Appreciative Inquiry

The 5D process

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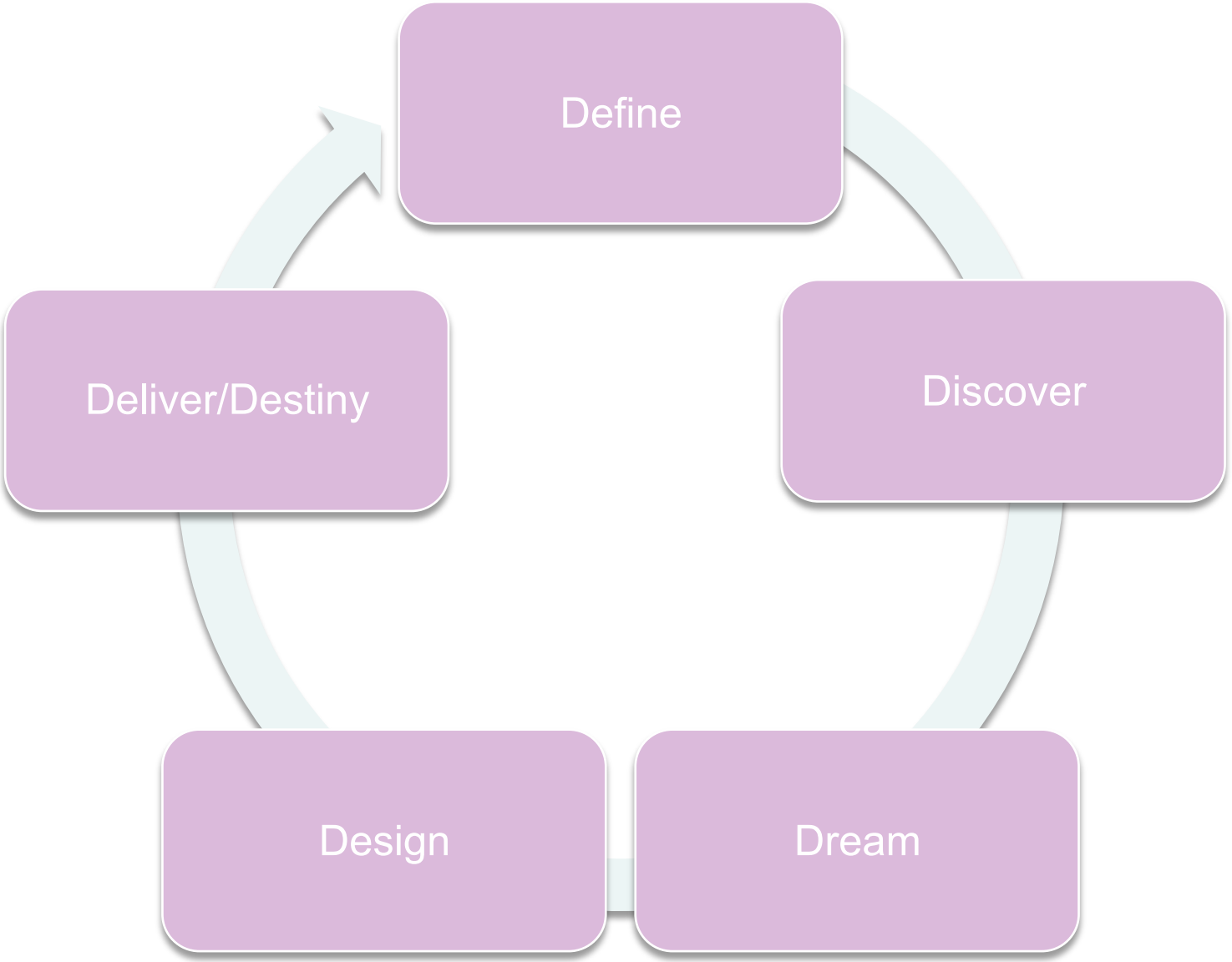
5D Appreciative Inquiry Cycle



Appreciative Inquiry background

- Developed by David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva in 1987
- Large group change method used across the world
- Collaborative, generative
- Puts people at the heart of co-creating the future.
- Identifies what is working well, identifies the energy for change and builds upon that

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Appreciative Inquiry Assumptions

- In every organisation or community, something is going well
- What you focus on becomes your reality
- Everyone has their own reality, they are different. You can create a shared reality through convening a conversation
- The act of asking questions influences the group (what we ask matters)
- People are more comfortable co-creating an unknown future if they can take parts of ~~the~~ today (success) forward and build upon it.

