

# Taos Institute News

Creating Promising Futures through Social Construction

January 2012

## An Exciting Year of Taos Institute Activities

A message from Kenneth Gergen, President of the Taos Institute

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It is a great pleasure for me to review the activities of the Taos Institute this past year, as the accomplishments inject such energy into our visions for the coming year. Two conferences were shining stars, the first, *Play with Purpose*, held on shipboard in the Gulf of Mexico; and the second a Summer Institute in Copenhagen with the consulting firm Ramboll/Attractor. Workshops on constructionist topics were filled to capacity, as were a dozen others we sponsored with various Associates. The publishing wing brought forth two new books: *Healing Conversations: Enhance Relations with Elders and Dying Loved Ones*, *Practicing Relational Ethics in Organizations*, and a third book coming soon, *Developing Relational Leadership*. The PhD program with Tilburg University had a banner year, with a full roster of new students, and a record number of 14 graduations. The completed dissertations represented a broad array of topics, many exploring new practices in therapy, organizational development, and education. Also in an educational vein, we joined the Houston-Galveston Institute to launch a Certificate in Collaborative Practices. This program is now offered in seven different countries around the world.

Finally, we are particularly proud of developing a small grant program to fund projects close to our interests, for example, a collaborative initiative in Bangladesh, websites that share resources for therapists and educators, and a book on mediation and medicine. Throughout all of this, we have been guided by the wisdom of a newly developed Associates Council. So, with these warm winds now billowing the sails, we enter the New Year with hope and promise for an array of upcoming activities and innovations. We hope we can share valuable resources with all our friends and associates.

"...rational thought, intentions, experience, memory, and creativity are not prior to relational life, but are born within relationships. They are not 'in the mind,' — separated from the world and from others — but embodied actions that are fashioned and sustained within relationship."

— Kenneth Gergen  
Relational Being, 2009

### Attractor/Taos Summer Institute

July 2nd- 4th, 2012

in Copenhagen, Denmark

A conference on systemic, constructionist and appreciative theory and practice. For details:

[www.attractor.dk/english/summer%20institute](http://www.attractor.dk/english/summer%20institute)

# Social Constructionism

## A New Year's Reflection from The Taos Institute

By Mary Gergen

2012 begins, and the Taos Institute Board is happy to wish everyone a wonderful new year. When it comes to the New Year, I think I've always been a social constructionist. Despite the fact that the calendar is clearly an invention of a group of learned people who had some desire for order and simultaneity – that is, a socially constructed social object, it appears to be quite real to those of us who live under its form of 12 months and 365 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  days. Yet it seems to promise more to us than the marking of time, itself. The calendar seems to suggest that January 1 offers us a new beginning, a way to start over with our lives. It allows one to wipe away the tears of sadness and shed the dross of errors that we accumulated in the old year. We even make New Year's Resolutions so that we can formulate just how we are going to change our ways of living – lose weight, stop smoking, exercise more, be a better spouse, spend more time with the children and less with the TV, and so on. Of course, it doesn't take long until our resolutions are broken or at least bent. Our old habits persist, and soon the new year loses its luster, with the return of the usual bumps and grinds.

Still, there are other opportunities every year to have fresh starts – new months, new semesters, new seasons and even new dawns. This March, The Taos Institute is joining in partnership with a Mexican therapy group, called Kanankil, in Merida, Yucatan, to explore and ponder the question of what is beyond the end of time, that is beyond the end of the ancient Mayan calendar, which ends in March. How do we all together construct the beginnings of a new time, the Post-Mayan time in its homeland? How far do our old habits interfere with new possibilities, and how might we go on together in new ways in this new era?

As a metatheory, social constructionism is open for any system to exist, any formulas to be brought forth, any theory to be made, and any stories to be spun. As we recognize how vital our relationships are to the development of our sense-making, and how open the future is as we join together, perhaps new beginnings are possible. Maybe we can converge in the new year, with new skills for relating as we make new friends and revisit the old in new ways. We can do this anywhere and any time. And for starters,

“We'll take a cup o' kindness yet, for auld lang syne.”



## Welcome to our Newest Board Member

With the continued growth of the Taos Institute, the Board of Directors has invited Jason Wolf, Ph.D. to join the Board of Directors beginning January 1, 2012.

Jason is an explorer of organizations and a 'radical catalyst' for organizational health, effectiveness and performance. He is a sought after speaker and consultant on such topics as sustaining high performance, organization culture and change, leadership and service. An innovative thinker and experienced facilitator, Jason works as a collaborative coach in helping organizations build a direct path to organizational outcomes and overall success. He is also strongly committed to bridging the scholar-practice divide by advocating practical scholarship and encouraging the increase in research projects driven from inside organizations.



Jason Wolf

Jason currently serves as the Executive Director of Beryl Institute, in the Washington, DC area. See: <http://www.theberylinstitute.org/>

As Executive Director of The Beryl Institute he provides direction and leadership in expanding the Institute's services and driving its vision to become a globally recognized thought leader committed to improving the patient experience in health care. Jason has almost 20 years of leadership and consulting experience, leading major initiatives both as an internal Organization Development leader for two Fortune 500 companies and as an external consulting working with numerous organizations in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

Jason has been a long-time member of the Organization Development Network, serving as a member of the Board of Trustees from 1999-2002. He founded the *Student Paper and Presentation* category for papers with the ODN. He is also a Professorial Lecturer at American University in DC.

Jason speaks in both academic and professional settings from ACHE to the Academy of Management. He is a seasoned consultant on such topics as sustaining high performance, building cultures of service, organization change, and leadership and has authored with numerous articles and publications include the upcoming *Handbook on Organization Development in Healthcare: A Guide for Leaders*.

