

## Next Practices: Building an Appreciative Campus with Dr. Jenny Bloom

Katy Oliveira ([00:07](#)):

Welcome to Next Practices Data-informed strategies to shape the future of higher ed. In each episode, you'll hear from transformational higher ed leaders on how they're tackling today's most pressing challenges to make a difference for their students and institutions. I'm your host, Katy Oliveira.

Jenny Bloom ([00:28](#)):

Appreciative advising is a framework for working with students where we're focusing on each student's unique skills, abilities. We're working to identify their hopes and dreams for the future, and then we're co-creating a plan together to help make their dreams a reality.

Katy Oliveira ([00:57](#)):

In this episode, I'm talking with Dr. Jenny Bloom. Dr. Bloom is a tenured professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology, and the founder of the Office of Appreciative Education at Florida Atlantic University. He has served as the president of nta, the Global Community for Academic Advising, and in 2017 received NACADA's, Virginia and Gordon Award for Excellence in the field of academic advising. She has co-authored six books and numerous articles and presented at over 500 institutions and conferences. In this episode, she shared how she came to develop the Appreciative Advising Framework, how this framework can be extended to foster an appreciative campus, how new generative AI technologies can support cultivating an appreciative approach and much more. But before we dive in, take a moment to subscribe to the show to stay up to date on the latest creative data informed approaches to student success. Jenny, welcome to Next Practices. I'm so excited to have you on the show today.

Jenny Bloom ([02:04](#)):

Thank you so much. I'm delighted to be here.

Katy Oliveira ([02:06](#)):

So let's just jump in and take a moment to you introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about your background and work in higher ed.

Jenny Bloom ([02:14](#)):

Sure. So I am currently a professor at Florida Atlantic University in the Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology, specifically in the Higher education Leadership program. And I've had quite an interesting journey throughout my career, not what I expected, certainly at the beginning of my career that I would become a professor, but glad to have made it to this point. So I started, I was an undergraduate physical education teaching major at Illinois State University who decided while I was doing my student teaching, that wasn't what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. And I was very blessed to have next door neighbors growing up in Champaign, Illinois who happened to be at Illinois in associate Dean positions. And one was associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the other was Associate Dean in the graduate college. And they heard somehow that I wasn't going to be a PE teacher, so they made an appointment to come see me.

([03:28](#)):

And I was like, oh boy, that's not normal for neighbors to make an appointment. So turns out they were wanting to encourage me to apply to get a master's degree at Illinois and to come work for Bob, Bob Copeland, my neighbor. And I didn't know what I was going to do, so I said sure. And I ended up getting my master's degree in athletic administration, but the most important part of that was working for Bob

and I was a graduate counselor with the transition program, which was for underrepresented students who came in with lower ACT scores and high school ranks. And I had a caseload of students, and literally Katy, the very first day I met with a student, I was like, this is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life. And I have been doing that ever since. So after I finished my master's degree, I was looking for a job and an advising job came open at the Institute of Aviation at Illinois and I got it.

[\(04:33\)](#):

And so I worked five years as an undergraduate advisor there. And while I was there, I started working on my doctorate and completed my doctorate. Once I did that, I was looking for another job and there was a coordinator position available in the University of Illinois College of Medicine's MD PhD program called the Medical Scholars Program, and I was selected for that position. I spent 12 years there, kind of worked my way up from coordinator, assistant director, associate director, administrative director of the MDPH program. And then eventually I was named the dean of Students associate dean that was in charge of both the MD PhD program and the traditional medical school program there. So loved my time there being surrounded by really, really smart students who were going to go out and do great things in the world. And indeed they have. And then I ended up switching tracks and there was a clinical assistant professor position that was available at the University of South Carolina. And so that involved teaching and running the master's degree program in higher education and student affairs. I spent eight years there, and then about nine years ago now, I came to Florida Atlantic University in a tenure track position, and that's where I'm at. And the other duty that I have that I'm actually spending all of my time now doing is helping to run the Office of Appreciative Education that I started first at South Carolina and then brought with me to Florida Atlantic.

