Greetings!  

February 19, 2020

As many of you are aware, The Spirituality Network board, staff and many active leaders of the organization and its programs, have been engaging in discernment around strategic planning for the future and how to enhance our work in the community. All were invited to participate in these initial conversations to assess the organizations’ strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. From ArtiGras, Living Faith Awards, Wellstreams and Women to Women, to our newest JEDI (justice, equity, diversity and inclusion) programing, we have been considering how best to live into our shared vision:

“Awakened Lives, Transforming the World”

…and mission:

“Grounded in the Source of all creation, The Spirituality Network seeks to cultivate the awakened life through contemplative living and action.”

We are deeply grateful to the leadership of Alejandro Rodriguez in facilitating the beginning phase of this journey through holding three initial conversations where the following four areas of focus were identified and agreed upon by the Board of Directors at it’s November meeting, as priorities to dive into more deeply.

Four task groups were formed, one for each focus area, to propose ideas and plans of action for moving forward, and their work was reviewed by the board at our January meeting.

Group 1 - Jill Frost, Tina Butler, Amanda Stone Cushing

- Bolster internal and external communications
  - Break down silos to encourage sharing of information/mission across programs
Further leverage partnerships (religious, spiritual, business, “nones”) and social media/web

Group 2 - Raven Jackson-Stone, Saralise Ward, Judy Ketterer
- Focus on team engagement and capabilities (staff, faculty, key volunteers)
  - Reinforce mission, build stronger bonds of trust, clarify/align goals, secure commitment
  - Build technology acumen to prepare for a digital future

Group 3 - Rich Horton, Renee Wormack-Keels
- Shore up TSN’s financial position and financial transparency
  - Re-establish relationships with previous donors
  - Think big: explore creative fundraising options (e.g., Go Fund Me), underwriting and sponsorships

Group 4 - Amanda Stone Cushing, Lisa Bueche, Margot Connor
- Explore creative solutions that leverage Network strengths while addressing weaknesses, opportunities and threats
  - Brainstorm these with Board

Our next steps include finalizing detailed work plans for carrying out those areas that the board felt were the most immediate priorities for the balance of this fiscal year, and to present those plans, including timeframes for completing them and identification of individuals responsible, at the March meeting. Each group is to begin implementing actions in the meantime.

Here are the top 5 priorities to move forward, as identified at the January meeting:
- Tie all programs more closely to The Spirituality Network, avoid jargon and review all messaging of Vision and Mission for alignment in language about who we are and who we serve; Audit all current communication channels for alignment with messaging; Promote a common culture and intention across all programs and committees asking “who is missing at the table?”; Establish a common connecting
lens for all working teams and transparency in their activity reporting (Groups 1 & 2)

- Increase technology accumen and support its use in all operations; Establish a members only log-in on website; Post photos/bios of board members and staff on website; Include PDF’s of current outreach materials accessable for download on website (Groups 1 & 2)
- Improve the financial tracking and reporting system and prepare for an affordable annual audit or financial systems review; Improve donor recognition including regular donor reminders and past donor reconnection; Increase partner sponsorships of all TSN events; Initiate new personal solicitations to foundations; (Group 3)
- Develop an ongoing centering prayer/book group; Increase promotion and engagement in the Interspiritual Contemplative Circles and Busy Person’s Retreats; Cultivate new partners as new events are planned; Increase speaking at potential partner gatherings (Group 4)

Once the first 4 priorites are well on their way we will begin to focus on:

- Experimenting with technology use in programming and increase outreach to young adults - (Group TBD)

As we continue to embark on our new strategic plan for 2020 and beyond, we deeply desire your input and engagement in helping the organization and all of it’s programs, live into our mission and vision as fully as possible through a lens of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. To that end we invite you to participate in the next phase of the journey.

Please prayerfully consider joining us in “Awakening Listening Circles”, as we mindfully listen for how best to shape the future of The Spirituality Network living more fully into its mission and vision. We will be convening and holding these 90 minute Awakening Listening Circles, every other month, over the course of this year, as a means of connecting with each other and our mission, to explore ideas around interspirituality,
mindfulness, inclusivity, diversity, equity and justice, and how we may more fully embrace our collective role in the community. Please come and be a part of as many of these Awakening Listening Circles as possible over the next few months as we discern how to live more fully into the important work of The Spirituality Network.

All circle gatherings will be held at the Network office, the dates of the first three are as follows:

Sunday, March 22nd - 2:00 - 3:30 PM  
Tuesday, May 12th - 10:30 - 12:00 PM  
Saturday, June 27th - 10:00 - 11:30 AM

Please lend your voice to this work at least once, once in awhile or each time we gather. You are an important and key stakeholder of The Spirituality Network and we want your voice to be heard at the table along with your peers, so that each of you may feel connected and empowered to share your ideas, thoughts and gifts. We believe that in gathering together in circle, we can address the majority of our questions, concerns and needs. Through active listening, learning and growing into a shared understanding and connection we can enhance this critical work of healing within our community and our world today. We look forward to hearing from each of you!

In deep gratitude,

Saralise Ward, TSN Board Chair, Convener  
Jill Frost, TSN Board Vice Chair, Convener  
Barbara Hubbell, Awakening Circle Convener