Jason's research interests focus on using paradox to sustain high performance in organizations and the influence of discourse and social construction on organization change. He lives in the Washington, DC area with his wife (and best friend) Beth.

### The Taos Institute has Joined the Social Networks

**Join us on Facebook**—We are starting over with our Facebook presence. Instead of a "group" for the Taos Institute, we are now creating a PAGE and we want all our "Fans" to join us here. Many of you have signed up as a Friend on Dawn Dole's personal page, or on the 'group' page of the Taos Institute. *Please make the switch today* from our group page to our **Organizational Fan Page**. And then, join in the conversation. Thank you. - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Taos-Institute/250814124972065?sk=wall>

**Follow us on Twitter**—@taosinstitute - <http://twitter.com/taosinstitute>

**Join us on LinkedIn**—[http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Taos-Institute-2288978?home=&qid=2288978&trk=anet\\_ug\\_hm&goback=.gna\\_2288978.gmp\\_2288978](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Taos-Institute-2288978?home=&qid=2288978&trk=anet_ug_hm&goback=.gna_2288978.gmp_2288978)



Join us for a conference in partnership with Kanankil Institute

## Enriching Collaborative Practices Across Cultural Borders:

Constructing Alternatives in Psychotherapy, Education, Community &  
Organization Development and Research Practices

March 20 – 23, 2012

Presidente Intercontinental Hotel, Villa Mercedes  
Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

Register Now: <http://www.kanankil.org/eng/>



We live in a time when national and cultural boundaries are dissolving. This continuous movement of meanings, traditions, people and practices comes with both challenges and opportunities. With an appreciation of the multiple constructions of realities and values, and a belief that collaboration is our major means of moving forward together, conference participants will both share and create enriching practices in a variety of related professions.

Woven into the conference activities will be an exploration of the Mayan world, as one of the many indigenous/ancestral/cultural traditions that are alive in the world today. The conference theme connects with a new cycle of the Mayan calendar and the beginning of a new era. This moment in history calls for an exploration of the ways we relate to each other, to the knowledge of our ancestors, and to nature.

Come join us on this journey.

### Videos on the Taos Institute Website

We have videos on our website that may be of interest to many of you. We invite you to take a look, spend some time and let us know what you think of this offering.

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/videotapes---board-members-associates-and-guests>



# Play with Purpose: Relational and Performative Practices in Everyday Life

February 2011, Seminar at Sea



What better setting for an exploration of play, performance and relational practices than an ocean cruise! Over 120 participants came together to explore and experience practices for effective improvisation in a wide range of contexts - including psychotherapy, organizational development, education, community building, and personal life. We looked at the ways in which theater, music, humor, movement, art, storytelling and other play/full activities inspire and transform our relationships. Under the canopy of social constructionist theory, we engaged in a multitude of activities designed to enhance both conceptual consciousness and relational skill. "Playshop" sessions gave us a rich opportunity to put performative ideas into practice.



This exciting gathering was co-sponsored by the Houston Galveston Institute and the Taos Institute. We met on a Carnival cruise ship, setting sail from Galveston, Texas and making stops at Progreso and Cozumel, Mexico. Seminar at sea sessions took place on board the ship through keynote presentations and "playshops".



The highlight of the seminar at sea was our time in Progreso, MX. There we met with students and faculty from the local university: Instituto Tecnológico Superior Progreso. All 'seminar at sea' participants were assigned a group and each group was paired up with a group from Progreso. The groups prepared an experience for the other which highlighted how we use play and performance in our everyday lives and relationships to create positive change. Friendships were forged and cultural boundaries crossed. Our time in Progreso with the students was one that will live on in our collective experience and memories.



The venue and theme provided opportunities for reflexive exploration and performance of relational practices in a wide range of contexts. We all benefited from the venture on the high seas of play, improvisation, performance and humor to expand our personal and professional lives.

For more details and to see pictures and slide show of this playful, relational and performative gathering, visit:

[www.taosinstitute.net/play-with-purpose](http://www.taosinstitute.net/play-with-purpose)



## Moments with the Taos Institute Board

### From Sally St. George and Dan Wulff

One significant accomplishment was the presenting and publishing (upcoming in the January 2012 edition of the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*) of a qualitative metasynthesis (a qualitative study of qualitative studies) on client impressions of their couple or family therapy experiences. This was a collaborative project with three other Taos Associates (**Ron Chenail, Maureen Duffy, and Karen Wilson Scott**). Our joint professional roles as academics and community practitioners allows us the time and opportunity to work with front-line social workers to explore and develop more family-focused and family-friendly ways to help youth who are struggling. This connection to working directly with families and workers keeps us sharp in the classroom as we work to nurture creative and challenging therapists within the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary.

Lest this sound like we are devoted only to professional activities, we had a great conference experience at Seattle Swing in Washington this past spring working on our most favorite dance to date, the west-coast swing. It keeps us young at heart and quick on our feet.

### From Sheila McNamee



I am happy to end 2011 with the good news that my book, *Research and Social Change: A Relational Constructionist Approach* written with **Dian Marie Hosking**, will be out on December 19 from Routledge. We wrote this book with students and practitioners in mind, hoping to offer a "user friendly" entry into the world of inquiry. In this book we

invite readers to view research as an everyday activity that is very much part of professional practice. The book is marketed this year to libraries. Encourage your libraries to buy it so that next year Routledge will issue the book in paperback as well as ebook format at a reasonable price!! In addition, my travels this year, allowed me to work with and visit many Taos colleagues including those in Dublin, Utrecht, London, Calgary, Bogota, Tilburg, Breda, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Ribeirao Preto (Brazil), Boston, Houston, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Minneapolis. All of these trips stirred the creative juices and my time skiing, sailing, and traveling up the wild coast of Northern California with my family helped keep me grounded and recharged.



