



INSPIRING NEW  
PERSPECTIVES  
VISION. GROW. EMPOWER.



# EMBRACE THE ENERGY OF 2023

## TO GUIDE TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

PRESENTED BY: SUSAN MACDONALD

Inspiring New Perspectives

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# welcome

*Change, even dramatic change and transformation, is easier than we ever thought before – when it is approached in a positive, life-centric, appreciative way.*

*- David Cooperider*

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## Welcome to **Embrace the Energy of 2023** to **Guide Transformational Change!**

Embrace the energy of the new year and develop a plan for implementing positive professional transformation as an early childhood leader. In this inspiring and motivating webinar, author and professional coach, Susan MacDonald, will help you clarify a specific change you would like to make to enhance your work. Using the Appreciative Inquiry methodology, she will guide you through a process of creating an action plan to bring your positive change to life. All participants will receive a comprehensive workbook with reflective activities and a current listing of resources to fuel their continued learning.

This energizing webinar will ignite your passion and boost your confidence to:

- *Identify a professional transformation you would like to make.*
- *Clarify an actionable goal to focus your transformational journey.*
- *Design a realistic plan to make small changes, move past your challenges, and embrace new possibilities!*
- *Develop new ideas for supporting professional transformation in the educators you work with.*

This workbook will guide you through the process of identifying a professional change you would like to make and developing a clear impact goal and action plan.

Be intentional about finding time to complete the reflective exercises. The energy and focus that you put into these exercises will directly impact your outcomes.



# About Susan

**Susan MacDonald** is the founder of Inspiring New Perspectives, a consultancy focused on empowering educational leaders to create programs that deeply respect and nurture the possibilities that lie within each child, parent, and teacher. She has been developing and delivering inspirational courses and workshops for more than 25 years. Her background includes director of a Reggio-inspired preschool program, adjunct faculty at Lesley University and Wheelock College, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts licensing supervisor. She holds a master's degree in instructional design and several professional coach certifications. Susan is the past president of the Boston Area Reggio Inspired Network and past vice president of the Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children.

Susan is the author of two books, *Inspiring Early Childhood Leadership: Eight Strategies to Ignite Passion and Transform Program Quality*, and *Inspiring Professional Growth: Empowering Strategies to Lead, Motivate and Engage Early Childhood Teachers*.

Let's  
Connect

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Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/inspiringnew/>

# REFLECTIVE QUOTES

We are all sculptors, authors, and composers. Our lives, quite simply, are our most precious projects. And a life of joy – if we want it- is ours to cultivate and to cherish, to express and spread, and to discover and design. - Jacqueline Kelm

Far way in the sunshine are  
my highest inspirations.  
I may not reach them,  
but I can look up and see beauty,  
believe in them and try to  
follow where they lead....  
- Louisa May Alcott

Change is inevitable. Growth is intentional. -Glenda Cloud

DIG deep – get deliberate, inspired, and going. – Brené Brown

We must be the change we wish to see in the world. – Gandhi  
Determination, energy, and courage appear spontaneously when we care deeply about something. We take risks that are unimaginable in any other context. - Margaret J. Wheatley

The habits you created to survive will no longer serve you when it's time to Thrive. Get out of survival mode. New Habits. New Life. – Eboni Davis

It takes but one positive thought when given a chance to survive and thrive to overpower an entire army of negative thoughts. – Robert H. Schuller

My mission in life is not merely to survive. But to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some humor, and some style. – Maya Angelou

What got us here won't get us there. - Marshall Goldsmith

We thrive not when we've done it all, but when we still have more to do. – Sarah Lewis

I keep my mind focused on peace, harmony, health, love and abundance. Then, I can't be distracted by doubt, anxiety or fear. - Edith Armstrong

You rarely have time for everything you want in this life, so you need to make choices. And hopefully your choices can come from a deep sense of who you are. – Fred Rogers

# THE APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY 4D MODEL



## STEP ONE: Discover – The Best of What is

1. What do you love about the work you are doing?
2. What core values and aspirations have kept you committed to your work in the early childhood field?
3. What professional skills and talents are you most grateful for?
4. How have those skills and talents contributed to your success?
5. What do you feel most inspired by in your current work?

## STEP TWO: Dream – What Might Be

6. What are your hopes for your career in the early childhood field?
7. What is your biggest dream for your professional career?
8. What legacy do you hope to leave? How do you want to be remembered for your work?
9. What do you want to create?
10. Imagine it is January 2024, and you have been selected for an award for director or educator of the year! What professional skills helped you achieve this award? What specific words or phrases were used to describe your strengths?

