

Chapter 8

Student Leadership, Well-Being and Service: Integrating Appreciative Inquiry, Strengths and Leadership

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The Opportunity

Following the introduction of well-being as a strategic goal for St. Peter's College and Martin Seligman's residency at the school, an early ground-up and student-lead project emerged. This was the natural evolution towards a strengths-based leadership approach for students in the school. Based on a small-scale leadership conference held at St. Peter's College in June of 2012, which Tom and I participated in, we started to dream about a more ambitious program. The plan sought to galvanize as many school student leaders as possible across Australia.

With the support of Mr. Simon Murray, Headmaster, and Mr. Sam McKinney, Head of Senior School, our ambitious project for a National Student Leadership Summit was born. Mr. Murray and Mr. McKinney told us about their experience in leading an Appreciative Inquiry Summit with staff; we had experienced a smaller version of a similar approach first hand when we were in our final year at school. We felt that this method would work well with students (cf. Chap. 3).

Our aim was to establish an informal network of student leaders who could collaborate and seek advice and feedback from each other throughout the year to harness the creativity and energy of student leaders across the state, learn from each other, document the hopes and dreams we have for the communities we serve, and commit to action, reporting back outcomes from our Leadership Summit.

We acknowledge this chapter was written with the support of with Dr Mathew A. White, Professor Lea Waters, Mr. Sam McKinney, and Mr. Simon Murray. We thank Professor Martin Seligman, Professor David Cooperrider and Michelle McQuaid for their feedback on our plans.

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Table 8.1 Leadership opportunities at St Peter’s College

Leadership opportunity	Description
<i>Formal</i>	School captain, vice-captain, house captains and leadership teams, sports and co-curricular Captains
<i>Distributed</i>	Collaborative opportunities within an open discussion
<i>Informal</i>	Ongoing peer-to-peer relationships to look after younger students and help them to develop the strategies to feel more a part of the school

We realized early on that a major challenge school leaders experience is being able to communicate with peers across systems (independent, government, and Catholic schools). Preparing for the National Student Leadership Summit was a significant undertaking. We were able to consult and seek feedback from a number of leaders in the field. Central to the final structure and approach we created for the summit was an early scoping meeting with Professor Lea Waters and Dr. Mathew White. In discussing our ambitions with Professor Waters, she challenged our understanding of leadership and the role of schooling aligned with positive psychology (Elmore 2000; Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000). In particular, we discussed an older “hero” approach to leadership and reflected on the existing leadership structure at the school, summarised in Table 8.1. In our initial scoping meeting with Professor Waters in Term 4 of 2012, we discussed the opportunities for 2013 and highlighted three areas we wanted to tackle:

- Finding meaning for, and with, student leadership roles in the School
- Finding ways to make a difference within and outside of the School
- Finding balance between leadership opportunities and studies

We discussed the difference between a “hero” view of leadership and the one that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s from challenges in the business world with the rise of the “authentic” leader, and we considered the formal, information, and distributed opportunities that already exist at the School that we could enrich. Tom and I quickly related to both models. We considered examples from sport and history. However, Professor Waters outlined the capabilities demonstrated by an authentic leader. This, we could see, fitted with our larger plans to hold an appreciative inquiry summit at the school.

Outlined in Table 8.2, Tom and I had the opportunity to experience the energizing power of a smaller student conference held at St. Peter’s College in June 2012. Our experience from this process showed us that it was possible to bring a group of diverse people together and form a clear vision, mission, and goals to help measure our success throughout the year. We decided to integrate the advice Professor Waters gave us about authentic leadership, with a reflection on Martin Seligman’s and

Table 8.2 Leadership training 2012–2013

Date	Step
June 2012	South Australian Leadership Appreciate Inquiry Summit
December 2012	Internal School Leaders Appreciate Inquiry Summit
March 2013	National Student Leadership Appreciate Inquiry Summit

Christopher Peterson's character strengths, to build our team (Peterson and Seligman 2004). Professor Waters outlined four qualities of an authentic leader: maintaining self-awareness, building clear relationships, practicing balanced decision-making, and sustaining aligned moral leadership. Out of these four capabilities, we decided to focus systematically on two. Tom and I felt that by enhancing our self-awareness and building good relations across the school, we could strengthen our school's culture (Peterson 2006; White and Waters 2014).