Katy Oliveira [\(06:23\)](#):

Thank you so much for sharing your journey. It's so interesting how you said I happened into an advising position and loved it, and that opened the door and you kind of followed your path isn't always linear where you start and think you're going to go. And so to have that experience, it's really good preparation to be an advisor. I had this very similar experience and started doing the work and just loved it and have been someplace in that field ever since. I think it has its own allure.

Jenny Bloom [\(06:54\)](#):

Yeah. And I think it's so many people feel like they don't know what they want to do when they go to college. I knew exactly what I wanted to do and I did it and then decided, oh, this isn't for me. So sometimes even when you're decided coming in, it doesn't mean that I'm not a failure because I'm not a PE teacher right now. And I think that helps to share that because when you're young, it can feel like these are life and death decisions that you're making in terms of selecting a major. And it's not. I mean, we have to be flexible and be willing to adapt and to be willing to say, Hey, I thought this is what I wanted to do, but my interests have shifted.

Katy Oliveira [\(07:46\)](#):

Yeah, absolutely. I thought out knowing I wanted to be a doctor, got amazing genetics, internship, did all kinds of amazing things, and got to my junior year and passed out three times in my anatomy and physiology and realized I don't have the constitution.

Jenny Bloom [\(08:02\)](#):

There you go. There you go. It's another you just,

[\(08:06\)](#):

That's right. You don't know until do it, which is the value of doing internships to doing student teaching, et cetera. And I had even had a lot of experience going into the classroom throughout my time. So it wasn't like my student teaching was the first time that I had done it, but I hadn't done it five days a week. And so once I got the chance to do that, that's when I was like, okay, I don't see myself doing this five years from now. So even those experiences, I think just kind of paying attention and doing that reflection is so crucial for students and for all of us throughout our careers.

Katy Oliveira ([08:56](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Well, I invited you on the show today because I'd love to talk about how your appreciative advising approach has evolved into a broader appreciative campus. But before we get to that piece of the conversation, I'd like you to give just a brief introduction to Appreciative Advising for those who may not be familiar.

Jenny Bloom ([09:20](#)):

Sure. In 2001, I first became aware of an organizational development theory called Appreciative Inquiry and was really struck by the framework just in general, how it was taking an anti deficit approach to working with organizations. So David Cooper, writer at Case Western Reserve University is the person who created appreciative inquiry actually as a PhD student at Case Western Reserve University in the 1980s. And so by a fluke, I first was exposed to appreciative inquiry, and the more I thought about it, the more I was like, wow, these four phases of appreciative, inquiry, discovery, dream design, and deliver. Really, that's kind of what I'm doing with my academic advising when I'm meeting with students. And so with the co-author of my first book, Nancy Archer Martin, we were working on that, and that's how we actually learned about appreciative Inquiry was through doing a presentation about how to advance your career in higher ed administration.

([10:44](#)):

Someone came up to us and said, is this appreciative inquiry? And I don't know what's appreciative inquiry. We looked it up. And so anyway, we ended up writing an article that was titled Incorporating Appreciative Inquiry into Academic Advising that came out in 2002. And little did I know at that time that that article would really kind of change the trajectory of my own career and be something that I have been doing ever since that day. So appreciative inquiry is typically when a consultant would come into your organization, they would ask you, tell me, Katy, what's the worst thing about working with Civitas? What are the problems? Where are the issues? And you could identify those really easy. In fact, we all have a negativity bias built into us. And the problem is that once you start going down that rabbit hole of all the problems that are inherent in any organization, that it often makes it difficult for you to then talk about, okay, so now tell me about the good things.

