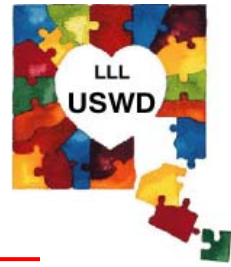


USWD eCONNECT

La Leche League US Western Division
Forming Connections Leader to Leader

Issue 1



Announcing USWD eCONNECT

We hope you enjoy this new, online publication, which is written for all USWD Leaders. It's been a dream of the USWD to have an online presence with such a publication, and it's so very exciting to see that dream come to fruition! We've tried to include a variety of articles that might appeal to a variety of Leaders, and to help us all think outside the box. Recent learning experiences such as the TLGC Workshop in May, (see article below) and IMS just a few weeks ago, have brought all of us into closer contact with many other Leaders, and we want to continue that contact through USWD eCONNECT. Future issues will feature introductions of other USWD Staff Workgroups, as well as information about what's happening

In this issue:

Announcing USWD eCONNECT.....	1
USWD Holds TLGC Workshop.....	1
Intro: Publications/Online Workgroup	4
Breastfeeding Outreach in Wisconsin	7
Grossman Clip-Art CD.....	8
World Breastfeeding Week --Q & A.....	8
Leader Applicant Work Sessions Using Appreciative Inquiry	11

in all Areas in the Division. We will rely on you to share news about exciting new work Leaders are doing in your communities, and we'll provide this publication as an avenue to share your news across the Division. We also want to hear your ideas for ways to make this publication one that is truly usable and accessible; you may contact any staff member by clicking on her linked name on the directory page of our web site. We look forward to hearing from you!

US Western Division Holds Transformative Large Group Conversations Workshop: Leaders gather for meaningful conversations

Peggy Wiedmeyer, Glenbeulah, WI

For four days in May, 32 Leaders and one Leader's husband (and several children) from across the USA and Canada gathered in Bloomingdale, IL, to learn new meeting facilitation techniques, and

to talk about things that mattered to them. The central theme of our conversations was "Supporting internal health to enhance external growth in LLL." The workshop was guided by facilitators Christine Whitney Sanchez and Claudia Haack.

This workshop was a very intense learning experience! We started off with an informal dinner on the eve of Day 1, which gave us an opportunity to get acquainted with other participants, and to receive a bag of goodies – a binder of materials we'd be using for the workshop, and these books:

- *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*, Sue Annis Hammond
- *The World Café*, Juanita Brown, with David Isaacs and the World Café Community
- *Open Space Technology: A User's Guide, 2nd Edition*, Harrison Owen
- A blank journal

The next morning we started off with Appreciative Inquiry interviews. The purpose of these paired interviews was to share our stories about an experience each person had as a Leader when she felt particularly good about her work in La Leche League. Each person had 15 minutes to find out as much as she could about her partner's experience. By listening carefully and asking just a few questions, we learned how our partners felt about themselves as Leaders, their LLL work, and about LLL as a whole. The interviews ended with each person identifying three wishes she had for supporting the internal health of LLL, while enhancing external growth of the organization.

Next we divided up into "learning circles." We kept the same learning circles for the duration of the workshop, and met regularly to talk about how and what we were

learning, to ask for feedback, and to reflect together. My circle included Leaders from Michigan, Washington state, Illinois, and Oklahoma. We found it very helpful to stay with the same people for the duration of the workshop, and to share our different insights.

On Day 2, we spent the morning in World Café conversations. We created three table topics, one at each of three tables and a fourth table repeated one of the topics. The first topic I participated in was "How are we incongruent with what we say and do?" We focused on the fact that a Leader serves mothers best when she meets mothers where they are in their lives, rather than trying to convince them to breastfeed and mother the same way she did. A quote I have in my journal from that discussion is, "Meet *yourself* where you are, then you can meet mothers where they are."

A topic at another table I joined was "What does it mean to value what each of us says?" My notes on this page of my journal include "go beyond acceptance to valuing;" "If I'm telling you something and trying not to offend you, I may not tell you all of what I think/feel;" "if you leave the difficult conversation, it'll go underground."

