THE DIALOGIC MINDSET

IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Extending the argument made in Bushe & Marshak (2009) of the emergence of a new species of Organization Development (OD) that we label Dialogic, to differentiate it from the foundational Diagnostic form, we argue that how any OD method is used in practice will be depend on the mindset of the practitioner. Six variants of Dialogic OD practice are reviewed and compared to aid in identification of a Weberian ideal-type Dialogic Mindset, consisting of eight premises that distinguish it from the foundational Diagnostic Mindset. Three core change processes that underlie all successful Dialogic OD processes are proposed, and suggestions for future research offered.

Dialogic Organization Development is, we hope, a generative image that will allow Organization Development (OD) scholars and professionals to re-imagine and re-invigorate the theory and practice of OD. We believe that the past 25-30 years have seen a number of successful innovations in OD theory and practice that are significant departures from conventional OD. These differences, however, tend to be glossed over in OD textbooks, where many of these more recent innovations are shoehorned into the predominant "Diagnostic OD" mindset that is based on the foundational OD frameworks established in the 1960s and 1970s (Bushe & Marshak, 2009). In offering the image of Dialogic OD, we intend to create a space where a conversation can take place about the nature of organizations and organizing, about the nature of change processes and change agentry, and about the nature of leadership and consulting that adhere to OD values, but fall outside the diagnostic mindset. We believe that doing so allows us to see important underlying similarities in a variety of popular OD methods that can appear, on the surface, to be quite different, and that understanding these similarities will advance the theory and practice of Organization Development.

Our 2009 paper provided only the beginning outline of what Dialogic OD might be, and more in theory than in practice. More images of Dialogic OD, especially in practice, are provided in a Special Issue on Dialogic OD in the *OD Practitioner* (Bushe & Marshak, 2013). In this paper we seek to further elaborate the image of Dialogic OD without stifling its generative potential. We do this by offering a model of what we believe helps inform a "dialogic mindset". It is our contention that any specific instance of Organization Development practice is a product of the mindset of the practitioner. We think

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the term Dialogic OD loosely categorizes a mindset of OD practice that differs in fundamental ways from the foundational, Diagnostic OD mindset. In attempting to describe a Dialogic OD mindset, we are creating an "ideal type" in the Weberian sense, where we synthesize a number of discrete, more or less present but occasionally absent, action logics and attempt to create a unified analytic construct. To construct our Dialogic mindset we review six important theoretical and practice oriented streams we believe are good examples of the discrete influences that have helped inform this mindset. We have chosen ones that we think well represent each of two major developments in the social sciences since the 1980s contributing directly or indirectly to what is emerging as Dialogic OD, three based in the complexity sciences and three based in interpretivist social science. They are not the only influences, but are illustrative of the orientations or mindset(s) of more dialogically oriented OD types. Our contention is that they help to form a way of thinking that is significantly different from Diagnostic OD and not just an "add on," small variation, or additional intervention. In this task we are, at times, aided by positing a different, "Diagnostic OD mindset" – as a way to sharpen the distinctions we are trying to make. We do this with the assumption that neither ideal type is fully present in any particular practitioner. Instead, we assume that diagnostic and dialogic action logics are mixed and matched, perhaps serving as figure and ground to each other, with one being accentuated to varying degrees over the other, in the minds of individual practitioners, and even in the models and theories of those we highlight as sources of the Dialogic mind-set.

This paper is divided into five sections. In the first we briefly summarize our 2009 exposition of the key tenets of foundational OD theory and practice that are being violated by Dialogic change practitioners. The second section reviews work on organizational change representative of theory and practice that influence the dialogic mindset. The first part of that discussion considers change theorists influenced by the complexity sciences as applied to the social world or organizations. We briefly look at Harrison Owen and Open Space Technology, Peggy Holman and Emergence, and the work of Ralph Stacey, Patricia Shaw and colleagues on Complex Responsive Processes of Relating. Then we review work on organizational change influenced by interpretivist social science, briefly describing Barnett Pearce and Vernon Cronen's Coordinated Management of Meaning, the work of David Grant, Cliff Oswick and Bob Marshak on Organizational Discourse, and David Cooperrider, Frank Barrett and Diana Whitney's Appreciative Inquiry. In each case we will identify links between these theories/models and dialogic practices. We also identify what we believe to be the unique contributions of each orientation.

The third section begins by identifying perspectives and values that both the Diagnostic and Dialogic OD mindsets share. It then builds on the underlying similarities in the six reviewed orientations to offer eight premises that shape the Dialogic OD mindset that, we argue, are significantly different from the Diagnostic OD mindset. In the fourth section, we offer three propositions about the nature of transformational change associated with dialogic approaches to organization development. We argue that organizational change does not occur simply from having "good dialogues". Rather, the success or failure of any Dialogic OD intervention rests on underlying processes of 1) narrative and discourse, 2) emergence, and 3) generativity. Specifically, we propose that transformational changes, regardless of approach, occur because at least one, and perhaps more, of the following have occurred: 1) a change in the core narrative of the group or organization, 2) a disruption in patterns of organizing great enough to compel the group or organization to re-organize at a new, more complex level of organizing, and/or 3) the utilization or emergence of a generative image that provides new ways of seeing, communicating, and acting. In the fifth and final section we briefly discuss directions for future research.

BASIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DIAGNOSTIC AND DIALOGIC ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Organization Development emerged in the 1960s as an identifiable field of practice that included action research, survey feedback, T-groups, humanistic psychology, open systems theory, team building, and process consultation (French and Bell, 1973). In the last 30 years the post modern and linguistic turn in the social sciences, and the discoveries in non-linear and complexity natural sciences, have been influential in altering ideas about change and change practices. These have spawned methods like Appreciative Inquiry (AI), Open Space Technology, World Café, Coordinated Management Of Meaning, Art of Hosting, and The Conference Model, to name a few. Table 1 offers a list of 27 methods that deviate from some key tenets of OD foundational orthodoxy, most particularly, that diagnosis should precede actions and interventions to achieve planned outcomes (Bushe, 2010a; 2013). The following is a brief summary of points we made in an earlier paper (Bushe & Marshak, 2009).

Diagnostic Conceptions

Diagnostic OD is based substantially on the change theories developed in the 1940s-50s by Kurt Lewin and Ron Lippitt and their colleagues and followers (Lewin, 1947; Lippitt, Watson, and Westley, 1958). Change is conceptualized as a planned process of "unfreezing" a current social equilibrium, creating "movement" to a new and more desirable future equilibrium that then needs to be "refrozen" to sustain the change. A key aspect of planned change is action research, which includes "diagnosis" of the existing situation - the elements, factors and forces maintaining the current state – in order to know

TABLE 1. EXAMPLES OF DIALOGIC OD METHODS

1. Art of Convening (Neal and Neal)
2. Art of Hosting (artofhosting.org)
3. Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider)
4. Complex Responsive Processes of Relating (Stacey, Shaw)
5. Conference Model (Axelrod)
6. Coordinated Management of Meaning (Pearce & Cronen)
7. Cycle of Resolution (Levine)
8. Dynamic Facilitation (Rough)
9. Engaging Emergence (Holman)
10. Future Search (Weisbord)
11. Narrative Mediation (Winslade & Monk)
12. Open Space Technology (Owen)
13. Organizational Learning Conversations (Bushe)
14. Reflexive Inquiry (Oliver)
15. Real Time Strategic Change (Jacobs)
16. Re-Description (Storch)
17. Search Conference (Emery)
18. Solution Focused Dialogue (Jackson & McKergow)
19. Structure of Belonging (Block)
20. Syntegration (Beer)
21. Systemic Sustainability (Amadeo & Cox)
22. Talking stick (pre-industrial)
23. Technology of Participation (Spencer)
24. The Circle Way (Baldwin)
25. Visual Explorer (Palus & Horth)
26. Work Out (Ashkenas)
27. World Café (Brown & Issacs)

From Bushe, 2013

TABLE 2. CONTRASTING DIAGNOSTIC AND DIALOGIC OD

	Diagnostic OD	Dialogic OD
Influenced by	Classical science, positivism, and modernist philosophy	Interpretive approaches, social constructionism, critical and post modern philosophy
Dominant Organizational Construct	Organizations are like living systems	Organizations are meaning making systems
Ontology and Epistemology	• Reality is an objective fact • There is a single reality • Truth is transcendent and discoverable • Reality can be discovered using rational and analytic processes	• Reality is socially constructed • There are multiple realities • Truth is immanent and emerges from the situation • Reality is negotiated and may involve power and political processes
Constructs of Change	• Usually Teleological • Collecting and applying valid data using objective problem-solving methods leads to change • Change can be created, planned and managed • Change is episodic, linear, and goal oriented	• Often Dialogical or Dialectical • Creating containers and processes to produce generative ideas leads to change • Change can be encouraged but is mainly self-organizing • Change may be continuous and/or cyclical
Focus of Change	**Emphasis on changing behavior and what people do**	**Emphasis on changing mindsets and what people think**

From Bushe & Marshak, 2009

where and how to intervene to induce unfreezing and movement in the direction of the desired state.

