

SnowFlower Sangha Schedulers Meeting Notes

November 14, 2008 Friends Meeting House

Present: Susan O (facilitator), Karuna, Susan S, Steven S, Cheri, Maureen, Lisa, David H, Walt, Efrat and Mary M.

The meeting was convened at 5:30 PM , and after a brief sit, Susan O asked that each member of the Schedulers Council respond to the question: *How can we bring joy to the sangha? How can we help to open Dharma doors?*

Members shared the following themes:

*It is good to consider the needs of both new practitioners and those who have been coming to sangha regularly for a long time.

*Practice that is non-verbal is a welcome part of the practice and part of Thay's teachings. It was suggested that this could mean some scheduling each cycle that does not include the normal length dharma talk. There are many dharma doors.

*Each of us comes to sangha with different gifts and it is lovely to create a spectrum.

*Our scheduling is about inspiring people to practice and should embody the core of Thay's teachings.

*Diversity deepens our collective sangha practice. It is important to encourage sangha leaders to stretch a bit and live the practice. Dharma discussions can be very rich.

*As schedulers, it is very important to support the leaders, and to be available as a sounding board. "Structure with a light touch" is key.

*No one should be forced to lead and those who are leading for the first time should have someone to talk with about leadership. It is important to remind leaders about the instructions for leaders on the web site.

*If we stop and notice what we each bring, it comes together as a “garden” of different flowers.

Susan O gave a recap of our discussion:

1. “Not too loose and not too tight” in terms of the schedulers’ role, with an understanding that Thay’s teachings are at the core.
2. It is important to cover the basics on a regular basis.
3. It is important to support new leaders.
4. It is important to transmit the 5 Mindfulness Trainings once each year.
5. Schedulers will continue to schedule an introductory session once in each scheduling cycle. The scheduling has been the first Tuesday in February, April, June, August and October and the first Friday in January, March, May, July, September and November.

The next meeting of the Schedulers Council will be held from 7 to 9 PM on Thursday January 22, 2009 at Steven and Susan S’s home. The agenda will include:

- Whether (and how) there should be coordination between Tuesday and Friday
- What should be covered, in addition to Buddhist Basics; how we select topics
- “The Arc of the Year”—the idea that there might be certain topics covered during a year-long period
- How we enlist and support new leaders
- When to schedule transmission of the 5 mindfulness trainings

After a brief period of silence, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 .

Respectfully submitted,

Mary M