

Process Team Steering Committee

Meeting Notes

January 5, 2020

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

Absent: Paul Kelway

Transition Task Force representatives Arawana Hayashi, Charlene Leung, and Suzann Duquette attended the last 30 minutes

1. Check-ins

2. Update on recent communications

Discussion about how the Sakyong's and the Board's letters to community are being received. Concerns about the potential negative reception of both.

Some PT members are upset about the SC not involving the PT in the crafting and sending of a letter to the Sakyong about engaging in a process of community reconciliation. Some have the perception that the SC is somehow blocking or discouraging others in the PT from communicating with the Sakyong. We have had difficulty in convincing these individuals otherwise.

Discussion: How to respond to these concerns? Issues raised – fear that the Board is proceeding on their own without involving the PT. Our best approach may be to continue to establish practices within the community that empower people and local centers to make more of their own decisions.

3. Discussion of PT Year 1 Review

We reviewed the current draft of "Our Story", made some structural changes to the document, and assigned responsibility for each section to SC members [see Action Items].

Brief discussion of the previous all-PT meeting and planning for the next one on January 18th.

4. Discussion of the Code of Conduct

Since the Code of Conduct has been accepted in principle by the Board and the Sakyong as one basis for moving forward, there is an opportunity for using it as a larger framework within the community for healing and for defining broadly-acceptable conditions for reintegration of the Sakyong. A wide-ranging discussion ensued about this possibility and the issues that it raises. The Code of Conduct Support Group is currently exploring how to engage the community. They are waiting to hear from the Board about how to release the Child Protection Policy within the framework of the existing Care and Conduct policy. They are also exploring how to engage the community in conversations that result in a sense of individual ownership by all members of Shambhala. As yet, there is no clarity. It may take another year to get to a version of the Code of Conduct that is widely acceptable to the community.

An emerging view is that the Code of Conduct is not about establishing policy, it's about re-establishing trust, establishing enlightened society. We need to change the perceived frame of reference of the Code from addressing misbehaviour to supporting the internalizing of the teachings as one's personal conduct; good conduct in our Shambhala Buddhist context. That would be more magnetizing for the community. What is the container for this? Where will this reframing work be done? In regional meetings? We need to shift to a more dialogic approach to seed the basis of understanding of good conduct in the community. We can make use of Theory U-trained facilitators. If we put a lot of energy behind this, the Code of Conduct could be used as the basis of the healing process, provided the Board and the Sakyong participate. Our letter to the Sakyong expressed a view of joining forces with the PT, Board, Acharyas, and the Sakyong. It might be helpful to get a clear statement from the CoC task force of how we can support them.

5. Discussion of Year 2 Planning with TTF representatives

The TTF representatives (Arawana, Charlene, and Suzann) joined the last half hour of the meeting and were invited to share their perceptions of the Process Team's first year. Their impressions of what happened included a sense that the PT engaged in processes of exploration, listening, inclusivity, and transparency. There was a sense of struggle of trying to find our direction, and the challenges of organizing and empowering members of the PT. Two main accomplishments were the launching of Theory U training in the community, and the draft Code of Conduct, as well as a lot of awakening and seeding of issues that need to be addressed. It was gratifying that the Presencing Institute provided direct help to Shambhala with its participation in Theory U. It was inspiring to hear how people are able to hold what's going on and to innovate in their local centres. The Steering Committee and the Board have helped set the tone for what's possible within the Dharma. Overall, there was a positive sense of how the community is using Theory U to engage with each other in a better way. They agreed that it is important to continue the work of the Process Team beyond this first year, but in what way?

A discussion of the future shape of the process team then ensued. The TTF representatives felt that there is a need to craft a way for everyone to travel together, with the bigger picture of who we are as a community. The PT needs to look for the bigger patterns that are beginning to become evident, and build on that. The current sense is that there are multiple Shambhalas emerging, multiple experiments being conducted. It is time to try to seek some cohesion. The next version of the PT needs to help listen broadly, to coordinate the voices from the community, with participation from all different groups and factions. The PT needs to help the community seek common ground, beyond the loud voices and extreme views. In short, what is needed is a further process of surveying, listening, gathering and sharing about what does it mean to be Shambala.

The TTF representatives will try to join us at a future Steering Committee meeting to continue to contribute to design of the second year of the PT. They will also provide comments on the SC's "Our Story" document. They concluded by inviting the SC to attend a meeting of the Acharyas to get further perspectives on the future shape of the Process Team, with a focus on how the PT can help create the conditions for healing and reintegration of the Sakyong.

6. Action Items, responsible party, and target date

- Each SC member will add their assigned sections to the "Our Story" document before January 16th
- Each SC member will review Fred's "Spaces That Work" document and provide feedback.

- Fred, Susan, and dian marie will meet to plan the January 18th all-PT meeting; LaDawn will help facilitate the meeting.
- [Someone] will contact Eric Spiegel to set up a meeting with the Acharyas

Next SC meeting: Saturday, January 11th 2020, 12:00 – 2:00 PM Eastern, via Zoom.