

## NH Sangha Gathering 20160625

Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (10:00 – 12:00AM)

Attendees: John Orr, Karen Bluth, Matt Berenty, Bill Trost, Patty Smith-Overman, Donna Deal, Kathy Buck, Janice Escott, Loring Pardee, Kim Burns, Vicki Knox, Judith Gamboa

### A. Start 10:15: Introductions

- Relationships
  - Retreats: 6
  - Tuesdays: 5
  - Full-Day Meditation: 2
  - FIT: 2
  - Mindful Aging and Dying: 4
  - Beginning Meditation: 1
  - Board: 1
- Time in Attendance
  - 0 - 5 years: 4
  - 5 – 10 years: 1
  - 10 Plus years: 5

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Patty – Question on relation to other Buddhist group at ERUUF? (River Buddhist – Mondays)

Donna – comes for John’s teachings, meets her needs

Kathy – beginning meditation & mindful aging

Janice – Tuesdays & mindful aging

Loring – focused on solitary practice; enjoys the group & wants community to continue \*\*\*

Willing to Volunteer!

Kim - Tuesdays & mindful aging

Bill – Sangha is important

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- Community Gathering (annual?) required by law for Non-Profit
- Changes in the Sangha, must move forward
- Who are we/Why
- Notification not in time, plan on another Gathering in August

### B. Reading of the Mission Statement

Provided by the Sangha for this mission:

- Tuesday Sittings & Retreats
- Fellowship
- Training & Classes

Time Changes and people move on (natural evolution)

- Seeking different teachings/path
- Needs and practice change
- Even John's path changed over time
- Sangha began @ Meeting House in Durham
- Many left after John announced Aaron

#### At another cross-roads

- Tuesday attendance low
- Board membership is down (need at least 4 only have 3)
- Need for more volunteers/members to step up
- John shifting @ 67 yrs.
  - Duties at Duke teaching/organizing union
  - Expects to work till 70
  - Is a part of other Dharma groups/organizations
  - Needs help for Sangha in present form to continue
  - Office mgt. need (John not good at admin)

#### Tuesday Meetings:

- Structure of Tuesday sittings needs to change
- Takes a lot of work to prepare Dharma talk
- Has become a burden as not many in attendance
- Who will help to make a change in format work?

#### Reading of Ted's Letter

- Describes the present situation very clearly
- John – not a clear vision of what to be or where to go
  - Over many years – teaching, practice, and sharing with others
  - Now, there are more Dharma opportunities, teaching centers (that are growing!)
  - If could change the past, would emphasize community more
  - Energy comes from Sangha
  - Community must grow
  - How will the community continue after leader leaves (or steps back)?
  - To continue to provide, must have support
  - John getting “too old” to continue to give at that high a level

#### Question: How many attended last Tuesday?

- Between 4 to 8
- Used to have 10+

#### Question: Why 2-3 Tuesdays a month?

- John – loss of continuity of teaching/thought
  - Need open/closers
  - Preparation (?)
  - No new people base

- No “internet presence” therefore unknown to young (?) (have website and Facebook page?)

Janice:

- Are building the Sangha around one person
- At another Sangha, lost lead but kept going
- Had no “physical” place (meeting?)
- Not the teacher’s role to lead the group
- What is this “sense” at NH Sangha?

Donna:

- Missed the community – not felt there
- Need to know other’s situation and help
- Big “Yes” to community
- Hears that John is tired
- She will support whatever form ( ?)

Bill:

- What do you (?) want/vision?
- John’s part is not to be in charge
- If continues, others must lead (who will step up and be responsible?)
- John loves to teach, but can’t carry all
  - Needs
  - No vision
- Community leaders establish group (?)

Kathy:

- Doesn’t come for John, comes for the group
- Original people left
- A community to be a part of – may look elsewhere
- Was asked to open and then people left (Kathleen?)
  - 3 people not wanting to do anymore
  - Who/how to ask for help scheduling?
- Gets a lot from practice with others
- Wants a group to continue discussion of mindful aging and dying instead of sit

Question: What is the rent on the ERUUF space?

- \$45.00 each opening

Loring:

- Looking for social interaction – retreats don’t allow
- Has solitary practice

Patty:

- Doesn’t want John doing what he doesn’t want to
- Sangha can continue to sit with John as visiting teacher

- Structure of sitting – no discussion
- Social-life on own time

Vicki:

- Burn-out (John?)
- Too much work to maintain bldg.
  - \$45 too much
  - Use Mary Scott's space
- She (Vicki) lacks resources
- Fled (?) in exhaustion and despair
- \*\* Supports need to lead 1-2 nights
- \*\* Rotating leadership
- \*\* use Amazon Smile – purchases support non-profit of choice

Janice:

- FIT group tried to encourage leadership
- Sitting could be to just sit, with no Dharma talk
- Sangha finances are good

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- Comes to hear John (new to teaching)
- Loves to sit, doesn't want to lose it all together
- Enjoys Day of Sitting
- John should only teach occasionally

Kim:

- Ted's options
  - Non-profit remains
  - Future to other teacher
- Fortunate to have other opportunities and groups
- Grateful for the time (w/John?) Thanks!

Karen:

- Here for John
- Sits with other groups
- John is tired
- Surprised(?)
  - Sangha is important to people
  - Older group
  - Sometimes hard to get to sitting
- Nights not good; Saturday better time to meet?
- What will work?
- Social part is important
  - Who wants to smooze @ 9:00PM
  - Sitting doesn't allow to meet, no time to talk

- Switch/change times

John:

- Could have an earlier time on Tuesdays, 6:30 – 8:00
- Interest expressed by several in this

Judith:

- Two different directions
  - Self-lead
  - But want John
- Want more community
- Need to organize
  - John teach once a month
  - Why not put open/closers in newsletter?

Kathy:

- Tried newsletter, but no one volunteered
  - On-line sign up?
  - Question: Couldn't the one leading do the open/closing?
  - What is involved?

Karen:

- Communication issue?, not aware of opening schedule
- Kathy sent out but no responses

Bill:

- Lack of group cohesiveness
- FIT/MAD adds to cohesiveness

Janice:

- Have Tuesday sitting with occasional teaching?

John:

- Sit/Walk/Sit (2 Votes)
- Dharma Talk (3 Votes)
- \*\* Will be away in July, who will be coordinating?

Janice:

- Volunteer to open?

Karen:

- Follow-up meeting in August
- Have Tuesday sitting with occasional teaching?

John:

- Upcoming events:
  - Day of meditation
  - Visiting speaker (Llama ?)
- What to do this summer?

- Change the time? But what want?

Patty:

- \*\* Volunteer to lead 2X (5<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> July)

Vicki:

- Won't come to "Sit-Only"

Donna:

- Willing to help distill ideas (from Gathering?)

John:

- Board sets the vision

Misc:

- Vicky/Janice/Donna/Judith want email addresses?
- 6:30 for Tuesday openings

John:

- Board sets the vision
- Gathering helpful, not feel so alone; Thanks to all
- Post minutes on website?
  - Never done before...

Karen:

- Email further thoughts to both Matt and me