**Bringing the Web to Life**

Youth Ministry Leadership Development Curriculum for Congregations



Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

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This curriculum is available at uua.org/webtolife

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# Introduction

## The Program

"Becoming a leader is synonymous with becoming yourself. It is precisely that simple and it is also that difficult." --Warren Bennis

Unitarian Universalism has a long legacy and the present blessing of youth leadership at the forefront of change and progress within our association and movement. *Bringing the Web to Life* is designed to help youth and adults in youth ministry develop the skills and multigenerational community support to faithfully lead with confidence and compassion within and beyond a Unitarian Universalist context.

For many youth the state of injustice in our world today can seem so dauntingly heartbreaking as to instill a sense of hopelessness to do anything about it. This is why youth leadership development in our congregations is a ministry, because it provides skills and tools for youth to have hope in their agency to be change makers in a hurting world.

The title, *Bringing the Web to Life*, is a reference to the [Web of Youth Ministry](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/yaya/web_of_yth_min.pdf), which outlines eight components of a balanced youth ministry: spiritual development, beloved community, justice making, faith exploration, multi-generational relationships, covenantal leadership, identity formation and pastoral care. Within our congregations youth should not only have access to but also be collaborators in:

* creating opportunities to nurture and enliven their spirits (spiritual development),
* leading and participating in programs that are grounded in local community, connected with the wider movement and enriched by interfaith experience (beloved community),
* answering our faith’s calling to work for justice and being in solidarity with others (justice making),
* looking deep and developing their Unitarian Universalist faith and identity (faith exploration),
* bringing people together across generations (multigenerational relationships),
* being affirmed as vital participants in the life of our shared faith (covenantal leadership),
* developing a healthy spiritual, relational, racial/ethnic and sexual identity and living with integrity (identity formation) and
* caring for one another spiritually and emotionally (pastoral care).

Developing and practicing skills to lead with one’s values is neither a process that begins nor ends in high school. However the middle adolescent years are a time of rapid brain development, relationship building and exploration of faith and values. The lessons that can be learned in *Bringing the Web to Life* have the potential to impact not just the lives of our youth, but the life of our movement and our world.

## Goals

This program will:

* Provide concrete tools in active listening, conflict resolution, building inclusive community and multigenerational collaboration
* Support and embolden youth to create the kind of change they hope to see in the world
* Build capacity for youth to lead faithfully as Unitarian Universalists who understand the importance and power of making and keeping promises, leading with our seven principles in mind and developing relationships with supportive adults of all ages
* Affirm youth leadership as a vital part of congregational and denominational life
* Engage youth and adults in conversation and partnering in leadership

## Leaders

In the spirit of covenantal and shared leadership, which is the topic of Workshop 4, these workshops should be co-facilitated by a youth/adult team. In addition to sharing the work of leading, co-leadership sets an example of collaboration, offers experiential learning opportunities for youth and adults and demonstrates to participants that role models can come in all ages. Co-leaders can regularly evaluate the program and one another’s facilitation techniques to offer creative course corrections.

Being a leader is different than being a friend or a workshop participant. A leader need not be perfect nor have all the answers, yet a leader is responsible for creating an emotionally and physically safe environment and providing a space where all participants can fully experience the activities of each workshop.

In addition to co-facilitating a workshop, youth can practice leadership by:

* **Providing program input.** As a group, youth can help shape the program. Soliciting youth input about activity choices is respectful and appropriate when leaders are ready to act on participants' ideas. Like adult leaders, youth provide the best input with sufficient time and resources to prepare. Give them enough information to make a good choice.
* **Assisting in small parts of the program.** Youth of all ages can easily do tasks that require little preparation, such as lighting the chalice, greeting participants at the start of the workshop, or acting as scribe during group generation of ideas.
* **Planning a retreat.** If you choose to do this curriculum as part of an overnight conference or retreat (see Program Structure), youth can practice planning, cooperation, and leadership skills in collaboration with adults to organize the event.