In the late 1960s open systems theories became an integral part of OD (e.g., Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969), leading to models of how organizational elements (mission, strategies, structures, systems, leadership, culture, etc.) needed to be aligned with each other and strategically responsive to external environments in order to position the organization for future success. This led to the development of a number of different diagnostic models in the 1970s-80s identifying key organizational elements that needed to be part of an OD planned change effort (e.g. Burke, 2011; Weisbord, 1976; Nadler and Tushman, 1980). This assumes that there are important objective facts, currently unknown, that can be uncovered and verified through appropriate data collection and analysis.

Briefly, then, the core elements of the Diagnostic OD model of change that are at variance with what we label Dialogic OD, involve conceptualizing organizations as open systems that need to have all of their elements in alignment and responsive to changing environmental conditions and competitive threats. The current state of the team, organization, or community can be diagnosed to ascertain what aspects need to be changed and what means will best achieve the planned for outcome(s). Change is episodic and results from a planned and managed process of unfreezing, movement and refreezing. Furthermore, this should be done through a collaborative action research process emphasizing valid data, informed choice, and commitment

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(Argyris, 1973). Table 2, from Bushe and Marshak (2009) summarizes the differences we identified between Diagnostic and Dialogic OD.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO A DIALOGIC MINDSET

We now turn to an examination of some of the ideas and models that have directly or indirectly influenced a shift from a diagnostic orientation to a dialogic orientation among some OD practitioners. They fall roughly into two groups: those influenced by complexity science (though they may also be influenced by interpretive social science) and those influenced by interpretive social science (though they may also be influenced by complexity science). Harrison Owen, Peggy Holman, Patricia Shaw and Vernon Cronen were kind enough to comment on and provide suggestions for improving initial drafts of their respective sections. Because of our longtime involvement in the fields of Organizational Discourse (Marshak) and Appreciative Inquiry (Bushe) we didn't feel it was necessary to seek that kind of feedback on those sections. For each of the six reviewed, we will indentify linkages to what we are calling a Dialogic mindset, as well as our perspective on the unique contributions of each stream of thought to OD theory and practice.

COMPLEXITY PERSPECTIVES

HARRISON OWEN AND OPEN SPACE TECHNOLOGY

Open Space Technology, (OST) in pure form or in adaptive forms, is a common technology used by Dialogic OD practitioners. It originated in 1984 when Owen, an OD consultant and community organizer, was convening a symposium on Organizational Transformation and, based on his observation that the best part of previous symposiums had been the time between presentations, decided to design a conference that would emphasize informal, spontaneous groupings among participants. It morphed into an OD intervention in 1989 when he was asked to help Dupont organize its scientists for "breakthrough research" on a very short timetable.

Since then OST has become a globally used process with an active international community of registered practitioners in every country in the world except for a few in Africa (http://www.openspaceworldmap.org)

During an OST event, which can last from 1-3 days, a group of people convenes around an issue of concern. Individuals propose topics they wish to discuss, and a schedule is constructed of topics and meeting places. Individuals decide which meetings they wish to attend, the meetings happen, and then another wave of proposed topics and another schedule is created. Participants are asked to document what takes place in each working group. Toward the end of the event, the large group convenes to discuss what has been learned and decided (Owen, 2008a). A number of case studies describing significant breakthroughs and transformational changes in organizations and communities are available (Bastianello, 2002; Fulton, 2012; Hallgren, 2009; Oelofse & Cady, 2012; Owen, 1997, 2008b; Thakadipuram & Stevenson, 2013).

OST utilizes a deceptively simple set of principles and rules. The basic framework is to start with everyone sitting in a circle, create a bulletin board, open a marketplace, and then go to work. The four principles which are enunciated at every Open Space are 1) whoever comes are the right people, 2) whatever happens is the only thing that could have, 3) whenever it starts is the right time, and 4) when it's over it's over. The key principle is called the law of two feet: if you find yourself in any place where you are neither learning nor contributing, use your two feet and move to some better place.

Owen was ahead of his time in recognizing that complex, rapidly changing environments were not going to remain simply a category of organizational environment, but the normal state of affairs (Owen, 1987). In such a world, leaders need to learn how to aid organizational transformation, which they can expect to have to endure many times in their

careers, or suffer the same fate as the dinosaurs – at the top of the food chain one moment, and gone the next. He argues that formal organizing processes, with their emphasis on control, reduce the inherent capacity of human systems to create, produce, and grow through self-organization. He points out the irony that while most managerial texts acknowledge the existence of an "informal" organization through which organizational members get work done, very little about it has been studied or understood. He argues that managers and organizational consultants "work too hard" and that by letting go of control and getting out of the way, the natural self-organizing process can take over. He proposes that we consider self-organization as fundamental a mechanism as gravity, and that there is no such thing, at least among human beings, as a non-self organizing system. From this point of view, OST is an antidote to the ways in which self-organizing processes are thwarted and diminished by formal organizations. If formal organizations were designed around principles of self-organization, there would not be a need for OST (Owen, 2008b)

His early theoretical foundations rested on ideas of spirit and mythos as the animating forces for self organization (Owen 1987). More recently he has been influenced by the biologist Stuart Kauffman's (1995) work on complex adaptive systems (Owen, 2008b). Kaufman identifies the essential pre-conditions for self-organization among biological organisms as a) a relatively safe nutrient environment, b) a diversity of elements, c) complexity of connections, d) search for fitness, e) sparse prior connections, and f) being at the edge of chaos. These dovetail with the preconditions Owen has indentified for effective Open Space events: a) a "real", galvanizing issue that people care about, b) voluntary self selection of participants, c) the issue involves high levels of complexity, d) high level of diversity in the group, e) presence of passion and conflict, and f) urgency. The rules and principles of open space, combined with the voluntary nature of participation, help to ensure a relatively safe environment. The voluntary self selection and high levels of diversity in the group create a nutrient environment. The high level of participant diversity and the complexity of the issues they face ensure a diversity of elements and complexity of connections. Sparse prior connections, in Kaufmann's model, simply refers to little formal organization already existing – the design of OST ensures that. Finally, the presence of passion and conflict and the urgency people feel about the issue makes it likely the group will be at the edge of chaos.

LINKAGES TO DIALOGIC OD

In Owen's work we find some of the first movements away from the diagnostic, pre-planned outcome mind-set in organization development. While organizations are treated as open systems interacting with their environment, there is no assumption that any specific formal arrangements, processes or structures constitute a healthy organization. The interest, instead, is in the always emerging present. There is no requirement for a diagnosis before the intervention, though there are a set of preconditions for success. The creation of a marketplace of ideas is a sort of inquiry that surfaces the range of concerns and motivations in the group and identifies the varying interests and motivations of individuals. There is little in the way of facilitation and, besides the law of two feet, no prescriptions for how people should behave or how to engage in "good dialogue". Instead, the consultant creates a container with a minimum set of conditions designed to encourage self-organizing processes. Emphasis is placed on creating conditions for new and different conversations to take place, particularly by creating opportunities to evoke new conversations and to change who is normally involved in conversations. That social reality is an emergent, ongoing process of construction is implied in Owen's writing but not explicitly dealt with. Certainly there is the sense that there are multiple, competing perspectives and "realities" and that organizations are better served by allowing them all voice than by trying to establish the veracity of any particular point of view. Indeed, the theory and

process of Open Space views hierarchy as an impediment to change and promotes a hetararchical organizing process that assumes change can and does happen from anywhere and traditional top-down change processes are problematic.

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OD THEORY

Owen was, as far as we can tell, the first OD theorist to propose that environments of rapid change and complexity require the ability to guide self-organizing transformation in self and systems. He proposed that when we are at our best as consultants/facilitators/hosts, we create a space that allows what is trying to become, become. Before Bridges' Transitions model became popular, Owen identified what he called "open space" as a necessary time and place between what can no longer be and what is still to be, and that this was essential to transformation. He showed us that such open space requires highly diverse group members, the presence of passion and conflict, and a sense of urgency to do its organizational development work. He contends that the job of the leader/consultant is to provide a nutrient environment for informal networks and innate motivations to coalesce around the desired and the doable. He also showed us that too much "leadership" of the planning and controlling kind, may be more debilitating, than not enough.

PEGGY HOLMAN AND EMERGENCE

Holman (2010, 2013) a Dialogic OD practitioner and lead editor of *The Change Handbook* (Holman, Devane & Cady, 2007), while grounded in Open Space Technology, extends Owen's application of complexity science to offer a perspective on organizational change that incorporates more dialogic change practices and a greater role for the leader and consultant. Contending that emergence is "nature's way of changing, in which increasingly complex order arises from disorder" (Holman, 2013, p.19) she offers a set of lens for identifying the process of emergent change and practices for making emergent change successful. Central to her theory of practice is a three step process of disruption, differentiation, and coherence. Building on the observations of bio-chemists studying dissipative structures (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984) she asserts that when complex systems are disturbed in a way they can't absorb, there is an initial falling apart. They either re-organize at a more complex level of organization, or they disintegrate. Holman argues that social systems are more likely to transform to more complex levels of organization if, first, increased differentiation is encouraged in the system followed by efforts to find new levels of coherence.

