

Sweat Equity and Personal Summaries

A Proposal for a Multicultural Sweat Equity System to help enable equality amongst people of Various Social Classes who are helping to create...

Networking for Peace: The Multicultural Cohousing Resource Neighborhood.

A Personal Summary is written input emailed to an email list. Members can also submit their personal summary by postal mail when email is not available. If you use postal mail, please purchase a certificate of mail (available in the post office) when mailing your letter (or purchase certified mail) just in case your letter gets lost in the mail.

A Personal Summary is based on your, unique perspective, knowledge, experience and cumulative insight into your part in helping to create the Networking for Peace, Multicultural Cohousing Resource Neighborhood.



First, please close your eyes. Please actually close your eyes for a while. Feel the peace. Allow your thoughts to think outside of the box. Far outside of the box. You allow your mind to open, and your heart to open. Now, slowly, allow your eyes to open.



The very first thing to understand about this request for a personal summary is that it is not a request for a standard 'dues' or 'monetary membership fees' in which the members must continuously contribute money in order to be a member. Hundreds and thousands of dollars in dues and fees are charged to members on a monthly basis to keep the traditional cohousing organization running. This personal summary is your non-traditional contribution that will keep the cohousing resource center running, and continuously networked with the world. It is based on the knowledge, the experience, and the thoughts of a very unique, group of individuals who have shown they are devoted to helping the first two Networking for Peace, Multicultural Cohousing Resource Neighborhoods to become a reality. Those neighborhoods will be the first two of seven.

Every time you submit a personal summary, you will receive 100 SP points. SP is an abbreviation for sweat equity personal summary.

Earning SP points is very important if you want to be one of the first to choose which unit you will live in.

Because we are beginning with the first two neighborhoods, there are a total of 18 units in two neighborhoods. Ten of those units are extremely large. Two of those units are moderately large. Six of those units are medium sized.

Earning SP points are also important if you want to have a large variety of options if you should ever choose to relocate to another neighborhood. At some point, as is customary in most cohousing developments, there will be a waiting list. However, in most cohousing developments, it is your wealth and your ability to pay thousands of dollars in fees that enables you to move up the list. In all Networking for Peace, Multicultural Cohousing Resource Neighborhoods, it is your SP points that enable you to move up the waiting list.

The SP point system is based on several things:

#1. All new members must first read the entire **personal summaries book** of the prior year (there is not one available now because we have just started) before receiving an SP point. All new members must first read all personal summaries found on the abwwrpeace riseup group email list. This is to ensure that new members are familiar with aspects of group conversations.

#2. Any meeting for which a personal summary is not submitted is a meeting for which the member will not receive SP points.



A photo of how the garden may look in the Networking for Peace, Multicultural Cohousing Resource Neighborhoods.

Members who appear for the meeting have the below timeline:

- 1 personal summary (submitted within 2 weeks after the monthly meeting date) = 100 SP points
- 2 personal summaries (each submitted within 2 weeks after the monthly meeting date) = 200 SP points
- 10 personal summaries (each submitted within 2 weeks after each monthly meeting) = 1000 SP point.

- 1 personal summary (submitted within 2-6 weeks after the monthly meeting date) = 75 SP points
- 2 personal summaries (each submitted within 2-6 weeks after each monthly meeting) = 150 SP points
- 10 personal summaries (each submitted within 2-6 weeks after each monthly meeting) = 750 SP point.

Members who do not appear for the meeting have the below timeline:

1 personal summary (submitted within 3 weeks after the monthly meeting date) = 100 SP points
2 personal summaries (each submitted within 3 weeks after the monthly meeting date) = 200 SP points
10 personal summaries (each submitted within 3 weeks after each monthly meeting) = 1000 SP point.

1 personal summary (submitted within 3-6 weeks after the monthly meeting date) = 75 SP points
2 personal summaries (each submitted within 3-6 weeks after each monthly meeting) = 150 SP points
10 personal summaries (each submitted within 3-6 weeks after each monthly meeting) = 750 SP point.

Personal summaries (submitted 6 weeks after the monthly meeting date) = 0 SP points

No one is required to submit a personal summary. If a person does not feel comfortable submitting a personal summary that person may feel more comfortable contributing to the group by the traditional method of membership fees and membership dues.

If a person chooses to pay for SP points, the membership fees or dues are \$10.00 for every 25 points. All membership fees and dues will help defray the cost of printing, photocopy expenses, legal fees and more.

No one, under any circumstance, may purchase more than 100 points per month. There is no limit to how many SP points a person can accumulate, but no one, under any circumstance, may receive more than 100 new points in one month. This is done so that the group may measure one another's contributions (personal summary or traditional fees) over a long period of time.



This is also done so that members of the group who are financially disadvantaged (have no money) will still have the same ability to accrue as many points as a person who is financially well off.

#3. A member does not have to appear for meetings.

This is important when keeping in mind that

- a. The health care crisis in the USA in addition to the skyrocketing, ever-increasing health care costs make it likely that health care issues will effect all members of this group in an increasing manner.
- b. Most people who read about new solutions have difficulty grasping them because they have never physically been a part of those solutions. Members who leave out of state for extended periods often are exposed to alternative solutions and new ideas and they actually, physically, participate in new methods of grassroots networking. Some of the greatest local peace activists who are great at the unique ability



to think outside of the box are also well known to move back and forth to Portland, Oregon from other parts of the Northwest, the country and the world. This type of invaluable experience, and interactive involvement with new solutions and nationwide participation should be encouraged, rather than limited, provided that **personal summaries** are submitted in a timely manner which does not devalue the rest of the group's punctual participation.

c. If we place members in narrow rules to receive the SP points, it will likely cause the member to resign from the group without explanation. Such *narrow minded rules of membership* are succinctly and beautifully

described in **Grassroots Rot: How Citizens' Groups Destroy Themselves" by Charles Dobson** www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook. The resignation of a member will set the group back greatly in productivity due to the fact that new members must learn the history of the Networking for Peace group, must reacquaint themselves with the group process, and much more. In addition, other members will need a 'comfort zone' of time to acquaint themselves with a new person and their conversational style. Whereas it is already very common for members of the Networking for Peace group to discuss Networking for Peace issues outside of the meetings (because we are familiar, and comfortable with one another and we see each other in other activist groups) this will not initially be the case with new members.

d. The rule of requiring people to physically appear for meetings unintentionally favors men because of the widespread patriarchy and sexism that exist in our society.

[This is further detailed later in '#5. *The fifth reason why a personal summary is so important.*']

e. Many new members who have a casual, 'just curious' interest now will have a greatly increased and devoted interest in the future when they begin to see, and read about the neighborhoods take shape. We encourage dedicated and semi-dedicated members to keep in touch because we have a total of 7 neighborhoods to build. In addition, many members who are extremely devoted to creating the neighborhoods now, may have to greatly decrease (or perhaps temporarily discontinue) their involvement due to unavoidable family emergencies and travel plans. The personal summaries are created to reward all social classes and all levels of dedicated involvement. Some members may not feel comfortable helping to create a new neighborhood. But perhaps what they lack in creative pioneer energy, they will make up in dedication to peace work once the neighborhoods are created. Seven neighborhoods will become a permanent home to a minimum of 63 people and their children so there will be many types of personalities, work styles and levels of dedication.