([11:59](#)):

Well, you kind of get stuck in all the bad things. Now, what Appreciative Inquiry does is it doesn't ignore the challenges that are in every organization, but it doesn't start there. It starts with, tell me about the best thing about working at Civitas And it changes the entire conversation when you start there. And that was the brilliant insight that David Cooper writer had, was that the questions that we ask are faithful. So in my work with students, I also found that the questions that I asked were faithful. And when I'm working with a student on probation, for example, that instead of being like, Katy, what the heck happened last semester? You really messed up. That puts you on the defensive, and it's hard for you to, you're already feeling insecure and kind of beating yourself up because you are on probation. But typically when a student is on probation, it isn't that everything in their life has just crashed necessarily.

([13:19](#)):

And so what was the high point last semester? I mean, I see your grades and everything, but tell me what was a high point for you that's like, okay, all right. She's not just coming after me. Everybody else in my life is coming after me about how I screwed up last semester. And really that allows us to get to solutions, and it makes you more open to talking about different strategies that you might employ this semester so that there isn't a repeat of last semester, then putting you on the defensive right from the get-go. So appreciative advising is a framework for working with students where we're focusing on each student's unique skills, abilities. We're working to identify their hopes and dreams for the future, and then we're a plan together to help make their dreams a reality. And when I started that 2002 article was really focused on how you can use that with students in an advising setting, because that's what I did.

(14:37):

And one thing that has really surprised me, as you've mentioned in your question, is how this has evolved over time and unexpectedly, to be honest. So I mentioned that I went from working at the College of Medicine to going to the University of South Carolina and being a faculty member in a higher education and student affairs program. And I always had my students write articles for publication, and they didn't have to write it about appreciative advising, but many of them worked across campus. They worked in Greek life, they worked in the career center, et cetera. And when they learned about appreciative advising, they could easily see like, oh, this would actually work with my interactions with students working in student conduct even. And so they started to write about that. And slowly but surely this has spread. So where I think the definition has really kind of evolved over time, and what I've learned is that appreciative advising is really a framework for how do you build good relationships, built on trust with other people that's both inside the classroom, outside the classroom and individual conversations. But it's outside of work too, because what I've found over the years is that this framework has made me a better person in general because instead of even with my husband and with my grandkids, the questions that we ask matter. And when I am curious instead of judgmental, I'm a much better person to be around. And it's helped me to look for the opportunities and look for potential in other people instead of making assumptions about other people, both at work and outside of work.

Katy Oliveira (16:48):

It's really powerful because everyone is trying to do the best they can. And especially students, they've signed up for the college experience, which is very expensive, very time consuming, can be very challenging for a reason. So they don't mean to be making a mess of it. They may be in their own way, but they have a reason for being there. And I found we used the appreciative framework in my former life as an advising leader and advisor, and I found that when we made the shift to using that approach, that you could see a shift in students that they move from defensive to like, oh, oh, you're actually here to help me and guide me. There can be contention in an advising relationship with a student, especially, they can come in defensive, they can come in with an agenda that maybe they can't do. Perhaps they want to skip a class or they don't want to take a certain section, they have an agenda, and you are the bearer of bad news. Sometimes you are a gatekeeper that they need to get around. And so that shift, it was like I used to tell my team, it's like advising jujitsu, right? We're not trying to fight against the students. We're trying to go with the students,

Jenny Bloom (18:06):

Partner with them.

Katy Oliveira (18:08):

Yes, yes.

Jenny Bloom ([18:09](#)):

And nobody wants to be fixed. I mean, I've learned that the hard way over the years. Nobody wants to be fixed. People are pretty amazing, actually. They're awfully resilient. They have strengths. But just like for me when I was younger, sometimes you need other people to see potential in you. Like my neighbors, what they ever saw in me that made them make an appointment to come see me and to invite me to apply for a master. I didn't know what a master's degree was. I didn't think that I was worthy to pursue a graduate degree at the University of Illinois. I didn't have experience as a peer advisor, as an undergraduate, but they saw potential in me, and I'm forever grateful to them. I can never pay them back. But I've tried to make my whole life really about seeing potential in other people, especially at times when I felt like a total loser because I'd known since I was in sixth or seventh grade that I wanted to be a PE teacher.