As a practitioner of transformational change, Holman encourages leaders to embrace disruption, to see it as a source of possibility and renewal. It seems intuitively obvious that transformational change cannot occur without disruption yet she notes managers, and the diagnostic OD mindset, view disruptions without a planned and managed process of movement and re-stabilization as dangerous or failure; something to be resisted and avoided. Instead she asks us to consider how can we disrupt coherence compassionately? Her answer is to ask possibility oriented questions in the midst of disturbances and to invite all members of the system being disturbed into a container in which dialogue about such questions can occur. She points to the kinds of questions Appreciative Inquiry practitioners use in the discovery phase as a good example of possibility oriented questions that can disrupt compassionately.

A key proposition of Holman's is that a more complex coherence cannot emerge without first increased differentiation amongst the parts. This is one explanation for why increasing the diversity amongst participants invited to join in dialogue leads to better OD outcomes. It also points to one of her more intriguing prescriptions for Dialogic OD practitioners: to emphasize the differences among participants before attempting to forge a new coherence. "Dialogic practices that thrive brilliantly support the counterintuitive insight of spaces for

differentiation: pursuing what matters to us individually enables us to discover commonalities in our mutual needs and longings" (Homan, 2013, p.23). Or as Bushe (2009) has put it, teams (organizations, communities) are built and sustained the more individuals believe they can voice their unique perspectives, feelings and desires without fear of being shamed or excluded.

Coherence can then emerge, Holman argues, through reflecting together to find meaning and coherence. Her model proposes that if a space has been created where conversations among diverse participants, who are part of a system experiencing disruption, allow for individuals to speak to what is most important to them and most alive in them and most seeking to actualize, then there is a much greater chance that a more complex re-organization of the system will occur. She points out that reflection has two meanings; one is to be a mirror for others, to reflect back what is being heard. The second is to sense patterns and meanings that are emerging. She points out that dialogic practices that successfully utilize emergence for productive transformational change involve creating conditions that motivate participants to deeply listen to each other, recognizing that it can be a leap of faith to believe that by surfacing what matters most to ourselves and each other, new meanings and coherence will become visible.

In her 2010 book she offers a set of steps for engaging emergence productively which she labels 1) step up, 2) prepare, 3) host 4) engage, 5) iterate. In her 2013 paper she reduces these to a simpler, and more focused set of prescriptions. First, create a container for dialogue by asking possibility oriented questions, invite the diversity of the system and be welcoming. Second, create opportunities for individual expression and connection. Third, reflect together to find meaning and coherence.

LINKAGES TO DIALOGIC OD

Holman is more emphatic than Owen in seeing organizational change as a continuous flow, as opposed to the more episodic (unfreeze, movement, refreeze) view of the Lewinian diagnostic mindset. Even during "steady state", organizations experience disruptions people may ignore or adapt to but business as usual continues. Incremental shifts occur from bigger disruptions where changes are integrated into the current state in a way that improves the current state. Emergence occurs when principles that keep a system orderly break down. She is also more social constructionist in taking account of how meaning is made and re-made through conversation, through the nature of questions asked and through processes of reflection and collective meaning-making. She does not propose an initial diagnosis before taking action but she does advocate collective inquiry. However, the purpose of this inquiry is not to uncover a hidden truth about the organization, but initially to encourage the variety of perspectives and motivation that are dormant in the system to be voiced and later to identify emerging possibilities for coherence. She suggests that leaders and consultants should emphasize bringing the right people into a container in the right way. Owen manages the problem of how to create a safe and nutrient environment by advocating voluntary participation in dialogic events. Holman believes that more needs to be done to ensure the complexity of the system and issues are present, and that their motivation and willingness to interact authentically is engaged during dialogic events. Holman aligns with Owen's essentially heterachichal approach to change, with an even greater belief that in the ever ongoing flow of organizing, change happens from anyone, anywhere, anytime. Her stance as a consultant, however, is much more to fully engage, with the assumption that the consultant is a part of the emerging now, and cannot stand apart from it. While Owen describes a consulting style of minimal intrusion, Holman advises us to tune into our own thoughts, feelings and wants, to identify what matters to us, to engage authentically with the other, to share in the reflection and the search for meaning and coherence.

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OD THEORY

Holman's signature contributions include the advice to embrace disruption as an opportunity for emergence. Become compassionate hosts, welcoming who and what needs to interact. Disruption tends to increase differentiation which is required for re-organization at a higher level of complexity. Encourage creative engagement, supporting people to differentiate through expressing what matters to them personally. After differentiation is underway, pay attention to the commonalities, convergences and coherence that are emerging. As they discover those connections, differences that make a difference emerge. Inviting people to name them supports re-organization at a higher (and hopefully wiser) level of complexity.

RALPH STACEY, PATRICIA SHAW AND COMPLEX RESPONSIVE PROCESSES OF RELATING

Another stream of complexity thought relevant to Dialogic OD has been advanced by Ralph D. Stacey and his associates Patricia Shaw and Douglas Griffin at the Complexity and Management Centre, Hertfordshire University, UK. Through various published works, including several books in the Complexity and Emergence Series published by the Centre, they have articulated a perspective called "complex responsive processes of relating" as a way to understand organizations, knowledge creation, and change (e.g., Griffin, 2002; Shaw, 2002: Stacey, 1996; 2001; 2011).

The complex responsive processes of relating perspective, primarily articulated by Stacey, evolved over time and included some reversals as well as orientations to complexity and organizations that differ in important ways from other discussions of complexity and organizational phenomena. Stacey's initial work on this topic in the 1990s was driven by trying to understand how and why managers continued to attempt to predict, plan and manage outcomes when their efforts were usually unsuccessful. This led him to explore the then emerging complexity sciences in physics which detailed the unpredictability of outcomes and the new ideas of self-organizing complex adaptive systems as ways to understand organizational dynamics and why strategic planning didn't work as intended.

During this earlier period he created what is known as the Stacey Agreement and Certainty Matrix (1996, p. 47), which, as will be explained, he later renounced. This matrix was originally intended to provide a contingency approach for when to use different types of thinking in management decision-making situations. The matrix is created by locating decisions along two axes: from Close to Certainty to Far from Certainty about cause-effect relations and from Close to Agreement to Far from Agreement amongst actors about what to do. This led to five decision situations: 1) technically rational decision-making when agreement and certainty are both close; 2) political decision-making when agreement is moderately away and certainty is close; 3) judgmental decision-making when agreement is close but certainty is moderately away; 4) "muddling through" or innovative decision-making in the "zone of complexity" when both agreement and certainty are moderately far; and 5) anarchy or chaos when both agreement and certainty are far away. Following this matrix one would potentially use management planning and predictive tools in situations where there is relatively high certainty and agreement while adopting insights from the complexity sciences as the situation bordered on the edge of chaos in the complexity zone. This matrix model has been widely adopted and adapted by others and reduced in some versions to four situations: simple, complicated, complex, and chaotic. This model is used by some to suggest there are situations that are more simple or certain where rational tools of planning and decision-making apply. Other situations that are more complex or chaotic call for different approaches relying on innovation and self-organization.

This contingency thinking led Stacey to later renounce his matrix because he had come to the conclusion that all organizational situations are inherently complex and continually emerging, and that ideas of rational planning and control are illusionary, but play a vital role in containing anxiety in the face of the radical uncertainty of human action. "From this perspective the future is under perpetual construction through continuous processes of relating, which have the inherent, spontaneous capacity for coherent patterning, paradoxically displaying both continuity and potential transformation at the same time" (Stacey, 2001, p. 68).

Stacey and his associates also declined to apply the findings of the complexity sciences in physics and biology directly to organizational dynamics, arguing instead that because organizations consist of and are created by human beings it is better to consider ideas from the complexity sciences as analogies rather than directly applicable principles. In the same vein, because human beings are involved there must also be consideration of such factors as emotions, power, and anxiety as contributing dynamics to the complexity of all organizational situations. More specifically, Stacey argues that all relating is power relating in the sense that relating is simultaneously enabling and constraining, creating power differences that reveal themselves in various figurations that are paradoxically stable and unstable at the same time. This patterning emerges continuously as turn-taking/turn- making sequences, leader-follower dynamics, insider/outsider groups, contention/cooperation, identifying of sameness/difference. This also leads to tensions and anxiety and can produce disruptive or even destructive change. Thus Stacey rejects ideas that complete cooperation is possible. Instead, complex responsive processes of relating inherently involve both cooperation and contention simultaneously.

Finally, what began as a complex responsive processes perspective came to explicitly include "of relating" as a way to emphasize that all knowledge, and reality for that matter, is created and re-created in the on-going social interactions among people; and that there is no objective reality outside of the ongoing processes of relating, which are primarily through communicative interactions . "From this perspective, the process of perpetual construction is one of communicative interaction, in the living present, between human bodies and the context they find themselves in" (Stacey, 2001, p.163). What is most important and controversial in Stacey's work is his argument that complexity demands a processual mode of understanding rather than a systems perspective. Change and transformation occur when there is some type of disruption to the ongoing patterns of communicating and relating, even though the outcomes of such disruptions cannot be planned or controlled. "However, without such disruption to current patterns of collaboration and power relations there could be no emergent novelty in communicative interaction and hence no novelty in any form of human action. The reason for saying this is that disruptions generate diversity. One of the central insights of the complexity sciences is how the spontaneous emergence of novelty depends upon diversity…" (Stacey, 2001, p. 149).

