



# **Appreciative Inquiry and the SIP**

# *Appreciative Inquiry (AI)*



*As a means of affecting change, Appreciative Inquiry shifts the focus from a deficit model that seeks first to identify problems and then potential solutions, to a model that recognizes the plentiful potential that already exists within our organization.*

# Appreciative Inquiry and the School Improvement Planning Process



*“The BIP states a commitment to an appreciative, collaborative, inquiry-based approach to improvement; this requires a multi-faceted approach to indicators of success, employing both quantitative and qualitative data.”*

*-- BIP Presentation to P/VP October 2010*

“I saw the angel in the marble  
and carved until I set him free.”

-- Michelangelo



**To incorporate an Appreciative Inquiry approach to  
School Improvement Planning, consider the  
following 5 guiding principles:**



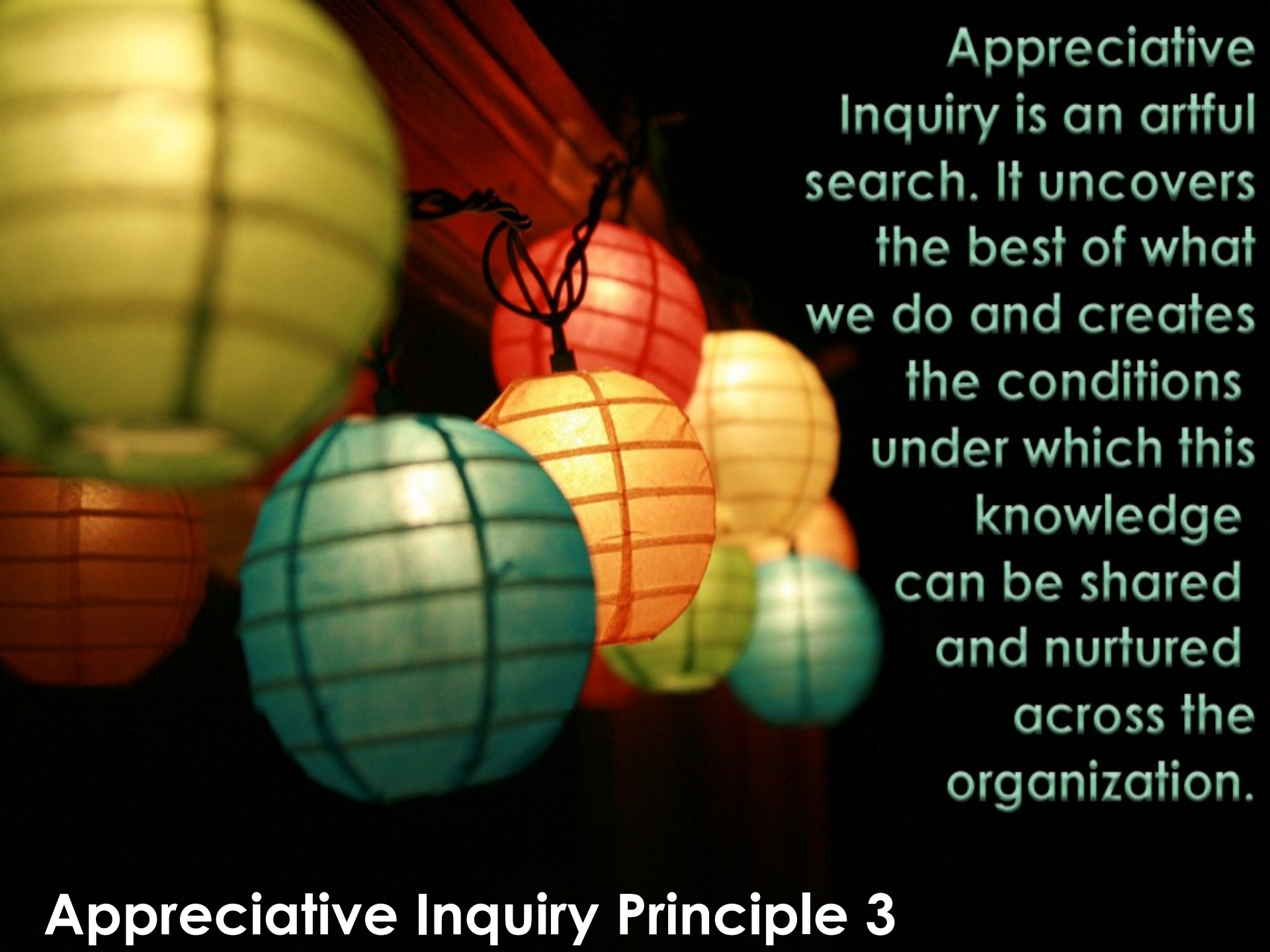
Every organization  
has strengths.  
Appreciative  
Inquiry  
discovers and  
celebrates  
those strengths.

