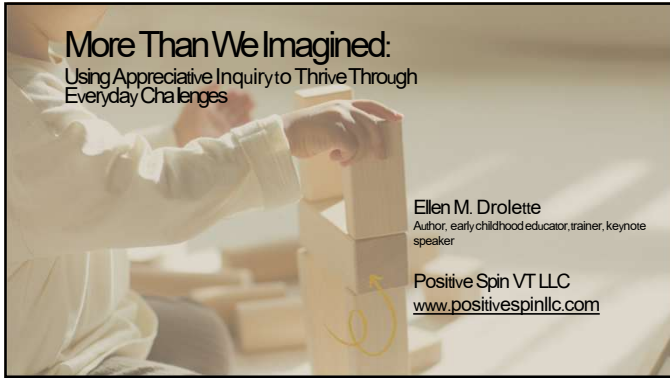


More Than We Imagined:
Using Appreciative Inquiry to Thrive Through
Everyday Challenges

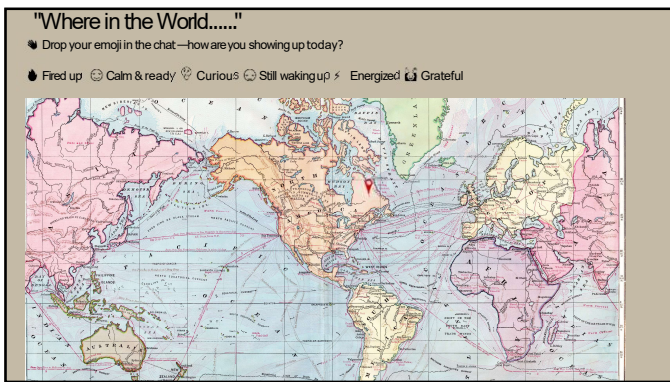


Ellen M. Drolette
Author, early childhood educator, trainer, keynote
speaker

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www.positivespinllc.com

"Where in the World.....!"
Drop your emoji in the chat—how are you showing up today?


Fred up 🤪 Calm & ready 😌 Curious 🤔 Still waking up 🌅 Energized ⚡ Grateful 🙏



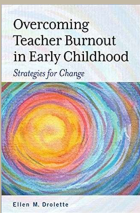
A strengths-based guide for early
childhood educators, leaders, and
caregivers ready to create joyful,
resilient learning environments.

"Takes Appreciative Inquiry out of theory and brings it to life!"
—Alice Barancho, Senior Director of Programs Life @ Good Playmaker Project

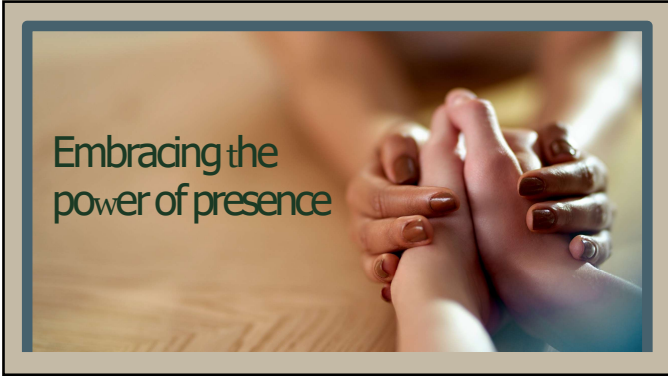
"Will transform not just your teaching practice, but your life!"
—Teacher Tom, Author and Educator



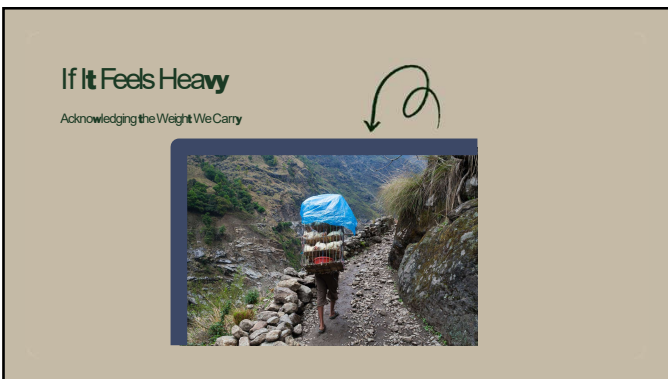
[Learn More](http://edlinkspress.com/MoreThanWeImagined)
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A Different Approach
 Entering Moments with Fresh Eyes




Shifting Perspectives in Practice



What We Notice
 Shapes Our Future Interactions

Appreciative Inquiry Defined

The Power of Positive Questions

Reflection Prompt

Drop your answer in the chat, which story sounds familiar right now?

