

SIA May 14 Reflections

The concept for the meeting was to use Nancy Schlossberg's *Revitalizing Retirement* as an inspirational guide to examine individual stories about transitions as a springboard to examining what "the community should do" and "what SIA should do". We applied the three aspects of Nancy's Psychological Portfolio, Identity, Relationship, and Purpose to individuals' stories and hoped it would seed a way of looking at community.

Emily Sperling of the EDC and Tim Dutton each spoke about SIA and the role in the county strategic plan for 2009. Tim also updated the group on SCOPE's efforts to get the ball rolling for a business plan.

The process and some results:

- The individual stories may have been easier or more interesting than the community "shoulds"
- Some noted that transition to the community level was a bit difficult
- The community and SAI "should" were as follows
 - SIA is a metaphoric Welcome Wagon
 - What differentiates SIA is
 - Aggregation
 - Best practices
 - Research
 - There is need for a Clearing House
 - Place for an exchange of (social) capital and skills

The purpose was to lay out a road map from individual stories about identity, relationship and purpose to the community identity, community relationships, and community purpose. It may take a while for this to sink in.

The talks by Emily Sperling of the EDC and Tim Dutton of SCOPE began to encourage hopes that funding may be forthcoming. SCOPE has its teeth in the SIA and EDC/Sarasota County plans to make the Sarasota Aging Institute a centerpiece, thus seeking funds. It seemed to me that a coalition including The Ringling School of Art and Design, USF, EDC and (though not mentioned) Florida State College, AKA, MCC, could evolve and assume a strategic leadership partnership.

Doug Ross: 5/15/09