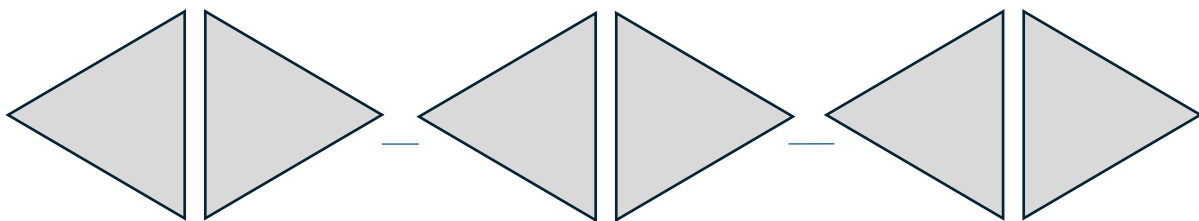


WH Retreat Highlights and Board Evaluation Comments

April 2024

Summary of 2024 WH Retreat Agenda

1. What makes you proud to be on WH Board? (selected photos & explained choices)
2. Leadership – Three Aspects
 - a. What are the characteristics of leaders?
 - b. Which leadership characteristics are your strengths?
 - c. Which leadership characteristics do you want to work on?
3. Decision-making Matrix: Staying Strategic as Board Members
4. Divergent & Convergent Thinking:
 - Brainstorming; Weighing pros/cons; Narrowing choices
[Analogy of deciding which hike to take based on big strategic considerations (level of difficulty, accessible trail head, weather forecast, etc.), rather than going straight to details like what someone should bring in backpack.]
 - Flow of specific questions leading from divergent to convergent thinking (Is there a need? What are the benefits/limitations if this topic is addressed? etc.)
 - Use divergent/convergent thinking *in a repetitive cycle* to thoroughly consider an issue:



Divergent / Pros / Convergent → Divergent / Pros / Convergent →

Divergent / Pros / Convergent

5. 3 topics were the focus of structured discussion:

a. WH impact/visibility in larger community

- We re-wrote Goal 3 after concluding that most Board members felt that what we were doing with respect to the larger community was about the right amount/type; that we/our members were already engaging in an emergent, self-organizing way; and that the energy of members should drive the ways in which community engagement occurs [attached revised goal]
- We said that we would consider partnerships, but only with organizations whose mission was well-aligned with ours (e.g., aging).
- Other ideas:
 - ✚ We are trustees because of our lived experience; our members are our treasure and we could share it.
 - ✚ We could raise our visibility via signage when appropriate (we do this and perhaps could do it more?)
 - ✚ It's ok to support member-selected activities with organizational resources (ED can decide)

b. Loneliness/Social Isolation

- Use this as a LENS through which to focus on-going and future WH efforts
- The 1-on-1 social worker model is not the “be all and end all”; we can have more group learning on various topics
- We could have an “adoption” program, e.g., connecting members with similar background/interests
- Recognize the enormity of loss our members have to deal with
- If you as a Board member see a gap, see if you want to fill it as a member or with other members; not everything is an issue for the Board

c. How to ensure Board decisions stay at a strategic level going forward and still meet Board members need for program information:

- ED will give information about programs at each Board meeting to help the Board stay more strategic, focused, effective, and engaged.

WH Board 3-2-1 Final Thoughts

3 Things I Learned:

1. What it means to be leader on a Board
2. Importance of informed leadership
3. Insight into my own strengths and limitations as a leader
4. Divergent/Convergent Thinking distinction
5. Matrix for decision-making (staying strategic)
6. Better understanding of strategic thinking
7. How profound our members can be when creatively stimulated
8. The power of us in a group when focused and listening
9. The importance of being strategic and exercising that muscle
10. The need for us to think more strategically in Board meetings
11. Realizing that these issues are not “one and done” – keep discussing
12. Listen, reflect, share

2 Things I Appreciated

1. Flow of the retreat agenda
2. High-level decision-making process
3. Structure of discussions, including small/large group combination
4. Variety of interactions: small group, large group, moving around
5. Making time to think about big questions
6. Being with other Board members
7. Opportunity for connectedness, energy, and more humor than at regular Board meetings
8. Opening activity with pictures
9. People really listened to each other
10. Denise speaking up when uncomfortable
11. Hilary made sure everyone had a chance to speak and people really listened to each other

12. Facilitator's gracious style and wonderful behavior
13. Facilitator paraphrasing Board member comments
14. Facilitator kept things moving and kept an on-time schedule as well
15. Facilitator's skill
16. Really good facilitation by Hilary

1 Thing I Need Going Forward

1. Replace "member part" of Bd meetings with "ED report" on programs, activities, outcomes
2. Continue to think strategically
3. Practice, practice, practice
4. Help when I jump to conclusions and help with more patience
5. Everyone being mindful of how often they speak; more "step back" and listen
6. All Board members yielding to allow others to talk
7. Time to absorb working on the Board
8. More non-defensive discussion of when Board's role bumps up against ED's role
9. The Board wants to make a difference, but in ways I don't appreciate
10. Possibly a different source of income

Divergent-Convergent Visuals (PowerPoint slides):