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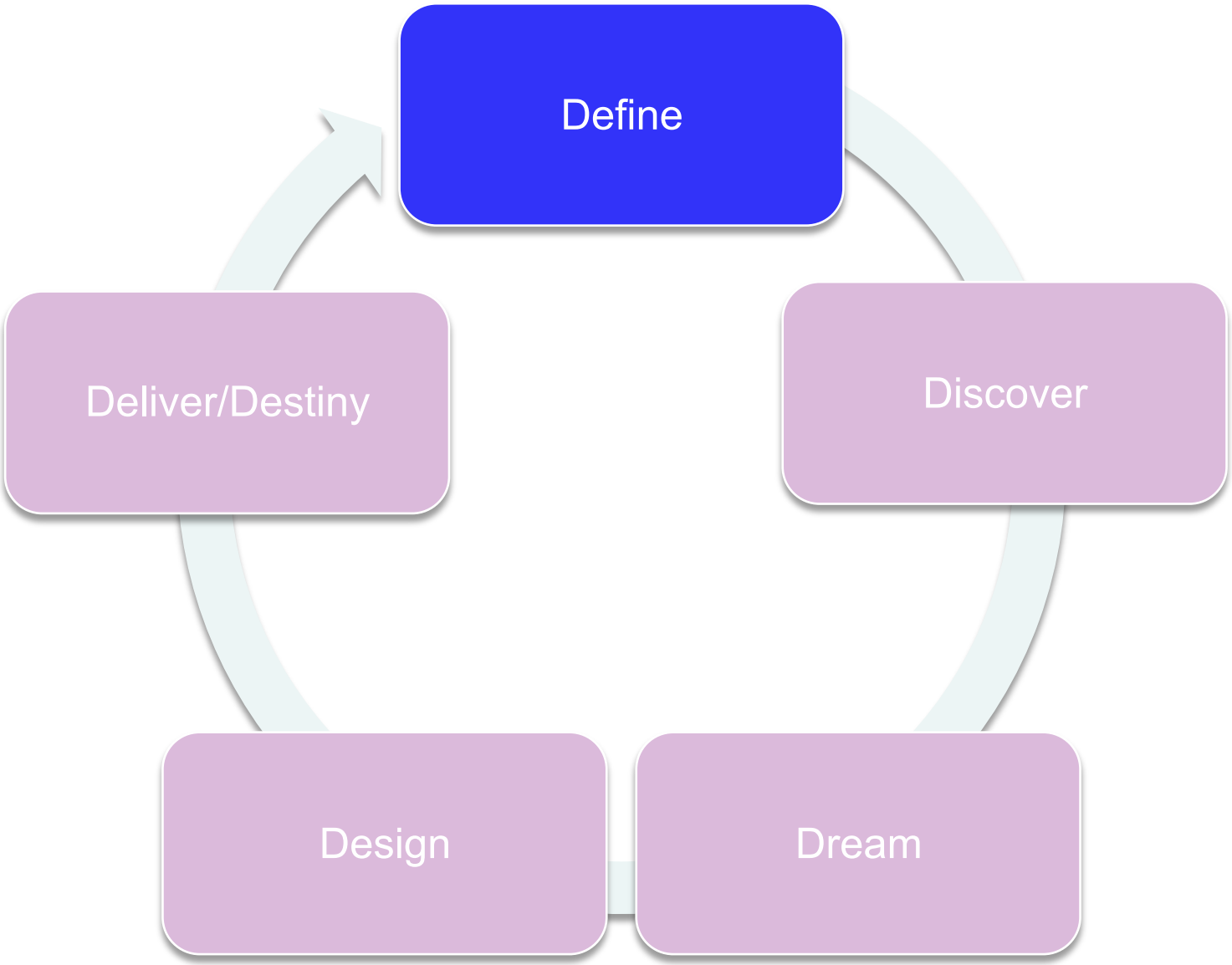

Define

"If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than 5 minutes."

~ Albert Einstein

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Define

- Define the enquiry you want to make
- What is the real question that needs to be asked to uncover the energy for change?