## Participants

While *Bringing the Web to Life* is designed with high school adolescent development in mind, the lessons and community building aspects of these workshops would be valuable and relevant for adults of all ages as well. This curriculum can and has been adapted for young adults and campus ministries. If there are adults in your congregation who are interested in being involved in youth ministry in some way, without the commitment of becoming a youth group advisor for example, you may choose to use *Bringing* *the Web to Life* as an intergenerational curriculum for youth and adults. For the safety of youth and to respect the fact that this learning environment prioritizes youth learning, screen the adults who are interested in participating in the program to ensure they will be healthy contributors. A healthy adult contributor would be someone who:

* Sustains appropriate, authentic, friendly, covenantal relationships with youth
* Is present and participates as a role model
* Shares leadership and can be in relationship with youth who are at different maturity levels
* Understands that adults have a responsibility for accountability that precludes a mutual friendship or being “just one of the group”
* Is conscious that by virtue of age and experience adults naturally have more power in conversations with youth
* Is familiar with the spectrum of shared youth adult leadership
* Takes responsibility to create space for and invite youth leadership
* Can gauge when to step in with course corrections and when to let youth learn from their own experience

For more ideas of what a healthy adult participating in youth ministry looks like, review the UUA’s [Competencies For Ministry To/With Youth](https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/uua_youth_advising_competencies_2015.pdf).

All youth do not arrive at each developmental stage at the same time, yet knowing what to expect overall from fourteen- to eighteen-year-olds can be helpful, especially for first-time leaders. In her book, [*Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook*](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Nurturing-Children-and-Youth-P16945.aspx) (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005), Tracey Hurd discusses typical developmental characteristics of older youth:

* practices increased cognitive skills
* expresses growing interest in abstract values and moral principles
* engages in moral relativism
* becomes less egocentric and more interested in the larger society
* struggles with gender and sexual identities
* continues to develop ethnic or racial identity
* needs to belong and have a sense of self worth
* demonstrates empathy
* conceptualizes religion as an outside authority that can be questioned
* questions faith, sometimes leading to deeper ownership of personal faith or disillusionment
* deepens or attenuates religious or spiritual identity
* explores sexuality
* navigates greater risks relating to alcohol, drug use, and unsafe sexual activity
* sustains the personal fable that "it couldn't happen to me"
* considers friendships and peers important, with some shifting of alliances.

## Integrating all Participants

No one should be excluded from this program or its activities by real or perceived physical or other limitations. Inclusiveness sometimes requires adaptation; you may need to modify an activity or use an alternate activity to fully include youth with a range of physical and cognitive abilities, learning styles, food allergies, and other sensitivities or limitations.

The program provides suggestions for adapting some activities under the heading Including All Participants. By changing approaches as suggested or substituting alternate activities, you can help make every workshop inclusive of all.

All spaces, indoor and outdoor, need to be accessible to anyone who might be in the group. Check the width of doorways and aisles, the height of tables, and the terrain of outdoor landscapes. When you invite youth and adults to write on posted newsprint, meet in small groups, gather around a centering table, or otherwise move about the space, make sure everyone can move as you are requesting, or adapt the activity. Strategize how you will include those with sight or hearing limitations when an activity relies on these senses.

When possible, arrange volunteers to read aloud before a workshop and give them the written material in advance. Allow youth the opportunity to pass on any roles that require reading. Be prepared to support young people who wish to read, but need assistance.

Find out about participants' medical conditions and allergies, particularly to food. Make sure all your youth can eat the food you plan to use for an activity, or change the food.

Always be ready to do what is needed to keep the workshops safe for any participant who needs assistance or accommodation to ask for and receive it.

The program mixes active and quiet, expressive and listening, and whole group and individual activities. It offers alternate activities to substitute for core activities if they better suit the group or if you have extra time. Let your knowledge of different participants' learning styles guide your selection of activities.