At the end of 2012, we held a half-day appreciative inquiry summit for new school prefects and other house leaders. The aim was to develop a program that focused on leadership styles, decision-making processes, and problem solving. We invited the school prefects to complete the character strengths questionnaire to commence our discussions on building our team's leadership capability. From this day we discovered that the top five character strengths of the group were: capacity to love and be loved, gratitude, forgiveness and mercy, fairness and equity, and citizenship and teamwork. Following six appreciative questions, we collated our peers' feedback (Cooperrider and Srivastva 1987). We asked them:

- "What are the greatest strengths of our school?"
- "What does our school care about?"
- "As students, what do we care about?"
- "What do our peers care about?"
- "What do we want to achieve as prefects?"
- "What three aspects will we focus our effort on?"

As a team, we developed the following vision, mission, and goals:

St. Peter's College 2013 Prefect Vision

To be a united and committed prefect body serving St. Peter's College, and fostering mutual respect through the development of relationships.

St. Peter's College 2013 Prefect Mission

To uphold our values as role models to influence those around us.

St. Peter's College 2013 Prefect Our goals

- To create supportive relationships
- To unlock strengths within our community
- To serve selflessly

Leadership and Seligman's PERMA Theory

During our time as school leaders, we were very fortunate that Professor Martin Seligman, the founder of positive psychology, was resident at the school. This meant that we were able to discuss our ideas and seek feedback from Professor Seligman. His advice was simple and direct. It worked with the three opportunities for leadership we had identified with Professor Waters, in conversation with Dr. White.

Table 8.3 Seligman's PERMA theory. (Adapted from Seligman 2011, pp. 12–20)

	Description	Leadership Strategy
P	Positive emotion	Foster positive experiences across the school for students. In particular focusing on events that promote a sense of belonging and team. Help students to find their passion and interests
E	Engagement	Challenge boys to find engagement in their co-curricular activities studies and align these with their character strengths
R	Relationships	Discuss and foster good relations across year levels
M	Meaning	Challenge our peers to seek and find opportunities to service something greater than themselves
A	Accomplishment	Celebrate student academic and co-curricular achievement with particular emphasis on perseverance in the face of adversity

In early February 2013, when Tom and I met with Professor Seligman, he pointed out that one of the most important things a leader could do was to elevate the level of PERMA (well-being) in the people around him or her. This conversation with Professor Seligman influenced the way that Tom and I considered the year and planted a seed that grew into the vision for a National School Summit. In our weekly school assemblies and meetings with school prefects, we focused on relationships across the school. When we had the opportunity to speak to the whole senior school, we explored PERMA. We explored with Professor Seligman's (2011) theory of PERMA (Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment), which could be applied to aspects of leadership, during the school year. In our discussion with school leaders, we asked them to "name and discuss when they fostered good relations amongst their peers?" "How they could continue to do this?", "What stops them from doing this?", and "What were the barriers?" This determined a timeline, system, and set of skills that we wanted to develop over the course of the year to help foster the well-being of other students in the School (Peterson, 2006, Table 8.3).

We asked our team of school prefects and leaders to consider their capabilities, map these against the PERMA theory, and reflect on their own emerging leadership styles. We linked this back to a presentation that Professor Martin Seligman made to our senior school students in 2012. Professor Seligman addressed all 800 students in the senior school at the installation, and in particular, spoke to our student leadership team:

... I want to tell you something that may touch your careers; when I look in the front row at your school captain, house captain, and behind, one thing that I see is that many of you will want to be leaders in your profession, in the school, leaders in the nation ... I work on leadership and predicting who will become the highest leaders. I'm interested in human strengths and predicting who will become the highest leaders including faith, love and kindness. Your Chaplain has just read to your of faith, hope and love—what could it mean that love is the highest strength. It turns out that of the twenty-four strengths the greatest

predictor of high leadership is the capacity to love and be loved, it is the one strength you want to nurture (Seligman 2012)

Professor Seligman's speech had an impact. We strongly remember how we were surprised at its simplicity. Building on Professor Seligman's lecture in a discussion with Professor Lea Waters, Mr. Murray, and Mr. McKinney, Tom and I decided that we really wanted to focus on the R(elationships) and M(eaning) in PERMA in our new roles as Captain and Vice-Captain of the School. With Professor Seligman, back in 2013, we commenced our plan for a National Student Leadership Summit and actively sought his input. In my opening speech for the year, I decided to expand on my views on PERMA. As School Captain, my aim in doing this was to highlight the best of what already existed at Saints, and then envisage what might be our reality. At the induction service, I said:

In my eyes, the most significant aspect of my job here at Saints is the opportunity that I have to form relationships. When you think about what you really are part of, it is important to stand back from the basic perception of school and see St. Peter's College as a community where you can make a conscious decision to serve or remain idle.