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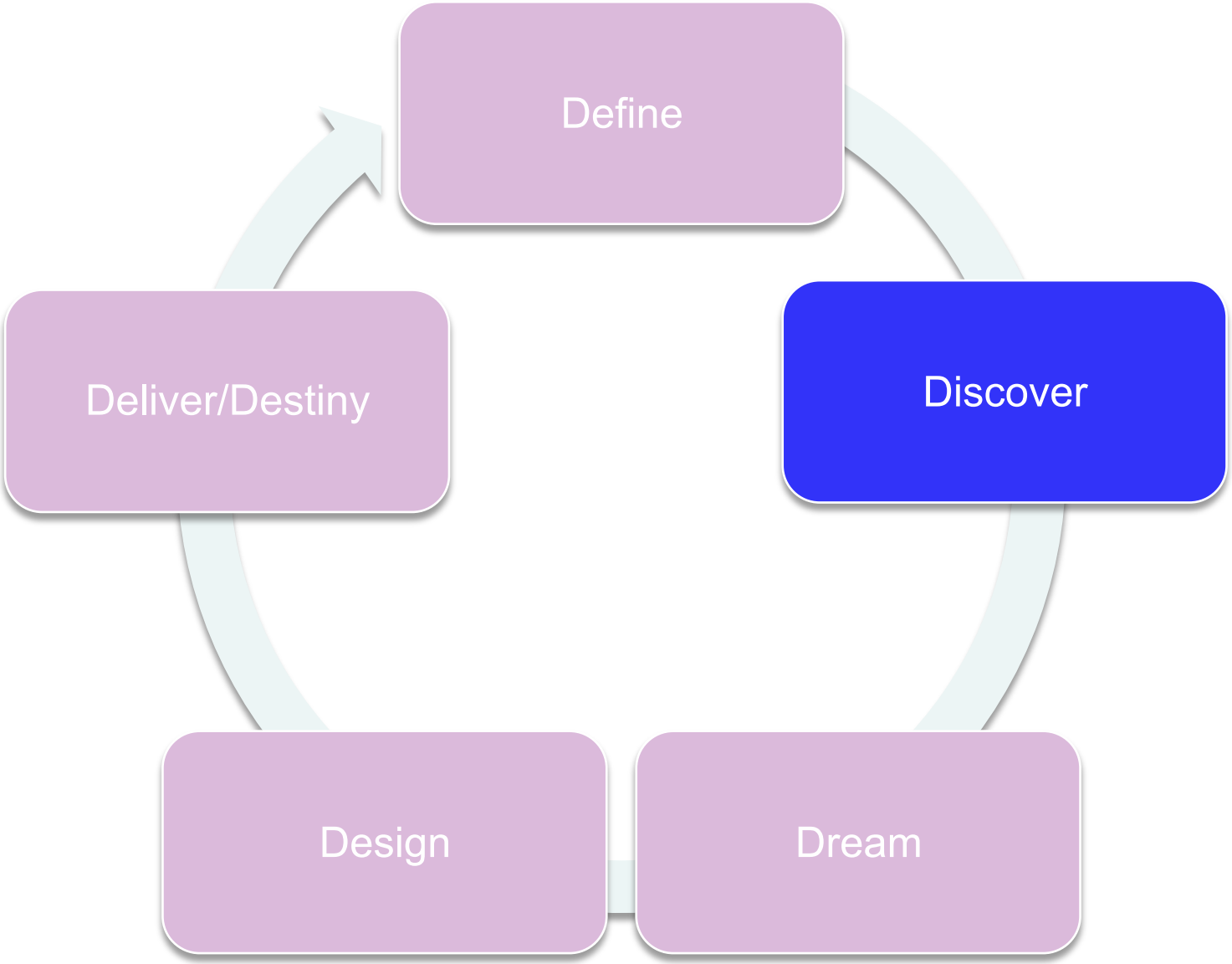

Discover

- Celebrating the best of what is today
- Exploring through face-to-face interviews
- In depth interview of success, actual experience and what made it so
  - What are you most proud of?
  - What is the peak experience? The greatest success?
  - You look for a version of ‘what is going well’, ‘what we like.’

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Question 1 – Discover success

- Tell me about a Foresight project where you are most delighted with the outcomes that flowed from your work. What were they? Why were you so delighted?

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Question 2 – discover strengths

- What strengths do you personally bring as a practitioner to supporting change in an organisation or community?
- Give me some examples of where these strengths have been most useful?

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Question 3 – moving in to Dream

Imagine that you wake up tomorrow and a foresight project that you have been involved in has successfully brought about significant change….

- How do you know that it has happened and been successful?
- What do you observe?
- Who is talking to whom? About what?
- What else?

