



## One on One Participant Guide

### About the One on One Conversation

**Length.** Plan for a 45 and 75-minute conversation. This will depend on your and your partner's style. Also plan for another 30 minutes to complete the [One on One Conversation Summary](#). The summary should be completed immediately after your conversation. Go to [uua.org/gatheredhere](http://uua.org/gatheredhere) to complete this online (preferred) or to download the form and return by snail mail.

**Venue.** If on the rare occasion you are partnered with someone in your area, by all means, meet in person. If not, make arrangements to speak by phone, Skype or iChat. Take time for a little small talk with your partner before you begin the questions. The relationship you form is just as important as the "data" you collect. Enjoy your time together!

**No such thing as "right" or "wrong" answers.** These questions explore times people's *best experiences* within the UUA and in other communities. Everyone's answers will be unique – so whatever your partner shares is exactly what's called for. Feel free to ask for additional details, so that you more fully understand and can retell their experiences. This will help you complete the summary.

**Transparency.** Regarding confidentiality, there may be times that the UUA and Gathered Here staff and volunteers may publicly share sources (and in some cases quote people directly), *unless otherwise directed*. If, at the end of the conversation, you or your partner prefer to remain anonymous, feel free to complete the Conversation Summary without identifying information.

**Photographs.** If you are meeting in person, did you take a photo together? We'd love to see them. Submit electronically in .jpg format to [gatheredhere@uua.org](mailto:gatheredhere@uua.org).

**For more information.** Go to the [Gathered Here website](#), or to get an answer to your question from a real live person, contact us at [gatheredhere@uua.org](mailto:gatheredhere@uua.org).



## One on One Participant Guide

Below are the guiding questions for your conversation.  
Determine who will ask all of the questions first.  
Ready, Set, Go!  
(Feel free to jot down notes—that'll help you with the Summary form)

### Your UU Beginnings

1. Tell me about yourself and your beginnings in this tradition.
  - Where and when did you claim Unitarian Universalism as your own – or rededicate yourself to this as an expression of your faith?
  - What was it that called you from affiliation to a deeper level of commitment?
2. Please take a moment and scan your personal UU history. Tell the story of a time you consider a high point in that history: when you felt alive, excited, and connected to something large and really important.
  - What was the situation or outcome? Who was involved? How and why did things work so well?
  - What was the impact on you and others? What made the experience so memorable?
  - What, in that experience, do you *most wish* you could replicate – in your congregation, or UU community, or Unitarian Universalism as a whole?

### Invitations that Connect Us

Our relational community spans multiple cultures, generations, and ways of learning, engaging, and expressing our UU identity. As a covenantal people, we intentionally come together across our differences through deliberate invitation. Through invitation, we all connect and grow.

3. Describe a time when you received a genuine and personal invitation into community with a person or group of people quite different from yourself in one or more of the ways we've just discussed. The result was a deep and important bond or connection.
  - What made you accept the invitation?
  - How did you and others change or grow as a result of the connection?

4. *[Optional, if the story came from outside your partner's UU community]* Now, describe a time when you experienced UUism as similarly inviting ... when we reached across differences in a manner that enabled everyone to deeply connect and grow.

### **Staying at the common table**

The world cries out for compassionate people who stay in relationship – at the common table - to bring their stories, passion, commitment and vision to a clear, shared goal despite difficulties. Time and again, we as UUs demonstrate our commitment to bring love, joy and a sense of celebration to the hard work of staying at the common table.

5. Is there a story from UU history that you believe illustrates our commitment to staying at the common table? If so, what is it?
6. Tell me about a more recent time when a group of UUs – that may or may not have included you – surmounted a period of challenge and conflicting goals by staying at the common table.
- When and where did this take place?
  - What made you and others willing to stay involved?
  - How were the obstacles overcome?
  - What did this group achieve, that would otherwise not have been possible?
7. What does this experience teach you about living in community, at its best? How does it shape your thinking and your actions, both within and beyond our faith?

### **Called to a something larger**

As Unitarian Universalists, we live our faith in covenant, working together to claim our common purpose as individual UUs and UU communities. Through clear, shared vision, we make a large and lasting difference.

8. Think about a time when you, your congregation or UU community worked with another group to bring about something really important. Now, describe it:
- What was the situation?
  - Who was involved? Consider people both within and outside your immediate community.
  - What was the result?
  - What did this coalition achieve that would not otherwise have been possible?
  - What was your, your congregation's or your group's unique and valuable contribution?
  - How did that experience affect your feelings about being part of something larger?

## Imagine ...

9. It is 5 years from now. A really important change has taken place in the world – something about which you and other UUs have cared deeply – and it seems that a powerful coalition of more than a thousand UU congregations and communities played a leading role in bringing this about. Tell me the story.
- What is this positive change that UUs have helped bring about? Give me the details.
  - What made it possible for these communities to work together?
  - What allowed you and others to set aside your individual concerns and join with something greater?
  - What choices did we make back in 2011 and 2012 that paved the way for the future you've just described?
10. Now, *more time* has passed. The year is 2020. You are gathered in a physical or virtual “tent.” Tens of thousands of UUs and their allies - people of all ages and stages of life, of many cultures and perspectives – are together experiencing a joyful feeling, connection, mystery and celebration.
- What is happening?
  - Describe the people surrounding you.
  - What “called” this group together? What is it in people’s spiritual beliefs or practices – their commitment to something larger – that keeps them at this common table?
  - What is the same or different about this gathering, from UU gatherings that took place back in 2011?
  - What is *your unique contribution* to this gathering? What skills, talents and/or financial gifts have you offered that helped bring this to life?
11. What do you *love* about this faith?

### **NOTE TO ONE ON ONE PARTNERS:**

NOW is the time for each of you to complete the [One on One Conversation Summary](#). Remember, if you wish to remain anonymous, to ask your partner not to include identifying information.

However, completing the demographic information that is part of the summary is crucial. Your cooperation will help to ensure that UUs with a wide variety of perspectives and life experiences are included in Gathered Here.

Thank you!