This realization often comes late in one's time at the school, though the second of the central values in my vision for 2013 is service to others and the community. This can be so perfectly summarized by President John F. Kennedy's famous quote: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Here is another point for this realization: St. Peter's College, in itself, is an invitation to be a part of something greater than yourself. I turn to another historical figure in Isaac Newton, who said of his pursuit of knowledge that he would stand on the shoulders of giants by using those before him to propel modern science forward.

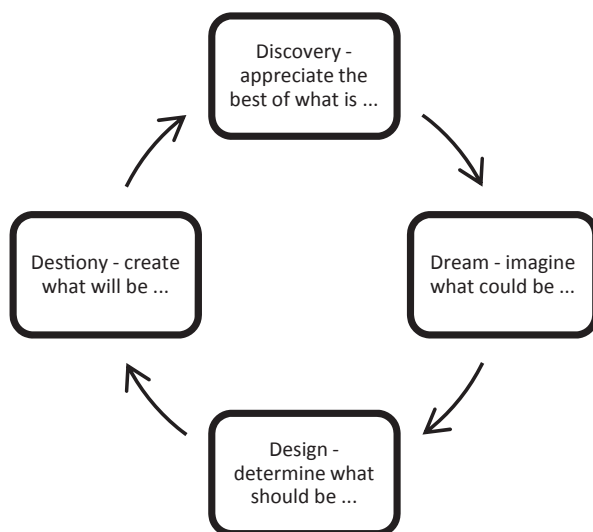
You, as students and contributors to our society here at Saints, are invited to use the rich culture of self-improvement and all-rounded pursuits to not only develop your own character, but to find your niche and excel. A few years ago, Rufus Black said at Year 12 valedictory that our generations' greatest challenge is to overcome our personal comforts and complacency and to embrace an attitude of unshakable perseverance. Your duty is to go against the grain. To explore the unfamiliar and to do more than is asked of you within the comfortable niche that you might acquire. In doing this, I urge you to encourage and support others to take similar risks. Enable people to question, embrace the challenge, and in doing so, allow yourself to help develop an atmosphere of open-mindedness, which will remain as the mark of our great institution.

By overcoming adversity with perseverance, understanding what you are part of by the relationships that you form, and tirelessly serving something greater than yourself, you will look back on your time here with absolute pride and memories that will last a lifetime. Finally, as Professor Seligman, our guest today, is known to say, do not be drawn back by your the past but rather be pulled forward by the opportunities that lie in the future. (Vrodos 2013a)

A National Student Leadership Summit

We recognize that we had great ground on which to build our previous Summit in June 2012. The Captain and Vice-Captain, Oliver van Ruth and Isaac Aitken, worked hard to start the first one. This was our launch pad for a larger Summit. We commenced a larger project using appreciative inquiry as the central method

Fig. 8.1 Appreciative inquiry. (Cooperrider and Srivastva 1987)



(Barrett and Fry 2005). Over 70 school leaders from all sectors of education were invited to participate, with representatives coming from all over the country. Our aim in hosting the Summit was to provide other school leaders with a set of practical skills to use in their schools. We concluded with trying to bring our vision, mission, and goals to reality that we had opportunities for formal, distributed, and informal leadership across the school. How do we engage student leaders from a diversity of schools? Throughout January and February 2013, we worked to structure the National Student Leadership Summit based on David Cooperrider's appreciative inquiry approach (Cooperrider and Srivastva 1987, Fig. 8.1).

As Professor Waters explained to us, appreciative inquiry aligned with our goals in that it focused on what goes right in systems and organisations. Through the workshop format, we unlocked energizing reflections of participants to have them leave the Summit with a clearer sense of their own personal vision, mission, and goals for their leadership during the year.

