

Plenary Session Held at MM 55 at Pilgrim Lodge Saturday, May 16, 2009

Men at MM 55 were invited to attend a Plenary Session during the gathering. Approximately 25 men attended the session.

What is the future of Mainely Men?

Who are we? Where are we going?

Men were asked to share thoughts, feelings and suggestions regarding some of the things they believe may enhance the quality of Mainely Men Gatherings. Men also shared concepts about promoting and maintaining a viable “product” that men would want to purchase for themselves.

We used the concept of “piggy back” as a way for members to validate the thoughts and ideas of other members. Below is a list of suggestions generated by the group. Along with each idea or suggestion you will find a number showing members who support the idea or concept.

The Board of Directors would become more transparent regarding the issues of planning and finances. Some members would like to have more detailed information about how things work in regard to the board so that members might feel more willing and able to participate in a variety of activities related to the creation of the gatherings and the board itself. This includes the idea that the Board of Directors should open up the process of how board members are chosen. (16).

In addition to the fall and spring gatherings, some men would like there to be a winter and summer gathering also sponsored and supported by MM. One where all past and present MM attendees were invited to attend. Not necessarily at Pilgrim Lodge (15).

MM should support the formation of ongoing regional men’s groups (21)

MM should consider other, more affordable venues for our gatherings (20)

MM should be more organized in planning for workshops. And we should pay attention to these workshops being more “challenging” and “edgy” (19)

Have an all group workshop each day. Put energy into planning these workshops and publicizing them in the brochure prior to gatherings as a way to create interest. (5)

Rework the opening and closing to make them shorter (12)

Provide a more varied schedule. Don't abandon rituals but don't necessarily have them each gathering. (8)

A good product will draw good attendance. So focus on the product. (22)

Collect testimonials and have pod casts on our website (22)

Board of Directors focus on 2 priorities: Fund Raising and Growth (18)

Focus promotion to younger men. Find out what they want. (18)

Focus energy at gatherings on being more welcoming of new and returning men (21)

Get free from Founders Syndrome. Hold a plenary session at each gathering. Work at including more members in the planning process. Hold a planning party. (17)

More specific brochure on what Mainely Men is (11)

Start spring gathering Thursday evening (8)

Develop apprentice program for Sweat Lodge (14)

Develop a mentoring program for new men (14)

Provide a short, focused MM concept statement that could be shared with members and prospective members. (15)

Keep MM traditions alive (22)

More intention on workshop planning prior to the gathering (17)

Following is a list of men who said they would like to be involved in moving this agenda forward should the board of directors decide to accept any or all of these recommendations.

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Vince Dufort | Tor Smith | Eric Goodale | Dan Belanger |
| Mike Relac | Joe Minot | Steve Putnam | Tom Allan |
| Alan Weaver | Jim Davis | Tom Beale | Brian Baudette |
| Richard Aziz | Jared Littlefield | Fred Greenlagh | Wes Cannell |
| Jeff Chaplin | Robert San Giovanni | | |

It seemed clear that there is “juice” in the group that was present to take a more active role in supporting the development and continuation of Mainely Men. I believe all the Men present shared a common vision of preserving the best of Mainely Men while being open to new ideas and ways of being together in community.

It was the strong desire of some of the Men present, if not all, that the Mainely Men Board of Directors seize the moment and the positive energy of this group and invite Men to be more involved in a larger effort (larger planning group) as soon as possible.

Respectfully and gratefully submitted,

Tom Allan

Plenary Session Facilitator, Past Board Member, Pinkie MM44