### From Mary Gergen

I have been adding the finishing touches on two book manuscripts for publication. One exciting project, engaged in with **Ken Gergen**, has involved putting together many of our performance pieces into a book, *Playing with Purpose: Adventures in Performative Social Science*, which one reader described as "fun, quirky and whimsical", in press with Left Coast Press. With Ellen Cole, former president of the Society for the Psychology of Women, I have edited *Retiring, but not Shy: Feminist Psychologists Create their Post-Careers*, soon to appear with the Taos Institute imprint. Travel highlights this year included Belgrade, Helsinki, Bogota, and Cruz Bay (a snorkeler's haven on St. John, a U.S. Virgin Island.) At home, there is nothing like our Sunday night family dinners to remind one of the joys of family life, including learning the ways of a 5 year old, and also after the hubbub subsides, the joys of travel.



### From Ken Gergen



The hours devoted to Taos Institute affairs are a real joy. So many creative things taking place. Yet, a full day at a desk is intolerable, and the nearby golf course and tennis courts are a blessing. I also carry on my losing battle against the deer, who love to eat my plantings. My latest challenge is to create sculpture pieces that deer don't like to eat, but do decorate the property. I have been on the road almost

every other week this year - some 10 different countries - and endlessly grateful for the hospitality I have received. I am very happy that my recent book, *Relational Being: Beyond Self and Community*, published in 2009, is now in paperback. I'm looking forward to 2012 as a year of exciting prospects for the Institute and for my outreach to encourage others to develop new practices relating relational ideas to action. And the performance book with Mary will also be published. I dream of having a bit more time at home, but I suspect that dream is a waste of the imagination.

### From Bob Cottor

I have continued to focus on the Taos Institute developing its first major healthcare conference that will address the critical role of collaborative, narrative and appreciative practices in healthcare reform. Relationships and meanings in medicine will be emphasized at the conference. Our hope is that the conference will attract medical practitioners from all



**Join our pre-conference online dialogue** — We invite you to blog with us in a virtual dialogue between now and the time of the *Relational Practices in Peacebuilding, Mediation and Conflict Transformation* conference. Feel free to share a post, share your thoughts, ideas, comments, etc. What practices are you engaged in related to relational practices in peacebuilding, mediation and conflict transformation? Share a highlight from your work.

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/pre-conference-dialogues>

## Taos Board continued .....

disciplines, healthcare educators, healthcare consultants, healthcare organizations as well as interested citizens from the general public. I also remain active in the operations of Ryan House, the only freestanding home-like pediatric palliative care facility in Phoenix, Arizona, named for my 10-year-old grandson Ryan, who was diagnosed as an infant with spinal muscular atrophy, a progressive genetic neuromuscular condition. Ryan House has now been open for 21 months and is providing respite care for over 100 families and has provided end-of-life care for nearly 50 children and their families with a culture that is built on strengths and resilience, emphasizes the celebration of life and makes relationships, collaboration and compassion the cornerstone of its program.

### From Harlene Anderson

I continue to focus on the application of postmodern collaborative practices across cultures and professional practices, especially in organizations and education. I conducted trainings and consultations with educational institutions, professional associations and businesses in various countries in 2011 including Australia, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Greece, Hong Kong, Mexico, Norway and Singapore as well as at my home base in Texas. With Taos Associate **Sylvia London**, I convened the Annual Summer Institute in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. We invite you to join us this summer. Associate **Chris Kinman** and I collaborated on a Taos funded project: creating videotaped interviews of family therapist and Taos Honorary Associate **Lynn Hoffman**. The videos will be included on the Taos website. Favorite projects are the *International Journal for Collaborative Practices* and the International Certificate Program in Collaborative Practices. Along with my husband David, I enjoy spending time at our river cabin, entertaining friends and enjoying our dog Beaux, the third member of our family.



### From David Cooperrider (honorary board member)

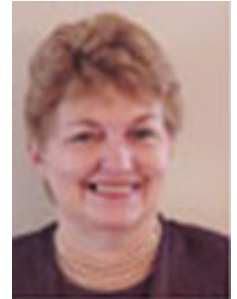


Traveling all around the world almost on a monthly basis, I am most passionate when taking the social constructionist spirit to the hilt: multiple voices, appreciative construction of questions, and joint design of the future. I am also interested in not just change, but change at the *scale of the whole--how do we move a whole 67,000 person telephone company, or a whole northeast Ohio economic region--together*. My favorite project is with Mayor Jackson, designing for "A Green City on a Blue Lake"--an AI Summit each year for 10 years on sustainability and next generations of energy. I am using this example to write about the next IPOD with Lindsey Godwin--*innovation inspired positive organization development--bringing together design thinking, AI, and strengths*. And on a personal note I am experimenting with AI as a way to re-construct dieting. I've lost more than 30 pounds (off now over 2 years). The AI topic is not losing weight (too often we become what we study.) The life-centric inquiry instead revolves around "eating to thrive." And the discovery, dream, and design process has

changed everything. I'm loving the green smoothies, the amazing communities involved, and the triathlons I'm now doing with my daughter Hannah!

### From Jane Watkins (honorary board member)

Busy as usual, with many teaching-consulting activities, as has been my habit. I was very happy to receive a recognition from the Organization Development Network during the annual meeting last October/November. I was presented the *Lifetime Achievement Award* for my work in OD. On the home front, **Ralph** and I had all but one of our children and families plus **Barbara Sloan** here at MarshHaven for four days over Thanksgiving Holidays. We had a full house - 19 plus two dogs! The humans devoured a 24 pound turkey in one sitting! We worked it off during an extended Kennedyesque game of touch football.