# CREATE A PROFESSIONAL GROWTH WISH LIST

*If my mind can conceive it, My heart can believe it,  
I know I can achieve it!  
- Jesse Jackson*

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Set a timer for five minutes. List every hope, skill, and aspiration you would like to enhance or develop this year. Think beyond your current day-to-day reality. Let your ideas flow. Imagine that whatever you write on this paper will become a reality in the coming year.

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## STEP THREE: Design – How it Can Be

11. *Reflect on all that you have written in your Dream reflections, then list your ideas for what you can begin doing this year that will help you make your hopes and dreams a reality.*
12. *Review your ideas and prioritize one or two ideas to guide your work this year. What will have the biggest impact on your professional work? What will help you thrive in the workplace? What will renew your passion for your work?*
13. *Create one goal that captures the essence of what you want to achieve and will positively impact you.*

## STEP FOUR: Deliver – What will be

### CREATE A MIND MAP FOR YOUR IMPACT GOAL

Before you begin this exercise, gather three pieces of blank paper and a pen or colored markers.



- Draw a circle in the center of the page and write your impact goal (a short summary is fine) in the center of the circle.
- Set a timer for two minutes and write everything you can think of that will help you achieve your impact goal. Let the creative part of your brain take over, do not censor yourself, allow your ideas to flow and build off of one another.
- At the end of two minutes, write the very last thing that you wrote into the center of a circle on your second blank piece of paper. Set your timer for two minutes and begin the process again.
- Repeat step three for your third piece of paper. (You can continue repeating this exercise until you have exhausted your ideas. Some people do up to ten pieces of paper to thoroughly flush out their thoughts and ideas.)

Once you have completed your mind map, reflect on the following questions

14. List four to five small action steps you can begin to take to move you closer to achieving your impact goal.
15. For each action step determine a specific date for completion.
16. Create a one-page summary of your impact goal, action steps, and timeline

# 2023 IMPACT GOAL

*Because our expectations shape what we believe is possible, they shape our perceptions and actions. That means they also shape the outcomes. And that means they shape our reality. – Michael Hyatt*

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*Impact Goal* \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION STEPS	TIME FRAME
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- 17. Begin each day by asking yourself this question: What is one thing that I could do today, no matter how small, that would move me closer to achieving my goal? Then write your answer in your planner or on your daily to do list.
- 18. Place a time in your calendar for a weekly check-in. List what steps (no matter how small) you have taken towards achieving your goal. Find joy in the progress you are making.



# POSITIVE INQUIRY SKILLS: CRAFTING VITAL QUESTIONS

BY BART TKACZYK

Association for Talent Development

<https://www.td.org/insights/positive-inquiry-skills-crafting-vital-coaching-questions>

## 1. FIGURE OUT (“Discovery” Stage)

- *What about this topic energizes you?*
- *What’s already working well? What are your super-powers?*
- *Without being humble, please share a story of a time when you enjoyed some peak experience/performance that made you feel proud and had a particularly positive impact... What’s the big picture? What’s really going on?*
- *What one or two things do you wish more of?*

## 2. IDEATE (“Dream” Stage)

- *What’s the biggest dream for yourself these days? If you couldn’t fail, what might you do then? What if anything were possible? How might Superman/Mahatma Gandhi/Your Middle School Teacher/Mother Theresa/Martin Luther King, Jr./Marie Curie/James Bond handle this?*
- *Describe the future you want to move toward. Please use words, expressions, or images that capture your desired future. What are the forces shaping your own (working) life? You can pick any on Earth.*
- *Imagine you’re in a helicopter right now hovering above this issue. What can you see now?*
- *Picture it’s 2030, and you are awarded the Top Partner by the CEO for developing an enterprise that’s the best place to work anywhere. What might people notice about you? What part do you play in this story?*

## 3. TRANSFORM (“Re-Design” Stage)

- *How would you craft/(re)design your sunnier side of life/future working life?*
- *What should be the ideal? What can help you focus and energize your ideas, actions, or behaviors?*
- *Who’s likely to back you up? What enablers can you puzzle out?*
- *What wows?*

## 4. EXECUTE (“Delivery” Stage)

- *What exactly works?*
- *Where do we go from here? How are you already living your dream today?*
- *What baby steps will you take right now/today/tomorrow/next week/next month to actually make it happen?*
- *How would you like me to hold you accountable?*

# FIVE STRATEGIES OF APPRECIATE LEADERSHIP

ADAPTED FROM

MacDonald, Susan. Inspiring Professional Growth: . Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House, 2019. Pages 16 - 17