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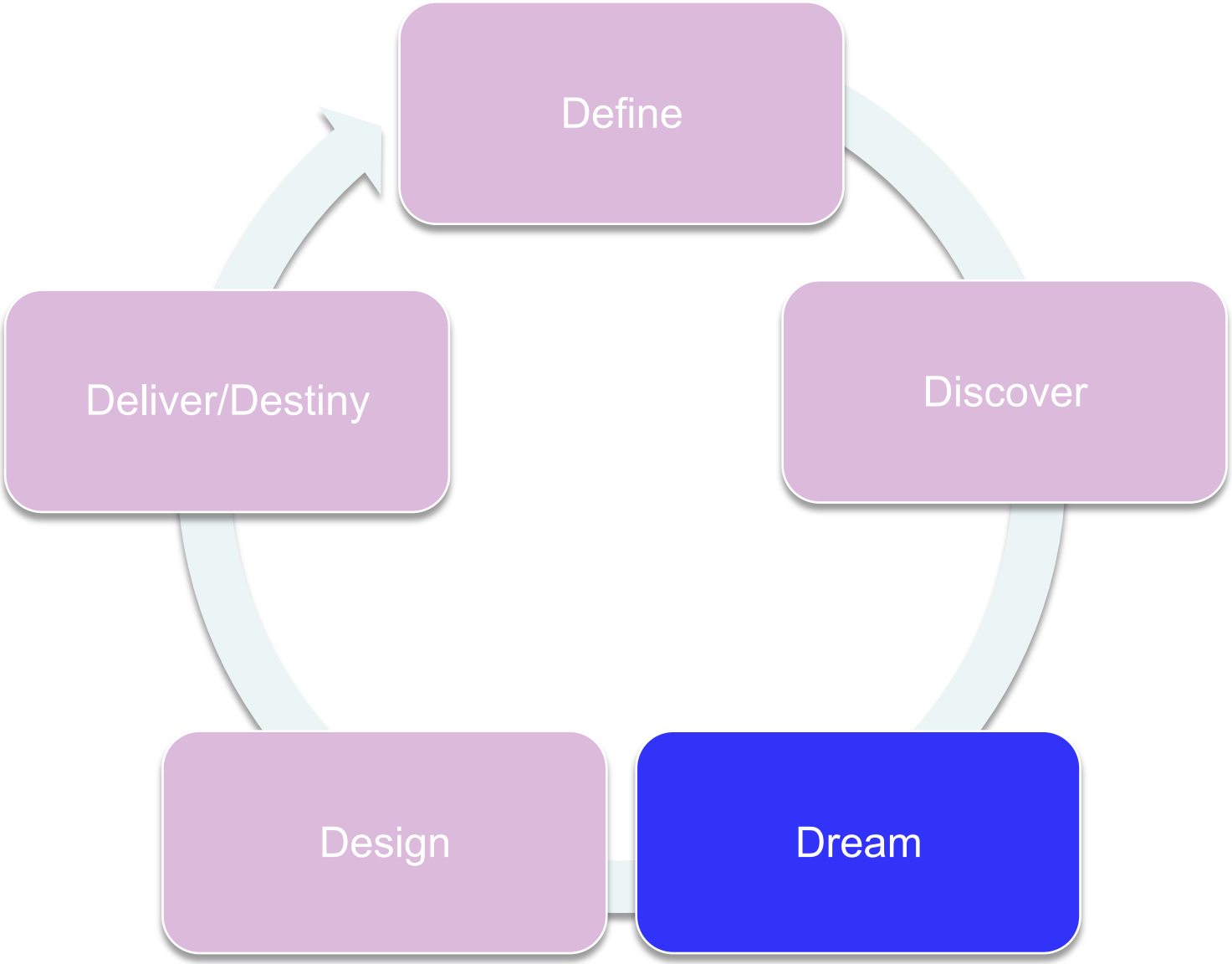

Dream

- Dream together about a preferred futureyou would like to co-create
- What could our best future be?
- What can we build based on our success (which came out of the Discover interviews)?
- What vision can you create of a preferred and plausible future?