David Cooperrider believes that by approaching leadership with an appreciative perspective, we would be able to unlock a system's future potential. We wanted to tap into an approach that helped other student leaders (including us) focus on what we are doing right already. We wanted to focus on what needed to be improved or fixed. By allowing people to unite on a central theme, the appreciative inquiry process allows people who share related objectives to construct a shared future based on the strengths of their past. It is a process each person feels free to be heard, free to dream together, free to choose to contribute, and free to act with support. The appreciative inquiry process is grounded in five fundamental principles:

1. The first step acknowledges that the seeds of change are implicit in the first questions asked;

2. The second step recognises that inquiry and change are not truly separate moments; they can and should be simultaneous;
3. The third step understands that our pasts, presents, and futures are endless sources of learning, inspiration, and interpretation;
4. The fourth step values that collective imagination and discourse about the future is a mobilising agent;
5. The fifth step states that the momentum for change requires large amounts of positive energy, emotion, social bonding, hope, inspiration, and the joy of mutual creation.

It was our hope that the Summit participants would create a community of like-minded individuals who are able to keep in contact throughout the year. However, we mainly wanted to activate a group of leaders across a number of schools who would systematically consider the possibilities for their communities. The appreciative approach asked participants to define examples of what they felt success should be. We structured the day so that all participants were seated within their school-leadership groups, and then at the end of the Summit, we mixed individuals at different tables (Cooperrider and Srivastva 1987).

As outlined in Table 8.2, we used an appreciative inquiry into leadership and were able to illustrate examples of this quickly from our small-scale day, where we discussed our focus topics. We were interested to realize that what we chose to focus on can actually become real. We can establish clear, measurable goals, and focus on the behaviours that foster them. We were keen to ask questions to the group to energize the leaders at the school about their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. In structuring the Student Leadership Summit, we carefully considered the questions we wanted to ask participants over the 2.5 days, and how these could link with Seligman's PERMA theory (Seligman 2012). Professor Seligman kindly contacted Professor Cooperrider and told him about our plans for the National Student Leadership Summit and the way that we planned to incorporate Cooperrider's 4-D model.

We shared our plans and the structure of the summit with Professor Cooperrider. He wrote back to Professor Seligman of our plans, stating, "Marty, this does have truly important implications—for young leader development; for action learning; for management of our schools (where young people are truly involved); and for a complete approach to positive education in the classroom and in the joint leadership of the school system! As a positive institution" (D. Cooperrider, personal communication, Wednesday 6 February 2013). This was an important step in the planning process. It established the foundations for the remainder of the conference. From here, Professor Cooperrider generously shared with us some of his writing and journal articles, chosen for a pre-conference reading package and sent to all conference delegates (cf. Chap. 3).

To compliment the natural energy and ideas of the group, Tom and I invited two leaders to speak to our Summit participants. We established a list and started to contact people. For both of us, two names kept reappearing: Matthew Cowdrey, OAM Australia's greatest Paralympian, and His Excellency, Rear Admiral Kevin

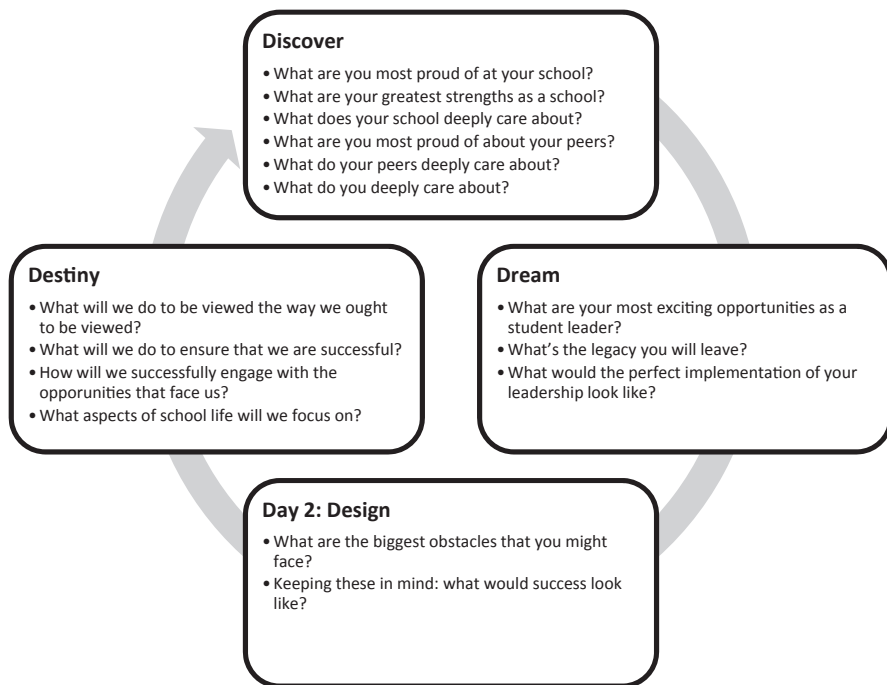


Fig. 8.2 St Peter's College national student leadership summit AI questions

Scarce, AC CSC RANR, the Governor of South Australia. We wrote to these great Australians and outlined our vision for the day.

