

Process Team Steering Committee

Meeting Notes

November 9, 2019

Present: dian marie hosking, Fred Meyer, Jim Fladmark, Susan Skjei (convener), David Marshall (note taker), LaDawn Haglund

Not Present: Deborah Marshall, Lisa Piemont, Martin Ramstedt, Paul Kelway

1. Check-ins

2. Revised notes for the SC meetings of October 26th and November 3rd will be posted and approved by Monday, November 11th.

3. Further discussion of how to engage the community with the Code of Conduct and other issues

We began by reviewing and reflecting upon our conversation at our last meeting about the Code of Conduct (“CoC”). We reaffirmed that our focus as a steering committee should be on developing a pedagogy for how to engage the community with the CoC. The CoC could be a focus for Shambhala's participation in u.lab 2x. The central idea is that we could use a theory U case clinic approach, with cases based on redacted, closed cases from the Care of Conduct archives.

The Board intends to discuss the CoC at their November 13th meeting. The CoC task force is developing an executive summary, with added background principles. We could conduct a series of webinars for different sectors of the community on sections of the CoC, with immediate polling.

November 22 is a tentative date for us to meet with the board. The board wants to work with the steering committee on planning some regional meetings, using Theory U as a framework. The board also has some interest in conducting some listening circles with small groups of people and would ask for our help with that, too.

We need structured, community-based conversations: besides theory U-based CoC case clinics, retreats on themes related to establishing enlightened society and other foci would be helpful. The structure needs to include addressing the lack of collective reflectivity. We have a chronic ignoring of problems such as fiscal instability and staff burnout. How do we shape or hold a conversation that faces up to these chronic problems?

We could also use case clinics to mutually reflect on our habits of chronic burnout and fiscal instability. Why do these problems keep recurring? Besides longer retreats and regional meetings, we could develop guidelines for two or three hour sessions to be held in local centres after sitting periods. We could also help build and direct cases for consideration in that format.

Let's think of centre directors and centre leaders as our target audience and provide flexible options. Conversations about care and conduct are already happening in many places. We need more focus on the larger issue: what constitutes “good conduct” in an enlightened society? To what degree do we need or want to specify these conversation questions?

Fred has developed a webinar for revenue generation training that could be used as a prototype for other topics. This is a fairly extensive six week model with webinars on weeks one and six.

We could offer a menu for exploring key common topics in Shambhala.

LaDawn proposed a three basket approach:

1. Basket one involves topics that need to be handled at a professional level such as fiscal, legal, and marketing issues. For these, the Steering Committee does not necessarily need to be involved; instead, the relevant professionals should be brought in. This area is essentially the Board's responsibility.
2. Basket two entails areas where we could provide guidance and/or hold the space for conversations about uncomfortable topics, such as volunteer burnout. We could provide direction and structure through webinars, regional meetings and other conduits.
3. Basket three involves more ordinary challenges; here we could use the process team website to post stories of how people and centres are working with challenges, as well as relevant resources. This could include case studies, a suggested template for holding effective conversations, and a list of resource people that could be called on locally (for example, people trained in Theory U). We could then use the bimonthly letter to the community to notify them of these resources.

We need to work out how to harvest from each of these three levels, with perhaps no harvesting needed for level 3.

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What we do for basket number two need some fleshing out. We could also consider some sort of appreciative inquiry.

All three baskets can be seen as addressing the question of how to repair and restore trust in our community. The first basket essentially deals with legal accountability. The second basket is essentially about inclusivity. Helping the community to sit with discomfort, to help the community see itself. How to let go of old values and patterns and instead to see ourselves as a more open and inclusive community. Basket three is essentially about transparency, about reflecting back, being visible and open.

Further down the road we also need some sort of transformative or restorative justice process. We could take what we harvest from these other conduits into regional and international meetings. We can integrate these ideas with our earlier ideas of documenting spaces that work and reports to the board. We need to structure these needs in terms of our year timeline and our finish date of next Shambhala day.

The essential question is how to establish a good human society. This includes how to have a substantive conversation on the level of Shambhala vision. This is a big menu. What is do-able by the end of next February?

4. Next Steps/Action Items

The SC over its next several meetings will further develop ideas and templates for webinars and regional meetings. Susan and dian marie will lead those discussions. Jim, Lisa, and Deborah will lead further discussions on telling our story. Fred will document our learning on spaces that work (methods that lead to generative, forward-looking conversations). He will present a draft to the steering committee by January 1, with the final document provided to the Board by Shambhala Day.

LaDawn will take the lead on eventually posting materials for basket number three items. She will first lead an SC visioning session on website content: what guidelines, cases, links, and resource people should we provide?

We will invite people currently taking the u.lab to work as groups on some of these topics in u.lab 2x. The steering committee as a whole will work out what projects to suggest to the current Shambhala u.lab participants.

Steering Committee homework before the next meeting: think about and propose what might be ideal for u.lab 2x projects.

Next meeting agenda: Ideas for u.lab 2x projects, further work on telling our story, and discussion on possibly taking a weekend off our meetings and eventually reducing our meeting frequency.

Next SC meeting: Sunday, November 17th, 12:00 – 2:00 PM Eastern, via Zoom.