

On Leadership...

How it all started

In November 2013 I started my PhD journey in search of the core - I often speak about the Soul - of appreciative leadership. Invited by John Rijsman from the University of Tilburg, I started by reflecting on my own journey as a leader in business ever since my encounter with appreciative Inquiry around the mid nineties of the last century. From that reflection emerged three models on which I regularly speak at conferences and meetings. I also felt the need to speak with others around what it is that we see emerge when we speak about 'the soul of appreciative leadership'.

Appreciative conversations please...

To really engage into a conversation, have a heart to heart, maybe even a soul to soul conversation. A conversation where time and space disappear. In my search on how to do that I became inspired by the film work of Nic Askew. After being trained by him last year and still being coached by him and Andrew Hasenruck, I started to make black and white film portraits trying to capture the essence of the leadership of the people I had conversations with. Appreciative conversations instead of interviews with prepared questions! I engage in a fully open conversation, a meeting filled with curiosity and interest in what will emerge. Usually these conversations last from 45 minutes to an hour and a half, after which I start to review the material, trying to capture the essence.

All leading to...

Where should this lead to? My objective is to have some 10 - 15 portraits for my PhD, hoping that by then I will have a clue on where to look if I want to find the soul of an appreciative leader. In the end I also hope to have a balance male / female portraits and hopefully also across geographies.

“I'M LOOKING FOR
THE TWINKLING IN
THEIR EYES”

(FRANK VAN ERKEL)

Enjoy and reflect...

I invite you to watch the three film portraits. They are 5 to 7 minutes in length and maybe you see a glimpse emerging of what characterizes these leaders, leaders that are regarded as appreciative leaders by the people around them. The links:

1. Frank van Erkel, director organisation development of the City of Amsterdam (vimeo.com/124447967)
2. John M. Le Moyne, Lieutenant General U.S. Army (retired) (vimeo.com/136021656)
3. Dan K. Saint, former partner at Deloitte and managing director at Jefferson Wells (vimeo.com/136666896)

“TO APPRECIATE YOURSELF...
MAYBE IT IS SELF
CONFIDENCE DEEP INSIDE”

(JOHN M. LE MOYNE)

JOEP C. DE JONG is associate of the TAOS Institute and member of the council of Instituto IDEIA. Jane Watkins and Barbara Sloan introduced him to AI and he received a certificate in the AI program Global Change and Social Innovation from Case Western Reserve University.

Above all he is the proud father of 2 daughters (Maaike and Anne) and a son (Dirk) and grandfather of Ilse. He lives with his partner Hanne on their houseboat near Spaarndam.