**Appreciative Inquiry Principle 1**



Appreciative Inquiry is collaborative. It asks participants to be open to learning together. Participants work together to spread the seeds of best practices across the organization or school.

**Appreciative Inquiry Principle 2**



Appreciative Inquiry is an artful search. It uncovers the best of what we do and creates the conditions under which this knowledge can be shared and nurtured across the organization.

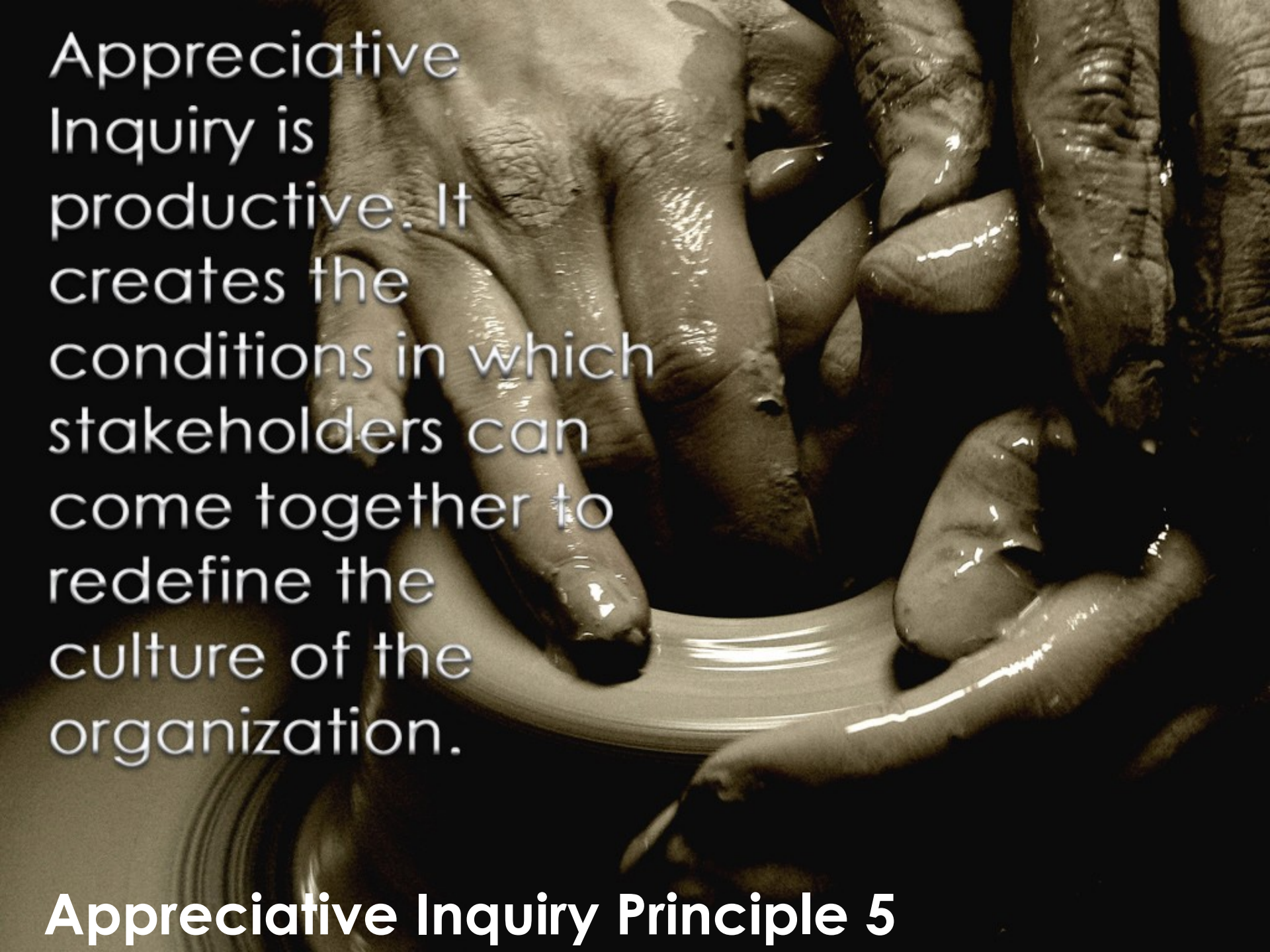
**Appreciative Inquiry Principle 3**



Appreciative  
Inquiry is  
inclusive.  
It invites  
participants  
from every  
corner of the  
organization to  
become  
involved.

**Appreciative Inquiry Principle 4**







Appreciative Inquiry is productive. It creates the conditions in which stakeholders can come together to redefine the culture of the organization.

**Appreciative Inquiry Principle 5**

# Framing OCDSB BIP Strategies as Guiding Questions to focus AI

## BIP Strategies:

- OCDSB Strategy #1:  To improve student achievement through a focus on innovative, creative and critical thinking (higher-order skills)
- OCDSB Strategy #2:  To improve student achievement through a focus on ongoing assessment and feedback

## AI Guiding Questions:

- What conditions exist within our school and community that foster innovative, creative and critical thinking skills? What is going on? Who is involved? What makes it work?
- Which assessment and feedback strategies do we use to bring about the greatest improvement in student achievement? What makes those strategies effective?

# Make a Positive Impact 2010: AI in Action



*"Problem solving as we know it sometimes gets us into a rut. Appreciative Inquiry will help us to find new direction, utilizing all the skills and talents within our own site, to make our own success stories. My school has lots of success stories which are in-house most times." – MAPI Participant*



