

Ideas to Assist Mainely Men into the 21st Century

A list of ideas to move the glorious feelings of Mainely Men into the next century and beyond

1. Recruitment/marketing

Find younger men who would like to attend but are not aware of the semi annual meetings.

College campuses, Colby, Bates, Bowdoin, University of Maine system. Advertising: men's journals, local weekly papers, campus papers, increase word of mouth. Seek men through professional groups.

2. Theme weekends

Have a central theme such as father-son relationships, work versus who we are, play weekend, relationships, and spirituality. The central theme need not be for all to attend but can be woven throughout the weekend. A key component would be to retain a paid speaker or presenter to bring the weekend in perspective at a keynote address or an experiential session that is tied into the central theme.

3. Change of venue

Seek an alternative location for a change of pace. Another location can add to the freshness of the gathering. This can be on a trial basis and may take time to arrange as most venues are booked well in advance during "the season." While Pilgrim Lodge has many positives, it also has some negatives (see 5).

4 Change of times

Hold a mid-winter meeting. Everybody in Maine is a little crazy in January and February and this can be alleviated by a Mainely Men mid-winter break. Hold a mid-summer meeting when everyone is “busy.” Bring your shorts and t-shirts.

5. Change of dates

The present dates are based upon the availability of Pilgrim Lodge. These are cold weekends just prior to and post season. Either get a better date at the lodge and/or extend the weekend to three or four days around Columbus Day due to the holiday. Register some for two, three and four days. Have day visitors who come for a day session for what interests them or just to see if they are comfortable.

6. New men’s first contact and initiation

Formalize the new men initiation process. Institute a buddy system so new men have a designated man to speak with throughout the weekend. Checking in with a man can be a life saver and convince some to stay rather than leave. It also can lead to a friendship. Set parameters for the “new men’s meeting so that all new men can learn about the group and the weekend from a diverse group of veterans who have different experiences.

7. Change the program

Allow for a flexible program including workshops that take place all day or Sunday am and Sunday am. Intensive workshops may be held where a group stays in a particular cabin for the weekend and shares the weekend workshops, eating and sleeping.

8. Break up the closing circle

Split it into two circles. Everyone will get bread, everyone will be heard, everyone will sit for half the time. All men's bottoms will appreciate this.

9. Change the opening ritual

For a group that relies upon "consensus" I do not know how the particular ritual came into place. It is a newer ritual and was developed without input from the group. Aspects of the pre-opening circle ritual should be discussed and should be based upon the will of the group.

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