**Gossip Be Gone! The Vital Importance of a Positive Culture**

##### **Opening Reflection: Wait, What?**

**The Five Questions**

1. Wait, What ?
2. I Wonder ?
3. Couldn’t We At Least?
4. How Can I Help?
5. What Truly Matters?

**Bonus Question:**

And did you get what you wanted from this life, even so?

Team Discussion Questions:

* **How could these five questions impact your work?**
* **Which questions will you commit to using in your work with your colleagues? parents? administrators? Share examples?**

Based on the book: *Wait, What? And Life’s Other Essential Questions*. By James E. Ryan, Dean of Harvard’s Graduate School of Education

**Presented by: Susan MacDonald, Inspiring New Perspectives**

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**Inviting Possibilities for Teams**

*“When teachers are filled with a sense of their own strengths, vitalities, and aspirations, and when they are invited to imagine the possibilities that would make their life and work more wonderful, they get fully engaged in self-directed learning. Their energy goes up and their resistance goes down*.”

**Questions that Invite Possibility:**

What are the best things that could happen in our classroom in the near future?

What changes would we like to experiment with in our teaching?

What do you think are the best possible outcomes for our work together?

What do we believe is possible?

How might our teaching be different in a few months?

What could we pay more attention to in the classroom?

What variables do you think matter most?

What possibilities do you see for the teaching team in the next few months?

What changes do you think your students would really appreciate?

What commitments have you made to the team?

What things can we imagine doing differently?

What would we like to see more of in your classroom?

How could our needs and the needs of your students be more fully met?

What kind of environment would we like to create for you students?

What changes would excite us and make us feel great?

What has worked for us in other settings that we can draw on in this situation?

What are the best things that could happen in our classroom in the near future?

What changes would we like to experiment with in our teaching?

What do you think are the best possible outcomes for our work together?

Adapted from *Evocative Coaching: Transforming Schools One Conversation at a Time*. By Tschannen-Moran, Bob, and Megan Tschannen-Moran. 2010. pages 159 – 160

**Questions for Teams to Reframe Difficult Situations**

* 1. **In what ways will our work together be better after having worked through this?**
  2. **What are the strengths of this situation, and what is good about it?**
  3. **What do we stand to learn or gain from this?**
  4. **Who do we know who deals well with these types of situations, and what can we learn from him or her? What questions do we want to ask this person?**
  5. **When was a time in the past when we dealt successfully with a similar situation, and what can we apply from that?**
  6. **What are our greatest strengths, and how can we use them to help us in this situation?**
  7. **What are two good things that could possibly come out of this?**
  8. **How will the learning from this situation spill over into other areas of our work?**

**Adapted from: *The Joy of Appreciative Living* by Jacqueline Kelm**

**Team Discussion Planning Form**

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Professional challenge (with a colleague, classroom dynamic, child, parent..)

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Key goal(s) for team discussion:

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Key questions to gain a broader perspective on the challenge:

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Key questions to define the issue(s) that needs to be addressed:

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Key questions to define action steps:

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Plan for follow-up:

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**Prepared by: Susan MacDonald, Inspiring New Perspectives, www.inspiringnewperspectives.com**

**Assessing Your Work as a Team**

**Directions:** Circle the number that best reflects how true each of the stated descriptions is for your team

Strongly Strongly

Disagree Agree

1. We engage in open and 1 2 3 4 5

honest communication.

1. Everyone has a chance to 1 2 3 4 5

participate in decision making.

1. We all feel comfortable 1 2 3 4 5

expressing our thoughts and

ideas during team meetings.

1. We listen actively to one 1 2 3 4 5

another and try not to

interrupt.

1. We cooperate to get things 1 2 3 4 5

done.

1. We all follow through on 1 2 3 4 5

the commitments we make.

1. We continually clarify 1 2 3 4 5

everyone’s team

responsibilities.

1. Conflicts are dealt with 1 2 3 4 5

constructively, respecting

differing points of view.

1. We seek and give feedback 1 2 3 4 5

to each other.

1. We regularly reflect on and 1 2 3 4 5

evaluate the progress we are

making towards achieving

our goals for children and families

Source: *Adapted from Leading Adult Learning: Supporting Adult Development in Our Schools* by Eleanor Drago-Severson. p. 98

**Resources**

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