While most of us moved from table to table at regular intervals, and

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.
-Margaret Mead

discussed all the topics, one person – the host - stayed at each table for the entire morning. That person acted as the scribe, taking complete notes. When new people came to her table for their turn at this topic, she told all of them what the previous group(s) had talked about. Sometimes the new group continued the discussion in the same vein, sometimes they took off on a completely different track.

Key points from these table topics were used to come up with "headlines" which were posted to one of the sticky walls in the room. Some of those headlines read:

"LLL Reports that 95% of One Year Olds are Breastfed. They credit change in legislation, support from AMA, AAP, insurance industry for the change."

"97% of LLL Leaders report, 'We feel valued!' Women in international breastfeeding organization value each other for their diverse perspective and experiences in helping mothers and babies."

"IBM and Motorola adopt the new organizational communication model developed by La Leche League International."

That afternoon, we started "Open Space Technology" and continued in Open Space sessions through the

morning of Day 3. Some of the Open Space sessions included:

- How do we give all Leaders a voice in LLL?
- Let's talk on a walk outside.
- How do we solve the "rift" among Leaders?
- LAD issues and opportunities.
- Creative alternate forms of communication.
- How can we encourage participants to follow the Guidelines for Skillful Conversations when having important conversations?

We spent the afternoon of Day 3 and the morning of Day 4 doing project planning and sharing what we'd learned with/from each other. Some Leaders had very specific plans to incorporate some of these new meeting facilitation techniques with their LLL communities, and some had plans to use them with other groups in which they're involved. Some of us, like me, decided we already had enough projects going on right now, and chose to listen to the plans of others (though I do have ideas for using Appreciative Inquiry with a mother-to-mother support group I'm helping to form in my church).

Our binder of materials included a number of thought-provoking quotes. You'll find them scattered throughout this and future editions of USWD eCONNECT.



If we all did the things we are capable of doing we would literally astound ourselves.
-Thomas Alva Edison

Introducing USWD Staff Members

Beginning with this issue of CONNECTIONS, you will be introduced to USWD Staff members, and the work they do to support Leaders in our Division. We're starting off with the members of the Publications/Online Workgroup: Deirdre Knowles, Kathryn Major, and Peggy Wiedmeyer.

Passion and Serendipity – Kathryn Major

I'm a passionate person! I've always gotten involved in many different things, but it's unusual for me to do anything "halfway." In just about every job or hobby I've taken up, I've tried to understand every part of it, grasping the big picture, even if I'm only responsible for one little corner.

I became a Leader in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1993, signing my Statement of Commitment on my 30th birthday. Now that was a fitting way to start a new decade! I led Series Meetings, presented Area Conference sessions, helped on local outreach projects, and enjoyed our three-year-old daughter, Celia. Only three years later, I was contacted by Wista Waldroop, then the Regional Administrator. Someone had recommended me for the soon-to-be-vacant ACL position. I was stunned--I had never even been a DA--how could I be an ACL? I remember turning it down the first time around, but when the ACL search ended without finding a successor,

Wista came back to me again and asked me to reconsider.

I had recently gone to work part-time for a large service organization, and as I envisioned what I thought the ACL position would be like, I could see it fitting into my day-to-day routine. I had email at work, unlimited access to a copy machine, a supportive employer, and a few hours a day I could further devote to my passion of helping mothers and babies. In 1996, I accepted the ACL position.

What a learning experience that was! I spent a lot of time talking about things with the CLA, and every Leader conversation, whether one-on-one or Area-wide, inspired the start of an article. I went from avoiding conflict to being able to recognize and acknowledge it, and slowly, slowly, became more comfortable with confronting problem issues. That skill alone has made a huge difference in my life, both inside and outside LLL.

Since I enjoyed writing and editing, I welcomed the chance to review documents and work on Area publications. Even though I felt very comfortable with the mechanics of writing, being a part of the review process for the Area Leaders' Letter was a wonderful experience. I got to see firsthand how you could take a troublesome sentence and make it sing with clarity and that warm LLL tone.

Of course, being a Type A person

meant that I always looked for a clear rule to guide me in my decision-making--it was a big part of my upbringing (I'm the stereotypical firstborn child of a probation officer and a lawyer/teacher!), my schooling, and even my hobbies. (I've been a dog obedience trainer for many years.) That's a lot of rule-following to overcome! My LLLI Stylesheet, THE LEADER'S HANDBOOK, and the Policies and Standing Rules were always close at hand. I know many Leaders felt a sense of security, having easy-to-lookup answers in those resources.