In a book that speaks directly to applying the complex responsive processes of relating perspective to organizational change, Patricia Shaw (2002) questions all OD approaches that tacitly or explicitly assume there are objective situations that managers and consultants can stand outside of, and intentionally act upon, to achieve planned changes. This includes some applications of approaches, such as Future Search and Open-Space, which we consider dialogic or proto-dialogic. Her reasons for questioning are varied, but include the explicit or implicit presumption that leaders or consultants are able to structure processes that will lead to, or move in the direction of, an outcome or agenda desired by the organization's hierarchy (see chapters 6 & 7, Shaw, 2001). This is based on her taking seriously the complexity understanding that whatever is actually emerging is doing so in the interplay or interweaving of myriad intentions and actions. Change happens as we go about trying to make certain changes happen.

Her orientation is that one joins complex responsive processes of relating that are on-going, wherever there is opportunity and/or energy, and participate in ways that shift the processes in new directions towards a future that is constantly becoming. Her role as a consultant is to be part of on-going conversations and emerging situations while embracing the paradox of acting with intention into the unknowable. One of the central roles of the consultant is to act in ways that move into small openings and differences that are often unseen in the on-going patterns and narratives of conversations that are creating and sustaining the ways things are (including those advanced or sustained by organizational leaders). Thus new possibilities can be generated and developed as opposed to implementing pre-planned interventions. Such openings occur from within the sense-making process and so ensure that new moves can only be made that literally *make sense* to those involved in a network of relations – new contexts of meaning and joint action emerge. "I am suggesting that we could approach the work of organizational change as improvisational ensemble work of a narrative, conversational nature, a serious form of play or drama with an evolving number of scenes and episodes in which we all create our parts with one another" (Shaw, 2002, p. 28). Ray and Goppelt (2013) offer another description of how Shaw's perspective can influence an OD consultant's orientation and practice.

LINKAGES TO DIALOGIC OD

While there is some overlap with the perspectives of Owen and Holman, there are some major differences that primarily arise from a belief that there are no situations of enough certainty to be able to plan, control, or facilitate change that has a pre-determined end in view. As a result, there are no prescriptions for creating containers or holding dialogic events, although such situations may arise in the course of work as part of the patterning of communication. Like Holman, they view organizations as on-going communicative and relational processes among people which create and re-create organizational "reality," although there is a greater explicit emphasis on the role of power differences in sustaining both continuity and change. Perhaps more than Holman they emphasize that everyone - consultants, managers, workers - are part of those processes. Consequently, there is no place where one can stand apart from and study or diagnose a situation, nor are there any independent objective organizational aspects to be diagnosed. Change occurs as a result of disruptions to the existing narratives and patterns of communicative interactions and always involves shifts in the existing power and political processes. Disruptions may be intended but cannot be fully planned or controlled to achieve specified results. These disruptions involve everyone, including consultants, and add novelty and diversity to the situation stimulating generativity and new possibilities as well as sudden reversals and stagnations. In this way all participants are always in the midst of a complex dance of change, where experiences of initiation and completion pattern the flow of events.

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OD THEORY

What has become known as "the Hertfordshire group" invites us to see that all organizational situations are complex and not amenable to control and planning to achieve predetermined outcomes, but they play a vital role in containing anxiety in the face of the radical uncertainty of human action. The complexity sciences in biology and physics are not directly applicable to social systems, but can serve as analogies. Complexity demands a processual mode of understanding rather than a systems perspective. Communicative interactions involve patterns of power relationships that are simultaneously enabling and constraining and foster inclusion/exclusion, identity and anxiety dynamics. These patterns emerge continuously and are paradoxically stable and unstable at the same time. Change results from ongoing disruptions or shifts in communicative processes of relating and power patterns. The consultant cannot stand apart from the ongoing

processes of transformation and becoming. Instead the consultant participates in those processes by acting with intent into an unknowable future.

INTERPRETIVE PERSPECTIVES

BARNETT PEARCE, VERNON CRONEN AND THE COORDINATED MANAGEMENT OF MEANING

Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM), an interpretive theory of interpersonal communication, has informed a generation of OD consultants since Barnett Pearce (who co-created CMM with Vernon Cronen in the mid 1970's) began teaching in the School of Human and Organizational Development at Fielding University in 1997. "CMM is grounded in pragmatism, however, not only by its interest in what people actually say and do (rather than abstractions such as attitudes, power, values, etc.), but also in its spirit of wanting to do something constructive in the social worlds that it interprets and critiques." (Pearce, 2004, p.45).

Since its inception, Pearce and Cronen have contended that CMM is more interested in developing people than producing propositions and is a "practical theory" (Cronen, 1995). Through the Public Dialogue Consortium, Pearce extended CMM from a lens for understanding how meaning is constructed to a set of practices for public engagement in controversial issues (Pearce, 2012) notably the Cupertino Community Project (Spano, 2001). CMM envisions a communicative act as doing something, as making up the social objects we encounter in our interactions with others. Since communicative acts cannot be done alone, each act is done *to*, *for*, or *against* someone, with meaning made by the conjoint action of multiple persons. Unlike the psychological orientation of Diagnostic OD, which tends to see the outcomes of communication as a result of the skills and characteristics of individuals, CMM views the outcomes of communication as a joint construction produced within a hierarchy of meanings in which the actors are embedded, most notably the stories they are living and the stories they tell, and influenced by the unfinished sequence of co-constructed actions in the to and fro of interaction.

CMM has produced a number of models for answering four basic questions of any pattern of interaction: 1. What are we/they making together? 2. How are we/they making it? 3. What are we/they becoming? 4. How do we/they make better social worlds? OD practitioners describe the theory as influencing how they think and the ways in which they intervene in organizations (Goldsmith, Habibi & Nishii, 2010). Descriptions of the use of CMM by consultants and facilitators focus mainly on how they can use CCM models and tools like the serpentine model (Cronen, Pearce & Snavely, 1979), constitutive and regulative rules (Pearce & Cronen, 1980), logical, and other "forces" (Cronen & Pearce, 1981), the hierarchy of meaning (Pearce, 1994), strange and charmed loops (Cronen, Johnson, & Lannamann, 1982), and the LUUUTT and Daisy models (Pearce and Pearce, 2001) to describe and diagnose how patterns of communication are creating whatever outcomes they are creating, and to plan how to intervene to create "better" outcomes. Barge, discussing what practitioners using CMM methods might consider "better", argues that "(S)everal possibilities exist that have been mentioned in the literature such as forward movement (Cronen & Lang, 1994), enhanced coordination (Pearce, 1976), liberation (Cronen, Chen, & Pearce, 1988), and diversity (Cronen, 1991) as well as several not mentioned specifically by CMM theory but that would seem to resonate with CMM's commitments such as freedom, responsibility, justice, and empowerment."(Barge, 2004, p.193)

Pearce's description of his use of CMM in a community development project (Pearce & Pearce, 2000) helps us ground a description of CMM as an OD method. He treats talk as a form of action, not a substitute for it. Creating certain kinds of talk was,

for him, the necessary and sufficient condition of success. This required enactment of a "charmed loop" between stories of "self" (standing one's ground), "relationship" (being profoundly open to the other), and "episode" (co-constructing a sequence of actions that invites participants to remain in the tension between self and relationship)" (Pearce & Pearce, 2000, p.414). The ability to do this within the context of public events requires a set of CMM based interventions of "(re)framing comments by using circular, reflexive, and dialogic interviewing procedures; positioning participants as reflecting teams and outsider witnesses; and coaching participants in dialogic communication skills. Strategic process and event designs are intended to create the preconditions for just this kind of intervention and the resulting form of communication" (*ibid*, p. 416).

As consultants to the multi-year project, Pearce and colleagues set themselves the task of managing the "architecture of conversations" about issues, focusing on their inclusivity and quality. Utilizing the hierarchical and serpentine models for mapping public conversations that portray the multiple, unfinished meanings of each act, "(they) enabled us to see power as only one of many possible interpretations and helped us to identify openings for interventions that would transform power relations into collaborative participation in dialogic communication. For example, … being careful to invite all stakeholders to our meetings, including some who would not normally be in conversation with each other." (*ibid*., p. 412). They enlarged the CMM concept of "episode" to operate at three levels: a strategic design level that maps out a sequence of events that respond to existing conditions and lead to preferred outcomes, an event design level, which maps out sequences of activities that will occur in any one meeting, and the communication act level, where the concept of episode had previously been focused. During events, "facilitators' responsibilities include (a) helping the group follow a useful episodic sequence; (b) remaining neutral (actively aligning one's self with all of the participants, creating a climate of reciprocated trust and respect); (c) listening actively and helping participants listen to each other; (d) helping participants tell their own stories (taking a not-knowing stance, expressing curiosity, asking systemic questions); and (e) helping participants tell better stories by introducing appreciative and systemic perspectives through questions and reframing, weaving participants' stories together." (*ibid*., p.416-417). Pearce and Pearce emphasize the importance they came to place on avoiding "problem talk", the kind of disrupting discourses that feature blame and victimhood, and focusing on the positive visions that underlie complaints.