In the [Teacher Development section of the UUA website](https://www.uua.org/re/teachers), find descriptions of a helpful resource book, Sally Patton's [*Welcoming Children with Special Needs*](https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/lfd/welcoming_children_specialneeds.pdf) [and other inclusion resources.](https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/lfd/welcoming_children_specialneeds.pdf) Another helpful resource is Howard Gardner's [theory of multiple intelligences.](http://multipleintelligencesoasis.org/) The congregation's religious educator is another resource for adaptations to make workshops as accessible as possible.

## Families

An adolescent’s notion of family expands to include their close friends, while the home family remains a touchstone. Our families and friends often have a large impact on how we choose to live as leaders in the world. This curriculum is designed to include the family and friends of participants as well as your wider faith community.

Each workshop provides a Taking It Home handout with ideas for participants to lead conversations and activities with their friends and family. Collect the email addresses of participants’ parents/caregivers so you can send them the Taking It Home section after each workshop.

# Program Structure

Eight of the nine workshops have the same basic structure. Each hour-long workshop begins with a chalice lighting and check in and concludes with a Taking it Home handout, which is a review of the session and an invitation to participants to practice the things they’ve learned throughout the week and share what they learned with others. Workshop 3, Meaning of Leadership Worship deviates from this structure in that it is a worship. There are multiple alternate activities to ensure you can create a worshipful space that is right for your group.

The topics of each workshop are based on one of the eight components of the Web of Youth Ministry: spiritual development, beloved community, justice making, faith exploration, multi-generational relationships, covenantal leadership, identity formation and pastoral care. The curriculum begins with a workshop that introduces the Web of Youth Ministry.

Each workshop provides these sections:

**Quote**

A quote introduces each workshop. Discussing the quote with your co-leader can help you feel grounded in the ideas and activities you will present. The quotes are also included in Taking It Home.

**Introduction**

The Introduction gives an overview of the workshop's concepts. The Introduction will alert you to special considerations for planning and leading the workshop and its activities.

**Goals**

Goals provide general outcomes for the workshop. As you plan a workshop, consider the group, the time and space available, and your own strengths and interests as a leader to determine the most important and achievable workshop goals and the activities that will best serve those goals.

**Learning Objectives**

Learning Objectives identify specific participant outcomes for the workshop—what a participant will learn, become, or be able to do as a result of the workshop. They are the building blocks to achieve the larger goal of leadership development.

**Workshop-at-a-Glance**

This table lists core workshop activities in their recommended order with estimated times to conduct a 60-minute workshop. It is a guide for your own planning. The table also includes alternate activities.

Many variables affect the time required for an activity. Large-group discussion takes more time than small-group discussion. Small teams can do some activities more rapidly than large teams, but they may then require more time to share with others what they have done. Youth enthusiasm may lead you to continue an activity longer than planned; youth disinterest may lead you to move on more quickly than you had expected. Remember to plan time for moving participants from one space to another and to clean up.

**Spiritual Preparation**

Each workshop offers a spiritual reflection to help you prepare to lead. Taking time in the days before the workshop to reflect on its content, and in the moments before the workshop to center yourself, will support and free you in your work with youth. With your co-leader, take advantage of these exercises to grow spiritually as a leader of youth.

**Workshop Plan**

The Workshop Plan presents every workshop element in detail and in the sequence shown by the Workshop-at-a-Glance table. It also includes Leader Reflection and Planning, Taking It Home, Alternate Activities, and Resources. If you are reading the program online, you can move as you wish among a workshop's elements: Opening, Closing, Activity 4, Resources, etc. Each element occupies its own web page. You can click on "Print This Page" at any time. If you click on "Download Entire Program" or "Download Workshop" you will have a user-friendly document on your computer to customize as you wish using your own word processing program. Once you decide which activities you will use, format and print only the materials needed.

A description and discussion of various Workshop Plan elements follows:

**Opening:** Openings reinforce the themes of the workshop and include:

* Lighting of the chalice
* Check in.