The time I spent as an ADC gave me a sense of perspective and self-realization that has encouraged me to move forward with the change work in LLL. While I'm still a Missouri Leader, I'm also part of a new Area developing from the ideas that have been generated by the Renewal Initiative. Heartland LLL is a distributed Area and exists alongside LLL of Missouri, gradually growing and finding its way. I've just completed a term as ALLE for Missouri/Heartland, and I've worked full time for the last six years as a paralegal for a large national bank. Much of what I do is writing and editing, providing information and support for retail bank staff in eight states. When I was an ACL, I saw firsthand that you can't force people to "follow the rules" and do things exactly the way you want them to. This is completely true even in real life where people are paid to do their jobs in an industry that is highly regulated and controlled. There is always a little anarchy mixed in - —

always someone who doesn't agree, always someone with a better solution—we just have to keep paying attention! I believe that we have a wonderful model in Series Meetings, helping mothers find information and ideas that work for them and their families. If the organization as a whole can function the same way, we will be doing what works best for LLL and we'll continue helping mothers and babies discover what works best for them for many years to come.

E pluribus Unum – Peggy Wiedmeyer

"E pluribus Unum." I remember starting off a fifth grade essay with this line, back in grade school. At that time, I was one of eight children in my family (eventually, I was one of 12), and I had learned that that Latin quote meant "one out of many." As a child, I took great delight in knowing that I came from a unique family – there weren't many others with that many children in our small town in Wisconsin.

Now I'm an adult and once again, I consider myself "one out of many" - this time, the "many" are the 19 LLL Leaders who also serve on USWD Staff as consultants for USWD Leaders. I still live in Wisconsin, about 20 miles west of Lake Michigan and about 60 miles north of Milwaukee. My husband is a dairy farmer, and I work off the farm as a parent educator. Our three children are grown and on their own: David is 27 and manages a restaurant in a Senior Living complex in Minneapolis; Katie, 25, works as a

landscape designer just north of Milwaukee and is newly engaged to Mark (wedding fall, 2006); Brian, 22, is wrapping up a year of studying diesel mechanics at a technical college here in Wisconsin, and also works part-time as a semi driver and as a diesel mechanic.

During the 25 years I've been a Leader, I've led meetings with three different Groups. I was part of the Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) for six years, and the Leader Department for about 18 years, and now I've been part of the Publications/Online Workgroup for just about a year. While working in the LAD and the Leader Department, I had opportunities to develop many skills, including writing, editing, proof reading and doing layout. My paid job as a parent educator gives me the opportunity to dabble in web site work, write newsletters, create flyers and brochures, and learn from professionals in the marketing field – in addition to teaching first time parents about child development and helping them identify resources in their community.

Providing information and support to all breastfeeding mothers is one of my passions, and that's one of the reasons I'm still an active Leader after 25 years. Being a Leader means I have ready access to current and accurate breastfeeding information to share with the mothers I encounter through my work as a parent educator and as an LLL Leader. And, my closest friends are LLL Leaders – they've been my mentors as I muddle

through this most important job of being a parent.

My other passions, besides my husband and our children, include having fun with my mom and my many siblings, working on a variety of church committees and ministries, reading, sewing, knitting, gardening, cooking, and learning new skills. I'm a firm believer that you're never too old to learn new tricks, and that learning new things keeps my brain nimble.

I look forward to hearing from you, in whatever way I can help you. I'm available for phone calls on most evenings, and most weekends; if I'm not home, please leave a message on my answering machine. I read email at least once a day, usually twice a day – before I head off to work in the morning, and again in the evening after I get home. If I can't help you, I'll find someone on staff who can!

Learning and Teaching - Deirdre Knowles

I went to my first LLL meeting when my oldest child was three weeks old. She's now 35 and a mother herself, and I'm still here. Along the way there have been four more children, a divorce and a career change (or two).

