**Board Workshop Sept 25, 2020**

**Minutes**

Trustees Attending: Scott J, Colleen C, Derita P, Kelsey W, Paul N, Steve B., John W., Bezhad D.

Staff Attending: Elaine Weber Nelson

9:00 a.m. Open with Serenity Prayer

*Introductions from all Trustees*

9:05 Visioning:

* What does the Board want this organization to be?

*More widespread, more inclusive, sad we’ve been around so long and no one knows us, goal - getting word out that EAI exists and how we can help people, agile and fluid rather than stuck in how things have been. Be able to move and keep up with the 21st century. Want as many people as possible to know EAI exists. Message clear/expectations of meeting. Want EAI to be financially sustainable. Greater visibility in the medical field.Get .rid of the rigidness - the way things used to be - need to change that attitude. Need greater cultural and age diversity. Financially - need more regular funding. Be as known as AA. More sharing information at hospitals. - more ‘12 Stepping’ More involvement by members. More service by members.*

* What is preventing EA from achieving these goals?

*The public at large don’t know EAI exists. “Just found you online’ Don’t have any organizational recognition in the community. Healthcare providers would be a good resource. Need public outreach. (could table at conferences).  Member apathy - part of that is at the core of our organization - emotional issues lead to apathy. We don’t address apathy at meetings/literature. Apathy is less recognized. Other “A” programs deal with more obvious issues. Barriers to spirituality is the level of religiousness that exists. Lack of service commitment. Lack of trust of board by members . Lack of outreach. Focus on self - want to feel better - members don’t practice 12th step. Tech issues - understanding how to use it (ie the app) Oldtimers resist the tech changes. Funding - not enough. Need more staff. Money is an issue.  People can do things for their own meetings but they don’t do more than what they themselves need personally.  Paul spoke with a few larger mental health org’s - partnerships would help get word out. Outcomes based studies could help point out benefits of the program.  No one else steps up in meetings. ‘One person is doing all the work.’  No face to face sponsorship - hinders development. Hiding behind the phone - losing social skills. Lack of sponsorship -  a better sponsorship effort would keep people more involved. Getting the word out. Structured sponsorship program. Apathy among members. - lack of interest, enthusiasm or concern. Number 1 thing that is missing. People think the program is ‘funny’  - that the program is a waste of time. We have to prove the worth. Need people to share how the program works with others. It’s hard for people to accept that they are emotional and need this help - that following this program is not necessary. If someone doesn’t pay for the program then people don’t care about the health of the program. Newcomers attend just to talk about themselves and not help the program as a whole. Hard to share messages with others/show the usefulness of the program.  People don’t volunteer to do service - could we create a list of opportunities. Page 49-50 - acceptance vs. apathy.  Lack of going back to the literature. Stories in book are old - need to bring new life to them. We need growth, we need more groups, we need people to be aware of EA. Questions: are we presenting a consistent methodology?  Is one meeting like the next?  How do we offer a similar offering so that people know what to expect? Frustrations: There's a lack of involvement in the decision making process and then sometimes criticism follows the decisions that were made with input available.  For example - with the changes to the new discussion forum, only 12 people responded to the request for input.  11 out of 12 were very positive.  After it was launched, some very strong opinions were expressed negatively.  There's often opposition to change - even though people are repeatedly offered the chance to have input along the way. Other thoughts: We can grow in the ways that we maintain current modes and we can offer new options (just like maintaining the current email sharing option while adding the new discussion forum). We need to have a cohesiveness and clarity of our messages and the ways that meetings are run.  It's important to be clear around religion/spirituality so that the Bible is not read and Christian or other religious prayers prayed during meetings. Some of these are "branding" issues. Doing good marketing work is essential - to build on what we've already done. In terms of growth, the greatest growth has been internationally.  We've been a bit too focused just on America. Frustration: We don't have enough money to add more staff hours to do the work that needs to be done to grow the organization.  I.E. we could give more hours to Claire but it's not in the budget.  Claire could be doing more outreach stuff like Paul's ideas with google ads.  We don't have good follow-through on a consistent basis.  Sometimes people are delivering on their promises to do what they said.  That is great!!  Many times people promise but don't deliver. Things are going well.  We'd like to keep the momentum of growth going.*