### From Diana Whitney (board member emerita)



I write from St. Petersburg, Florida where my first experiment living and working near the beach can only be described as a great success. Last year was full of opportunities to share the hopeful and practical messages of Appreciative Inquiry and Appreciative Leadership. I traveled to Sweden, South Africa, Canada, Chile and numerous places in the US, speaking and consulting. Executives, consultants and coaches seeking fresh ideas and

tools for collaboration and strength-based organization change hosted me. Corporation for Positive Change continues to be a positive force for good in the world. We have a new website, check it out. And we will be launching a global inquiry, "*Putting the World to Work*" in the year ahead. It seems that 2012 will be a year of meaningful conferences. This spring I am keynoting at the *National Hospice and Palliative Care Conference* and the *Canadian Medical Association Conference*. And I am looking forward to both the *International Appreciative Inquiry Conference* and the Taos Institute conference, *Relational Practices in Peacebuilding, Mediation, and Conflict Transformation*.

### From Dawn Dole, Executive Director

I spent the past year managing all the various projects and initiatives of Taos, both new and ongoing. Particularly active this year was the publishing efforts with three new books and several in the works for 2012. I was fortunate to travel to Tilburg University, in the Netherlands in November to be present at 7 of our PhD students' defenses—



what an honor it was to be there. I continue to thrill at hearing about all the fantastic work of our board members and associates around the world and look forward to our two conferences in 2012, one in Merida, MX and the other in San Diego, CA. I hope you are able to join us at one or both of these exciting gatherings.



## Remembering Barnett Pearce 1943-2011

By Sheila McNamee for the Taos Institute Board

We are saddened by the loss of Barnett Pearce, scholar, theorist, practitioner, mentor and friend. Barnett, an Associate of the Taos Institute, is best known for the creation of the Coordinated Management of Meaning Theory with his long-time colleague, Vernon Cronen (an Honorary Associate of the Taos Institute). Barnett was always fond of saying that to use CMM (as the theory is known) is to “take the communication perspective” and this consists of “looking at communication rather than through it.” Looking at communication was in evidence in every conversation Barnett had. His attentiveness to what was going on in the moment, his continuous curiosity, and the joy he took in engaging in playful surprise offered his conversational partners a view of what is possible when we “take the communication perspective.” Barnett challenged himself and us all to continually ask, “What are we making together; how are we making it; and how can we make better social worlds?” These questions provoke us to pay attention to how entire worlds unfold on all levels from the dyadic to the global. Barnett’s intellectual curiosity and passion were insatiable. He was able to ignite inspiration in generations of colleagues and students. Barnett had a wonderful habit of writing provocative pieces and sharing them widely; we will miss these provocations but we will continue to carry his legacy of intellectual curiosity and passion for making better social worlds.



## Remembering Ruth Bonner

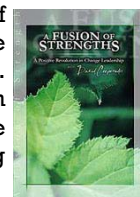
In memory of Ruth Bonner - 1917-2011

The Taos Institute wishes to honor Ruth Bonner for her lifetime contributions to the International Baccalaureate program and list her among our esteemed Honorary Associates. Ruth had participated in many of the Taos Institute conferences over the past 10 years as she traveled together with her daughter **Yvonne Bonner**, a Taos Institute Associate. We came to know her as a true legend of the international education movement. Ruth Bonner was one of four teachers in Geneva who in 1964 laid the foundation for the International Baccalaureate Programme and for the first time it provided a standardized curriculum across IB schools that has spread all over the the world.



Ruth's physical presence will no longer be with us at our Taos gatherings with her daughter Yvonne, but her spirit will live on in so many people she touched throughout her life. She will be missed by all of us who came to know her and love her.

A DVD— **Fusion of Strengths: A Positive Revolution in Change Leadership** (2006) The next generation of management thinking....Join Dr. David Cooperrider, Professor, Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University, as he passionately explores the next generation of management thinking. Dr. Cooperrider's ideas are on the leading edge of the field and are bringing about a positive revolution in change. Three powerful concepts in the film are: The Power of Positive Image; The Power of Words; and The Power of Positive Emotions. This video was produced by the Film Investment Group (FIG) and is being distributed by the Taos Institute. 10% of all sales of the video are donated to the Taos Institute.





# Taos Institute - Tilburg University Ph.D. Program in Social Sciences

## 14 students graduate in 2011

Read about our students' dissertation research and writing.

Very exciting work — go to this link or click here to read about our current students:  
<http://www.taosinstitute.net/current-dissertations>



**Anne Mette Korczynski**



**Aileen Tierney**



**Jody Jacobson**



**Loek Shoemakers**



**Rodney Merrill**



**Glen Boyd**



**Cara Weston**



**Ginny Belden-Charles**



**Karen Dawson**



**Tobias Schueth**



**Ottar Ness**

**Not pictured:**

Randy Janzen

Joan Marquess

Satinder Dhiman

### Completed Dissertations

The Taos Institute-Tilburg University students who have completed the program share their dissertations on the Taos Institute website. Please visit this page: <http://www.taosinstitute.net/completed-dissertations> to view these dissertations.

### Noteworthy Dissertations

The Taos Institute is collecting dissertations from around the world which are related to social construction research, theory and practice. Visit <http://www.taosinstitute.net/noteworthy-dissertations>. Many new scholars are finding intriguing and innovative ways to employ social constructionism as the substantive focus of their work, as a guide to methodological designs, or as an organizing framework for the entire dissertation/thesis enterprise. We hope these "noteworthy dissertations" will stimulate networking conversations among all who read them. Authors of these dissertations have granted the Taos Institute non-exclusive rights to post their dissertations on its website in a PDF format. Please use correct citation when quoting from any of these documents.

