Presence in Teaching by Rodgers and Raider-Roth, 2006

This article articulates a theory of 'presence' in teaching and seeks to establish a theoretical foundation for presence that can serve as a platform for further research. It seeks to address the current educational climate that sees teaching as a check list of behaviours, dispositions, measures, and standards, and to articulate the essential but elusive aspect of teaching we call presence. Presence is defined as a state of alert awareness, receptivity, and connectedness to the mental, emotional, and physical workings of both the individual and the group in the context of their learning environments, and the ability to respond with a considered and compassionate best next step. The article is divided into four sections and explores existing conceptions of presence: presence as self-awareness, presence as connection to students, and presence as connection to subject matter and pedagogical knowledge. Within each section the role that context plays in a teacher's ability to be present is also explored. The authors draw upon papers and stories from student teachers, interview data from children and experienced teachers, and stories from a study group of experienced educators that explored the notion of presence on three different occasions. They conclude by connecting presence to the essential purpose of teaching and learning, the creation of a democratic society.

Question : Rodgers and Raider-Roth suggest 'presence' as an important factor in teaching and argue for four aspects: presence as self-awareness, presence as connection to students, and presence as connection to subject matter and pedagogical knowledge. Is presence just as important in leadership? If so, what would be the four equivalent aspects of presence for leadership?

Emergent School Leadership : Creating the Space for Emerging Leadership through Appreciative Inquiry by Mark S Dickerson, 2012

Much has been written on the importance of increasing leadership capacity in schools and managed systems for leadership development; however, little focus has been given to creating conditions to facilitate the emergence of leadership. This research study examines associations of strength-based reflexive processes to the emergence of educational leadership. Specifically, through qualitative analysis, the author explores the emergence of school leadership during an appreciative inquiry initiative in a large, urban school district and identifies the features of appreciative inquiry that were conducive to such emergence.

In addition, the author notes that the initiative also provided participants with many of the element considered vital to leading a healthy learning community: a greater understanding of the big picture, opportunities for professional reflection and sense making, a safe and affirming learning community, time to dialogue with others in the system regarding their core values and commitments, a collaborative work culture, space for networking, and the freedom to take action.

Question : Appreciative Inquiry (AI), a strengthbased method used in organizational development - how does it compare with models of leadership and development that you have experienced? What would be core skills and qualities that leaders need to work with to use AI? How does AI link with the conception of presence?