LINKS TO DIALOGIC OD

Practitioners grounded in CMM see human and social realities as co-constructed phenomena that emerge through communication. Pearce and Cronen (1980) believe that any attempt to reduce our lives to mere facts is a mistake and will ultimately fail. The universe is far bigger and subtler than any possible set of stories by which we can make it coherent. It makes sense to ask, of any social pattern, how is it made and how might we remake it differently. CMM is mainly interested in the meaning-making process, and views organizations as systems in which meaning is made. Not only are there multiple realities in any given organization, there are multiple meanings existent in each person in each interaction, meanings that exist in a nested set of contexts and stories from one's socio-historical context thought to the role one is occupying in any local interaction.

Meanings emerge through processes of coordination among people, mostly out of awareness, and bringing those meaning making processes into awareness can aid people in organizations to create new, more convivial meanings. Talk is action, and the focus of change is on how people talk. This focus can operate at an individual level, such as coaching managers in how to make sense of themselves and situations that change their awareness and options

(Oliver & Fitzgerald, 2013), in facilitating interactions between people and small groups (Goldsmith, Habibi & Nishii, 2010) and at the large system level in designing events (containers) that support collaborative change. Sometimes the focus of inquiry is diagnostic, particularly to understand how the process of communication is creating something unwanted. Sometimes the focus on inquiry is dialogic, creating a space for the variety of experiences and meanings to gain voice, without attempts to discern a correct or true point of view. From the CMM point of view, in each "turn" of a conversation there is a choice to make, and whether realized or not, the possibility for change to occur.

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OD THEORY

Pearce and Cronen were early advocates in North American social science of the point of view that we create as we talk, and everyone can learn to talk in a way that creates better social worlds. They showed how each turn in a conversation is a choice point; meaning is not fixed. They pointed out that there are the stories lived, and the stories told, as well as the stories untold, the stories unheard and the stories unknown, and no story is ever finished. They argued that increasing the collective ability to reflect on the process of communication itself creates better social worlds and that it supports collaboration to keep asking "what are we making through the way we are talking?"

DAVID GRANT, CLIFF OSWICK, BOB MARSHAK AND ORGANIZATIONAL DISCOURSE

In 1994 the first of a series of biannual conferences on *Organizational Discourse* was organized and convened by David Grant and Cliff Oswick at Kings College London. The first conference focused exclusively on metaphor, with subsequent conferences addressing "organizational discourse" more broadly defined. Through the conferences, edited books, special editions of journals, and their own articles in the ensuing years, Grant and Oswick, along with many others, helped to define and legitimate organizational discourse studies as an academic field of interest to scholars and practitioners around the world (e.g. Grant and Oswick,1996; Grant, Keenoy, and Oswick, 1998; Grant, Hardy, Oswick,, and Putnam, 2004; Oswick & Grant, 1996; Oswick, Grant, Michelson, and Wailes, 2005; Oswick, Keenoy, and Grant, 2002; Oswick, Grant, Marshak, and Wolfram-Cox 2010).

In the organizational sciences the term Organizational Discourse now includes a wide variety of perspectives based on a range of disciplines where the central focus is the role of language, communication, and discursively mediated experience in organizational settings (Grant *et al.*, 2004). A discourse is generally taken to consist of a set of interrelated "texts." These texts are regarded as the discursive unit of analysis and may constitute, for example, conversations and dialogue or narratives and stories. These can be spoken or written or take the form of symbols or other more abstract types of media. Discourse analytic approaches focus on the production, dissemination and consumption of such texts and are now used to study many aspects of organizational and managerial phenomena. Although approaches to the study of Organizational Discourse encompass a wide range of perspectives, significant portions of the field embrace either or both a social constructionist and a critical perspective that considers power relations as central to the establishment and change of the narratives, storylines, conversations and so on that define the privileged ways of thinking and therefore acting in organizations.

In 1995, Bob Marshak, at that time primarily an OD consultant with an interest in the role of metaphors and change, and a practice that included consideration of the role of language in organizational change (Marshak, 1993), began interacting with Grant and Oswick while bringing a more practitioner and psychological orientation to their collaborations (Marshak, 1996; 1998; Marshak, Keenoy, Oswick, and Grant, 2000). These collaborations considered how a discursive

orientation would lead to thinking about OD theory and practice in new and different ways (Marshak, 2005; Marshak and Grant, 2008; Oswick and Marshak, 2012) and later influenced Marshak's thinking with Gervase Bushe about how to conceptualize and what to name what is now known as Dialogic OD (Bushe and Marshak,2009; Marshak and Bushe 2009).

In terms of organizational discourse and change, Grant and Marshak (2011) recently summarized key ideas associated with a discursive orientation to change contained in the scholarly literature. They posit that there is no independently objective organizational reality; discourse plays the central role in the construction, meaning making, and interpretation of social reality. Linked discourses exist on multiple social levels, for example: intrapersonal, personal, group, inter-group, organizational, societal. The prevailing narratives and story-lines that shape organizational actors' thinking and behaviors are constructed, conveyed and re-enforced through on-going conversations. Organizational power and political processes determine which narratives, storylines, themes, and so on are acceptable and correct and which are rejected or marginalized. There are, however, always alternative and diverse narratives, themes, and storylines that, while presently marginalized or excluded, could be included in the future if established power processes are disrupted or changed in some way. Discourse and organizational continuity and change constantly interact in a recursive relationship. One is always a participant in the discursive processes that construct organizational reality and resulting behaviors, consequently change agents need to be reflective of their biases and roles in shaping which narratives and ways of thinking are considered acceptable or not.

Drawing on these ideas and his own experience, Marshak developed a way of coaching and consulting that is based in a discursive orientation (Heracleous and Marshak, 2004; Marshak, 2004; 2013). He works from the premise that language and symbols reveal the unspoken assumptions that are guiding what an individual or group are doing. By listening to their metaphors and storylines it is possible to develop hunches about the unspoken premises. By then bringing these unspoken conceptual metaphors and/or storylines to the attention of the client, or offering alternatives as a way to disrupt current assumptions and thinking, it is possible to stimulate generative ideas and images leading to new and different actions.

LINKAGES TO DIALOGIC OD

There are several direct and many in-direct linkages between organizational discourse and Dialogic OD. First, of course, is providing research studies about organizations and change based in constructionist and interpretive premises. This differs, as has been noted before, from the more positivist and objectivist thinking found in most all Diagnostic OD. Furthermore by providing a rich theory base for conceptualizing organizations as interpretive, on-going conversations that recursively construct prevailing thinking, it is also suggestive of organizations as dialogic entities rather than machines or living organisms (Oswick and Marshak, 2013). The emphasis on how conversations construct and reinforce prevailing ways of thinking are also supportive of Dialogic OD methods focused on "changing the conversation" as the principal way to achieve organizational change.

The emphasis in many discursive studies on the role of power in determining the privileged discourses and discursive processes is not well represented in most OD approaches which tend to emphasize collaboration and seeking power equalization rather than acknowledging and engaging the role of power dynamics directly. The premise, however, that there are always alternative discourses that could alter a situation, if you can include marginalized or otherwise excluded voices, is central to most all dialogic approaches and reflected in practices that seek to include diversity, create safe containers for expression, and conversational processes to

stimulate new ideas and generativity. There are presently no strong positions taken in organizational discourse as to whether change is episodic, continuous or complexity based, although most do consider discursive processes to be iterative and recursive. Because of the emphasis by many on the role of power there are some implicit notions that change is hierarchical, although some suggest changing conversations can occur at many levels and perhaps more heterachically. Finally, there are some suggestions, for example by Marshak, that by listening to what is said one can produce and possibly test hypotheses about unspoken assumptions and thinking. This is essentially diagnostic, although the actions then taken are not to achieve a prescribed or planned end state as is found in Diagnostic OD, but rather to stimulate generativity and new possibilities by the client person or system which is more Dialogic in approach.

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OD THEORY

This stream of thinking shows us that in addition to talking, texts, symbols and gestures are also discursive phenomena. These do more than report or represent information; they construct social reality and the meanings people make about their situations. Like CMM, organizational discourse approaches also consider talk to be a form of action. Discourses exist and influence behavior at multiple levels of system (e.g. individual, group, organization), and are inter-connected and re-enforce each other in iterative ways. Organizations should be thought of as more like "on-going conversations" than "machines" or "living organisms." Some narratives, storylines, symbols and images become the privileged ways of thinking and acting in an organization, while other voices and versions are marginalized or excluded. Power processes determine which discourses and voices become privileged and included, and which marginalized. Change results from "changing the conversation", i.e., changing the discourse. This may involve shifts in communication and power patterns that in turn lead to the emergence and privileging of different narratives, storylines, symbols, and so on. Consultants are not independent, objective helpers, but active participants in the construction of social reality; consequently they need to be reflexive and aware of how they may contribute to which discourses are privileged and their role in what is being constructed through their own discursive acts and interactions.