We were delighted when both agreed to speak at the conference. The governor of South Australia opened the National Leadership Summit on the first day and met with all participants. He exchanged his views about leadership and the lessons he has learnt through service to others during his significant maritime and defense career. Then, on Saturday night, Matthew Cowdrey spoke. Mr. Cowdrey's powerful message focused on the important role of grit in leadership, the significance of working as a team, and the necessity of having clear and measurable goals. Mr. Cowdrey's message about his personal journey and determination was an inspiration to each of us. It set the bar high for the final day of our conference that focused on developing the strengths of all student leaders present.

As conference delegates completed their tasks for the day, the output of the Summit was significant. It was clear that the creativity of the student leaders who were present was unleashed (Cooperrider 2012). When we asked the group what they hoped to achieve from the meeting, regular themes emerged. Some of these included a national perspective on student leadership, new ideas and systems to promote student leadership, ways to improve student relationships, goals to achieve in teamwork, and developing a common vision. The questions that we chose through

the 2.5 days of the Summit were based on focusing on the best of what was already happening in schools.

The aim here was to help student leaders focus on what was working well within their school context rather than falling into the trap of focusing on areas that need to be addressed. We then moved into the next stage of the process that focused on what might be in the future, dreaming freely and letting thoughts and ambitions run wild with future possibilities. The third step was about translating what we have discovered about ourselves and dreamt about future possibilities of designing the main goals and measuring the outline of what should be (Cooperrider et al. 2012).

Finally, our last step was to outline what we will do, commit to moving forward, and plan to incorporate Cooperrider and Srivastva’s (1987) view that institutions (including schools) have elements that are organic and are to be embraced—as opposed to being problems that are to be solved. We wrote to David Cooperrider who generously made a video-recorded message for the conference delegates. During his 10 min message to the Summit, Professor Cooperrider made a number of points; however, we would like to highlight one key part of his speech where he said:

... I want to first thank John Vrodos and Tom McNeil for inviting me to share a few thoughts with you as you bring together students from nearly every Australian state. What an amazing opportunity. I love the questions you have all framed and posed. Questions that will help us dig deep in terms of what leadership is all about: What do you and your school deeply care about at this time? What are the opportunities available to our generations and to you as a leader? What would successful engagement of your leadership skills look like? Yours, honestly, is a path-breaking summit. It is the very first of its kind, and let me underscore that it is the very first. We have always had many of the best summits’ young leaders participate, but this is the very first AI summit that I know of anywhere in the world that has been designed by young leaders, initiated by young leaders, and led by young leaders. (Cooperrider 2013)

How did we integrate David Cooperrider’s appreciative inquiry technique over the 2.5 days of the summit? Tom and I decided to structure the summit around the 4-D model of discovery, dream, design, and destiny. Summarised in Fig. 8.3, Character Strengths of National Student Leadership Summit Participants, we asked all conference delegates to complete the Values in Action for Young People and the Strengths

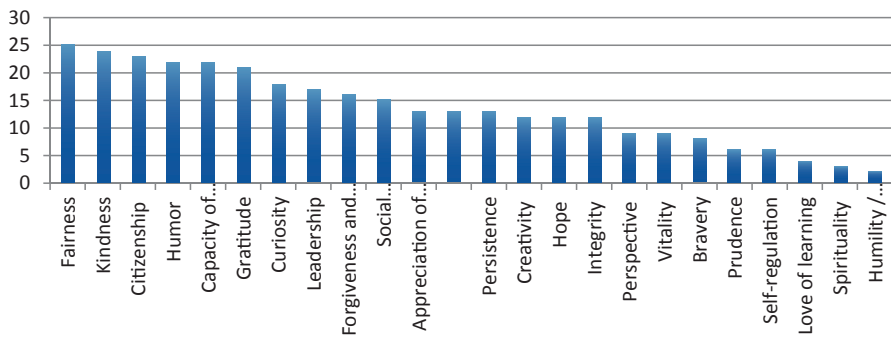


Fig. 8.3 Character strengths of national student leadership summit participants

Use Scale. This framed discussion focused on how participants could engage in the year's challenges from a strengths-based perspective.

