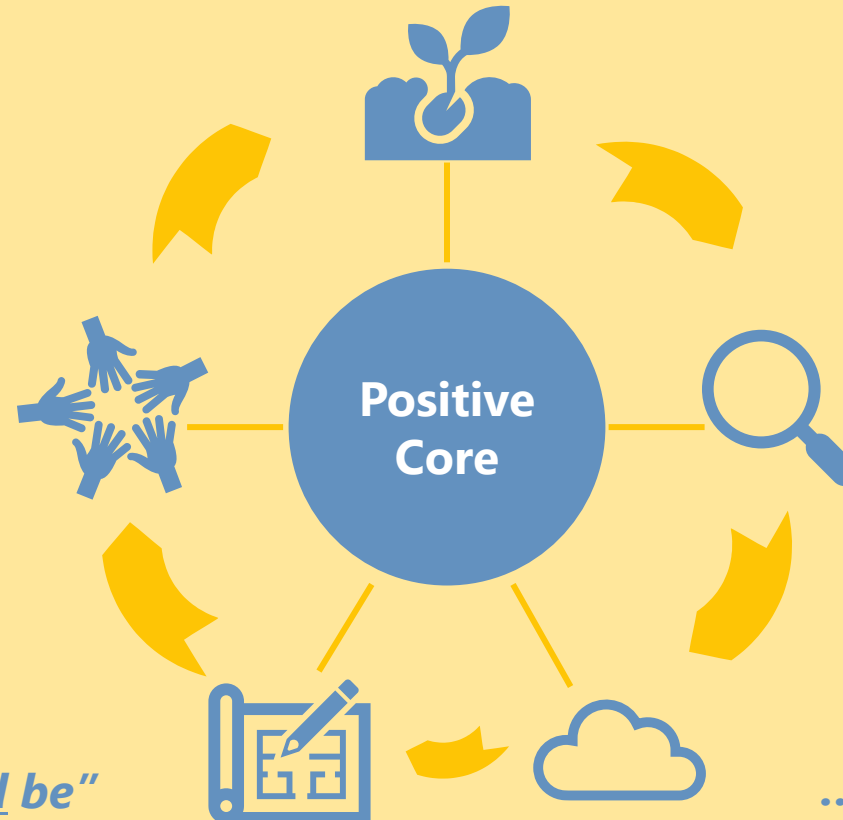
...determining "what should be"

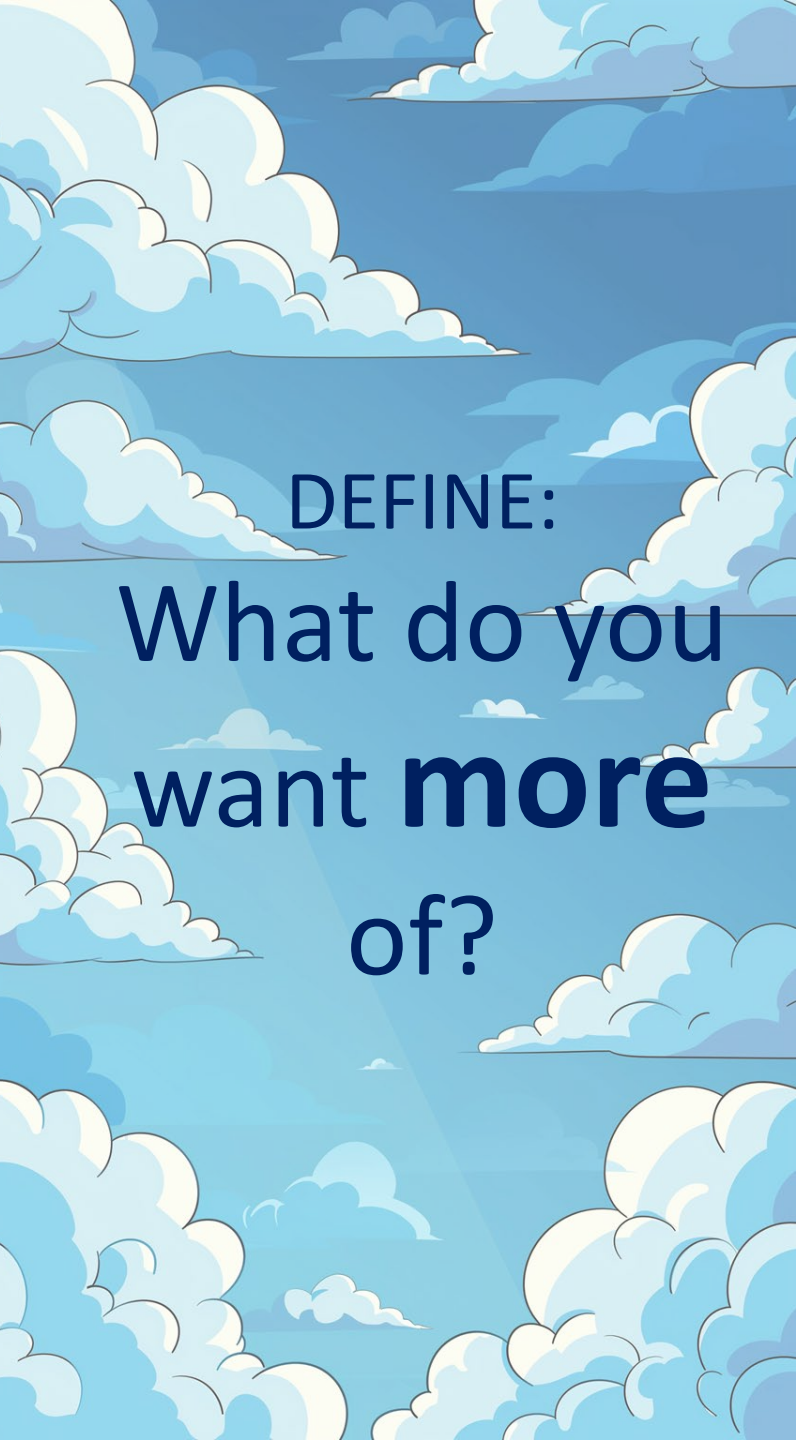
*Innovate ways to create
the ideal future.*