([19:29](#)):

My mom was a sixth grade teacher. My aunt was a high school principal. My uncle was an adapted PE teacher. I for sure knew that this was what I was going to do. And so I really had a loss of identity when I was no longer going to be a PE teacher. And just that they didn't look at me as someone who had failed at something that I had been incessantly talking about for the last decade. They didn't do that, but they saw that in me. And I mean, I can't pay them back, but I am paying it forward all the time. And so I always have that kind of in the front of my mind is that everybody has potential to do great things. And so it's kind of my job to maybe help see that in them and unearth it and to support them if they do know what they're meant to do to make that happen. But then also to be able to pivot when life gets in the way or their interests shift. And that doesn't make them a bad person because I felt like a bad person. I felt like a failure when I had made this decision. So it's sometimes at those moments when they're the lowest in our lives, you just feel like I have nothing to contribute, that when somebody sees you, it's like the best gift that anyone can give you.

Katy Oliveira ([21:07](#)):

Oh, absolutely. Life is messy, and we can't always, like we were saying before, we don't always know where it's going. And students are both figuring out what they might like to do with their time, how they might like to use their skills and gifts and what even an opportunity for them. Because I think sometimes you were saying you didn't even know those things were available to you until someone said, Hey, have you ever thought about X, Y, Z? Do you know about X, Y, Z? No,

Jenny Bloom ([21:36](#)):

No, I

Katy Oliveira ([21:37](#)):

Don't. Something for you too, investigate, because it sounds like it might be a map for you can be one of the most transformational conversations you can have with a student or just another human being. And to be given that grace as a person I think is really helpful too. Yeah, I think

Jenny Bloom ([21:55](#)):

That that question right there, Katy, I talk about that question all the time. Have you ever thought about is very different than, Hey, Katy, you should be a doctor. Have you ever thought about, oh no, tell me more. I wanted to learn. And so I've always encourage people to be open to possibilities. Even if for sure that you want to be a doctor or you want to be a PE teacher, whatever, if somebody is offering you an opportunity to learn about something else, why wouldn't you take advantage of that and ask some good questions and learn? Because we just don't know about all the different career possibilities that are available to us. And so that curiosity is foundational to the appreciative approach. And of course,

teaching people to ask good questions to unlock that wisdom that is within each of us is another thing that I learned from appreciative inquiry was paying attention to the questions that I asked.

[\(23:15\)](#):

Because prior to learning about appreciative inquiry, to be honest, I didn't really think about that, but questions do matter, and a good question can really be life changing, and it can really gnaw at you for a long time, and that's really powerful to be able to ask good questions. I thought when I started my career, that advising was all about having all the answers. I have all the right answers, and I do, I want to have all the answers, but none of us have all of the answers. So I may not know it off the top of my head, but I know how to ask questions to figure it out and go to resources, et cetera. But what I've learned is as equally important as knowing good information, is being able to ask really good questions

Katy Oliveira [\(24:12\)](#):

And questions that lead the student, like you were saying, to tap into their own wisdom and better understand themselves, not questions that lead them to what you might think the right

Jenny Bloom [\(24:25\)](#):

Answer's is for them, right? Leading questions, right? Yeah. It's so important that an appreciative inquiry, they talk about the importance of generative questions, that they generate ideas within your head that you may not have come to on your own. And it's really through asking people questions that are generative in nature, that you learn so much about somebody in a short amount of time when they're telling you a story. And so really, so many of the questions that we ask in appreciative advising are meant to elicit the other person's story. Because in a world where we're all under time constraints, sometimes people are like, there's six phases to appreciative advising. I don't have time to do this, but when I do training, I'll pair people up and give them a good discover question and give them two minutes to answer. And because the questions almost dictate that you have to tell a story in reply.