I studied math, physics and computers in college and worked as a computer systems analyst. I became a Leader (back when we were "approved") and then a Communication Skills Instructor. And thanks to that, and nearly twenty years of La Leche League and parenting experience, when I

went back to school it was to become a psychotherapist. I also trained as a mediator and mediated small claims court cases for five years.

I love to learn and to teach. I'm interested in a variety of things—science, computers, communication, public speaking and training, organizational development, construction—and whatever I get interested in, I like to learn as much as I can about it. I'm particularly interested in how the universe works; I believe in consistency, and when it appears to be missing, I look beneath the surface to find it. I want to know how things fit together!

I love to read, and to write when I get excited about a topic. I'm only an amateur editor—though I know what "reads" well to me, I don't know all the rules.

I have an ongoing love/hate relationship with computers. I really

like technology: what it can do and also the fascination of what's possible for its own sake. And I hate that it sometimes makes things harder instead of easier and adds to the waste of time and energy in our culture. So I want to make technology serve human needs, so I can have my fun guilt-free!

I also like to draw, make jewelry, knit, crochet and sew a little, pull weeds (the extent of my gardening expertise), do plumbing, wiring and decorating projects and go for walks. I struggle with prioritizing because I want to do it all!

My kids are all independent or nearly so (the youngest just turned 21), and I'm finally in a position where I can make my decisions just for me! I can do work I love (paid and unpaid), spend time with my gorgeous granddaughter and my adult children, create my own life. I love it!



Breastfeeding Outreach in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

Peggy Wiedmeyer
Glenbeulah, WI

Plymouth Utilities (http://www.plymouthutilities.com/about_us/) is a community-owned, customer-driven utility that provides electric service to the City of Plymouth, Wisconsin, and parts of 10 surrounding townships. When monthly statements are mailed to approximately 6000 households, they include a "utility stuffer." These

stuffers are 3.5 inch by 8.5 inch sheets of paper that contain information about 1 or 2 organizations that serve the community in some way. The Family Resource Center that employs me coordinates which organization is featured on the stuffer each month. The individual organization is responsible for providing a local printer with camera-ready copy, and a fee of \$75 for one side of the stuffer (or \$150

for both sides). The printer produces the 6000 stuffers and delivers them to Plymouth Utilities, where they are included with the monthly customer statements.

In September, 2004, our county's Breastfeeding Task Force (which includes three LLL Leaders) was featured on one side of the

utility stuffer. Sara Demmon, LLL Leader, came up with the idea of a coupon for "free baby food" after seeing one too many coupons for artificial baby milk at her doctor's office. Another Task Force member turned Sara's idea into something visible and this flyer was created!

6 months of free food for your baby! Sheboygan County Breastfeeding Task Force	<p>"For the healthy, full-term baby, breast milk is the only food necessary until the baby shows signs of needing solids, about the middle of the first year after birth." © La Leche League International</p> <p>"Exclusive breast feeding is ideal nutrition and sufficient to support optimal growth and development for approximately the first six months after birth." © American Academy of Pediatrics</p> <p>For more information on the advantages of breastfeeding for mother and baby, as well as how to have a successful start to breastfeeding, contact one of the resources below:</p> <p>*La Leche League of Sheboygan & Plymouth Roni: (920)451-7110 Sara: (920)565-3874 Adrienne: (920)693-5025 www.lalecheleague.org</p> <p>*Lactation Services at Memorial Medical Center (920)451-5561 *St. Nicholas Hospital Genesis Center (920)459-4700 *WIC Program (920)459-6411</p>
--	---

Grossman Clip-Art CD

If you ordered a Grossman Clip-Art CD and it is corrupted, Kathy Grossman will send you a new CD at her expense. You can contact her at 6905 S. 1300 E. #242, Midvale, UT 84047-1817. Email grossman@stargate.net.

World Breastfeeding Week Celebration (WBWC) Questions & Answers

Robin Rziha, Hoisington, KS

Q: Why is the money raised through WBW Celebrations in the USA divided up the way it is?

The Area World Breastfeeding Week Celebration Coordinators (AWC) for

each Area were invited by the WBWC Planning Team to brainstorm in the discussion of how the proceeds from the WBWC should be divided. The AWCs were encouraged to dialogue with Leaders in their Areas so that the final decision would be representative of a large number of Leaders. The

breakdown as decided on by the 109 members of the WBWC e-list and coordinated by the WBWC Planning Team is as follows:

50% Group: To be used by the Groups to support their needs and to help further the LLLI mission in their community through continuing education for Leaders and for outreach, etc.