DAVID COOPERRIDER, FRANK BARRETT, DIANA WHITNEY AND APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) began as a research method grounded in social construction that would meet the aims of generative theorizing as enunciated by Kenneth Gergen (1978) (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). It evolved into an OD process as the power of questions to promote change in the social construction of reality came into focus (Cooperrider, Barrett & Srivastva, 1995). As AI morphed into an OD method, it combined a focus on the importance of discourse and narrative for organizational change (Barrett, Thomas & Hocevar, 1995) with a Heideggarian (1962) appreciation of anticipatory effects on current actions (Cooperrider, 1990). It extended Schon's (1979) work on generative metaphor (Barrett & Cooperrider, 1990), along with an emphasis on the impact of positive emotions for engaging cooperative action (Cooperrider & Sekerka, 2003).

Because AI existed for over a decade as a set of principles rather than a theory of practice, many ways of doing AI have proliferated. However, the AI Summit has emerged as the AI format most associated with Whitney, Cooperrider and Barrett (Barrett & Fry, 2005; Cooperrider, 2012; Whitney & Cooperrider, 2000). In this approach, as many stakeholders as possible are brought together for four days to engage in Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny/Deployment processes. Because of the large group nature of summits, little in the way of active facilitation of small groups occurs. Rather,

conveners attempt to create the conditions for small groups to manage themselves through beginning with inquiry into peak past experiences (Discovery) as a basis for identifying future possibilities (Dream). Small groups are then encouraged to self-organize (in a process very similar to Open Space) to propose changes that will help the organization change toward those future possibilities (Design). The summit concludes by preparing to act on those proposals (Destiny).

While the most emphasized and most controversial aspect of AI is the focus on positive experiences and positive emotions, research suggests that transformational effects in AI require more than just good feelings and good dialogue. Bushe's (1998; 2010; 2013a; Bushe & Kassam, 2005) research consistently finds that generative images are associated with transformational effects. Another stream of research has found changes in core narratives (Bushe, 2001; Ludema, 2002) responsible for changes stemming from AI interventions. There are cases however, where eliciting positive affect was central to the change process (e.g., Khalsa, 2005). The emphasis on using positive questions to explore when something is at its best is more than just a line of inquiry. It also transforms the ongoing narratives about the other, the organization and amongst the various actors. Inquiry is the change process rather than a step toward setting up a change process.

Although the sequence of phases of AI can be utilized to develop proposals that are then vetted, accepted or rejected, and managed like any other project by an organization, AI theorists and researchers have emphasized the emergent nature of change that results from an appreciative inquiry, typically describing this an improvisational, as opposed to the standard implementation approach, to change (Barrett, 1998; Bushe & Kassam, 2005; Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2008). While change can happen from ideas developed at an AI Summit that are acted on, studies of AI suggest that more change is due to the ongoing shifts in the social construction of reality, changing what people talk about and how they talk in day to day interactions, the increased network connections among stakeholders, and higher levels of engagement resulting from participation in an AI summit (Powley, Fry, Barrett & Bright, 2004; Vanstone & Dalbiez, 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010)

LINKAGES TO DIALOGIC OD

Appreciative Inquiry is explicitly based in a post-modern conceptualization of organization development and views organizations as socially constructed phenomena. From this point of view, there are no correct or optimal organizational/environment fits, no underlying basis for establishing how best to organize. Instead, organizations are open to perhaps endless permutations limited only by the human imagination and the social agreements. In AI we see, again, an absence of diagnosis and planned outcomes preceding intervention. Indeed, in the original description of AI, diagnosis was eschewed for its tendency to evoke the metaphor of organization as a problem to be solved. Instead, AI focuses on the importance of language, possibility oriented questions and for consultants to be attending to their language and questions right from first contact as a primary way to influence mindsets and initiate changes (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001; Ludema, Cooperrider & Barrett, 2000). The purpose of inquiry is not to uncover the "truth", but to surface the variety of positive experiences among participants that are relevant to the change objective. Change occurs from changes in organizational guiding narratives and from the deployment or evocation of generative images among organizational members.

Appreciative Inquiry consultants do not act as small group facilitators so much as they act as hosts whose job is to create the right containers for building cooperative capacity (Barrett & Fry, 2005; Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2008). They do this through framing the initial discovery questions and through orchestrating the sequence of small group

activities. The small groups, however, manage themselves. The greatest transformational effects of AI come from emergent (improvisational) processes that are unleashed by the AI process itself. While there is some sense in which the summit and AI processes seek to equalize power and create a level playing field for inquiry and dialogue, in practice successful AI seems to work through the existing hierarchy both in initiating change and sustaining it.

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OD THEORY

This stream of thinking highlights that people and organizations move in the direction of the questions they most persistently and passionately ask. The words and topics we choose to talk about have an impact far beyond just the words themselves, so effort is put into using words that point to, enliven and inspire the best in people. Inquiring in ways that refashion anticipatory reality may be the most prolific thing any inquiry can do. Well before the "positive psychology" movement took hold, AI argued that evoking positive affect and sentiments increases a group's capacity to engage in productive inquiry and collective action. For this, and other reasons, explore the best of what is before collectively imagining what could be. Because of the metaphorical grip problem-solving has on sustaining old patterns, transformation is supported when issues and concerns are addressed through generativity rather than problem-solving. Finally, AI has shown us that change happens more easily when new thinking emerges from within the group than when it comes from outside the group.

THE DIALOGIC MINDSET

Table 3 summarizes the unique contributions each of these streams of theory and practice may have on the Dialogic Mindset. Before exploring their contributions to a Dialogic mindset that differs substantially from a Diagnostic one, let's take a moment to identify what both mindsets share and why we consider both to be forms of OD.

Marshak & Bushe (2009) emphasize the commonalities in values that make diagnostic and dialogic two subsets of organization development. As discussed in Bushe & Marshak (2009) these are: 1) Strong humanistic and democratic values. Both diagnostic and dialogic OD practitioners are interested in creating situations where issues of hierarchy, power, marginalization and oppression are minimized so that a free flow of authentic conversation takes place. An emphasis on treating people respectfully and with authentic consent to whatever the practitioner is doing to and with the organization, is prevalent. 2) A concern for capacity building and development of the system. OD practitioners from both mindsets attempt to avoid creating dependence on consultants, and instead seek to build the capacity for self-management and/or self-organization of change into groups and organizations. 3) Consultants stay out of content and focus on process. OD consultants do not take an "expert" stance toward the content of the issues nor change focus of the organization. The expertise they claim is in providing processes that help people develop and change organizations in ethical ways. 4) Greater system awareness is encouraged and facilitated, although via very different methods. We are broadly in agreement with Hutton & Liefooghe's (2011) definition of OD as engaged inquiry that changes organizational practices. At the heart of what distinguishes OD from other change management methods is the intent to increase the awareness of organizational members. This is more than just a value difference – it is at the core of both theory and practice. The difference is that in Diagnostic OD, there is normally an attempt to identify a "truth", while in Dialogic OD the assumption is that there will be multiple, competing "truths". Further, in the Diagnostic Mindset research precedes decisions about how to change; in the Dialogic Mindset, inquiry itself creates change.

Now that we have considered the underlying similarities in Diagnostic and Dialogic forms of OD, we turn to identifying the fundamental differences by positing the outlines of a Dialogic mindset in OD.

TABLE 3. UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OD THEORY

Open Space Technology	• Environments of rapid change and complexity require the ability to guide self-transformation in self and systems. • When we are at our best as consultants/facilitators/hosts, we create a space that allows what is trying to become, become. • Open space is a necessary time and place between what can no longer be and what is still to be, essential to transformation • Such open space requires highly diverse group members, the presence of passion and conflict, and a sense of urgency. • Provide a nutrient environment for informal networks and innate motivations to coalesce around the desired and the doable. • Too much "leadership" may be more debilitating than not enough.
Emergence	• Embrace disruption as an opportunity for emergence. Become compassionate hosts, welcoming who and what needs to interact. • Disruption tends to increase differentiation which is required for re-organization at a higher level of complexity. • Encourage creative engagement, supporting people to differentiate through expressing what matters to them personally. • After differentiation is underway, pay attention to the commonalities, convergences and coherence that are emerging. As they discover these connections, differences that make a difference emerge. • Inviting people to name them supports re-organization at a higher (and hopefully wiser) level of complexity.
Complex Adaptive Processes of Relating	• All situations are complex and not amenable to control and planning to achieve predetermined outcomes, but they play a vital role in containing anxiety in the face of the radical uncertainty of human action. • The complexity sciences in biology and physics are not directly applicable to social systems, but can serve as analogies. Complexity demands a processual mode of understanding rather than a systems perspective. • Communicative interactions involve patterns of power relationships that are simultaneously enabling and constraining and foster inclusion/exclusion, identity and anxiety dynamics. These patterns emerge continuously and are paradoxically stable and unstable at the same time. • Change results from ongoing disruptions or shifts in communicative processes of relating and power patterns. • The consultant cannot stand apart from the ongoing processes of transformation and becoming. Instead the consultant participates in those processes by acting with intent into an unknowable future.
Coordinated Management of Meaning	• We create as we talk, and everyone can learn to talk in a way that creates better social worlds. • Each turn in a conversation is a choice point; meaning is not fixed. • Increasing the collective ability to reflect on the process of communication itself creates better social worlds. • There are the stories lived, and the stories told, as well as the stories untold, the stories unheard and the stories unknown, and no story is ever finished. • It supports collaboration to keep asking "what are we making through the way we are talking"?

