

From Willow - Sunday 4/6

Comments and reflections on process from the point person "committee" teleconference call, 6pm on Saturday 4/5.

There is much to chew on and digest here. If we are kind to each other, respectful and deliberate, we will learn, grow and become the change we want to see.

LANGUAGE, LABELS, TERMINOLOGY

Most of what I say below has to do with both: de-colonizing our minds and imaginations; and strategically moving toward more Ordinances in the future.

To that end I have invented systems-based terminology for what have been called the Steering Committee and sub-groups. I offer this language as suggestions to assist us as we mature into self-governing, self-regulating, sovereign people.

This work on our language is probably never fully finished. We can throw off the colonizers but we will still be left with the viral contamination that will re-assert itself when conditions are right.

So, in this piece I refer to the Steering Committee as the Point Person Network and to the sub-groups as Task Nodes. Every task and every person is connected within what I am calling here the "Living Network" of the people working on the Ordinance.

If the Point Person Network calls themselves a "council", "group", "steering committee" etc, they are thereby creating a separate elite construct.

The Point Person Network does not exist as an entity. Rather, it is like neurons temporarily lighting up, connecting to communicate, and then blending back into the main body.

The Point Person Network emerges from the inter-relationships of the Task Nodes. The structure, role and purpose of the Point Person Network can be discerned only after the Task Nodes have explored their own structure, role and purpose.

This process can begin with Mind Mapping as mentioned in the email from the Process Task Node, that Tim sent out today - April 6.

MONITORING POINT PERSON NETWORK MEETINGS

Both teleconferences and face to face

In a further effort to counter our colonized minds' tendencies to form hierarchies and elites - should Point Person Network teleconferences and meetings be open to the whole Ordinance Living Network - to listen and monitor as I did?

Any questions and comments from this wider audience can be addressed at the Task Node, and passed on from there if necessary - like these notes of mine.

PROMOTING EGALITARIAN STRUCTURE AND PRACTICES

This next item is delicate, but important.

During the teleconference call someone asked to see the Process Task Node's email ahead of everyone else for reasons of work/time pressure.

This set off a blinking caution light in my gut/intuition - the sense that this is a teaching/learning moment.

On the face of it that was a reasonable request. But on taking a deeper look this is what I have discerned:

allowing someone to self-select into being a "special case" would in fact create a loop for "elites" in the structure of the network.

Better to look at the underlying causes of why someone has special circumstances or needs. Could the Ordinance Living Network's culture - its structure, practices, understandings and principles - have prevented the special circumstances from occurring in the first place?

In this case, someone is over-loaded with work. Is that because the Network/Nodes allowed them to over-involve themselves - with the very best and honorable intentions - without an accounting of what they have already taken on, given their wider life conditions?

Without such accounting the culture of the Network/Nodes allows - and so enables - over-loading, which in turn centralizes influence and can lead to power concentrations. This in turn creates - as we have seen - structural ambiguity, personal burnout and general organizational mayhem.

One way to handle this, from a process point of view, is to develop the habits and routines of:

Taking time to hold a brief accounting of what tasks and responsibilities someone has already assumed;

Allowing the assumption of new tasks by anyone only after an appropriate period of time - varying by weight and size of tasks - from a few minutes to a few hours or days, to give everyone a chance to reflect on how they might fit new elements into their lives.

PRACTICING INCLUSIVENESS WITH PROCESSES

Some people volunteer easily, just as some consistently speak out in a group without too much hesitation. They are "extroverts". Their minds and imaginations work with externalized words, ideas, tasks, etc.

Conversely, "introverts" do their processing internally. They are slower to speak out or to volunteer. They are still "thinking about it" when the "extroverts" have spoken and acted already.

By routinely building a space for reflection before allowing volunteering, more people would be available for more tasks, and over-loading would be minimized.

Simply keeping lists of new tasks during meetings might be all that is needed. Tasks can then be distributed at the end of the meeting.

WHAT ARE "LEADERS" AND "LEADERSHIP" IN A NON-HIERARCHICAL NETWORKED ORGANIZATION?

There is the possibility for a co-dependence to settle into the culture of the Living Network: someone willingly takes on a lot and feels good about that; everyone else can take on less and fall in behind the "leader", quite content to follow.

But - are there "leaders and followers" in a community of sovereign people?

What are "leaders" and "leadership" in a system? How can we change our language and practices to serve our wider, long term aims? I'm designing a process to address this.

Onward -

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