[\(25:35\)](#):

It's amazing what you can learn about somebody in two minutes. And then I have people switch. And so each gets the chance to ask the question and answer the question. And then I'll say, after we've done that, how many of you are inspired by your partner's story? And almost every hand in the room goes up every single time. And so that's cool. Two minutes, two minutes. And they're inspired. And that's what I've always loved about being an advisor is how much I have learned from my students over the years and how much they've inspired me. But if you're asking questions like, how are you doing? Fine, I'm fine. I'm good. I'm not learning anything really from just the one word answer. And if you're looking at advising as just what classes you're going to take, that's not inspiring. I mean, that's just sharing information. But if you're really asking these good questions that allow you to be able to get some insights into the strengths and skills and abilities of this person and how they've overcome all kinds of obstacles, the strategies that they've used, it's like, wow, I need to up my game because I did not have those obstacles.

[\(27:09\)](#):

And look what this person is doing in spite of all of these obstacles and what a great strategy they used when dealing with that issue. So I think good advising is a two-way street that we're both learning from each other and we're a plan together. It's not me the expert telling you everything. Do I have some things to contribute to the plan? Absolutely. But the student does too. The student might have resources that I don't know about, and it would just be really presumptuous of me to think that the student doesn't have things to contribute to coming up with a plan for achieving their goals because they do.



Katy Oliveira ([27:55](#)):

Absolutely. They just have to uncover it sometime. Next practices is brought to you by Civitas Learning. Civitas Learning helps higher education institutions improve student outcomes through data activated decision-making and collaboration, intelligent student success software equipped teams with real-time insights and workflow solutions to support the entire student lifecycle, enabling leaders to implement strategies that improve retention and graduation rates, and promote the financial health of their institutions. To learn more about how you can proactively support student success at scale, visit [civitaslearning.com](http://civitaslearning.com). Let's get a little bit more into how the appreciative advising approach is being extended. We started to dip our toe in it, but how it's being extended across campus to an appreciative campus framework, how it's evolved beyond advising.

Jenny Bloom ([28:55](#)):

Yeah, that's one of the phases of appreciative advising is the dream phase. And really that's the dream that is really keeping me excited about this work is the dream that we would have appreciative campuses where this framework would be like an open operating system, which would provide kind of a common language, a common framework, a common approach for not only interacting with students, but interacting with each other and interacting with our supervisors and other offices on campus. Because if you can combine the power of appreciative inquiry, which is how can we optimize our organization with appreciative advising, which is really about how can we optimize our interactions, our individual interactions with each other, and then we have a book on appreciative college instruction that this can be brought into the classroom and help guide our approach to teaching and learning, and then appreciative administration that our leadership is taking an appreciative approach to working at all levels of the institution.

([30:28](#)):

I mean, wouldn't it be great if everybody got to go to work every day and it was a safe, healthy environment where we were all just focused on working to provide the best services, the best instruction possible to our students? Yeah, I think it would be mean. Maybe I'm a little naive and I'm okay, call me a little naive. But I think that that can be a reality. And I think by having a framework that's as powerful as this appreciative education framework with all of these different components, that it can be used to guide interactions, yes, but also to onboard new employees to annual evaluations. We can overhaul annual evaluations to not just be so problem-based and that we have to somehow fix our employees. We can do our strategic planning using an appreciative approach. You can use this appreciative approach in everything that you're doing, how you're coming up with the budget.

([31:40](#)):

And we've had people that have been writing about this, and it is happening at certain institutions. And I'll give the example of Utah State University that's in process of doing this, and everybody wants tell me what the overnight fix is. And we know, Katy, that if we're going to have sustained change initiatives, that it takes time. There is no silver bullet out there. And I think as we're heading into what I see as an unprecedented change, which is the infusion of artificial intelligence, this is going to change the world of work, it's going to change higher education. How can we harness that for good instead of evil? Because both are possibilities. And I think the combination of artificial intelligence and this appreciative approach, which is really focused on the human aspect of our lives can be a really powerful combination. And so I think that that combination is going to hopefully allow us to free up time from more menial tasks and advising and teaching, et cetera, where we can really focus in on building these relationships with each other, which is really what the appreciative approach, the appreciative advising approach is really centered on.

Katy Oliveira ([33:36](#)):

If I'm a leader and I am wanting to apply an appreciative practice to my strategic planning, how might I begin to build that and approach that might be a way that I start to apply those principles to my strategic planning process, just as an example for the listeners.

