

Morningstar Steering Committee
9/17/16 10am
Zoom Call

Present: Fortuna, Ealasaïd, Jenn, Thorn, Nancy, Starr, Tony, Ken
Absent: Ari, Sandra, John, Sarah
Facilitating: Jenn

- Morningstar Documents
 - Ealasaïd sent out collected PDF a couple weeks ago. Anybody have comments?
 - Fortuna: they looked good. It was a mighty piece of work, thank you everyone.
 - Starr: They look really good and appreciate depth of detail; wonders if the depth of detail is a bit too much for folks trying to figure out if they have what it takes to be a mentor/teacher/etc. Need detail to hold people accountable; would benefit us if there were a quick guide. "You're thinking about being a Morningstar teacher? Here is how: step one, talk to so-and-so, etc." Would be good to have a summary doc to supplement (not replace!) the detailed docs.
 - Jenn: was thinking each section/pillar could have a sort of quick intro/FAQ at the beginning of its section of the document.
 - Who will draft this? Ealasaïd.
- Thorn: State of the Thorn
 - Really uninterested in teaching. Been teaching for 25yrs, Elemental stuff for 15+ yrs, is burned out. It's affecting mentoring of the Elemental group, which is not great. Really needs to step back. Not sure what it'll look like; emeritus mentor? On call? Open to feedback on that as long as the feedback isn't "no you can't go!"
 - Concern right now: had hoped to be in a stronger place now with people trained to mentor the elemental class. Thorn is burned out, Tony ditto, Sarah ditto, Rynn MIA, Sandra has the baby. We were supposed to have two new people trained to pick up the class by now and we don't. Need to decide what to do. Bring new people in? Close class after Earth?
 - Nancy: This isn't the first time she's found herself in this position in an org. Hesitated to be on the steering comm as a result but feels is here for a reason. As reading the mission statement, sees us wanting to be a fraternity or a support group, and that's very important to her. We are her family, this is where she's likely to be encouraged and challenged and grow, that's really important. But it seems we face a major decision as an org and a steering comm: why we want to teach and *what* we want to teach. If our motivating for teaching is to maintain the fraternity, we are in trouble. It won't work. If there are some of us who feel called to teach this stuff, we need to get our butts in gear and do something about it. If we feel called to teach it not for the fraternity idea but because the work is vital and unique, then we really need to be teaching. If we don't, then we need to figure out how we're going to support the fraternity and quit pretending we want to teach.
 - Tony: really appreciate what Nancy said. Wants to add own perspective. Is burned out on organizing and developing policy statements, and is dealing with a big life shift (because that's what we are all doing all the time, heh). Had a big 10 of Wands moment: what do I want to keep? Is interested in just straight up being the lead teacher. Would rather focus on teaching right now and not do as much of the other stuff. Wants to step back from steering and teaching pillar and just teach.
 - Nancy: That's what we need but of course he can't do it alone. Nancy's passionate about this stuff and has taught in a variety of similar settings and sees this as unique. Not quite

qualified to by our standards to teach, but is already kind of teaching it anyway, so how do we get her qualified and bridge the gap til there are another 3-4 people ready to go with teaching.