STRATEGY	LEADERSHIP PRACTICES	IMPACT
<b>INQUIRY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask positive questions that guide people to share their best experiences and thoughts or ideas about their future</li> <li>• Truly listen to their responses</li> <li>• Strive to create a culture of Inquiry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals know you value them and their contributions</li> <li>• Learning and innovation become culture norms</li> <li>• Relationships are deepened and willingness to change is increased</li> </ul>
<b>ILLUMINATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight the best you see in each individual</li> <li>• Share stories of best practice with individuals and the school community</li> <li>• Focus your observations on the strengths you see and share positive highlights</li> <li>• Cultivate each individual's unique strengths</li> <li>• Create collaborative opportunities for everyone to share their strengths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals feel valued for their strengths and are inspired to find new ways to use their strengths</li> <li>• Builds confidences</li> <li>• Fuels an upward spiral of achievement and growth for individuals and programs</li> </ul>
<b>INCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View each individual with a strengths-based focus</li> <li>• Consistently have meaningful growth-focused conversations with individuals from all positions, backgrounds and experiences.</li> <li>• Host opportunities that allow the voices of all of your employees, families and community members to be heard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a sense of belonging</li> <li>• Creates an environment of collaboration</li> <li>• Creativity and innovation are sparked by rich, inclusive dialogues</li> <li>• Fosters a sense of commitment to growth and change by everyone in the program</li> </ul>
<b>INSPIRATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inquire about hopes, dreams, and possibilities</li> <li>• Collaboratively create a compelling vision of the program operating at its very best</li> <li>• Establish a vibrant engaged community for everyone to learn and grow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a sense of direction by focusing on a brighter future</li> <li>• Gives people hope</li> <li>• Unleashes energy and inspires actions</li> <li>• Leads to innovation and positive changes in performance</li> </ul>
<b>INTEGRITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead by example</li> <li>• Consciously make decisions that are aligned with your core values</li> <li>• Communicate in a timely manner, with integrity and transparency</li> <li>• Create opportunities for genuine conversations even in challenging situations</li> <li>• Keep your word, your agreements, and your commitments to everyone in the program</li> <li>• Avoid judgement and gossip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This environment lets individuals know that they are expected to give their best and that everyone in the program is held to the same standards</li> </ul>

# RESOURCES

## ARTICLES

Fredrickson, Barbara. Are You Getting Enough Positivity in Your Diet? Greater Good Magazine, Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley. June 21, 2011

[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/are\\_you\\_getting\\_enough\\_positivity\\_in\\_your\\_diet](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/are_you_getting_enough_positivity_in_your_diet)

Menard, Julia. The 4 D's of Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Model & Process for Change. The Coaching Tools Company, Coaching Blog. July 18, 2022 <https://www.thecoachingtoolscompany.com/4-ds-appreciative-inquiry-model-process-for-change-by-julia-menard/>

## BOOKS

Burnett, Bill and Dave Evans. Designing Your Life: How to Build a Well-Lived Joyful Life. New York: Knopf Books, 2016

Digh, Patti. Life is a Verb: 37 Days to Wake Up, Be Mindful, and Live Intentionally. Guildord, CT: Skirt, 2008 <https://www.pattidigh.com/>

Heath, Chip and Heath, Dan. The Power of Moments. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017. <https://heathbrothers.com/>

Hyatt, Michael. Your Best Year Ever: A 5-Step Plan for Achieving Your Most Important Goals. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2018.

Kelm, Jacqueline. The Joy of Appreciative Living: Your 28 Day Plan To Greater Happiness Using the Principles of Appreciative Inquiry. Mooresville, NC: Venet Publishing, 2014 <https://appreciativeliving.com/>

Kieves, Tama. Inspired and Unstoppable: Wildly Succeeding in Your Life's Work. Tarcher/Penguin, 2012. <http://www.tamakieves.com>

MacDonald, Susan. Inspiring Early Childhood Leadership: Eight Strategies to Ignite Passion and Transform Program Quality. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House, 2016

MacDonald, Susan. Inspiring Professional Growth: Empowering Strategies to Lead, Motivate, and Engage Early Childhood Teachers. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House, 2019.

Sinek, Simon. Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action. New York, New York: Penguin Group, 2009.

Sturt, David, Nordstrom, Todd, Ames, Kevin, and Beckstrand, Gary. Appreciate: Celebrating People Inspiring Greatness. O.C. Salt Lake City, Utah: Trainer Institute Publishing, 2017

Verheijen, Luc, Tjepkema, Saskia and Kabalt, Joeri. Appreciative Inquiry as a Daily Leadership Practice, Taos Institute, 2020

Whitney, Diana, Kaplin et al. Appreciative Leadership Focus on What Works to Drive Winning Performance and Build a Thriving Organization. McGraw-Hill, 2010

## WEBSITES

AI Commons –Resources (articles, videos, books, and workshop materials) focused on Appreciative Inquiry and Positive Change <https://appreciativeinquiry.champlain.edu/>

