

Morningstar Steering Committee Call

8/13/16 11am

Present: John & Sandra, Fortuna, Nancy, Tony, Ealasaïd, Ari

- First: Tony shared the login info for the Solar Cross Zoom account:
 - Username: solarcrosstemple@gmail.com
 - PW: Pra1s3Sun1ght3^3
 - Ealasaïd will write up a short guide on setting up a meeting
 - Download app from website www.zoom.us, open, log in, use to set up meeting.
- Tony is facilitating
- Call for agenda items:
 - Expectations and duties
 - Transitioning with new members
 - Pillar Status, action items
- Holy mother prayer
- How the steering comm functions
 - Ealasaïd: pretty informal, regular calls, etc.
 - Sandra: duties are to keep the school going, create a plan to move the school forward, implementing the plan with help from other people in the school.
 - We haven't had a lot of help, which is why people are getting worn out.
 - It's a big mandate, which makes it hard to define.
 - Tony: we're facilitating the school and trying to move toward a student-owned co-op model, but recognizing we need leadership. We want to balance everyone having autonomy with the need for leadership. The last year has been about restructuring and coming up with policies, and we've gotten a good start on those. We've also been planning the retreat and dealing with personal projects, so energy is flagging. Excited for new energy to come in so we can spread the work out a bit more. We have the pillar system, which is constantly evolving. We used to have 5, but now it's 3 where each of them is actually two.
 - Ari: Do all the School participants know that they have input and it's a "student-owned coop" Over-communicate this!
 - Tony: Not sure. We've been trying to invite people in, but recognizing that we're leading/facilitating. Feels like he's been inviting people in but people don't always step up / meet the request. Plus, Thorn is still Thorn – the whole process started so she wouldn't have to be *Thorn* anymore, but she's still Thorn, so there's an automatic deference when she speaks that isn't necessary or helpful. That probably contributes to a lack of people seeing the student-owned co-op goal/paradigm.
 - Ari: Doesn't feel the process was totally understandable. Wants to get involved

with the Temple & Tech group, but doesn't know how to do that. Has been on all possible sides of a bunch of groups, people come up with ridiculous stories, we need to communicate a LOT. We need leadership and a vision and to move toward that, but we also need to make sure people's perceptions are accurate.

- Sandra: From her perspective, getting engagement has been very difficult as far as getting people involved. This has all been posted to Moodle, we had the town halls and posted about them but participation was pretty dismal. Whatever suggestions the new folks have coming from the outside about how to better connect would be great. There were calls out on Moodle, mentions in school chats, etc etc etc, but we're somewhat at a loss about how to reach out to folks who aren't engaging. How could we reach out better?
- Nancy: Has hesitated to join, because has a lot of experience with this kind of transition. Wants to go back to Ari's statement about people not knowing the vision. An agenda item should probably be: what is the vision? We can't just carry on what Thorn did, need to figure out what we *are* going to do. What do people need/want? What do they imagine things will look like in three years? We need to come to a common vision of what we're creating so we can invite people to come with. As one of the newbies, can't just jump on to what those of us who've been here for a long time have had. What do we value, what do we want to see? What's the vision that each of us has?
- Tony: Ari's question is important – and brought up a sense of fatigue and defensiveness. Miscommunication and projections happen on both sides of this kind of situation. These questions are important, our feelings are important, and how can we move forward?
- Ari: How do we bring together center and circumference?
- Tony: Yes. Let's go around and each say a little about our vision for the school?
- Ari: Side comment in chat: "Each steering committee person reach out to one or two people in Morningstar personally?"
- Visions
 - Ari: To make it sustainable. To make a container and a space for people to stand in their power and do their work.
 - Tony: A strong center with a very strong circumference, a place where our energies can join, we can feed and support each other and bring that out to the edges as well
 - Nancy: The teachings and ideas Thorn has passed on, wants a place where we both keep those alive and add to them. Idea of container also important.
 - Ealasaid: I've always liked Thorn's thing about creating adults. We help people know themselves and discover the Work of this God, self-possession.
 - Fortuna: Likes the idea of looking at the gift we're received. Been woefully absent since returning to the school. The teachings are what is important. Practice is important. Deepening and sharing those tools is important. Thorn

isn't the source of everything for the school now. Vision: those tools going out, more people drinking the Kool-Aid so to speak.