- Starr: Willing and able to train to teach any of the classes. Has feet under her and this is part of what she's supposed to be doing. Ready to get trained.
- Thorn: One thought – huge amount of attrition with this elemental group for a lot of reasons. The small group that left, we could say to them, hey, we're bringing on a new mentor, Thorn will be around but things are coming around. We should ask what the remaining folks want to do. Passing the torch is okay, we just need to check in and see if they want to keep going after the current element.
- Tony: doesn't think they'll be surprised. Entranced by idea from retreat of doing a conjoined elemental course with a central Moodle course we're all doing but a number of us are organizing local small groups so we can have a both/and kind of thing.
- Thorn: That's something we'd talked about starting in the spring, just so people know.
- Fortuna: so there'd be online teaching but also a local teacher? That's really important! You've gotta be with a person and get the vibe!
- Thorn: there will still be some far flung folks who don't have an in person group. But if there are enough people involved who do have it, it'll enliven the experience for everybody.
- Jenn: Been talking about doing something on the East coast, because there are four of them there. Brought it up in a recent group meeting and a bunch of people were really excited by the idea. Thinks we could totally pull it off.
- Nancy: Has energy for the teaching pillar to structure this stuff up. Can't just use Thorn's outline. Each teacher has to build the modules that are interchangeable and communicable,. Feeling better – already had one org die this week and was thinking “oh shit” hehehe.
- Thorn: let's set a date, maybe spring equinox? And say okay, these three people are going to anchor local elemental classes, we'll all help co teach an online class under one person's leadership (tony is right about having a lead teacher being important). Having simultaneous online and in person class about the triple soul will help pull people in and gauge interest. Can have it as a possible route into the Elements class, but not everybody has to go on to the elemental stuff.
- Fortuna: the criteria for teaching elements: is that in the doc? Yep, she missed it.
- Nancy: basically it's completion of a full cycle.
- Thorn: not sure if this is in the doc. Right now everyone is a volunteer, including her. Need to decide about the finances around the in-person classes. If people will host in their houses we can avoid rental stuff. If we decide the classes cost X, need to decide if the lead teacher splits that or if everything goes to Solar Cross (which is what's currently happening with the online classes).
- Starr: on finances, if people want to be paid that changes this idea but for her, would be nice if part of the money went to Solar Cross and part went to a travel fund to make sure people can come to the in-person retreats! People could also donate to that.
- Thorn: Thinks its a great idea
- Ken: criteria for teaching – not sure, doc says you have to have gone through a round of the core curriculum, what is that? Where does “core” start and end?
- Thorn: training through Elements, Iron, Pearl, Planes of Stability. Don't have to have done demon work, “advanced” work, self-possession work.
- Ken: there was a round of demon work in the 2-year training.
- Thorn: you all can decide that demon work is required before teaching, it's a good idea. And

really, it's up to us right now. Tony, thoughts?

- Tony: Fortuna totally qualified to teach. Ideally, everybody will have done everything before teaching, but practically that feels like an extra hoop and we can't be adding hoops considering where we're at. Feels like Elements, Iron, Pearl, Planes is a good, stable foundation.
- [Ealasaid's audio dropped]
- Starr: Teaching this work matters, it's easy to harm people when you're seen as an authority around something as profound as the tools for liberation. Likes idea of someone having to weigh in/vouch for someone as part of getting cleared to teach.
- Thorn: Peer accountability is really difficult. Requires a commitment on the parts of everyone to be able to give and receive accountability feedback. We've tried various methods but nobody has really committed to it. It's really hard to say "Based on your checkins lately I'm not sure you're in a good place for this." Thorn's been hands-off in a lot of ways. It's your soul, do it in your own time. But has also had to fire the arrow.
- Fortuna: peer to peer is something where you need familiarity between the peers before accountability can happen
- Starr: in other groups, it's not so much peer to peer as there's a group of 3-4 people who get the list of names and has a private conversation about them. So, it's a group of your peers having a convo, but it's not a friend saying it directly.
- Tony: we need to update the doc to include the diff between core/advanced coursework, on page 10.
- Tony: trying to hold balance between being quasi-anarchists and also requiring a process to become a formal teacher. Christopher put forward idea of having teachers reflect and check in with someone.
- Fortuna: was thinking of Christopher, because accountability is one of his superpowers. He makes me want to be clean and upright! He's got a lot of skill in that way.
- Thorn: idea of adding a magical component. If you're teaching, there's a three-sentence reflection you do daily at your altar, there's a special aspect of astral temple work, whatever.
- Starr: increased Kala
- Thorn: yes. Something that links to the school and our magical processes.
- Jenn: Doing classes in person helps to build community and give people more agency in the school.
- Nancy: having taken the material doesn't mean you're qualified to teach it. Gotta remember that.
- Starr: likes idea that people who are vetted and have authority are on a webpage with a photo, name, short bio, so if someone wants to make sure you really are a teacher, they can get confirmed. Need a way to verify credentials.
- Thorn: we've talked about this before; is in process of getting websites redone, can include Morningstar and a teaching page in that. Personal website will be her writing, everything else will be Morningstar/Solar Cross sites. We need to identify someone to handle website updates.
- Fortuna (in chat): what about offering webinars with a few teachers, just an hour...to get the idea of what Morningstar is, what the core courses are, etc.
- Thorn and Starr: like that idea
- Tony: are we ready to move on to the teaching pillar?
- General consensus
- Tony: sent out a "who's in who's out" email. Ryan has volunteered to anchor, Nancy has

expressed interest in anchoring but Tony thought was on the fence?

