

Notes from Winter Solstice Forum Leads

12/16/17

Territory - victory story. A student wanted to bring a level 1 into her community. For a couple of years, there already was another training there, so in wanting to be deferential they waited. The existing organizer there was very territorial. The incoming trainer called the existing lead to explore. They invited the existing level 1 trainer to train with the new one. That call went super well. The existing lead trainer said sure - you can teach this year and we'll see what happens next year. The existing trainer will teach some of the weekends. So things can get less territorial and more shared. Even a 15min call really makes a big difference, so that it feels that everyone is on the same team. Sometimes it seems that the local organizers are the ones making the drama - so the leads have to really keep checking in to make sure they are still ok. Often the local organizer is facing the financial realities more than the traveling trainers. How does a yoga studio survive? Teacher trainings are a huge part of what lets them survive. Could KRI facilitate a resource sharing - lead trainers sharing their contracts and financial models with others to learn from each other. How are they structuring these traveling trainings? Percentage splits, flat fees, etc.

Maybe something beyond the academy - bringing in previous level 1 graduates to support a training. This is an important community to keep building. This would be like cultivating the earth, the foundation for the future growth of our communities. The layers of students is very important. They attend the trainings several times and learn more, and lead small groups and get prepared for level 3 and the academy if they end up applying.

Money is the key factor in territorialism. Sometimes there is an illusion of profit. A large training can lead some people to multiple the full price by the # of students and imagining a huge amount of money. But they aren't thinking about all the expenses.

In some places, the local organizer collects the money and pays out from there. This seems to be most places. But others, the money flows into the lead trainer and they reimburse expenses and pay out from there. But this later model can make the local people feel like it's "their" course.

KRI's perspective is that the lead is the one "in charge" - they have to be responsible for the budget and payments. But it is a collaboration. The local studio may need a certain amount of "profit" to cover their overhead expenses. It is the local people who develop the student relationships and maintain them. The lead really has to respect what everyone is contributing, because they are all important. Example, in Millis, they view the ashram "owns" the course, not the lead. They would replace the lead if they weren't working out. A lead going into a location with a local admin or sponsor who is in the academy can want to give them a sense of ownership as part of their training and mentorship. If you want to build a community you need to expect a level of ownership there.

Another positive territory story. Herndon - there are now 4 level 1 trainings in the metro area. Sat Kartar's lead practicum - he had to connect with Darshan Kaur who has led trainings from her home for decades, and the studio owner where he teaches weekly courses (since there is a course there and they didn't want him advertising his course there). He had

several challenging conversations and worked it out. He is grateful to this conversation in helping him understand how to work with the ashram people.

How to people present the Code of Excellence? One trainer makes students read the Code before registering. Then on the 2nd to last weekend, spend the whole weekend talking about the code and projection of a teacher. Then on the last weekend they are asked to sign it. Even if you aren't personally there, as long as you understand why the code is there, why its important, and they are acknowledging that it's where they are moving towards, then they can feel ok about signing it. Some other training asked students to sign it before the course started. But someone who's taught in both, felt that there was less engagement in the topic in the course where they'd signed it before. But there was no feeling that being tricked by having it sprung on them at the end. Another approach someone did - in the very first day, sitting in a group, they go around a circle and have students read out each one out loud and comment on it. Others make sure people read it before taking their money - make it part of the pre-course interview process. Another approach: Give them the code in the 1st day (in their binder). Also start talking about why no alcohol and no meat in the first weekend as part of the Aq. Age. Make it less about rules, and more about why. Make it a science and have them discuss their experience of the science. Enforcing rules is Picsean and people aren't willing to sign up for that now. Another approach - make people apply to enter level 1. As part of that, ask them "how is your diet and what are your beliefs around that?" Then in the interview, let them know that there will be a code of excellence. They aren't given it then, but they are told then that it will have diet and alcohol on it. Another approach - let people have 2 weekends to withdraw with a refund minus just expenses. But not after that. Tell them that every profession has a code of ethics, and this is what YB gave. You don't need to sign it and get certified, that's fine. Just keep moving forward toward that. And talk to them about your projection, even online. So don't post pictures of yourself drinking wine on your FB page. Another approach - start the 1st day of the 2nd to last weekend of training with an intense YB video from MT on the projection of a training. Then talk about what it means, and how this course will be so different than other courses. Then show another MY video at the end of the weekend before they are asked to sign.

How to handle when a student drops out after having been in for a significant amount of time? Is there a way to recoup the royalty paid for people who don't finish (and if they were on a payment plan, that means the student didn't pay their full amounts)? Maybe encourage people to pay in full by the end of the 3rd month? And make sure that there is a minimum amount paid at a first so it covers all the KRI fees.

Can we get more YB videos connected to the units of study? Maybe poll what videos people are using - poll the entire academy? Sat Purkh asked people for their top 5 videos - Paramnam should have this. We should post this.

Liberated Man (The Art and Science of the Liberate Man) should be in the 1st chapter of the new AT textbook. Helps frame promoting vs. demoting habits as basis for all the Sadhana requirements. Make building the meditative mind one of the competencies that we develop in level 1 graduates.

Mentoring - the first year as a mentee is a big deal - those people don't know what they don't know. People who've been training longer seem more open to dialogue and learning. Early interns don't really get conversations about "what is the most important section of this chapter? How will you get the students to get an experience of it?" They will tend to teach it how they were going to teach it, and it won't go well. They are like teenagers - can be like talking to a brick wall. Eventually they get how different teaching a topic is from training in a topic. Another mentor is up front that if they don't cover a topic, or make a mistake, that they will jump in. Maybe frame it as co-teaching or some what of covering it. Another training won't do that - even if the present totally screws up, this mentor waits until they are on stage to correct it. The idea of one teacher at a time.

One idea that worked really well - a group discussion about how to teach the segment (how will you grab the interest of the students, how will you make it experiential?) - with a more experienced trainer with 2 associates. The associates really got a be awakening about what it means. This really showed these associates behind the scenes what can look effortless.

How do leads support each other as peers? The discussion here today about code of excellence was great. What else like that can we do?

What do people do to handle when the slander online comes up? One trainer gives them history. But careful, especially as a man, to say that "even if its true, it doesn't change my relationship to YB." Another says stuff like, "He was a challenging teacher and some of the challenging things he confronted people on brought up old traumas." Another approach, keep bringing it back to your experience of practicing KY? Maybe do both - give people history and framing for why the slander is out there and then bring it back to this personal experience and the "don't love me, love my teachings." Deva Singh asked YB directly once, "How do you resist all these beautiful women?" He said, "Well, show me one." Deva Singh points to several. Each one, YB responded, "She doesn't have an arcline, that one doesn't have an aura."

We should put into the new AT manual some of Shanti's into about Sant Hazara Singh.