## New Associates in 2011

We are pleased to introduce the following colleagues as Associates of the Taos Institute. They were invited to participate in this capacity for their outstanding work in their field related to social construction and its applications to academics, professional practice, organizational and community development. The Honorary Associates are colleagues whose contributions have been unusually stimulating and inspiring and exceptional contributions to the dialogues, practices and ideals of the Taos Institute. We invite you to get to know them.

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/institute-associates>

### Honorary Associates

**Ruth Bonner**—International Baccalaureate, deceased

**Vern Cronen** - University of Massachusetts, Massachusetts, vec@comm.umass.edu

**Norman Denzin** - University of Illinois, Illinois, n-denzin@uiuc.edu

**David Epston** - School of Social Practice, UNITEC Institute of Technology/The Family Therapy Centre, New Zealand, bicycle2@xtra.co.nz

**Hubert Hermans** - Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands, hhermans@psych.ru.nl

**Jonathan Potter** - Loughborough University, United Kingdom, j.a.potter@lboro.ac.uk

**Jan Smedslund** - Psykologisk institutt, Norway, jan.smedslund@psykologi.uio.no

### Taos Institute Associates

**Gilberto Ramiro Limon Arce** - Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico, limon@unam.mx

**Bill Ash** - Wesfarmers Resources Limited, Australia, ewash@wesresources.com.au

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**Ginny Belden-Charles** - Center for Emerging Leadership: Women's Leadership, Minnesota, ginny@beldencharles.com

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**Bryan Crable** - Villanova University, Pennsylvania, bryan.crable@villanova.edu

**Sandra Davidson** - Chamberlain College of Nursing, Arizona, sjdavids@gmail.com

**Karen Dawson** - Create Now Inc., Canada, karen@createnow.ca

**Michael Elms** - Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Massachusetts, mbelmes@wpi.edu

**Larry Espe** - School District #60 - Peace River North, Canada, lespe@prn.bc.ca

**Gabriel Fairman** - Bureau Translations, Brazil, gabriel.fairman@bureautranslations.com

**Marco Gemignani** - Duquesne University, Pennsylvania, gemignanim@duq.edu

**Mauricio Goldstein** - Pulsus Consulting Group, Brazil, mauricio.goldstein@pulsusconsulting.com

**Maja Loua Haslebo** - Haslebo & Partnere, Denmark, gh@haslebo-partnere.dk

**Jenny Helin** - Jönköping University, Sweden, jenny.helin@ihh.hj.se

**Jeff Hicks** - Executive Education Group, Texas, jeff.hicks@utdallas.edu

**Jeff Jackson** - The Vallarta Institute, Mexico, jeff.jackson@vallartainstitute.com

**Jody Jacobson** - Jody Jacobson & Company, Wisconsin, Jody@jodyjacobson.com

**Randy Janzen** - Selkirk College, British Columbia, Canada, RJanzen@selkirk.ca

**Ollie-Pekka Juoperi** - Humap, Finland, olli-pekka.juoperi@humap.com

**Thomas Keller** - Medical specialist in psychotherapy & psychiatry, family therapy, Cologne, Germany, thokeller@t-online.de

**Lesley Lahaye** - Retired from: School District #60 - Peace River North, Canada, leslahaye@gmail.com

**Young Seok Lee** - ORP Institute, Korea, orplee@orp.biz

**Bill Madsen** - Family-Centered Services Project, Massachusetts, madsen1@comcast.net

**Rodney Merrill** - Elite Word & Image, Oregon, Rodney.Merrill@Elite-Word.com

**Anne Mette Korczynski** - Copenhagen Language Center, Denmark, amkorcz@hotmail.com

**Matthew Moehle** - Appreciative Inquiry Practitioner and Educator, Vermont, matthew.moehle@gmail.com

**Papusa Maria Luisa Molina** - Instituto Kanankil, Mexico, mlmolina@kanankil.org

**Maurice Monette** - The Vallarta Institute, Mexico, maurice.monette@vallartainstitute.com

**Angelica Moretti** - ATMA Desenvolvimento Humano, Brazil, angelica@atmadh.com

**Murilo Moscheta** - Psychologist, Brazil, murilomoscheta@me.com

**Pavel Nepustil** - „Pasaz“ („Passage“) within a non-profit „Podane Ruce“, Czech Republic, pnepustil@centrum.cz  
**Ottar Ness** - Trondheim Family Therapy Centre, Norway, ottar@ottarness.com  
**Ruthie Neustifter** - Amridge University, Exploring Intimacy Consultancy, Maryland, Ruthneustifter@amridgeuniversity.edu  
**Cornelia Oestereich** - KRH Psychiatrie Wunstorf, Germany, cornelia.oestereich@krh.eu  
**Mary Olson** - Mill River Institute for Dialogic Practice, Massachusetts, molson@smith.edu  
**Risto Puutio** - The Metanoia Institute, Finland, risto.puutio@metanoia.fi  
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## Taos Institute Web-page Featuring the Associates

Taos Institute Associates are colleagues who have supported the work of the Taos Institute and continue to promote and work with social constructionist thought, practice and theory in their own work. We hope you will take some time to visit the Taos Institute website page which features our colleagues who are Taos Associates.

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/institute-associates>

**Taos Associates Council** In 2010, the TI Board of Directors created a Council of Taos Institute Associates to assist in building greater connectedness and support to the community of Taos Associates. A call went out for volunteers, and from these volunteers, a selection was made randomly while assuring geographic distribution. The Council was formed in September 2010 and had its first ‘meeting’ on October 11, 2011. Meetings (via teleconferences) were and are still held each month.