- Nancy: never co-anchoring anything ever again, so yeah, she's stepping back. Ryan can do it.
- Tony: yeah, we don't have a formal process or description of what an anchor is. Thought about that but then felt process burnout again. There's so much more to do and he's just not the one to keep pushing it forward right now. Was hoping Nancy/Ealasaid could be the one to write to the group about what we've been talking about here, not Tony. :)
- Jenn: Do we have anybody from the other pillars?
- Temple and tech needs more computer people. Thorn is concerned that our only real computer tech person on the pillar is Sarah, who's really busy.
- Nancy: happy to step up to anchor teaching if Ryan needs to be moved to the tech side of things.
- Starr: has anybody formally asked him to join that comm? Sometimes people need to be asked. Gut assessment that Ryan needs asking. Who's the right person to ask? **Starr willing (general consensus)**
- Thorn: this is a service-to-the-school type thing. You have this skill, we need it, please do it.
- Jenn: Other pillar is research and alum, which Jenn is kind of holding space for, but not sure there will be movement until we get more people. Alumni never really got a writeup, may want to revisit with the new comm.
- Ken: Alumni – Starr brought up at the retreat that alumni who aren't part of the school per se are out of the temple and the energetic flow of the school in a way that matters for how they are included or not. There are things alumni could mentor, but other things they wouldn't be good mentors for. Stuff not Morningstar-specific tech, alumni could be a good mentor. Example of Starr's book club.
- Jenn: wants a working definition of what an alumni is, we never actually did that.
- Fortuna: having announced that I was leaving and then coming back, I guess I have official alumni status, but what does that mean? Didn't know who was doing what or where she stood as an alumni. And really, how do you ever *leave* the school? There are vaugeries around being an alumnus. There aren't a lot of us, this is the elephant in the room. Engagement is really important.
- Starr: as someone who left and came back, you can never leave, it's like Hotel California. (haha)
- Starr: excited about the potential, the idea of someone working with another person on their project. What is a project exactly? Etc. Having an alumni who's similar to you in some way to talk to could be really powerful. If you're trying to do some huge research project and we have an alumni whose profession is research/librarian/etc, would make sense to put those people together.
- Fortuna (in chat): we need to differentiate between alumni and inactive.
- General agreement.
- Jenn: it's been an hour. Time constraints?
- Thorn and Ken both have to go soon.
- OK, will wrap it up in 10.
- Anybody else have stuff?
- Nancy was going to talk about the vision statement – she kind of already did, talking about fraternity model etc.
- Thorn: would you write something up?
- **Nancy: yes**

- Thorn: a useful thing going forward: start and end every meeting with some kind of ritual/prayer, will help keep our work in mind at all times.
- Starr: practical question. When do we routinely meet? Wasn't on the call last time. Is there a pattern?
- Ealasaïd: we were doing the meeting after all school chats, but it's a long chunk of time.
- Starr: is busy on Sundays, that's not a great time for her. If we're gonna do sundays, it needs to be late or she needs to step out,.
- Ealasaïd: Saturdays are good.
- Nancy: some Saturdays are good, does do some teaching events on Saturdays.
- Starr: Doodle poll for a routine meeting time? e.g. 1st Saturday, etc.
- Ealasaïd: will do poll.
- Thorn: it's a big time stretch so it needs to be on weekends. At this point is happy to attend meetings as needed but would rather not by default. Let her know if we need her input on something.
- Nancy: in terms of teaching, if Thorn could commit to meet occasionally with the teachers and mentors, that would be great.
- Thorn: that sounds great, is happy to do that kind of thing. Like one meeting a quarter?
- Nancy: Yes.
- Thorn: sure.