REPORT OF THE ELDER`S COUNCIL

New Warrior Network
July 22, 1995
Submitted by Don Jones, Elder Chair

HISTORY

In July of 1994 the Executive Council meeting at Oakwood Farms, Indiana, voted to create a Council Of Elders consisting of "one or more representatives of each Center." At the Houston meeting of the Executive Council in January of 1995 Don Jones of Indiana was chosen and blessed as the Elder Chair for the Network. In April of 1995 Jones sent a letter (copy enclosed) to all Center Directors and all Leaders/Co-Leaders announcing the first meeting of the Elders Council to be held in the Washington D.C. area June 23-25, 1995, and requesting each Center to choose their Elder representative/s to attend the meeting. All but two existing Centers were represented at the meeting.

FIRST ELDER COUNCIL MEETING

Twenty Five men gathered at Missionhurst Mission Center in Arlington, VA on June 23-25, 1995, for the formative meeting of the New Warrior Elder Council. A list of the attendees is enclosed. The Washington DC elders prepared a great opening ritual for consecrating the space and calling in the energies of the Grandfathers.

We discovered the courage to step into this new "elder space" and claim our power as elders who would be willing to go back to our own Centers and help create Elder Councils in which New Warriors over 50 yrs of age could join together as "elders-in-training" and begin to grow into the character and role of the eldership.

We spent a great deal of our time sharing our images of elder characteristics, elder roles, elder education and training, and elder organization. The brainstorming sessions on these matters produced rich results far too detailed to include in this report. The results will be summarized in a document and circulated to all the attendees later this summer.

We spent a long time (over 2 hrs!) in morning circle each morning taking the "talking staff", each elder in turn, stepping to the center of the circle, telling his story, and finding his "elder voice" and getting the sense of his own "elder presence".

We organized ourselves around four "passions", or priorities, for our ongoing work. The ongoing groups are as follows:

Keepers Of Protocol--These elders will steward the weekend protocols, evaluating and revising, and checking all "creative revisions" of protocols in use anywhere in the Network. Convenor of this group is Don Jones. Members of the group are Wilbur Gay(Houston), Ed Alley(Indianapolis), Bill Kauth(Founder), Robert Davis(DC). Two additional members of this group appointed by the Executive Committee are Michael Greenwald and David Kaar.

Elder Literature, Tapes, Etc.--These elders will provide a list of reading, viewing and listening resources on the theme of eldership. They will solicit original contributions

of prose, poetry, art, etc. on the theme of eldership and seek to distribute useable material for New Warrior newsletters around the Network. Convenor of this group is John Everingham (Chicago). Bill Mawhinney(Tucson) will work with him.

Elder Education And Training Events--These elders will plan and design elder retreats and conferences for purposes of elder development and initiation. They will vision an "elder track" of growth and empowerment and the events that comprise it. Convenors of this group are Bill Kauth and Don Jones. Members are Alan Gilberg(DC), John Phelps(Windsor/Detroit), Allan Podbelsek(Louisville), Kirk Balcom(DC), Clifford Stocking(DC).

Reclaiming Lost Brothers--(Drop-outs, Burn-outs, Sour-outs)--These elders will implement ways and means of reaching out to Warrior brothers who have ceased to be a viable part of the community. They will conduct personal contact efforts, various re-entry events, including re-entry I-Groups. Convenor of this group is Wilbur Gay(Houston). Members are Richard Wiener(DC), John Everingham(Chicago), Bill Bruner(San Diego), Jack Gross(NY). John Phelps (Detroit/Windsor)

FINAL COMMISSIONING

At the close of the meeting each man present received his commission from the entire Elder Council community to return to his Center and call together his fellow elders and begin to form an Elder Council which can be a strong source of wisdom and blessing. He also resolved to get other elders involved in staffing weekends as elders with full intent to grow in the roles of blessing and supporting staff and initiates, and of helping lead rituals appropriate to eldership.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Network Elder Council will be at the Santa Fe meeting in January of 1996.

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