Jenny Bloom ([34:01](#)):

Sure. So I mean, I'll go to Google Gemini and artificial intelligence. I mean, literally, Katy, if you were to go in and say, here's our current strategic plan. How can I take an appreciative inquiry approach to improving this strategic plan? Boom, it will do that for you. We know with artificial intelligence how important the prompts are, and I would just invite people to put in issues that they're facing with students. So let's say that you've got a student that's come in that has a particular set of issues. Maybe they have a DHD, maybe they're on probation, et cetera. You can say, I've got a student that has come in with these characteristics. I'm an appreciative advisor. How might I approach that appointment with the student? Guess what? It really is so impressive what comes out, like Google Gemini will come back and it will say, well, here's some disarm questions.

([35:21](#)):

Here's some discover questions that you could ask. Now, is every single one of them perfect? No. But what happens, what I have found is that it will come up with three or four questions per phase, and then I can select the one that feels the most authentic to me. So it's not just in the strategic planning that I think we can harness the power of artificial intelligence. Again, it's a combination of artificial intelligence and having an appreciative inquiry or appreciative advising or appreciative education prompt that will help you to see the difference between taking an appreciative approach versus not putting that in the prompt. You'll get different answers. And so that's really exciting to me.

Katy Oliveira ([36:15](#)):

Oh, interesting. I think there's a couple of things there I want to tease out. One is you can use AI to help you ask appreciative questions, to help you generate the questions that will help shift maybe your perspective to a more appreciative approach, which is a way to help accelerate or shorten the learning curve on how to frame questions in an appreciative way.

Jenny Bloom ([36:45](#)):

Yes, and I also want to say our website for the Office of Appreciative Education is [fa.edu/o\\_ae](http://fa.edu/o_ae), and on there we have all kinds of free resources. So we've been doing a free webinar series since the beginning of the pandemic, since 2020, and we have all of our free webinars available for anybody to watch at any time. There's a lot of great stuff on there. We just did one yesterday about appreciative onboarding, for example, about how can you take an appreciative approach to onboarding new employees? It will be posted by the time this podcast airs. So there's that. Then we also, under our resources section, have all kinds of free articles that have been written on all of these kinds of topics, and we've got that. And then the other thing is that we do have an appreciative administration online course that is a paid activity, but what we do in there is we have a module in there about how you can take an appreciative approach to strategic planning as well as to onboarding and supervising and running staff meetings, et cetera. So there's a whole plethora of resources that we have available there.

Katy Oliveira ([38:10](#)):

The other thing I wanted to tease out that I heard you say is that we start often when we're sitting down to do strategic planning or we're sitting down to do a yearly performance review or we're sitting down with a student that we default to the negative and we'll start by trying to unpack or address problems as opposed to seeing potential areas for growth or opportunities or positive is a big part of this. If I'm



understanding, and correct me if I'm wrong, but if I'm tracking, I think a big part of an appreciative approach in addition to having the right questions to ask at different stages of the evolution of the experience, but it's also shifting that mindset away from being so problem oriented to being more opportunity oriented. Do you mind speaking to that a little bit? Do I have that right? Yeah, of course.

Jenny Bloom ([39:08](#)):

Let me give you a really specific example. I mean, there is those resources that I just mentioned. That's just a small fraction of the resources that are available on appreciative inquiry, for example. And so this is not my work, but when we're doing strategic plans, what's the first thing we do? We do a SWOT analysis, strengths, weaknesses. What happens when you do take that SWOT approach, the threats and the weaknesses is you spend all the time on the weaknesses and the threats. People are really good at coming up with those things and you get stuck in that versus there's scholarship out there that is about taking a SOAR approach. So the SOAR stands for strengths, opportunities, aspirations and Results. Just starting that whole darn process from the SOAR versus the swat, it changes. It changes how the whole discussion goes on the strategic plan. So that's like a very specific strategy that if you were to just go and to Google and say Soar, SOAR in strategic planning, it will give you good questions that you can ask in order to facilitate the creation of a strategic plan where people will actually have better buy-in to it because they haven't just gotten totally sidelined by the threats and the weaknesses that we've got going on in our organization.