The initial Council included Carsten Hornstrup, Chris Blantern, Diana Carleton, Kathleen Clark, Marvin Shaub, Susan Lord, Christine Dennstedt, Dora Fried Schnitman, Madelyn Blair, and Rocio Chaveste. Using a collaborative process, the Council has achieved a remarkable set of accomplishments given that they met only virtually for less than 2 hours each month.

**The mission** of the Taos Associate Council is to invite new life-giving relationships between Taos Associates in a way that generates new collaborative opportunities.

**Our vision** is to explore and develop ways of bringing together the resources of the Taos Institute Associates with the hope to develop ideas and practices that generate better relations in families, communities and organizations.

### **The 2011-12 Taos Associates Council members are:**

Madelyn Blair, Chris Blantern, Diana Carleton, Rocio Chaveste, Ralph Kelly, Lesley Lahaye, Pavel Nepustil, Marvin Shaub, Dora Fried Schnitman, and Susan Swim.



## Web of Connections

The **AI Practitioner**, edited by Anne Radford is an excellent source for up-to-date and relevant examples of Appreciative Inquiry. Visit Anne's website at:

<http://www.aipractitioner.com/>

You may find other innovative and interesting links on our web page called **Web of Connections**

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/web-of-connections>

This page includes a list of institutions with which our work at the Taos Institute is deeply resonant.

## Free Articles and Papers

We invite you to take a look at the articles on this web page of the Taos Institute website. Perhaps there is a paper or article that you have not read yet.....

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/manuscripts-for-downloading>

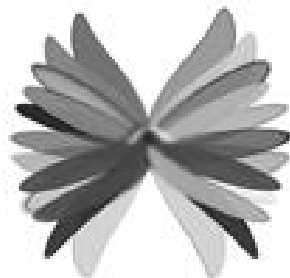
We also list "**Books of Interest**". If you know of a book that has been of interest to you, related to social construction, let us know. We can post the book cover, title and ISBN.

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/books-of-interest>

## Visual Resources for Teaching, Exploring and Enjoying Social Construction

We offer you here a collection of visual resources to explore and enjoy social constructionist thinking. A number of these resources are used by our Associates and colleagues in social constructionist training context. Many of the resources are compiled from what is available on the worldwide web and we ask you to appropriately acknowledge the original sources in your use. The resources are organized into cartoons, interactive visuals, mini-movies, photographs/images and presentation slides. We invite you to post your comments in the space provided on each resource page. You can also narrow the search for resources by using the above categories or by selecting the tags on the right margin. We are interested in your resources too. Please submit them for consideration using this form. Enjoy!

Visit: <http://www.taosinstitute.net/visual-resources>



**Conferences through the Years:** Take a look at all the conferences we've held over the past 19 years.

The first Taos Institute conference was in April 1993 with over 130 participants from around the world.

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/previous-conferences1>

It is exciting to see the growth and YOU have been an important part of making this happen.

## Workshops for 2012

### The Taos Institute Workshops

These workshops are sponsored by The Taos Institute. Questions regarding content, registration, and fees for a particular workshop may be directed to the presenter of the workshop.

For general questions email the Taos Institute —  
[info@taosinstitute.net](mailto:info@taosinstitute.net).

**For information and details visit:**

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/upcoming-workshops>

**Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry** | March 19-23, Diana Whitney, Chapel Hill, NC

**Social Construction, Relational Theory and Professional Practice** | April 19-21, Ken & Mary Gergen, The Netherlands

**Collaborative Practices: Social Constructionist Inquiry & Implications for Practice** | May 18-19, Sheila McNamee, Sally St. George & Dan Wulff, Houston, TX

**Social Construction, Relational Theory and Change Practices** | June 8-10, Mary & Ken Gergen, Wallingford, PA

**International Summer Institute: Collaborative Relationships and Dialogical Conversations** | June 17-22, Harlene Anderson, & Sylvia London, Mexico

**Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry** | July 10-13, Frank Barrett & David Cooperrider, Monterey, CA

**Social Construction: Relational Theory and Practice** | Nov. 11-13, Harlene Anderson & Sheila McNamee, San Diego, CA

### e-learning: Relational and Performative Practices for Transformational Change

Collaboration and Dialogue: We invite you to join the **online course** where the participants jointly inquire and explore the notions of social construction thinking. We currently have participants from 10 different countries having rich trans-disciplinary conversations to further our understandings of how to create communities of collaborative and performative practices. Using the *learning community model*, we meet for five *webinars*, each for 1.5 hours, along with asynchronous *online conversations* via forum postings. The program offered over five months helps participants to read, reflect and implement their understanding to real life situations creating an embodied learning context.

As Kristen, one of the current participants said “I am enjoying learning different ways of collaborative performance of meaning making. I find this useful and I can bring these ideas into my work in the future. Adding to my repertoire.”

**The next course will be offered April – August 2012.**

Visit [salihabava.com/learning](http://salihabava.com/learning) or email [drbava@gmail.com](mailto:drbava@gmail.com)

## Friends of the Taos Institute Workshops

The Taos Institute offers this workshop listing opportunity as a service to our Associates and friends to share their great work. The Taos Institute is not responsible for the content or management of these workshops. Questions regarding registration and content should be directed to the workshop presenters. **For locations & details visit:**

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/friends-of-taos-institute-workshops>

**Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry** | Jan. 16-20, Amanda Trosten-Bloom, Barbara Lewis & Linda Meccouri

**Collaborative Practices: Clinical & Community Contexts** | Feb. 2-3, Saliha Bava & Sue Levin

**LEAD from Your Strengths: A Simple Way to Address Daily Challenges and Opportunities** | Feb. 3, Ada Jo Mann

**Appreciative Inquiry for Strategic Planning: Igniting and Sustaining Positive Change** | Feb. 6-9, Tony Silbert & David Shaked