**Activities:** Two to four core activities are suggested for each workshop. Each activity may include a materials list, preparation steps, a full description, and/or ideas for adaptations to meet participants' needs.

**Closing:** Closings provide a ritual, usually including a reading or a reflection, extinguishing the chalice, and distributing Taking It Home.

**Leader Reflection and Planning:** It is helpful and personally enriching to spend a few minutes at the end of a workshop reviewing the experience and planning what to do next.

**Taking It Home:** This section summarizes the workshop's themes and activities and suggests extensions—for example, projects to create, journaling to do, or things to practice.

**Alternate Activities:** You can use alternate activities in place of, or in addition to, core activities. You can also use them outside the program for family retreats, multigenerational dinners, or other events involving youth. The format for alternate activities is the same as the format for core activities.

**Resources:** Resources contains the handouts and any other resources you will need to lead the workshop.

Under the heading Handouts, find any material you need to copy for all participants to use in the workshop.

Under Leader Resources, find all other components you need to lead the workshop activities. These may include role play scenarios; a puzzle for you to print out and cut into pieces; a series of questions you will be asking participants; or a story to read to participants.

# Leader Guidelines

Allocate time to prepare for each workshop, including time to do the Spiritual Preparation exercise, perhaps with your co-leader. Remember, this curriculum is primarily about the young people. The Spiritual Preparation exercise guides you to process your own feelings, so you will be ready and able to focus on the participants' needs.

Make sure youth leaders have time to prepare: Adult and youth co-leaders should read the workshop in advance, then together choose activities and determine each co-leader's responsibilities. The adult must both mentor youth co-leaders and support the program participants. You may wish to have a discussion with co-facilitators about ethics. Consider using the [Code of Ethics for Peer Leaders in Young Adult and Campus Ministry](https://www.uua.org/re/youngadults/start/ethics) or [Code of Ethics for Youth in Leadership](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/participant_covenant.pdf) as a guideline.

To create a healthy learning environment for youth co-leaders, ensure that the skill level, capacity and maturity of youth leaders is in direct proportion to the amount of leadership they take on in facilitating the workshop. Reflection is a key aspect of learning so ensure that the adult and youth co-facilitators make time to reflect and provide feedback.

It is the adult leader's responsibility to support youths' leadership success. Be ready to show flexibility about style of leadership; both youth and adults will have their own style. Encourage all interested youth to co-lead; participating in leadership builds individual and collective identities, and hesitant youth may be more willing after observing peers' success. Adults should support youth by modeling attentiveness and cooperation during youth leadership and managing the aspects of the program the youth are not leading.

Adapt the workshops to fit the space and time available and your group's culture, interests, and range of learning styles. Plan tight—yet be ready to execute loosely to leave room for welcome surprises.

# Implementation

There are many leadership development events throughout UUA regions including Leadership Development Cons and Youth Leadership Schools. *Bringing the Web to Life* is not intended to compete with or replace these programs, rather it is meant to complement immersion experiences. In addition, because many youth do not have access to weekend or weeklong immersive leadership experiences for reasons of geography, financial means, congregational support or time commitment, this curriculum is offered as an alternative.

Each workshop is created to be able to stand on its own, or be used in conjunction with other workshops. The way you choose to use this material is up to you. You may choose to pick one or two workshops that contain information you think is vital for your youth ministry right now; select a number of workshops and present them all at once in a weekend or overnight; partner with your cluster congregations to host these workshops; or present one workshop a week, or a month, throughout the whole year.

Note that there are many wonderful alternate activities that go into more depth or approach themes in different ways. If you have time throughout the year, consider spreading some workshops across multiple meetings and using more alternate activities. Depending on your time and interests, you may choose to replace core activities with alternates, or add an alternate to your workshop. You may also want to use the alternate activities outside the program for gatherings involving youth such as family retreats, multigenerational dinners, or youth group meetings.

Workshop 3, Meaning of Leadership Worship deviates from the format of all the other sessions in that it is a worship, so ensure you take the time and spiritual preparation to create a worshipful space for participants.