Organizational Discourse Studies	• In addition to talking, discourse is also found in texts, symbols and gestures and does more than report or represent information; it constructs social reality and the meanings people make about their situations. • Discourses influence behavior at multiple levels of system (e.g. individual, group, organization), and are inter-connected and re-enforce each other in iterative ways. • Some narratives, storylines, symbols and images become the privileged ways of thinking and acting in an organization, while other voices and versions are marginalized or excluded. • Power processes determine which discourses and voices become privileged and included, and which marginalized. • Change results from "changing the conversation", i.e., changing the discourse. This may involve shifts in communication and power patterns that in turn lead to the emergence and privileging of different narratives, storylines, symbols, etc. • Consultants are not independent, objective helpers, but active participants in the construction of social reality; consequently they need to be reflexive and aware of how they may contribute to which discourses are privileged or marginalized. • Organizations should be thought of as more like "on-going conversations" than "machines" or "living organisms."
Appreciative Inquiry	• Humans and human systems move in the direction of the questions they most persistently and passionately ask • The words and topics we choose to talk about have an impact far beyond just the words themselves so put effort into using words that point to, enliven and inspire the best in people. • Inquiring in ways that refashion anticipatory reality may be the most prolific thing any inquiry can do. • Evoking positive affect and sentiments increases a group's capacity to engage in productive inquiry and collective action. • Explore the best of what is before collectively imagining what could be. • Transformation is supported when issues and concerns are addressed through generativity rather than problem-solving. • Change happens more easily when new thinking emerges from within the group than when it comes from outside the group.

At this point in time it is a still an evolving convergence of newer premises, principles and resulting practices that are more a fuzzy outline than a sharp definition. We would stress that a Dialogic Mindset is not associated with any one method outlined in Table 1 or approaches summarized in Table 3, but rather involves selecting and mixing which methods and approaches to use, as needed, in different situations. Similar to Diagnostic OD, Dialogic OD contains a variety of practices that range from very large group interventions to day to day coaching and consulting, and any one practitioner may specialize or use a broad range of approaches. Further, individual Dialogic OD practitioners may not ascribe to all of the premises and principles we describe here. Individuals will be centered in one or another of the premises and principles while incorporating in various degrees and emphases some of the others, as well as framings that are diagnostic in origin. Nonetheless, while there is no current consensus on what the specific elements of a Dialogic Mindset are, our review demonstrates some important areas of convergence that allow us to propose an ideal type, a Weberian synthetic construct that allows us to discern similarities and differences and to be able to talk about them. We argue that the key premises and principles of Dialogic OD include ideas, practices, and especially values that are also included in Diagnostic OD (which is why we consider it a form of OD), but incorporated into a mindset greatly influenced by complexity and interpretivist thinking.

PREMISES

Presently there are eight key premises that we argue help shape a Dialogic Mindset in the practice of OD.

REALITY AND RELATIONSHIPS ARE SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED. Many dialogic forms of OD are now explicitly based in theories of social construction and notions of multiple "truths." Whether or not there are objective facts in the world, it is how we socially define and describe those facts that create meaning in social systems. Furthermore, there is no single objective reality; nor a single authoritative voice or version of reality. Instead, a multiplicity of diverse voices and actors need to be recognized and engaged.

ORGANIZATIONS ARE MEANING MAKING SYSTEMS. Consistent with constructionist thinking, people and organizations are considered to be meaning making systems where reality/truth is continuously created through social agreement while open to many possible interpretations. What happens in organizations is influenced more by how people interact and make meaning then how presumably objective external factors and forces impact the system.

LANGUAGE, BROADLY DEFINED, MATTERS. Words do more than convey meaning, they create meaning. Thinking is powerfully influenced by words and the underlying storylines and metaphors people use when talking to each other. Change is created and sustained by changes both in what words mean within the groups in which they are used, and by changes in the words that are used by those groups.

GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS ARE CONTINUOUSLY SELF-ORGANIZING. Following ideas from the complexity sciences, organizations are considered to be self organizing, emergent systems, not closed or open systems. In contrast to planned, "start-stop" thinking about change processes, more recent theories and experience with organizational change suggest a different set of premises. Social processes are continuously in flux, always undergoing change though the rate of change may vary widely. OD consultants may nudge, accelerate, deflect, punctuate or disrupt these normal processes, but they do not unfreeze and re-freeze them.

CREATING CHANGE REQUIRES CHANGING CONVERSATIONS. The social construction of reality occurs through the conversations people have, everyday. Change is promoted to the extent that everyday conversations are altered. This can occur from changing who is in conversation with whom (e.g., increased diversity, inclusion of

marginalized voices), how those conversations take place, increasing conversational skills, what is being talked about and by asking what is being created from the content and process of current conversations. Talk is action.

STRUCTURE PARTICIPATIVE INQUIRY AND ENGAGEMENT TO INCREASE DIFFERENTIATION BEFORE SEEKING COHERENCE. Ideas of participatory action inquiry have expanded the original ideas about action research. In the foundational formulation, behavioral scientists involved client system members at various times in diagnosing themselves and making action choices. Today, the methods and degrees of involvement reflect a much broader conception of participation. Inquiry and learning (versus a more diagnostic stance) has been advocated by many as an alternative way to engage and change a system. The resulting processes of participative inquiry, engagement, and reflection are designed to maximize diversity, surface the variety of perspectives and motivations without privileging any one, and allow new convergences and coherence to emerge.

TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IS MORE EMERGENT THAN PLANNED. Transformational change cannot be planned in the same way change management advocates implementing changes toward some predetermined outcome. Rather, transformation requires holding an intention while moving into the unknown. Attempts to plan and control are more obstacles, or even impediments, than resources to transformational change. Instead, disrupting current patterns in a way that engages people in uncovering collective intentions and shared motivations is required. As a result, change processes are more opportunistic and heterarchichal, where change can and does come from anywhere in the organization, than planned, hierarchical and top-down.

CONSULTANTS ARE A PART OF THE PROCESS, NOT APART FROM THE PROCESS. OD consultants cannot stand outside the social construction of reality, acting as objective observers or independent facilitators of social interaction. Their mere presence is part of the discursive context that influences the meaning making taking place. Consultants need to be aware of their own immersion in the organization and reflexively consider what meanings they are creating and what narratives their actions are privileging and marginalizing.

As shown in Table 4, these premises lead to a different way of thinking about the basic building blocks of organization development and change, even as practitioners may engage in similar steps as in Diagnostic OD. We see them enter and engage with people in an organization or community. They involve people in working on issues they are concerned about. They create processes for people to communicate ideas and information. They avoid becoming a prescriptive expert. These and other actions can look just like textbook descriptions of OD. Yet when all these actions and the attendant processes, tools and techniques follow from a Dialogic OD mindset, the choices made and actions taken by the consultant will be very different. As Shaw (2002) notes: “Above all I want to propose that if organizing is understood essentially as a conversational process, an inescapably self-organizing process of participating in the spontaneous emergence of continuity and change, then we need a rather different way of thinking about any kind of organizational practice that focuses on change” (p. 11).

TABLE 4: DIAGNOSTIC AND DIALOGIC MINDSETS (IDEAL TYPES)

< < < Diagnostic OD	**Dialogic OD > > >**
Ontology:	
Positivism	Interpretivist, Constructionist:
Objective Reality …….	……Social Reality
Organizations are:	
Open Systems……	……Dialogic Networks
Emphasis on:	
Behavior and Results……	……Discourse and Generativity
Change is:	
Planned ……	……Emergent
Episodic……	……Continuous and Iterative
More Developmental……	……More Transformational
Discernment via:	
Diagnosis……	……Inquiry
Consultant:	
Stays apart at the margin;	Immersed with;
Partners with ……	……Part of Interactions
Change Process:	
Hierarchical:	Heterarchical:
Start at Top, Work Down……	……Start Anywhere, Spread Out

THE CORE PROCESSES OF CHANGE

A quick glance at the variety of methods in Table 1 (which is unlikely to be complete) suggests there are many different change processes available to the Dialogic OD consultant. While there are a variety of approaches (and we would stress that many of these methods can be used from either a diagnostic or dialogic, or some combination of mindsets) we do not believe that the actual change processes underlying successful Dialogic OD are that many or that different. For many years now at gatherings of practitioners, stories of failure from the use of any of the methods outlined in Table 1 are generally more prevalent than stories of success. While case studies that get published in books and journals are almost always couched as successes, studies of actual success rates of any change efforts are generally well below 50% . Anecdotally, it appears that some people are more consistently successful using Dialogic OD methods than others, and that simply following the formulas for running an Open Space, an Appreciative Inquiry, or any dialogic process is no guarantee that successful organization development will occur. One of the reasons for our efforts to outline the Dialogic Mindset is because we suspect some of the success/failure rate is associated with mindset as much as tools and techniques.