15% Area: To help Areas lower Leader and member costs associated with continuing education events, communications, publicity and outreach, etc.

20% Division: To help with costs associated with developing materials for administrators, Leader outreach and support, increased US Web site presence, educational events, scholarships to LLLI events, etc.

5% LLLI: To support the work of our international organization.

5% Joint Division Projects: To be held by the Divisions and used as start-up money for Leaders working together on projects that further the mission of La Leche League in the USA.

Editor's Note: If you have an idea but lack funding, contact Barbara Emanuel, US Western Division Director, for further information.

5% WBW expenses/start up: To pay the administrative costs of the event, including prizes and postage.

Q: If Joint Division Projects money is to support WBWC, why does an

additional 5% go to cover WBWC expenses?

A: The Joint Division 5% does not support WBWC. The Joint Division projects are just that - projects that could be jointly coordinated by the Divisions' Leaders to further LLLI's mission in the USA. This is different from the 5% for expenses/start up. That 5% is to be used for any expenses that the WBWC would have above beyond what may be covered by WBWC prize sponsors. There are always some expenses involved in the planning of the WBWC. For example, if a member of the LLLI staff must be used, such as Web site services, then the WBWC has to pay for these services. The WBWC also pays for postage, and any prizes that are not covered by WBWC prize sponsors' donations. The WBWC planning team thought it wise to have this "seed" money in place from year-to-year just in case we should ever have a bad year in finding WBWC prize sponsors, or in the event the WBWC planning team would want to do more – e.g. offer more types of publicity with the WBWC that would involve paying a fee for these services.

Q: Why does the Division get more than the Area? Since many more Groups are feeding money into the Division, shouldn't Areas be able to give a smaller amount?

A: The two US Divisions who coordinate the WBWC are the ones taking responsibility for and accepting the risk for the success and overall coordination of the WBWC

in the USA. Although the Area portion was increased by 5% for 2005, it is the Divisions who coordinate the WBWC. The WBWC Planning Team represents the two Divisions, and it is the WBWC Team that is responsible for such things as organizing and setting up all materials available on the WBWC Web site, for soliciting WBWC prize sponsors for the event so that there will be prizes, and for publicizing the event, for tracking the registrations, awarding prizes, etc.

While it is true that the Groups are doing the fundraising, it is the Divisions (WBWC Team) that are providing all of the forms and publicity material for Groups to adapt, as well as sharing all the many fundraising ideas. Each Division provides a support person for Area World Breastfeeding Week Celebration Coordinators (AWC) (in some cases, the Division support person is also the AWC), and they provide regular memos to the AWCs, answer questions, and provide other support as requested

Q: Why should my Group participate in a World Breastfeeding Week Celebration?

A: A few Leaders, Groups, and Areas participate in the WBWC, yet the proceeds from this project benefit ALL of LLL. When all Leaders participate, then all of LLL benefits even more, which ultimately means that more mothers and babies benefit.

The WBWC has seen a steady decline in Group and Area participation over the past several years. A few Areas choose to not participate at all. In 2004, three USWD Areas had no participation: Arizona, Montana, and New Mexico. The top Areas that participated in the 2004 WBWC for the USWD were:

- Arkansas/Oklahoma \$4,014.32,
- Illinois \$5,784.40,
- Kansas \$28,568.59,
- Missouri \$7,578.75
- Texas \$4,088.66.

If we look at this even further and compare the number of Groups and Leaders in these top five Areas with the amounts that they raised for 2004, here is what it shows:

Area	\$ per Leader	# of Leaders	\$ per Group	# of Groups
Arkansas/Oklahoma	\$100.36	40	\$ 236.14	17
Illinois	28.35	204	93.28	62
Kansas	529.05	54	1785.54	16
Missouri	51.56	147	199.44	38
Texas	14.92	274	56.00	73

What if every Leader in the USWD set a goal of raising \$100 for the WBWC? This could be done as a

Group effort too; if a Group has three Leaders, the Group could help meet the goal of \$300. The Group, of

course, would keep half of what is raised. Do you know what kind of outreach could be accomplished if every Leader were to participate? With the example of a Group raising \$300 and \$150 of this amount staying with the Group, outreach might include sending Leaders to an Area Conference, offering membership scholarships to low income mothers, purchasing new books for the Group Library, printing and distributing Group flyers to doctors' offices, etc. The outreach from the WBWC would be huge!