# RESOURCES

Authentic Happiness - Learn about Positive Psychology through readings, videos, research, surveys, opportunities and more. <https://authentichappiness.org>

Greater Good Magazine: Science-Based Insights for A Meaningful Life. Includes articles, quizzes, videos, and podcast <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/>

Positive Psychology – Resources, including tools, techniques, courses and tips to help you bring positive psychology into your daily practices. <https://positivepsychology.com/>

## **VIDEOS:**

Barbara Fredrickson – Positive Emotions Transform Us <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKggZhYwoys>

Michael J. - Know Your Why <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lytFB8TrkTo&t=38s>

Robyn Strattion-Berkessel's Playful Inquiry – Try This Anywhere

## **PODCASTS:**

Brené Brown – Unlocking Us <https://brenebrown.com/unlockingus/>

Dan Harris - Ten Percent Happier <https://www.tenpercent.com/podcast>

Happier with Gretchen Rubin - <https://gretchenrubin.com/podcasts/>

# Upcoming Courses

## AND A LEADERSHIP RETREAT IN ITALY!

### INSPIRING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH FOR LEADERS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

Are you ready to reignite your passion, thrive as a leader, and discover new and empowering ways to sustain and recruit an engaged workforce? It's time to reduce the feelings of isolation and stress so that you can reconnect with your hopes and dreams and establish a more professional and positive work culture. Becoming a member of this five-month learning community will inspire you to rethink and refocus your work to re-energize and strengthen your learning community. This course includes:

- **Eight Live Interactive Professional Development Sessions** - to help you embrace a growth mindset, develop a vision-focused action plan, utilize strength-based communication and strategies for making transformational changes
- **Eight In-Depth Reflection and Resource Guides**
- **Four Live Building Connections Sessions** - where you can ask questions and be supported in a safe space with like-minded colleagues
- **Access to a Private Discussion Board**
- **A 24 Hour Professional Development Certificate**

This course begins on **January 24, 2023**, and ends on **June 6, 2023**. Eight live course presentations will be held on Zoom Tuesdays from 1:00 – 2:30 pm EST. The four Building Connections calls will be held on Wednesdays from 7:00 – 8:30 pm EST.

[CLICK HERE FOR COURSE DETAILS & REGISTRATION](#)

### DESIGNING AND FACILITATING INNOVATIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Do you have a unique skill or talent that you would like to share with other early childhood professionals? Sharing your knowledge and passion is an impactful way to enhance your professional skills and improve the early childhood field! This four-part interactive workshop series will guide you in creating a professional learning experience that showcases a specific area of interest or expertise you would like to present to early childhood professionals.

Susan MacDonald will use her experience as a professional speaker and instructional designer to support you in identifying an innovative focus for your project and provide a framework for bringing your project to life. This series will focus on:

- Exploring key components of Instructional Design and Adult Learning Theory
- Developing a clear and concise focus for your professional development project. Some possibilities include staff meeting presentations, workshops, webinars, conference sessions, and presentations for parent or board events.
- Understanding how to write learning objectives that focus on meaningful outcomes
- Creating a detailed action plan and a timeline for completing your project
- Providing insightful tips and strategies for facilitating engaging, inspiring, and interactive learning experiences

Participants will have the opportunity to present their ideas and receive feedback from each other. Susan will share a wealth of valuable resources, including information from her soon-to-be-published book – **101 Ways to Supercharge Professional Development Experiences!**

#### **COURSE DATES AND TIMES:**

The live course sessions will be held via Zoom from 6:30 – 8:00 pm EST on: **February 9, March 2 & 23, March 23, and April 13, 2023.**

[CLICK HERE FOR COURSE DETAILS & REGISTRATION](#)

# Join Susan

FOR AN INCREDIBLE LEADERSHIP RETREAT IN ITALY!



## ONWARD! REIGNITING YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

June 17-22, 2023

[CLICK HERE FOR COURSE DETAILS & REGISTRATION](#)

Are you ready to regain your focus, confidence, and purpose?

Supporting early childhood programs while facing societal and professional challenges has resulted in leaders feeling stressed and overwhelmed. This retreat is designed to inspire leaders to reconnect with their core values and professional aspirations.

Through the presentation of insightful strategies and well-researched tools, participants will learn new skills, habits, rituals, and daily practices to incorporate into their professional lives. In addition, leaders will engage in vibrant discussions, individual reflections, and reflective activities to develop an empowering plan for the next phase of their leadership work.

Small group professional development will be complemented by sightseeing excursions, amazing meals, and encounters with local artisans and townspeople, taking you inside village life.

This retreat will draw from the research in Susan's books, [Inspiring Early Childhood Leadership](#) and [Inspiring Professional Growth](#), and a wide variety of current resources.