

Annual Retreat - Ecocycle Planning Assessment & Open Space Strategic Plan

November 8th, 2023

Ecocycle Planning Assessment

The group was shown a diagram of the life cycle of an apple tree. It starts from a seed that grows from a sprout to a tree, and from a tree to the end of the life cycle eventually becoming compost. Then with the compost the cycle starts over again.

The activity of the group was plotting out where suggested strategic and programmatic initiatives fall within this life cycle.

Seeds:

These seeds are ideas that need “planting” (planning) to start growing.

- Gamifying Training
 - o Use of game theory to support teaching youth
- Support family members navigating elder care
 - o Communication skills
 - o Conflict resolution
- Begin mediation skill training in middle schools
- Expanding our current outreach work with F.E.S.S and Cielo to other communities currently underserved
- Assigning a position of staff role for access & inclusion to work across & programs to develop ways to be more inclusive & add access.
- Classes for seniors (via senior center?) on resolving personal conflict.

Transition from Seed to Sprout:

The work and resources to grow this seed into a Sprout.

- (Former) Peacemaker Clubs in elementary schools
- Staff Retention & Turnover
- More focus on all aspects of addressing in our efforts

Sprout:

Sprouts are ideas that have taken root and need consistent care and resources to continue to grow bigger.

- Build internal stability to deliver on community needs

- Prioritize relationships & efforts with schools
- Facilitation
 - o What conversations are we not having?
- Volunteer group to support student initiatives
- Working with mediation management to deepen & develop better ways to be more inclusive of linguistic needs & cultural awareness during intake & mediation
- Balance revenue generation with mission driven
- Multi-lingual mediations
- Collective Bargaining?

Growing:

The sprout steadily grows into fully mature apple tree, growing its own fruit.

- Expand roles in city
 - o City guide awareness of us
- Medical community
 - o Particularly women's programs
 - o Healthcare leaders
- Expand youth services to younger ages
- Tie expansion of youth services to furthering JEDAI goals.
 - o Fresh start to reach more diverse audiences - not burdened by DRC history
- Outreach to the younger community
 - o Young Adults, High School age, Middle School age, & Elementary School age
- Collaboration within the community
 - o Other nonprofits/organizations
- Develop age-appropriate programs & particularly in schools city wide
- Teach mediation at college again
 - o Annie board chair SPSCC

Tree:

This sprout has now grown into a fully mature tree that can bear fruit.

- Transparency around decision making
- Celebrate success - revenue goals
 - o Historic vs. future
- Do more community participation events
- Education about our resources for future young adults' connection to the DRC

Transition from Tree to Compost:

The tree has surpassed its life span, we give it more resources and care to survive but it's no longer needed or needs to be restructured to adapt to the community.

- Lost additional racial diversity on staff
- Some stuckness on IDI commitment
- Youth service stopped during covid
 - o Coming back now

Compost:

The cycle is at its end where the tree is no longer alive and needs to be made into compost to provide resources and attention to a new seed.

- What should we stop doing?
- DRC culture
 - o What is it? Do we know how it changed? Or stayed the same?
- Celebrate failures.
- Re-examine our relationship with and dependence on state government – what helps and what hinders our access & diversity goals
 - o With 40 hr. trainings



Debrief

What

- Youth is all over the Ecocycle
- Lots of seeds
- Lots of sprouts
- Are we spread thin with all these ideas?

So then What

- Let go
- Recycle ideas
- Rethink
- Not always have to let go, care use fruit of healthy tree importance if lessons learned from history

Now What

- Intention that sprouts are integrated into practice
- Cull weak sprouts
 - o What's viable
 - o What is true to the mission
- Prioritize so people can do it well & do their jobs
- Understanding rapid growth is key
 - o Need to know to help prioritize
- Multidirectional communication
 - o Re-introduce spring retreat?
- Ad-hoc support group focused on the multiple youth items
 - o Volunteer based
- Mobilize volunteers to help tend sprouts
 - o Example: Board member support JEDAI
- Also, collab with other organizations to expand resources, outreach, and connections in the community

Open Space on Strategic Plan

Leading the Transformation

- Add "alternatives" to key words
- DRC staff & board model behaviors
- Re: housing services
 - o Program going & adjusting
- Re: Restorative justice
 - o Program development group active
 - Need more support from volunteers

- Develop staff to conduct restorative justice group
 - Focus for Yul's position
 - Facilitated staff circle (restorative)
- Develop capacity for Restorative Justice leaders
- Success evidence in tangible program successes
 - Develop linking process & city organizations
 - Create ad-hoc committees to develop community partnerships

Expanding the Circle

- Volunteer recruitment non-mediator
 - E.g. youth services volunteer
 - Where do we find them?
 - Ex-mediators
 - Re-capture
 - Community colleges
 - Sophomore youth board member
 - How do we ground them in our missions?
 - Offer them the 4 hr/crash course DES training
- Lower barriers for youth -build into programs
- Could volunteers teach DES training?
 - Free staff capacity to do volunteer recruitment
 - Staff train the trainers?
- Focus training to new communities
 - Build facilitator pool
- Collaborative grant writing
- Build relationships with other DRCs
 - Deep partnerships with mutual benefit, written down in MOUs & scheduled meetings to overture
 - FESS, the Y, Cielo, CYS
 - Senior Centers
 - Groups already embedded
- How is our dependence on specific revenue streams hindering our ability to do this work?
- Focus board & volunteer recruitment across socio-economic status & education
 - Providing stipends & childcare to enable participants
 - What do they get from it?
- Board seat for a "family" or "org" rep-could rotate

Becoming a Pillar

- Trainings as bridge to future volunteers - How do we build that bridge
- Ways to within state agency relationships get word about needs - Volunteer opportunity
 - o Has happened on & off to the past
 - o Pot. Pilot to try that outreach
- Restorative training for training/youth
 - o Pier support programs
 - o Similar to pre-covid youth experiment sls
- Flip the model – have volunteer recruitment feed the 40hr. as accessed to vice-versa
- After training – 3 month reconnect
 - o Has anything sprouted
 - o Re-inviting to connect
- 40 hour class reunion after a year?
 - o Not just a plug for volunteers but chance to learn as about training pacts
- 40hr can be a high bar
 - o Alt. 4/16 options on expand opportunity
 - o Vision
 - Not just mediation
 - Need to go broader (& shoulders)
 - o Other ways to volunteer then mediate