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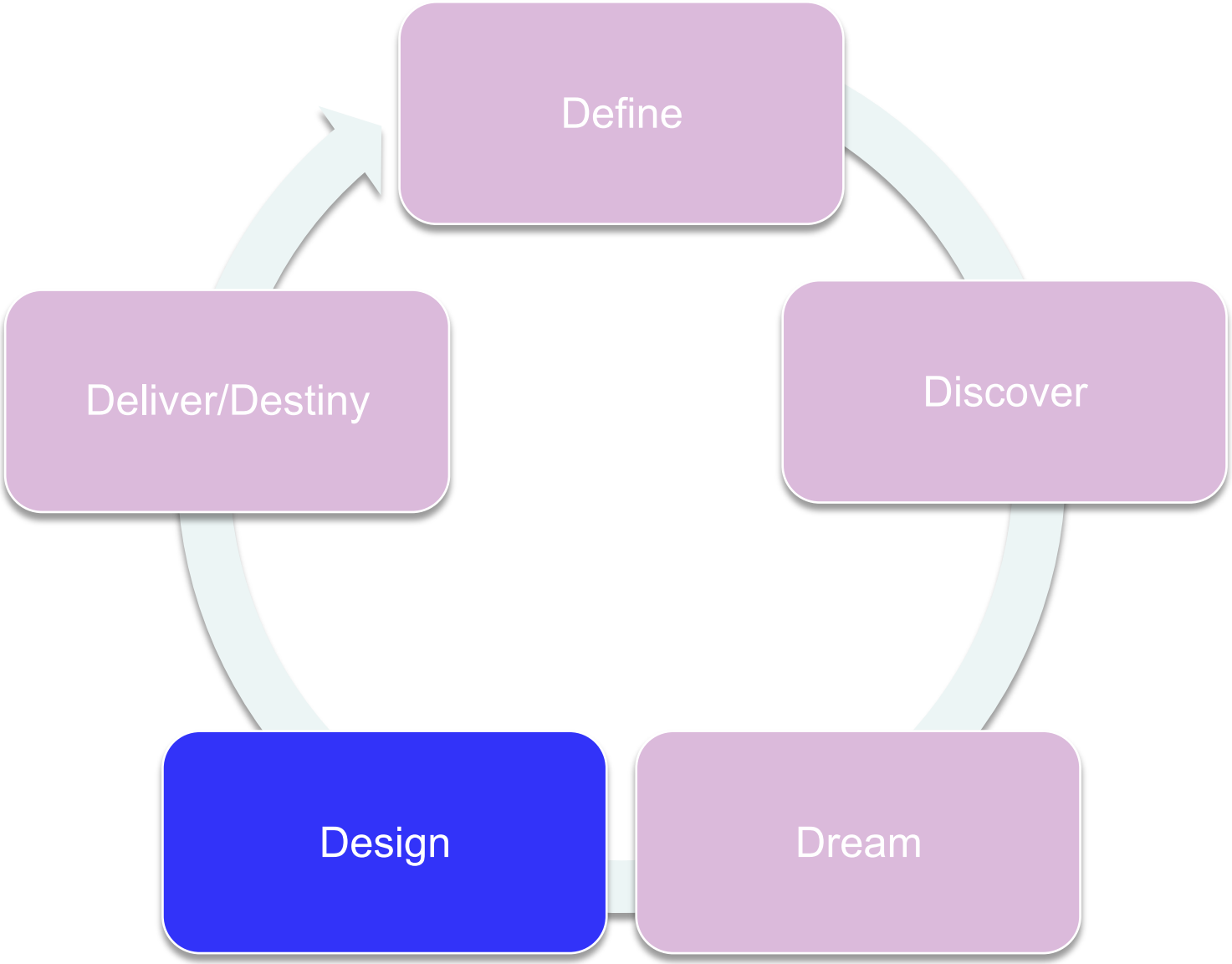

Design

- Exploring the best of what could be
- Sense making from what you have discovered so far
- Identifying how to turn barriers into opportunities
- Identifying what we need to do
- Making choices
- Developing a time line