We felt that the questions we created under each of these headings would enable conference participants to consider their school settings and their own personal leadership journey. The objective of this day was to invite school leaders to consider what works well in their schools. In particular, we wanted to ask participants how they felt about their school and which aspects of school life they felt are the strongest. We wanted participants to reflect on and link to their individual values as leaders and reflect on the values of their schools.

The questions asked included:

Day One

Session One

- What are your greatest strengths as a school?
- What does your school deeply care about?
- What are you most proud of your school?

Session Two

- What are you most proud of about your peers?
- What do your peers deeply care about?
- What do you deeply care about?
- What are your most exciting opportunities as a student leader?

Session Three

- What would the perfect implementation of your leadership look like?
- What is the legacy that you hope to leave?
- What does success look like?

Day Two

Session Four: Character Strengths Think about a person in your personal or school life whom you would describe as a great leader.

- Discuss a time you used character strengths in a challenge in your own life.
- Discuss how you use character strengths in your style of leadership.
- How can you as a leader identify and cultivate the character strengths of those you lead?
- As a leader, how can a focus on character strengths make your team more effective?
- How can a focus on character strengths make your life with family and friends more meaningful?

- How can you ensure that you bring your signature character strengths to your role as a leader when the situation calls for it?

Session Five

- What aspects of school life will we focus on?

Our vision is to.

Our mission is to.

Our goals as student leaders are ...

In many ways, Session Five was the most challenging part of the Summit. We wanted participants to consider what success would be and how they would measure their goals and determine success. In this last stage, after participants had considered their character strengths and how those strengths would enhance and hinder their efficacy as a leader, we asked participants to develop their own pathway to determine what they would do next. Throughout the process, the group developed individual visions for their leadership, including some examples of areas for focus, such as being role models, inspiring, supporting, acting, being approachable, being responsible, and being able to make a difference. The mission focused on actions that student leaders were able to undertake to promote their vision. Some of the examples included organizing a diversity of events, being positive and engaging leaders who connect with students, promoting unity, and leading by example. Other examples developed by the group include:

To remain a coherent group who, when faced with adversity, identifies strengths to overcome weaknesses and in doing so, achieves our goals for our school;

- To promote unity and engagement by encouraging confidence and individuality throughout the school community;
- To encourage participation in all aspects of school life, creating a close-knit community, free from judgment, allowing adolescent minds to flourish.
- From these, students developed goals to achieve their vision and mission by focusing on the actions they could promote as leaders. Some of the examples from the group included:
 - provide recognition of student achievements and actions in assembly;
 - Inform the school so they know what we are doing with regular communication;
 - Create team spirit throughout the whole school; increase co-curricular involvement;
 - Make it a place where people want to be, not have to be;
 - Become an approachable, easy-to-talk-to student leadership body by being open-minded and integrating with younger years, hence giving them the confidence to have their say;
 - Have a positive school culture by encouraging enthusiastic involvement in all aspects of school life;

- Understanding students and knowing names;
- Learning everyone's name at school.

Our aim in hosting the National Student Leadership Summit was to create a community of student leaders across Australia. We desired for these leaders to be united in unlocking the potential of their student followers. Throughout our leadership journey, we learnt a great deal about the importance of personal organisation and careful planning. We pondered the necessity of devoting time to organisational matters to ensure that a conference of this nature ran well. Looking back on the process, we are really proud that for the 72 h we spent together, student leaders were able to put aside their rivalries and focus on building what is good and right in their communities by responding to a number of questions structured around Cooperrider's 4-D model as highlighted in Fig. 8.2. Following the consultative process of the National Student Leadership Summit, we recommend the following:

- The creation of an online communication platform for the connection throughout Australia
- That regular summits be held so that student leaders are able to define their vision, mission, and goals clearly aligned with their communities' strengths.
- Widespread training in appreciative inquiry techniques to harvest student ideas and leadership potential.
- That student leaders have an unofficial network of support from previous years of leaders. This will enable newly appointed leaders to capture the ideas, vision and momentum of departing leaders and help them to engage with the school community without hesitation and a clearly defined concept of their role from the outset.
- We explicitly recommend the approach to student leadership be taken through an appreciation of relationships, rather than a superficial desire for outcome based results.