The total amount of money raised would be significant as well. If each

of the 1,887 Leaders in the USWD (data from 2004) raised \$100, the distribution of funds would like this:

- Groups, \$94,350
- Areas, \$28,305
- USWD, \$37,740
- LLLI, \$9,435

Just think of the outreach and continuing education that could be done with this money! If you'd like some ideas for how **you** can raise \$100 for WBWC, contact Robin Rziha, WBWC Planning Team at 663 NE 120th Road, Hoisington, KS, 67544; phone 620-653-4587; email scottr@hoisington.com.



Leader Applicant Work Sessions Using Appreciative Inquiry

Sue Scott, Springfield, OR
Vicki Parnell, Burnaby, BC
Lynn Coates, Eugene, OR

Goals of the session: To help Leader Applicants make significant progress in their applications by using face-to-face Appreciative Inquiry (AI) interviews for the Personal History and by using in-person discussion (with Leaders and A/CLAs) for other aspects of preparation for leadership. We wanted to meet the needs of Leader Applicants whose learning style does not lend itself to writing, who have different cultural experiences and expectations, or who simply prefer working in-person.

The project: The work session brought together Applicants, Leaders and ACLAs for a weekend—Friday

afternoon through Saturday evening. We used AI to do parts of the Personal History (PH). We also offered the option of working in small groups on the Breastfeeding Resource Guide (BRG), covering topics from the Discussion Checklist in the LEADER'S HANDBOOK, doing Preview questions, or other topics that Applicants suggested. As time allowed, Applicants could talk in-person with an ACLA to cover other parts of their PH. The only whole-group activities were two Appreciative Inquiries; otherwise, women worked on whatever they chose.

Five Applicants and six Leaders attended. Two of the Leaders were ACLAs. Many participants came for part of the session rather than the

whole time. Optional child care was provided in an adjoining room. Meals and lodging were provided by local Leaders.

Content of the AI work sessions:

Appreciative Inquiry started with the group dividing into groups of two (partners) and then moved to whole-group discussion. (Although we didn't stipulate it, it worked out that each dyad was a Leader and an Applicant.) The "heart" of the inquiry is storytelling in which each partner tells about her personal experience. One partner served as a story-coach, helping the speaker stay in storytelling mode for the beginning before getting into the more analytical questions; then the roles switched. Each participant received a copy of the introduction, which set the tone for the inquiry, and questions to guide the conversation. Note that the questions were designed to bring out positive, meaningful aspects of the experience.

1. Appreciative Inquiry—What Inspires You to Become a Leader?

Introduction: Women who are LLL Leaders are passionate about their personal breastfeeding and mothering experiences. They want to share that excitement with others and help other mothers experience the joys of breastfeeding and mothering.

Pair activity (20 minutes per person)

- A. Tell about a time when you realized that something you had done or said made a positive difference for another mother in her breastfeeding or mothering experience. What

was the situation? Who was there? What happened?

- B. What was exciting (satisfying, inspiring) for you in the experience?
- C. What inspires you to become/be a Leader?
- D. What are your positive wishes for how you can use your unique strengths as an LLL Leader . . .
 - to help other mothers breastfeed?
 - to increase awareness of the values of breastfeeding and mothering?
 - to serve the wider community (however you define it)?

Whole group discussion of highlights of the conversations (20 minutes)
Identified common themes about what inspires us to become Leaders.

(Following the inquiry, if someone had not completed this section of the Personal History already, she could talk with an ACLA who was present. They documented the discussion for the application file. An Applicant could also choose to write her comments to send to the ACLA to become part of her PH.)

2. Appreciative Inquiry, LLL philosophy

Introduction: Leaders need to hold three perspectives at once: 1) they are sensitive to their baby's needs and meeting those needs; 2) they want to help other mothers breastfeed and mother their babies; 3) they want to present LLL information and essential beliefs accurately.