Katy Oliveira ([40:56](#)):

So it helps us, I mean, not to say that you don't need to address acute issues, but the way you're orienting your thinking that we can get so mired in what's wrong that we can't even see what the potential solutions might be

Jenny Bloom ([41:12](#)):

For

Katy Oliveira ([41:12](#)):

The things that we're trying to drive forward.

Jenny Bloom ([41:15](#)):

Yeah, I mean, it plays into our safety when we're like, again, it's like the water cooler talk about, oh, you wouldn't believe this student that I had in last week. They blah, blah, blah. They missed appointments and then they were late, and then they try to blame it on me, and then you're going to say, oh, you think that's bad? Let me tell you about this student that I had, and we're just going to go back and forth. It's the same thing that can happen on the organizational level when you're trying to come up with a strategic plan is that we get so frightened by all of the restraints and the weaknesses and the threats that we can't be creative in designing a future where those opportunities are at. It all becomes a defensive kind of thing. And I think if we're going to do strategic plans, and I have my own little personal biases about a 30 year strategic plan, I think a strategic plan part of doing the strategic plan is that we've got to be able to adapt.

([42:28](#)):

And frankly, right now in the time that we're living, if I think at best you can do a year, maybe maybe five years, but I mean planning is good, but I think part of the plan has to be explicitly stated that we're going to set aside if it's an institution that you have to set aside some money for creativity and things that are not in this strategic plan because the institutions where I've been, once you have that strategic plan,

what everybody spends their time doing is saying, oh, okay, so we're going to be able to align what we're doing right now with this strategic plan three. Number three, so people are doing the same thing. It's just how they're selling it upstream to show that they're worthy for money to come in. And I think what we need now is people who are creative and thinking outside the box.

(43:33):

And if that's not part of your strategic plan, where there's some room for the people who think differently and come up with great ideas, because if you come up with a great idea and it doesn't align with one of these four or five strategic initiatives, oh, sorry, can't happen. We do that at our peril in higher education if we are not giving space for people who are coming up with creative new ideas. But those ideas don't perfectly match with some random four or five things that we've come up with as our priorities for the institution.

Katy Oliveira (44:12):

Yeah, it's allowing it to be a living, a living

Jenny Bloom (44:16):

Document

Katy Oliveira (44:17):

Rather than it being a thick objective. And I think this approach, taking that appreciative approach allows for it to be living because it allows for discourse that is more generative, right?

Jenny Bloom (44:33):

With the rapid pace of change and the uncertainty that we're facing right now, I would argue we need people to be thinking generatively and creatively and have a space to be able to bring forth those new ideas because that's what we need

Katy Oliveira (44:53):

Right now. Yeah, that's a world we're living in right now. We've covered a lot of information, so I want to just give you, as we wrap up some time to share anything I should have asked you about, anything we forgot to touch base on that you want to share before we sign off?

Jenny Bloom (45:08):

The only thing that really comes to mind, Katy, is I just want to thank all the people out there who are academic advisors and faculty members and student affairs professionals who are centering their work on trying to help students, students. It's not easy to be a student right now. We know that mental health issues are escalating. We're being called to do more as professionals and faculty members than ever. And I just want to say thank you for all of you who do everything that you possibly can to help our students be successful. I've got grandchildren that are in college right now, and I'm just so grateful for all of the people at their respective institutions that believe in them and are keeping them going on dark days and they could be at your institution. So on behalf of me, grandma Jenny, I'm just grateful for all the good work that you do.

Katy Oliveira (46:18):

Jenny, thank you so much for coming on next Practices. I really appreciate it.

## Next Practices: Building an Appreciative Campus with Dr. Jenny Bloom

Jenny Bloom ([46:22](#)):

My pleasure. Thank you, Katy.

Katy Oliveira ([46:27](#)):

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