10:00 Strategic Planning:

* Review of strategic plan document *(see document below)*
* What are appropriate expectations for Trustees? *(deferred to regular meetings)*
* Staffing requirements to meet the goals *(deferred to regular meetings)*

For information: Notes from August 2016 Board meeting:

EAI should provide to members:

* Resources
* Opportunities to serve/give back
* Ways to express 7th tradition/gratitude
* More information, more frequently
* More engagement opportunities
* Serenity, hope, help to get well
* More publicity

11:30 50th Anniversary ideas

*Logo on everything*

*Publish old stories - modernize to today - show how the program works*

*Merchandise to celebrate - items to sell*

11:40 General  issues to address: *(deferred to agendas for regular monthly meetings)*

* + How to get more members involved in writing for EA
  + Process to approve new materials/Book & Lit committee activity
  + Regional/state manager idea (Lynne in Iowa volunteered in 2018)
  + Partner program/Sponsorship as a whole – how to activate membership

12:00 noon Closure

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| Strategic Plan FY 2021 |  |  |  |  |  |
| GOALS: | Grow number of groups | Increase awareness of EAI | Increase service by members | Increase health of existing groups | Improve org's financial state |
| STRATEGY: | Respond to new inquiries | Drive more website traffic | Recruit more Trusted Servants | State 'manager' | Ask for gen op contributions |
| TACTIC: | Update NGIP packet of information | Expand use of Google Ads | Mentoring | Recruit one 'manager' in each state | Mail general support request 3x/year - May, Sept, Dec |
|  | Trustees reach out 2-4 weeks after initial contact | SEO efforts | Clarify roles of facilitator vs. "owner" of a group | Create pa plan/materials w/ expectations | Stress the 7th tradition at meetings/loop/FB |
|  |  | Review and improve website information | 12th step trusted servant corp |  | increase royalty payments |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| STRATEGY: | Partner new group with existing group contact | Attend national conferences | Increase EA content | Provide info to groups | Ask for special donations |
| TACTIC: | Ask for existing groups willing to partner | identify appropriate conf and attend | ask for specific input - i.e. a pamphlet on apathy | ESH weekly emails - 4x/yr | Send two donation requests per year for specific reasons |
|  | Create guide for how to be a partner |  | stream-line / track literature approval process | Update/add to pamphlet on healthy groups |  |
|  | Design and launch system to connect groups |  | non-english literature/books | increase communication to group conacts |  |
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| STRATEGY: | Expand use of platforms (zoom/phone etc) | Contact health profs | Sponsorships | Keep new members coming back | Identify Foundation sources |
| TACTIC: | Ask for people on zoom/phone calls to commit to the group as their home group | update pamphlet | Training sessions on "how to" do either sponsoring/cosponsoring | WhatsApp and texting groups to maintain connection between meetings | Research foundation funding and submit grant proposals |
|  | Give more suggestions on starting/going to meetings virtually - more emphasis on these types of meetings | Use mailing list (Paul has) to make contact |  |  |  |
|  | Encouraging smaller/dying groups to move to a virtual platform | send letter/pamphlet |  |  |  |
|  | Use loop and facebook to promote attendance |  |  |  |  |
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| STRATEGY: | Better training materials on how to start a meeting | Connect with other 'A' orgs | Reward more active members |  | Offer sales on literature |
| TACTIC: | Improve training information - "how to" in re: to startup | Encourage EA members (as a service position) to share information about EA at other 'A' meetings they may attend. | Provide a coin/card in appreciation of their work |  |  |
|  | Provide personal experience in how to start a meeting information |  | Highlight a member's involvement in S&H/other publications |  |  |
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| STRATEGY: | Get new groups to stick around | More direct requests for assistance to members | EA member ambassadors at other "A" meetings |  | "spend $ to make $" i.e. expand staff hours |
| TACTIC: | Video of how to 'do' a meeting | Ask for specific actions | Ask members to share EA information at other 'A' meetings |  |  |
|  | Connect new groups with someone else who can mentor them - find age/situation similarities to match them up |  |  |  |  |