- Sandra: curious about the onboarding people, have y'all read the stuff that was posted? When we first started this whole thing we had a long discussion, Sandra wrote up a long vision about what the school could be – that's what became the pillars.
 - Nancy: read the material but doesn't remember all of it.
 - Tony: so, we had the town halls and did a ton of work and thinking, but as is the bright Morningstar shadow, we think and talk a lot and then we didn't get to making a decision. We picked the things we felt pretty solid on, but it's not 100% set. The stuff that's posted is what the original committee put together to get the cart rolling down the hill, but we might need different wheels or whatever.
 - John: We need a place that's easy for people to find and read. Is Moodle that thing? Do we need to supplement with something?
 - Ari: I talked to Sarah about wikis and content management things
 - Tony: Yeah, Moodle is becoming a problem and Sarah is taking the bulk of this work but is also doing a lot of things with her life and is busy.
 - Sandra: We have the FB group and have talked a bunch about redesigning the Moodle, but having trouble finding out who can do it and setting up for the person to get training from Sarah. It's been a sticking point.
 - Fortuna: We need interns.
 - Nancy: It'd be great if alllllll those docs could all get put into one PDF and emailed to everybody on the steering comm as an attachment so they're easy to read. Obvs we also need 'em online, but it'd be helpful to have a single doc to start with.
 - Ealasaid will do this.
 - John: so, we want to revisit the vision Sandra created, and update/change it – as an action item for later, yes?
 - Tony: yeah, that's my sense. It's for the ongoing and onboarding members of the steering comm to do. We're all still part of the school so our visions matter, but the soon-to-be-former members have put a lot of their stuff in. Tony is happy not to have his visions matter for a while. :)
- Expectations/Duties
 - Tony: We've been having monthly calls after the school chats, but lumping them together has been hard for some folks. We're trying to do once a month calls to sort this stuff out. We did a lot of logistical work on the retreat but had Starr come in to organize and own the retreat. There's a lot of things that don't have to be right on the steering comm's plate. We've been having someone from each pillar be on the comm so they can update regularly. Others?
 - Sandra: We've talked about an expectation of appearing at the zoom chats as often

as possible but that's been a bit of a challenge for some folks, as we can see by how many folks are missing from today's chat. The main expectation has been showing up and participating, but seems like that's where we're having trouble – pretty typical for a volunteer comm

- Tony: Yeah, we've been having trouble figuring out if we even have a quorum. Note – Zoom records sessions automatically, do we want to keep or delete for people who aren't here? Ealasaid takes awesome notes {thanks tony!} so we probably don't need the recording.
- Tony: who's on pillars?
 - Ealasaid: I think I'm on teaching/curriculum? But haven't done anything
 - Tony: yeah, it's been really fallow. We talked about doing elemental stuff at the retreat, but it's not happening. Tony is getting grumpy about it because he's posted calls for participation and gotten nothing. What we've been doing is focusing on restructuring. There's a proposal in place with a code of ethics for teachers, lots of good work on setting up a framework. Idea is to have the pillar be a small group of 3-4 people that the Steering Comm approves of. Lots of ideas to implement, but people could start teaching if they felt called now. Needs to check in with people to see who's still involved and engaged. Wants to work on going through our curriculum and redoing it format-wise. Standardize, formalize, etc. Does think it's important to have a conversation about how to do the elementals class in a way that's more engaging. It's not great on Moodle. Tony's mentoring the demon work thing but there's not a lot of energy to work with.
 - John: Elementals – part of Morningstar or lead-in to Morningstar? Also, demon work was announced to start in August but didn't followup?
 - Ari offered to take over anchoring the demon work.
 - Tony: Elementals was a way to lead in. Demon work petered out, not a lot of energy coming in. People are probably doing their work and not checking it in, but he has no way of knowing.
 - Ari: "I think engagement with Moodle has been an issue in general (including from me)"
 - Tony: yeah, we're always trying to work on engagement with Moodle.
 - Fortuna: Communication is really important. People who are mentoring know what's up but others don't. FB group – informal secret group for students, right? (nods) A newsletter sounds hopelessly old fashioned but would help people understand what's up.
 - Ari: Email newsletter? If people aren't checking Moodle?
 - Fortuna: if you're as far away as I am, it's hard to remain engaged. It's really difficult to do any kind of online training, honestly, even if it's one on one. Measuring engagement is really painful. How many students are actually in Moodle classrooms?