**Rapid Strategy Development: Getting to Engagement & Results Quicker** | Feb. 10, Tony Silbert & David Shaked

**From Counseling to Coaching: Learning the Basic Principles of Coaching** | Feb. 23-24, Harlene Anderson & Diana Carlton

**Cultivating Strengths Through Appreciative Inquiry** | Feb. 24-25, Claire Fialkov & David Haddad

**Appreciative Inquiry Summit** | Feb. 27 - March 1, Tenny Poole & Ralph Weickel

**Igniting Innovation and Sustaining Positive Change** | Feb. 27 - Mar. 1, Maureen McKenna

**Keep The Conversation Going: Dialogical Resources For Therapy & Supervision** | March 2-3, Sheila McNamee & Julie Tilsen

**Rapid Strategy Development: Getting to Engagement & Results Quicker** | March 28, Tony Silbert & Roselyn Kay

**From Counseling to Coaching: Learning the Basic Principles of Coaching** | April 5-6, Harlene Anderson & Diana Carlton

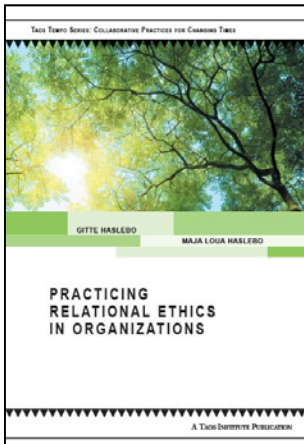
**Appreciative Inquiry Designing Experience-Based Learning** | April 16-20, Maureen McKenna

**The Eighth International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry** | May 16-19

**Igniting Innovation & Sustaining Positive Change: Foundations of Appreciative Inquiry** | May 28-3, Bill Scott

**Appreciative Leadership Development Program©** | Sept. 11-14, Diana Whitney

**Collaborative Practices: Applications across Multiple Practice Contexts** | October 12-13, Harlene Anderson & Diana Carlton



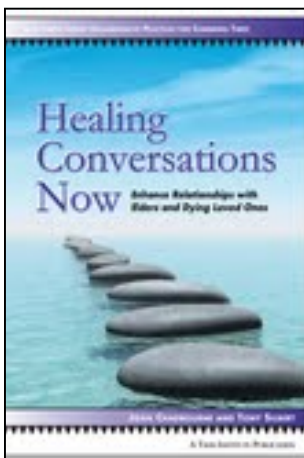
## Practicing Relational Ethics in Organizations

By Gitte Haslebo and Maja Lous Haslebo

ISBN: 978-0-9819076-8-0

In unforeseeable ways, events in organizations can lead to loss of face, violations of personal dignity, damaged relationships and poor results. Managers, employees and consultants search for ideas that might help them deal with complicated situations in morally respectful ways. By telling nine dramatic real life stories the authors illustrate how managers, employees and consultants might find inspiration in key social constructionist concepts and relational ethics. They introduce and unfold five key moral obligations in relational ethics: social responsibility, dialogic obligations, shared responsibility for positioning, inquiry of value to the work community and the obligation to interact as morally responsible agents.

*“Practicing Relational Ethics in Organizations is a wonderful book and I recommend it highly. It moves forward the discussion about ethics in organizations within a social constructionist perspective. Beautifully written and a delight to read, it provides an opportunity for English-readers to see how familiar ideas are being developed and practiced in a less familiar social, political, and institutional context, and – most importantly, from my perspective – the authors succeed in inscribing their wisdom and humanity. The book shows how we can make relational ethics support our being human in organizations.” - W. Barnett Pearce*



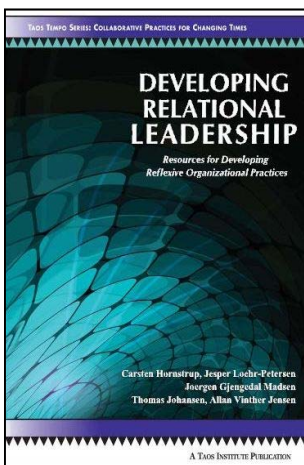
## Healing Conversations Now: Enhance Relationships with Elders and Dying Loved Ones

By Joan Chadbourne and Tony Silbert

ISBN: 978-0-9819076-7-3

We might be drawn to initiate Healing Conversations for a variety of reasons: Tony recognized the time was now if he was going to know his mom as a whole person before she died of small-cell lung cancer. Crisis compelled Joan to have more meaningful and powerfully intimate conversations with each of her parents before they died. Those interactions moved her to begin years of on-going conversations with her elder aunts. They continue today. As we reflected on these life-changing interactions, we realized: no matter what compels us to enter into Healing Conversations, the outcome is the same. Relationships are enhanced. Those who engage in Healing Conversations experience a more satisfying connection and a greater sense of loving and being loved. In this book you'll find stories to inspire you to initiate Healing Conversations with your elders and dying loved

ones. Questions and conversation starters are also provided, to help you know what to say and do.



Coming Soon.....

## Developing Relational Leadership: Resources for Developing Reflexive Organizational Practices

By Carsten Hornstrup, Jesper Loehr-Petersen, Joergen Gjengedal Madsen, Thomas Johansen, Allan Vinther Jensen

ISBN: 978-0-9819076-9-7

Developing Relational Leadership offers the scholar, the practitioner, and most importantly, the scholar-practitioner an exuberance of riches. The authors provide a deep foray into the worlds of systemic, cybernetic and constructionist ideas, while bringing those ideas to the worlds of leadership and organizational change and practice. The authors share cases that present tools for exploring these ideas and practices. While the authors position the two halves of this volume as “tools for thinking” and “tools for action,” marking this as a book about both theory and practice, the reader experiences “tools for thinking about the relationship between thinking and action” – and this connection is quite a treat. Relationship and context are continually in the foreground.