- ☹️ It was difficult
- ☹️ I felt unsupported
- ☹️ I made a mistake
- 😊 Everything was fine

The Triple R Framework

A simple lens for daily decisions

Are you doing work that matters?
The Triple R Framework™ helps you find out.


<p>R</p> <p>Relevant</p> <p>What matters</p> <p>Identifies immediate context, needs, and priorities clearly.</p> <p>What is most important right now? What context shapes the work?</p>	<p>R</p> <p>Relationships</p> <p>Heart of the work</p> <p>The heart of the work we do in human-centered systems.</p> <p>Who is affected? How are we honoring the humans in the work?</p>	<p>R</p> <p>Reflection</p> <p>A tool for growth</p> <p>Using this as a tool for growth in all areas.</p> <p>What are we learning? How do we use that to move forward?</p>
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Triple R Framework™ - Relevant - Relationships - Reflection

Relevance Matters

Focusing on what truly counts





Relationships

Supporting Emotional Safety and Growth

Reflection

Taking Time to Consider



Let's Try Together

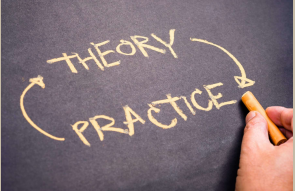
Moving from idea to practice
Real-World Scenarios

Practical Application—Live Poll

Which scenario feels hardest for you right now?

- A) Challenging child behavior
- B) Stressed family
- C) Reactive colleague
- D) My own burnout

Drop A, B, C, or D in the chat!



Navigating Behaviors that are Challenging

Understanding Responses to behaviors that are challenging

- Identify Triggers
- Respond with Empathy
- Encourage Positive Communication



Apply the Triple R Lens

A framework for daily decision-making

The Triple R Framework—Relevance, Relationships, and Reflection

- **Relevance** -----> What need is this behavior communicating right now?
- **Relationships** --> How can connection create safety and trust in this moment?
- **Reflection** -----> What am I noticing about the child, the environment, and my own response?

The Triple R Framework™ helps shift the focus from:

"How do we stop this behavior?"

to

"What is this child needing, and how can we respond in a meaningful way?"



Reactive Staff Dynamics

Understanding the underlying challenges faced

- Root Cause
- Strengths Perspective
- Constructive Response

Supportive cultures are not built by eliminating stress completely.

They are built by creating spaces where people feel seen, regulated, valued, and able to recover together.

3


Small Shifts Matter

Tiny Changes for Significant Outcomes—Word Cloud


🗨️ What word describes the small shift YOU want to make?

Drop it in the chat: Pause · Curiosity · Connection · Listen · Breathe · Wonder · Trust · Repair · Notice · Ask






Pause and Reflect



Embrace Curiosity

Curiosity creates space for connection, understanding, and more thoughtful responses.

Often, the shift from frustration to curiosity changes the entire interaction.



Naming What's Working



Regulate First, Teach Second



Reframe Your Perspective

Shifting from "This child is..." to "This child is showing me..." allows for deeper understanding and opens pathways for constructive interactions, transforming challenges into meaningful opportunities for growth and learning.

Tiny Truths

Recognizing the Small Things

- Connection is not extra work. It is the work.
- Feeling seen is a protective factor.
- Connection builds trust, and trust opens the door to learning.
- Small relational moments often matter more than perfect strategies.
- A child who feels connected is more likely to stay engaged, communicate needs, and recover from hard moments.
- Sometimes the most powerful intervention is simply helping someone feel understood.

Connection is a superpower.





Reflecting for Growth

Embracing New Possibilities Together

Compassion and accountability can exist together.

People are more likely to grow when they feel valued, not judged.



Reflecting on Possibilities — Commitment Pledge

★ One thing I'm committing to from today:
"I will _____ so that _____."

Drop your pledge in the chat—let's witness each others intentions together.

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- LinkedIn: Ellen Drolette
- Website: www.Positivespinllc.com
- Books available wherever books are sold
- You can also find me on Facebook and Instagram