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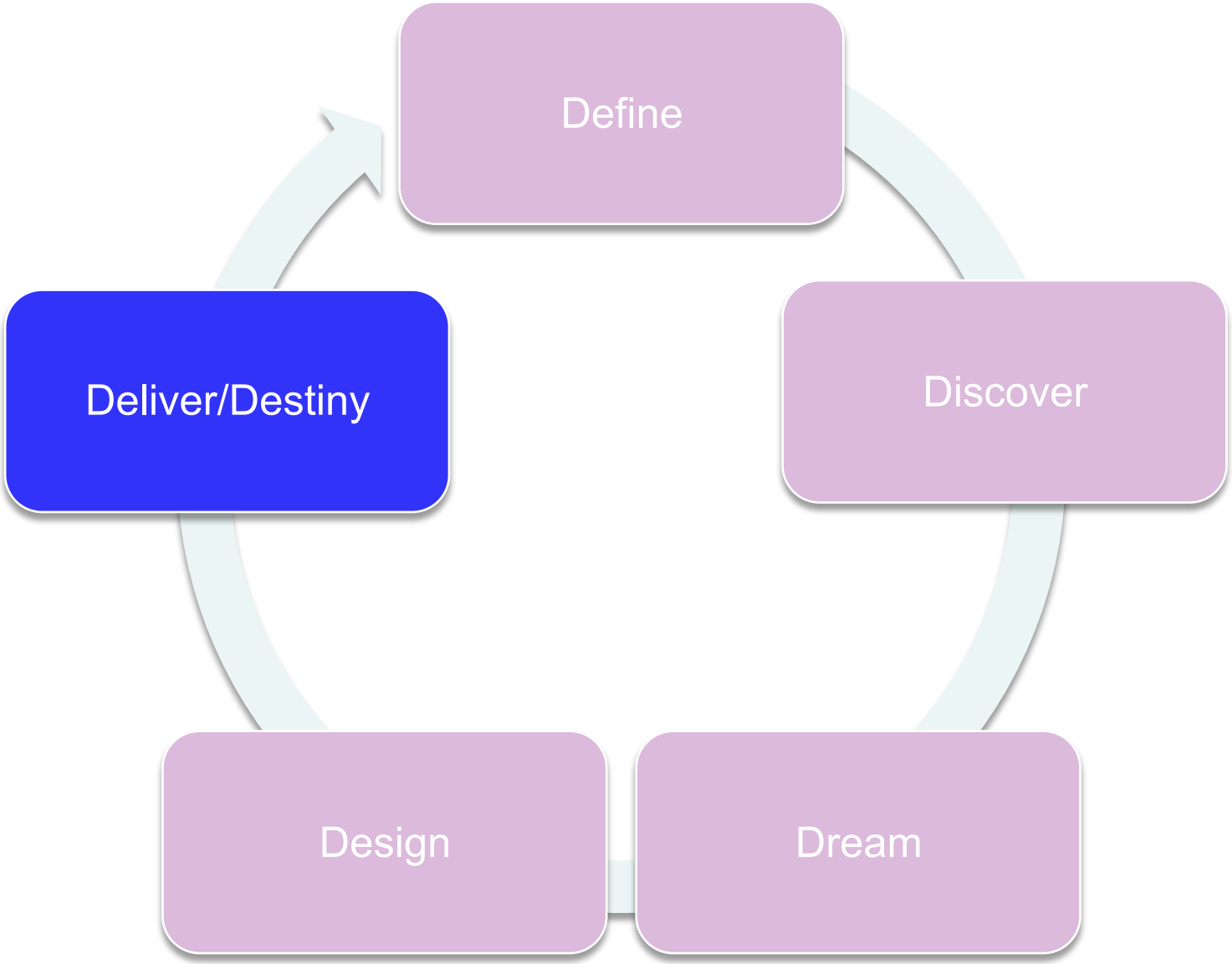

Deliver/Destiny

- Identifying what will be
- People commit to what they will do and take responsibility for
- You can ensure that the Design is still valid – if no one is willing to take responsibility for something needed for the design, convene a conversation on why and what to do about it.

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Appreciative Inquiry is an Iterative Process

The next time you go through the cycle:

- Define question is: What has been achieved since last time?
- Discovery is about what has worked well and what hasn't
- Dream is about checking if you are on track and changing what you need to
- Design is about the how and timeline of what next, taking into account what you have learned
- Deliver/Destiny is about who will do what for the next round
- No excuses – focus on what has been done, not what hasn't

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Developing a 5-year Corporate Strategy

- Participative Strategy Development involving staff, clients, partners & donors
- Scenarios used within Appreciative Inquiry framework to design a shared, preferred future
- People began to implement as soon as we finished

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Nos Aruba 2025

The project combined:

- Core team building
- Mass participation,
- Appreciative Inquiry,
- Scenarios and futures wheels.

It is still positively impacting the lives of a Caribbean nation nearly 10 years on.

Martin Hazell focuses on supporting large scale strategic change in organisations and communities.

Thank you!

Tricia Lustig & Martin Hazell

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