In this section we will propose three underlying change processes we believe, singly or in combination, are essential to the successful use of any Dialogic OD method. We emphasize that simply engaging in good dialogues, in creating spaces where people are willing and able to speak their minds, and where people are willing and able to listen carefully to one another, is not sufficient for transformational change to occur. Whether it is even necessary is an empirical question open to further study. What we

do believe is required is one or more of the following to have occurred during the OD practitioner's work, from orchestrating large group events to dialogic forms of process consultation (Bushe & Marshak, forthcoming). Said another way, we believe that failures from the use of any Dialogic OD method is a result of none of the following having happened.

PROPOSITION 1. A DISRUPTION IN THE ONGOING SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY IS STIMULATED OR ENGAGED IN A WAY THAT LEADS TO A MORE COMPLEX RE-ORGANIZATION.

A disruption occurs when the previous order or pattern of social relations is pulled apart and there is little chance of going back to the way things were. Disruptions can be planned or unplanned, and the group or organization may be able to self-organize around them without much conscious leadership. From a Dialogic OD perspective, however, transformation is unlikely to take place without disruption of the "established" meaning-making processes. A variety of Dialogic OD methods can be used to create containers for productive conversations to take place that support re-organizing at higher levels of complexity despite the anxiety that disruptive endings can create. However, once disrupted, it is impossible to plan or control what might then happen, the options range from complete dissolution to reorganization at a higher level of complexity (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984). While a variety of writers have influenced OD practice by applying insights from complexity sciences either directly (e.g., Olson & Eoyang, 2001; Wheatley, 2006) or analogically (Pascale, Milleman & Gioja, 2000; Rowland & Higgs, 2008), there is a dearth of research on organizational change from a complexity perspective. Recent work applying complexity theory to leadership and strategic decision-making tends to focus on ways to simplify complex situations to allow for control and planning, while those operating from a dialogic mindset tend to encourage leaders to let go and support emergence and self-organization. Much research is yet to be done simply documenting the efficacy of such approaches, when they are most appropriate, and when they are not. We believe, however, that many cases of successful Dialogic OD practice have relied on emergent self-organization without noting it. We encourage OD scholars to pay more attention to such processes in all studies of transformational change.

PROPOSITION 2: A CHANGE TO ONE OR MORE CORE NARRATIVES TAKES PLACE.

The core narratives are the stories that explain and bring coherence to our organizational lives. The significance of narratives to effecting organizational change is considerable for they convey the prevailing or intended rationales supporting change or stability. As Marshak and Grant (2008) have noted "changing consciousness or mindsets or social agreements - for example about the role of women in organizations, or about hierarchical structures, or even about how change happens in organizations - would therefore require challenging or changing the prevailing narratives, stories, and so on that are endorsed by those presently and/or historically in power and authority" (p.4). Others have shown how stories are a way of managing change, particularly culture change, and how change is often constituted by changes in the narratives that participants author (e.g., Brown & Humphreys 2003; Buchanan & Dawson, 2007). A variety of the methods listed in Table 1 can be used as a conscious intervention into the narrative and story making processes of an organization. Of the three propositions offered here, this is the one with the most existing academic research. Much of the academic literature on discursive phenomena in organizations, however, tends to come from institutional perspectives that observe change over long time horizons and focus on processes that offer leaders and consultants little leverage. An interesting exception to this is recent writing on "institutional work", the study of how agents go about changing institutions (Lawrence, Leca & Zilber, 2013; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). This line of research may open up interesting

avenues for OD scholars interested in how leaders and consultants can influence discursive phenomena and institutional processes in general.

PROPOSITION 3: A GENERATIVE IMAGE IS INTRODUCED OR SURFACES THAT PROVIDES NEW AND COMPELLING ALTERNATIVES FOR THINKING AND ACTING.

Bushe's research has found that generative images are central to successful appreciative inquiry efforts (Bushe, 2010; 2013a; Bushe & Kassam 2005) and he has proposed that it is central to Dialogic OD success (Bushe, 2013b). A generative image is a combination of words, pictures or other symbolic media that provide new ways of thinking about social and organizational reality. They, in effect, allow people to imagine alternative decisions and actions that they could not imagine before the generative image surfaced. A second property of highly generative images is that they are compelling; people want to act on the new opportunities the generative image evokes. A variety of the methods listed in Table 1 could be supported by using generative images as the initiating themes or questions for inquiry (Bushe, 2013a) or by evoking new generative images in the process of dialogue and inquiry (Storch and Ziethen, 2013). However, although the image of generative conversations is common in OD practice (e.g., Issacs, 1999; Marshak, 2004), other than Bushe's work described above, and one early paper by Barrett and Cooperrider (1990), we don't know of any research exploring the nature or use of generative images in OD practice. Like, complexity, we believe many cases of successful dialogic OD may contain unnoticed or un-commented on generative images, and encourage OD scholars interested in transformational change to pay more attention to them.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is unclear to us, at this time, whether transformational change requires more than one of these underlying processes to be successful. They do seem, at times, related. It is difficult to imagine in practice, for example, a change in a core narrative that didn't involve a disruption to the prevailing social construction of reality. On the other hand, changes in core narratives do occur, over time, which do not necessarily involve disruption (c.f., Barret et al, 1995). In a world of constant change, "disruption" is mainly a matter of temporal perspective. Similarly, it is unclear if generative images require either disruption or a change in core narratives to be successful, but it is clear that they can go together. What we are proposing here, is that the dialogic mindset is particularly attuned to these three change processes, and that the successful Dialogic OD consultant will take actions (or in-actions) while mixing and matching a variety of Dialogic approaches in order to maximize the likelihood that one or all will be present. How they may or may not go together is an empirical question open to further research. Indeed, the idea of Dialogic OD opens up a range of research opportunities and we will note just a few of them here.

The first and most obvious candidate is the question of whether the proposed mindsets are real in practice. Can OD practitioners be categorized by such mindsets, and do they help us to understand the different choices leaders, consultants and change agents make when confronted by similar situations? Do they help to explain the different ways in which OD approaches are applied? Do they help us understand why some applications of what we call Dialogic OD practices are more or less successful?

A second stream of research could explore the relationship between diagnostic and dialogic approaches. Are there situations or contingencies where one is preferable to the other? Can they be usefully combined or are they such different paradigms that they would negate each other in practice? What advice can researchers provide leaders and consultants in when and how to use either or both of these mindsets? A first attempt to

study these questions can be found in Gilpin-Jackson (2013).

A third area of study, that might be of great help to OD practitioners, is some understanding of the relative merits of each of the dialogic approaches listed in Table 1. Under what conditions is one approach more likely to be useful than another? What are their relative strengths and weaknesses? What underlying concepts or perspectives can aid leaders and consultants in identifying the best approach in any given situation, or how to mix and match them?

A final area for study we will mention here concerns the background and training of Dialogic OD practitioners. To what extent is the conventional, diagnostically oriented training of OD practitioners sufficient for (or perhaps detrimental to) effective dialogic practice? Are there are clear differences in the kinds of practitioners who are drawn to, or excel in, either mindset? Some initial thinking on this can be discerned in Eisen, Cherbeneau and Worley (2005), but much more can and should be done to study the characteristics, skills, and training of competent Dialogic OD practitioners.

We emphasize that this is just an initial, basic list of possibilities for further study of Dialogic organization development and hope the readers of this chapter will be stimulated to develop additional lines of research and theorizing.

CONCLUSION

Dialogic OD is not a new method or theory of change, per se. It is a label we use, in contradistinction to Diagnostic OD, as a disruption into the prevailing OD narrative, which, we might add, is mainly an academic OD narrative. Hopefully, it is a generative image for OD researchers and theorists that will evoke new insights into the potential for organization development, and ways to develop organizations and more effective organizing.

While we can make conceptual distinctions between pure types of diagnostic and dialogic practices and mindsets, in practice we are unlikely to find any particular instance that fully conforms to either. We do think, however, that as we enter the second decade of the 21st century the evidence is now incontrovertible that a new species of OD practice has emerged, and variants of it resemble in good measure the Dialogic OD premises reviewed in Bushe & Marshak (2009) and the mindset we propose in this paper. In this paper we identify two streams of scholarly discourse that have influenced Dialogic OD: complexity and interpretivism. However, even they, in practice are hard to find in pure type. Each of the 6 orientations reviewed here encompass elements of both. For example, even though Stacey and Shaw are listed under complexity, and Pearce and Cronen under interpretive, there is a great deal of overlap in their descriptions of organizations as communicative phenomena.

While our current intent has been to focus on, and make the case for, the similarities that underlie the methods and approaches in Table 1, we are well aware that many have important differences, and that a more nuanced comparison of Dialogic OD methods is yet to be done (though Shaw, 2002, provides some excellent starting points). Finally, we are aware of the all too easy trap of falling into an either/or narrative and polarizations that form false dichotomies. We offer the concept of OD Mindset as a way out of such dilemmas, recognizing that within the individual OD practitioner, diagnostic frameworks and dialogic frameworks may operate as both/and, increasing the range of action logics available to change practitioners and the opportunities for new syntheses and convergences.

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