*"It took practice to not see the bad things first, but to learn to see what was working and what was wonderful first instead and to focus on that. In doing this, I felt inspired and energized to pass on that positive in my work." – MAPI Participant*

“And as stories weave together, we can begin to notice patterns and insights that were not available to us before. In the end, we too may experience a collective insight, a wider wisdom, the magic of thinking together.” -- Margaret Wheatley





*“When we deliberately seek out and notice those qualities that we hold in high estimation, our act of noticing and valuing actually amplifies those qualities and increases their value.”*

*-- Barrett & Fry*



# A few ideas for incorporating AI in the SIP process ...

## **School Council:**

- *Dedicate a council meeting to Appreciative Inquiry.*
- *Ask council to engage in the discovery of what works really well to support student achievement at your school.*
- *Offer a few guiding questions to initiate dialogue.*

## **Staff Meeting:**

- *Invite staff to share their successes by framing guiding questions around current practices that best support student achievement.*
- *Be inclusive – invite staff members from all areas – teaching, support, custodial, etc...*

## **School Improvement Planning (full day):**

- *Create an opportunity for staff to visit classrooms looking for examples of innovative and creative practices that support student achievement.*
- *Have staff identify the very best of current practices to share.*
- *Use this discussion to guide the development of your SIP, including what students will do differently.*



yes

pride

caring

family

connected

courageous

creative

enthusiasm

contagious

warmth

inclusive

positive

commitment

productive

dedication

collaborative

participation