



# A Guide for Community Stewards

A new book: “From Me to We: A Guide for Community Stewards”

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April 10, 2026, Lighting Talks, RIIS 2.0

## About the Authors of the book: “From Me to We: A Guide for Community Stewards”



**Eva Jo Meyers, MA**, provides a wide range of facilitation support ranging from workshops to strategic planning retreats to training-of-trainers and conferences for institutes, nonprofits, city agencies, and school districts. Eva is passionate about employing the principles of transformational leadership and equity to support individuals and agencies in developing and reaching their goals, and loves supporting communities of practice and professional learning communities through Spark Decks.



**Arika Virapongse, MS, PhD** is a community builder, researcher, and consultant, with domain expertise in the human-environment, science, and conservation and development. She is experienced with institutional development and empowering volunteer leadership, and passionate about environmental conservation and social equity. Through Middle Path, Arika works with nonprofits and organizations to help them engage and build their communities.

# Have you ever been a part of a community that could do more to **feel** like one?

The reality is that in every group at least one person is needed to smooth out the pathways for collaboration and help independent activities stay harmonized and energized.

This person is a **Community Steward**.

# Who is a Community Steward?

A person who....

- Sees where community is needed.
- Is a connector.
- Supports improvements.
- Create systems that empower people.

It's not a title that defines a Community Steward, but instead the person's **role**, **goals**, and **actions**.

**Join us:** ToP Network Professional Development Workshop on “Who is a Community Steward? Defining the Framework and Finding the People”.

**Date:** April 30 at 10:00-11:30AM PT

**Cost:** \$10

**Register here:**

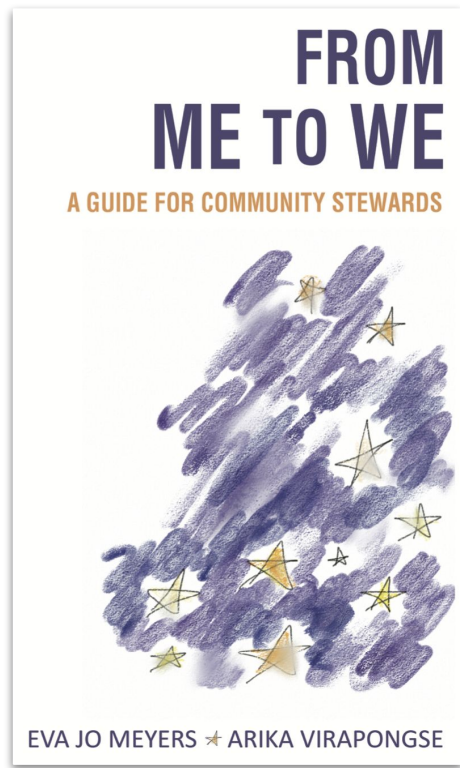
<https://top.memberclicks.net/pdwapril302026#/>

# Today I'll share with you...

5 key areas of Community Stewardship:

- Cultivate your Membership
- Get Together
- Be Intentional with Power
- Communicate Clearly
- Be Ready for Rough Water

Plus: A templates and tips you can implement right away.



# 1. Cultivate your membership

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*“Your members are the heart of your community”*

Support a healthy and connected membership where people feel like a vital part of the group. You can do this by:

- Supporting the membership journey
- Uplifting community volunteers and champions
- Shifting your thinking around participation

## Template 1. Shifting your thinking on how “good” participation in a community is often defined.

Participation dimension	Assumptions of “good” participation	How to shift your thinking
<b>Time given</b>	Lots of time	Instead of quantity, look at the quality of that time.
<b>Frequency of participation</b>	Attending all or most meetings	Reconsider whether you are asking people to do too many things.
<b>Money contributed</b>	Providing money generously and on time	Consider all contributions a member brings to the community, including those that are nonmonetary.
<b>Enthusiasm</b>	Quickly and forcefully	Recognize that some people need time to think before jumping in with both feet.
<b>Activity within the community</b>	Very actively in numerous activities	Explore whether you are asking for too much from your community.
<b>Service provided</b>	For free and generously	Let people decide when, how, and where they feel moved to serve.

## 2. Get Together

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*“What brings a community to life is when people connect, share ideas, and collaborate with each other.”*

- Facilitate mingling ➡

Get creative with activities and games

- Organize around a common issue ➡

Working groups

- Tell stories ➡

“A community is made up of people’s stories”



### 3. Be Intentional with Power

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*“All organized bodies have a power dynamic, whether it’s named or not.”*

- Reconsider what leadership looks like
- Develop thoughtful governance structures
- Say “Yes, and...”

## Template 2. Places in a community where power dynamics show up

Locations	How it Might Show Up
Decision-Making	Whose voices are considered before making decisions?
Membership	Who decides who can/can't be a member?
Meetings	Do some people always show up, or never show up?
Leadership	How welcoming, inclusive, and accessible are people in leadership positions? Who gets to be a leader?
Communication	Who decides what information gets shared?
Events	Who feels like they belong, has fun, and wants to attend again?
Fundraising	Who decides how much and where funds are spent?
Behavior Expectations	Does your code of conduct reflect that of a dominant culture?

## 4. Communicate Clearly

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*“The method, pace, and feeling of your communication is a reflection of who the community is and what it hopes to be.”*

Consider The Why, What, Who, and When and try these things:

- Document, document, document
- Articulate your values, vision, mission, and goals
- Improve your virtual infrastructure

## 5. Be Ready for Rough Waters

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*“We cannot anticipate every twist and turn that gets thrown in our community’s way. What we CAN do is prepare ourselves for when the unexpected occurs.”*

- Cultivate an abundance mindset
- Address conflict
- Know when it’s time to wrap up or reform

## Reflection & Close

What is one thing you might like to explore or try within  
Community Stewardship?



# Middle Path EcoSolutions

*"Taking Engagement to the Next Level with Community Activation"*

**Arika Virapongse, MS, PhD**

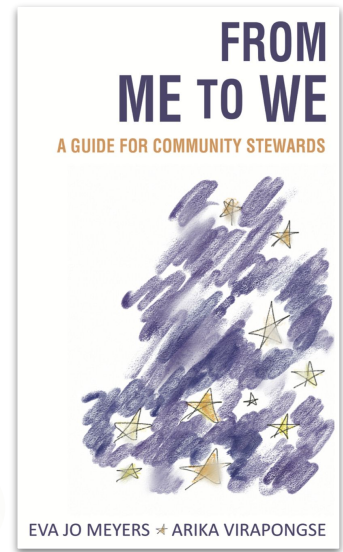
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[www.spark-decks.com/product/from-me-to-we-a-guide-for-community-stewards/](http://www.spark-decks.com/product/from-me-to-we-a-guide-for-community-stewards/)



## Spark Decks

*"Promoting Small Actions for a More Just World"*

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