

MUSINGS about the future of the ACPE, INC.

Firstly, about the Southeast Region

Across the decades this region has been most supportive financially and otherwise to the REM Invitational and to the ACPE Conferences. We support four SES consortiums and an annual Invitational for Supervisors of SES Programs. All of this financial support has come out of income from our Endowment Fund or from our Cash Reserves. I am proud of those facts!

Many years ago we decided to be more inclusive...gender, racial, faith groups. Our present membership and leadership is illustrative of those endeavors. Perhaps, because of the geographical region in which we live, we do not have many representatives of a variety of faith groups. Nevertheless, we do have a multi-cultural representation of SESs being supported by four consortiums in our region. We have a very good record in the certification of our Candidates...second to none...; and about that I am most pleased.

Going forward, for the next three years, we have contracts with hotels rather than retreat centers for our annual members' meeting in the fall. We've offered the C.E. event, a banquet and a luncheon for \$150 for many years, but that fee will likely need to be increased. My concern is: if we increase the registration fee (that once upon a time was paid by centers, but no longer is), will an increased registration fee reduce the number of participants (especially those who are involved in the certification process)? It feels like a "catch 22!" Our Administrative Board has some tough issues to face. Hopefully, our members can adopt and support a budget for the common good. Perhaps some centers can support the attendance of SESs.

Secondly, about the ACPE, Inc.

We have been engaged in a most productive process that will be revealed at the ACPE Conference in Denver.

The present leadership is clear and in consensus agreement about at least this much: ACPE, Inc. is

- a legal entity (presently incorporated by the State of Georgia),
- a unified financial entity (a tax exempt 502C-3 professional educational organization),
- a professional educational accrediting agency (recognized by the U. S. Department of Education as an accrediting agency for programs of specialized clinical pastoral education).

Because we are a legal and a unified financial entity, all persons receiving wages/benefits in excess of \$600 annually for services rendered are employees of the ACPE, Inc.; and henceforth, will be paid by the ACPE, Inc.

Going forward, we have to define who we are in 2016, why we exist and what we will do (and be held accountable for) in the immediate future. Then, we have to determine the best way we can order our life together, implement our purpose(s), and responsibly complete our mission.

In the coming months and after our convention in Denver in May of 2016, an organizational structure will be proposed to the ACPE Board of Directors. That group will have the awesome responsibility of forging how we will do our "business" and with what structures we will order our life and work.

Your perspectives have been and are solicited. Your participation in the conversations in Denver is essential. Please, come to Denver, and give your voice and your creative imagination to the dialogue. We need, solicit, and beg your participation so that we can be “All In in 2017!”

Thirdly, a Strategy for Transition

No one knows how the ACPE, Inc. will be organized after the Denver Conference in 2016, but some changes in how we organize our work are forthcoming.

I want my colleagues in the Southeast to be leaders and shapers of those changes. And I want to do all I can to make the transitions as smooth as possible for each and all of us. After 31 Dec 2017 I will not be in a position to lead, care for and provide oversight of my beloved Southeast Region.

Anticipating changes in how the membership will be more fiscally accountable as the ACPE, Inc., I recommended, and the Administrative Board of the SE Region approved, that the Office of the ACPE, Inc. will serve as the “**bookkeeper/accountant**” of our regional operating budget for 2016. Because the ACPE, Inc. did not have a CPA employed by the projected time, I have continued to serve as the bookkeeper and check writer for the SER ACPE. Presently, I am working closely with Tammy Davis (the newly employed CPA in the ACPE Office) with a view toward implementing the recommended proposal after July 1, 2016.

Implicit in this action is the acknowledgement that the RD is an employee of the ACPE, Inc. who serves at the pleasure of the SE Region Administrative Board and with the confirmation of the regional membership, and who is compensated according to the budget adopted by the regional membership.

After 1 July 2016 I anticipate that all **revenue from the members** of the Southeast (e.g., Annual Center Fees, Student Unit Registration Fees, Registration Fees for Continuing Education/Conferences, and Accreditation and Certification Fees) will be paid to the ACPE, Inc. **All salaries, honorariums, contracts and reimbursement of expenses to members** of the SE Region will be paid by the ACPE, Inc. Monthly, I will review our account with the ACPE Office, and provide the monthly financial statement for our website. Additionally, I will assist the ACPE Office in ensuring proper credit is assigned to centers and members of this region.

By the end of 2016 we should have a clearer understanding of the organizational design adopted by the ACPE Board of Directors. And by then, we will have worked out the kinks in a trial run of this new bookkeeping/accounting system. If everyone is well served by the procedures implemented, we (the membership residing in the Southeast) will be ahead of at least one portion of the changes that now seem inevitable.

Fourthly, a Suggestion about the Conference in Denver

Please, come to Denver with your perspectives about the future of your organization and with an openness to what you will hear from your colleagues. ***Trust the process!***

No one has an agenda other than to hear from those in attendance about what they want and need from the ACPE, Inc. in the immediate future.

I am a member of the Organizational Design Work Group, and that group is soliciting your best hopes, your vision, and your commitment to “what will be.” After fifty years of doing business as usual, the ODWG wants to know how you want to forge the next decades of our life together.

We value our past, but after fifty years that past in need of reformation. We appreciate our present relationships and structures; but they, too, are in need of reforming. How best can we move into the future? That, dear hearts, is the issue we hope to envision in Denver.

The program in Denver will be an “envisioning process” of those in attendance as we are led by the consulting firm (Tecker International from Yardley, PA by their representatives, Glenn Tecker and Donna Dunn).

Thus far, the input from our members indicate that we will be considering the following issues as we envision our future together:

- Strengthen recognition of ACPE accreditation and certification
- Support essential relationships and local connections
- Take advantage of technology
- Seize new opportunities
- Engage each succeeding generation.

Hopefully, we will come out of that conference with a clearer definition of “who we are, why we exist, and what we will do” (and be held accountable for) in the foreseeable future. Afterwards, the ACPE Board of Directors will determine the best way forward by which we order our life and work together, address our purpose(s), and responsibly complete our mission.

During the summer and fall of 2016, we will be implementing the directions/actions of the ACPE Board of Directors in regard to the “organizational design” for the future ACPE, Inc.

Although I now have no “specifics” that will be coming out our conversations in Denver, not even in my wildest of imaginations (I’m trying desperately “to trust the process”), I hope we will come out of the Denver Conference with enough direction that we will be revising governance manuals, administrative/financial policies and procedures, and job descriptions for the staff of the ACPE, Inc.

If any of my envisioning happens with a consensus for going forward, a major miracle will be given to us.

I’m convinced that we could not have envisioned a new future before now. But presently, we have the technology and the staff in the ACPE Office by which it can happen and be implemented. It is “a new day” for the ACPE, Inc. about which I am exceedingly grateful.

I look forward to a most productive venture with you at the ACPE Conference in Denver!

Blessings, peace and joy to each and all.....Jap