Pair activity (15 minutes per person)

Part 1: Mothering through breastfeeding is the most natural and effective way of understanding and satisfying the needs of the baby.

- E. Tell about a time when you felt “in tune” with this idea, a time when mothering-through-breastfeeding felt right to you and your baby. Describe the situation, i.e., what happened?
- F. What was it about you, your baby, and the situation that helped you understand and satisfy the needs of the baby?
- G. How does this experience help you relate to other mothers and support them in mothering through breastfeeding?

Part 2. Pairs chose another concept statement. The format was similar, with the same introduction (10 minutes per person)

- H. Tell about a time when you felt “in tune” with this idea, a time when [concept statement] felt right to you and your baby.
- I. What was it about you, your baby, and the situation that helped you [action related to concept statement]?
- J. How does this experience help you relate to other mothers and support them in [concept statement]?

Part 3, 4, etc. Additional concept statements: (10 minutes per person per statement).

Whole group discussion:
Participants shared highlights of conversations. If it hadn’t come out in the discussion, we would have asked a question about understanding

our personal experiences and biases and how that comes into play when we help others. We didn’t have to introduce this as it came up naturally. (20-30 minutes)

Recording the Applicant’s thoughts:
Applicants had the choice of writing about the highlights of their conversations to send to their ACLA, or having a private

conversation with an ACLA later in the day. In all cases, the Applicants chose to talk with an ACLA. During the conversation, the highlights of the AI were discussed, with opportunities for further dialogue as needed. The ACLA wrote up notes of the conversation for the Applicant’s file to satisfy that part of the PH. On request of either ACLA or Applicant, further dialogue after the session could ensue.

Progress and evaluations: Each Applicant was given a checklist to indicate which parts of her application had been completed. She filled it out at the beginning and the end of the work session to show progress made during the session.

Progress made: Five Applicants attended all or part of the weekend; all filled out the progress checklist. Three Applicants were new—they had applied within the last month. During the work session, each of them completed all or most of the

Martin Luther King did not say, “I have a strategic plan.” Instead, he shouted, “I have a DREAM!” and, he created a crusade.

-Unknown

concept statements for their PH. In addition to this work, one completed part of her background reading comments, and two completed the “About You” section of the PH.

One Applicant started her application about six months ago. She completed most of her PH prior to attending the work session. Her time was primarily spent going over the Discussion Checklist and parts of the BRG; she also talked in depth with two Leaders about a specific issue for her in leading meetings.

One Applicant started her application two years ago. She had completed parts of the PH prior to the work session but not the discussion of LLLI philosophy (concept statements). She completed this during the work session, as well as additional dialogue with the ACLA on LLLI philosophy. The Preview is all that remains of her application work.

Evaluations: All participants (Applicants and Leaders) filled out evaluation forms. They were asked to rate the work session; all but one indicated “very helpful” and one indicated “helpful.” Some comments:

“It was a rare and special occasion to have a group of Leaders all to myself to ask specific questions of! I also enjoyed the Appreciative Inquiry.” (Applicant)

“Helps people who have different learning styles. Is a more natural way of learning. Builds a community with Leaders and Applicants. Helps me

feel more confident training Applicants.” (Leader)

“Great personal contact. I got a lot done because there was no lag in mail correspondence. I learned a lot from other Leaders and moms.” (Applicant)

“It was much easier and much more pleasant to discuss the philosophy in person. I enjoyed getting to meet people in person, and I learned a lot from what others said.” (Applicant)

“I really liked doing all of this! It makes sense to do parts of the PH orally with those who have had a hard time writing/finding time to write. Also, ‘About You’ section of PH is wonderful to do in person.” (Leader/ACLA)

“I really enjoyed talking with five different Leaders. I liked the dialogue format. I liked feeling like I really got started on the application process.” (Applicant)

“I liked how the weekend was set up so we can come and go as needed.” (Applicant)

Suggestions for future work sessions:

- include a mock meeting and/or practice phone help
- rotate days/times of session to make it more available to more Leaders and Applicants
- better information beforehand so people know more about what to expect and also more in advance
- offer it in other locations in the state.