The privilege to host the National Student Leadership Summit had a substantial impact on our year. It opened many doors and inspired Tom and I to visit other schools and to learn from our peers across Australia. Throughout the remainder of our year, Tom and I focused on opportunities to connect our community with the m(eaning) part of Professor Seligman's PERMA theory. One project that we were particularly proud to focus on was an ANZAC Service of Commemoration focusing on gratitude as an act of remembrance for those old scholars who made the ultimate sacrifice in the theatre of war.

At the induction of new school leaders during the end of 2013, Tom McNeil (school vice-captain) said the following:

... As house captains, you have a unique experience that cannot be compared to those before you or those to follow. No one will ever have the capacity to influence the same group of people at the same point in time that you will in 2014. Therefore, why should you settle for the expectation and standards that have occurred before you? You have the opportunity to carve and define your name on the bedrock of your house's culture. This is no time to desire the luxury of cooling off, but rather a moment in time where you must strive to engage with the people around you, to form strong relationships and to appreciate

that your success will be measured not by what you attain but rather by what you give to your own sub-community. The goals that you set yourselves, as leaders, will require the full cooperation of your peers. You will be required to stand alongside your house members and encourage them to come with you and to share your vision and mission. As said in scripture, Romans 12:2, “Do not change yourselves to be like the people of this world, but be changed within by a new way of thinking.” (McNeil 2013)

Our final Speech Day and Valedictory Service were the epitome in our expression of gratitude for the journey we’d enjoyed at Saints. Having learnt to embrace the strengths of our community and our personal character traits, we have belonged to, and enhanced a culture of growth, shown unity in moments of mastery and celebrated those times that defined our community spirit. Having led with unity, with positive engagement and accomplishment in mind, it was thrilling to see such from the Year 12s, such a unanimous sense of pride and ownership over the year that had been. At the point to commence our life outside of school, we could leave knowing that moving forward as men of saints, we’ve grown, we’ve been challenged and we’ve overcome trials to a point where we’re ready to move forward, with new strategies, enlightenment and strength unlocked by our school. I was confident to pledge on the final day to close my Valedictorian address:

so here’s to the class of 2013 and a future of success. To a group of gentlemen that will go on to display an unshakable resolve of developed strength in character, that will commit to making a disproportionate and unpredictable difference. (Vrodos 2013b)

The appreciative inquiry approach worked for us. It highlighted what was working in our communities, and we certainly unleashed this in the amount that the group contributed. We learned the importance of fun and play along the way as we captured these ideas and tried to make sense of them all. However, we want to leave the final word on our year’s experience to Professor David Cooperider’s wonderful welcome to our Summit, as he reminded each of us that “... you are unique, and in the entire world there is no other young person exactly like you. You may become a Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything! (Cooperrider 2013).”

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Appendix A: Letter to School Leaders

National Student Leadership Summit 2013

In 2013, St Peter's College will host a National Student Leadership Summit for students from Government, Catholic and Independent schools across Australia, inspired by the mission and vision of the inaugural South Australian event in 2012.

In saying this, we would like to invite your School Captain and Vice-Captain to attend this conference, to be held at St Peter's College from Saturday 9 March until Monday 11 March 2013. We ask you to consider sending your School Leaders and include the dates as part of your 2013 planning. We will be writing to you in mid-January with confirmation of all logistics.

The Summit will be a Year 12 led initiative and designed to unlock the energy of young Australian Leaders. We believe that empowering student voice is an essential part of great leadership. The objectives of the Summit are:

- to harness the creativity and energy of student leaders across the nation
- to learn from each other and document the aspirations we have for the communities we serve

The Summit will be based around a series of questions including:

- What are you most proud of about your School?
- What are your greatest strengths?
- What are you most exciting opportunities as a student leader in 2013?
- What would successful implementation of these opportunities look like?

The outcomes from this National Student Leadership Summit will include:

- The ability for your school leaders to be able to undertake a similar program
- A conference package of resources
- Increased level of self-awareness
- Strategies for student leaders to reinforce positive relationships in your school community
- Training in methods for critical decision making
- A heightened awareness of each participant's "moral compass"

The output of the Summit will be a overview summarising the views of the participants and will be delivered to key leaders throughout the Australia. As part of the Summit, there will be a dinner held on the Sunday evening at St Peter's College. For this function, we are fortunate to have Matthew Cowdrey OAM, one of Australia's greatest Olympians, as a guest speaker.

Yours sincerely

John Vrodos
School Captain

Tom McNeil
School Vice-Captain

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