- Nancy: is there a way for people to go to Moodle school or something? Teaches online a lot but doesn't grok Moodle. Sarah knows how and could teach it, but she's really busy. Would she be offended if we went and took training? Is there a place to go do that?
- John: Moodle itself has some training. Thinks we're using a downrev version, isn't sure what we've got exactly. Also curious, what does Nancy use to teach online?
- Chat: general positive reactions to newsletter idea
- Nancy: We use Ebanz360. Interested in anchoring the teaching pillar but not ready to do it yet. Concerned: are we gonna make it in the long haul? If so, we need to get teaching online really working AND ALSO do teaching in person. Even if we were feeding in people from local elemental classes, we aren't ready to take people in and get profits.
- Tony: I agree. That's part of building the applearc while rolling it down the hill.
- Fortuna: It feels like we're thin on the ground, and it's going to get thinner because people are having all kinds of big things going on. We're gonna remain thin on the ground and uninformed unless we have continuity, but how can we do that without crushing some poor person who tries to take it all on their shoulders??? How many people are there out there? On the steering comm? Enrolled? That have engagement?
- Tony: reminded at the conference he just attended of something that's been a constant lesson – start simple and then let the simple become more complex. If you start with complexity you're at a risk of collapsing already. This is something we struggle with, we're passionate people – which is why we're stressed out. Need to come back to the core of what work we want to do. He's most fed by mentoring. It comes back to what Fortuna is saying, we take on a lot and there's a lot to work through and it just helps to focus our days if we know what's important. Building a really strong center of Morningstar is important. Building the circumference and local communities and stuff is important to other folks (and in general) too.
- Temple & Tech?
 - Sandra: hasn't been able to do anything for the last few months. There was a lot of stuff written up, long docs that got written and discussed at the town hall that generated questions but not answers, and we never did answer the questions. The way we left it last is the need to simplify the documents to allow for them to be more relevant for what's happening right now, and leave it so they can evolve over time. The process for renewing the steering comm didn't work the way we'd planned, so we need to revise to reflect that. Maybe not be so specific about the mechanics? That's on her to-do list, she's hopeful she can get to it in another few weeks or a month when she has two free hands to type on a keyboard but right now she can only hand the baby

off for so long. The docs need to be revised. It's a bit difficult. We need to get training set up, get Sarah engaged, get roles filled. Implementation needs to happen. Really needs a bigger recap of what happened at the retreat. The temple was rekeyed and other things that directly affected Temple & Tech, but never got a full report of what happened. Doesn't know who has the crystal, things like that.

- Ari: Starr has the crystal.
- Tony: I meant to speak to Fortuna's question - part of the goal with the next few months is to support continuity between steering committees. There are I believe 6 people who have stated they will be the Steering Committee
- Sandra: Building on Tony's response - 6 people have volunteered to be on Steering committee now. Original Steering Committee was 9. If I remember correctly, there are around 30-35 people who are still registered on Moodle as part of Morningstar. I don't think that includes people in the Elementals A & B.
- Sandra: is there someone who can write a report? Should we interview people?
- John: Likes to learn from history even if we don't continue from that, but didn't get info from people to finish writing up the temple doc. Needs help to get that info and then post the doc on Moodle.
- General consensus that the theoretical newsletter would help with this kind of thing
- Tony: thought someone had been tapped at the retreat who'd done that
- Nancy: there are about 30-35 people registered on Moodle. If you want to have access to the temple, do you have to be on Moodle?
- Tony: Yes, pretty sure
- John: Thinks that's why Elemental class isn't on our Moodle, so they don't have access to the write-ups of that. Who's a good person to talk to about info at the retreat?
 - General consensus: Ryan
- Nancy: who initiated the changing of the temple keys? Did Thorn just say we were gonna do it and we did it?
- Tony: Thinks it wasn't initiated by Thorn, but this is an example of lack of process.
- Pillar not represented today is Alumni/Research, which is Jenn's thing
 - Tony: It's both clear and really unprocessed. It's about getting people included who want to do their own kind of grad project now that they've done the Morningstar courses and stuff.
- Tony: It's 12:07, we didn't set an official ending time. How much more time do we think we need today?
 - Sandra: John and I starting to fuzz out.

- Nancy: This isn't the last meeting with the two generations of steering comm, right? As long as we'll all get together again, OK with adjourning now.
- Tony: in theory the official changeover is Samhain. We'll plan our next meeting further in advance. On that topic, Ealasaid asked about whose job it is to set up meetings, anybody OK to do that?
- Ealasaid: happy to do it
- Nancy: wants at least 3 meetings with overlap before leaving people actually leave. Also getting the doc together would be great to have as a focus for the next meeting.
- John: These monthly meetings aren't supposed to be the only time people talk! We can email conversations and stuff.
- Tony: We need to get all the people together. Should we set a date for the next meeting now?
- General: yeah, set meeting and then confirm w/others
- John: Ari, did you say you talked to Sarah about stuff?
- Ari: at retreat, talked to Sarah about wiki, Sarah had ideas for something better
- John: it'd be good to have a mailing list
- Sandra: there's been talk about a steering com section on Moodle, that'd probably be good to have. Lots of questions that need answering.
- Tony: Ari, would you be good with looking into that?
- Ari: to find possibilities for ways for the steering comm to meet and make it transparent to the school? Yes. Will talk to sarah about options for that.
- Next meeting: Weekend of 9/10? Discussion.
 - Conclusion: 10am Pacific on Saturday 9/10