# The Taos Institute will Celebrate its 20th Anniversary in April 2013

We hope you will plan to join us for our 20th Anniversary celebration when we return to Taos, New Mexico. Tentative date: April 10-13

Plans are beginning now in order to make this a gathering in which you will want to participate.

Share your story with us:

1. Tell us about your beginnings with the Taos Institute.

What first attracted you to TI and what inspired you?

2. Share a highlight of your experiences with TI over the years.

3. How has Taos made a positive difference in your life?

What has become possible in your life because of the Taos Institute?

The celebration:

4. How would you most like to celebrate the 20th anniversary with us?

The future:

5. What are your greatest hopes and visions for the next 20 years for the Taos Institute?

**We would love to hear from you. Email Dawn Dole at [info@taosinstitute.net](mailto:info@taosinstitute.net)**



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

relationships and conversations that make a difference

The *International Journal of Collaborative Practices* provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and stories from practitioners who utilize collaborative principles in their disciplines and daily work.

The Journal brings together authors and readers who are part of an ever-growing international community of practitioners including scholars, educators, researchers, and consultants interested in postmodern collaborative practices. This community is part of the broader dialogical movement in the social sciences composed of those who share an interest in: "How can our theories and practices have relevance for people's everyday lives in our fast changing world, what is this relevance, and who determines it?"

FREE Online Bilingual Journal

*The promotion of democracy, social justice and human rights*

### Spotlighting

*The necessity of collaboration*

*The importance of the people's voice, singular or plural*

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Coming in Spring 2009!

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- Frequently Asked Questions
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- Blog about the Journal
- Conference and Project Announcements

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## Relational Practices: Leadership & Organization Development

### RELATIONEL PRAKSIS



The Taos Institute has helped to sponsor a new free e-journal "Relational Practice" which is about leadership and organizational development, drawing on inspiration from the social constructionist, systemic, appreciative and narrative thinking, well known in many Danish organizations.

The journal's ambition is to provide a diversity of voices the opportunity to share their inspiration and experience of relational practice, so that together we can develop, disseminate and reinforce this practice. It is a journal from practitioners and to practitioners; managers, consultants, employees and others who are working to develop their own and others' everyday practice.

[http://forlagetmindspace.dk/etidsskrift/1\\_2010/1\\_2010.html](http://forlagetmindspace.dk/etidsskrift/1_2010/1_2010.html)

## International Certificate Program in Collaborative Practices

Co-sponsored by the Taos Institute and the Houston Galveston Institute

The International Certificate Program offers practitioners around the world an opportunity to expand their knowledge and competency in collaborative practices. The International Certificate Program provides practitioners across disciplines- therapy, organization development, education and research--an intensive, in-depth study of collaborative practices based in postmodern social construction philosophy. This Certificate will be offered simultaneously in the following countries: Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hong Kong and USA.

For information and curriculum be sure to visit:  
[www.collaborativecertificate.org](http://www.collaborativecertificate.org)







Social Construction  
in Action Around  
the World

Administrative  
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63 Maple Hill Dr  
Chagrin Falls, Ohio  
44022 USA

Phone:  
1-888-999-TAOS or  
1-440-338-6733  
Email:  
[info@taosinstitute.net](mailto:info@taosinstitute.net)

[www.taosinstitute.net](http://www.taosinstitute.net)

## Exploring Relational Practices in Peace Building, Mediation and Conflict Transformation:

**From the Intimate to the International**

in beautiful Mission Bay, San Diego, California

November 14-17, 2012

Practitioners, academics and community members will come together to share and create new forms of practice for peacebuilding informed by social construction. We will feature relational, collaborative, and appreciative practices for conflict transformation and mediation in families, organizations, communities, and the world.

There could not be a more important moment for this gathering. As inequality, interpersonal violence, community conflict, environmental demise, political unrest, terrorism, and general global unease proliferate, **it becomes increasingly important for us to share and expand our relational resources to create peacebuilding opportunities among people, families, organizations, communities, and nations.**

Participants will develop and share ways of moving from conflict-saturated relations to collaborations across divides of meaning. Our time together will both educate and bring to life new forms of practice and new projects large and small that inspire innovative ways of going on together.

**Join our online dialogue now until the conference in Nov. 2012:**

<http://www.taosinstitute.net/pre-conference-dialogues>

For details and to register:

[www.taosinstitute.net/peacebuilding-conference](http://www.taosinstitute.net/peacebuilding-conference)

## Positive Aging Newsletter — A newsletter for all ages

For the past eleven years Ken and Mary Gergen have been editing the *Positive Aging Newsletter*, sponsored by the Taos Institute. The electronic newsletter, which is free to subscribers, is dedicated to one goal, and that is to publish all the research results and news, as well as web, visual and literary resources, that suggest that the last third of life, the “third age” as some call it, is a time of life that is highly generative and rich in wisdom and personal satisfaction. The aim of the newsletter is to actively fight the stereotypes of old age that are so prevalent in our society. The hope is to undermine the notion that the life-span is an archway, with those who are growing older becoming “over the hill.” Instead, the attempt is to emphasize a way of understanding the later years as an upward trajectory.

Thanks to volunteers, the newsletter is also available in French, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese.

The Gergens also give workshops and seminars on positive aging. If you would like to receive the newsletter in any of its languages, visit: [www.positiveaging.net](http://www.positiveaging.net) to sign up and to read the current and archived newsletters.