Destiny/Delivery

...creating "what will be"

*Live out your design and
make changes as needed.*





DEFINE:

What do you
want **more**
of?

PRESENTING PROBLEM	Affirmative TOPIC
High rates of inactivity	Safe and accessible built and social environments
High rates of substance abuse	Quality prevention programs
High maternal mortality rates	safe, respectful maternal health care
Turfism and silos	Collaborative community partnerships and systems



Construction

Scope

Assumptions

Question Construction – Less to More "Powerful"



Data Gathering Questions

Who? Which? When?
Where? Yes/No?



Process Questions

How?



Expanding Options

What? Why?

Question Construction – Less to More "Powerful"

Data Gathering Questions

Who? Which? When?
Where? Yes/No?

Process Questions

How?

Expanding Options

What? Why?



Are you satisfied with your work?

When have you been most satisfied with your work?

What about your work do you find most satisfying?

Why do you believe your work is satisfying?

Scope

What needs our immediate attention to meet your need?

What needs our immediate attention as a team?

What needs our immediate attention as an organization/coalition?

What needs our immediate attention as a “community”?

Every question has a direction.
Where it leads depends on its often-
hidden assumptions.

~ Rev. Bliss Brown, Imagine Chicago



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Why isn't this coalition effective?
What's causing this challenge and who is
responsible?

vs.

Tell me a story about a time when coalition
performance was high, and you felt engaged
and valued.

What were you and others doing?
How could you expand on that now?



Make the following questions more “Powerful”.

Is our coalition making a difference?

Do we have the right people at the table to make progress on this issue?

Have we made progress on our action plan?



From Data to Action

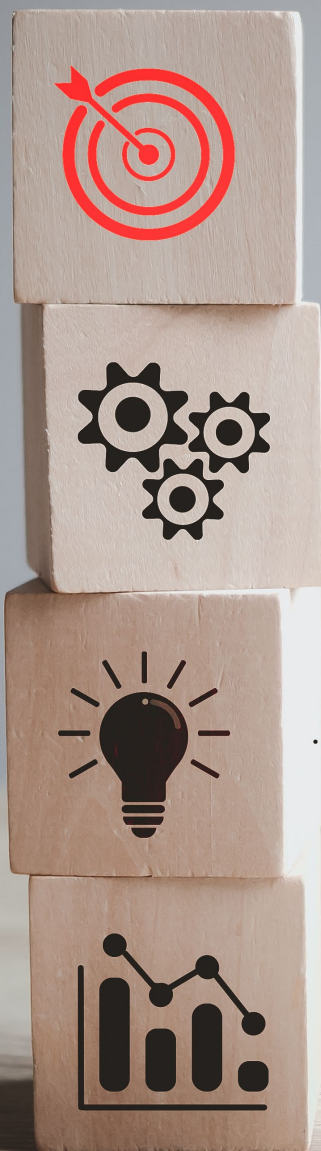
(Questions for moving from *Discovery*” to “*Destiny/Delivery*”)

Creating accountability

- Who will do the work?
- By when?

Measuring progress

- What is the baseline and what is the goal?
- What steps will get us there?
- How will we know that we have made progress?



“Destiny” In Motion

Regular check-ins

Continue asking good questions

- What progress have we made?
- What can we do more of?
- What do we need to adjust?

Recognize and celebrate contributions
to sustain energy!



What's emerging for you as you think about the Appreciative Inquiry approach to seeing the world?

What opportunities do you see for using Appreciative Inquiry in your work?

How can you support others in taking next steps toward incorporating this approach in your work?

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Future Coalition Compass Session

August 20th

Power in Partnership: Engaging with Community Decision
Makers the Right Way