Included in this curriculum, you will find feedback forms for leaders and participants. Asking youth to submit feedback shows them their voice matters. By giving your feedback, you directly influence faith development resources for the entire Association. All feedback is read and deeply appreciated.

# Before You Start

Read the curriculum before you begin the program, focusing especially on the materials lists. Take note of activities that require extra preparation, and plan ahead so you will have the necessary materials in time. Some of the workshops require advanced preparation and/or coordination between the co-facilitators and the leadership team of your congregation. For example, in the Taking it Home section of Workshop 1, The Web of Youth Ministry, participants are invited to submit a proposal for a new program or activity that addresses one of the components of the Web of Youth Ministry they feel most excited about. This requires the co-facilitators to provide advanced notice to the minister and/or religious educator so they know to expect these proposals. In Workshop 8, Building Multigenerational Relationships, the co-facilitators will need to meet with the minister and/or religious educator to identify a list of adults from multiple generations to attend the workshop and send out invitations to those adults at least two weeks in advance.

Before you set your calendar or commit to a project outside the regular meeting time or location, obtain the support of your congregational leadership and the youth’s families.

**Mandated Reporting**

As a teacher, you may be required by law and/or your congregation’s policies to report information youth share that involves a youth hurting someone or being hurt, or any situation that could be construed as illegal or dangerous that involves youth. Ask your religious educator what is expected of you, including to whom you should report which kinds of information.

# Resources

* [The Web of Youth Ministry](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/yaya/web_of_yth_min.pdf) adapted from the [Renaissance Module Ministry with Youth](http://www.uua.org/careers/re/renaissance/module-resources)
* [Blue Boat Blog](http://blueboat.blogs.uua.org/) by the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries
* [Competencies for Ministry to and With Youth](http://www.uua.org/re/youth/advisors/competencies) a collaboration between Congregational Life and the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries (2016)
* [*Youth Ministry Advising: A Complete Guide*](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Youth-Ministry-Advising-P17246.aspx)by the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2012)
* [*Coming of Age Handbook for Congregations*](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Coming-of-Age-Handbook-for-Congregations-P17022.aspx)by Sarah Gibb Millspaugh (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2008)
* [*Bridging: A Handbook for Congregations*](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Bridging-P17227.aspx) by Gail Forsyth-Vail and Jessica York (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2012)
* [Tapestry of Faith Programs for Youth](http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth) by UUA Ministries and Faith Development
* [Events and Trainings for Youth and Young Adults](http://www.uua.org/re/youth/events) by the Unitarian Universalist Association
* [High School-Aged Youth](http://www.uua.org/re/youth) by the Unitarian Universalist Association
* [*Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook*](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Nurturing-Children-and-Youth-P16945.aspx) by Tracey L. Hurd (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005)
* [*Welcoming Children with Special Needs: A Guidebook for Faith Communities*](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/lfd/welcoming_children_specialneeds.pdf) by Sally Patton (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2004)
* [*When Youth Lead: A Guide to Intergenerational Social Justice Ministry (Plus 101 Youth Projects)*](http://www.uuabookstore.org/When-Youth-Lead-P16968.aspx) by Jill M. Schwendeman (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2007)
* [Luminary Leaders](http://www.uua.org/re/youth/leading/luminary) recognition program for leadership excellence in youth ministry
* [Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain](https://www.amazon.com/Brainstorm-Power-Purpose-Teenage-Brain/dp/158542935X) by Daniel J. Seigel, M.D (New York: Penguin Press, 2013)
* [Worship Web](http://www.uua.org/worship) by the Unitarian Universalist Association
* [3 Models for Youth Group Covenanting and Beyond](http://blueboat.blogs.uua.org/2015/02/24/3-models-for-youth-group-covenanting-and-beyond/) by Jennica Davis-Hockett (Blue Boat Blog, 2015)
* [Adolescent Brain Development and Faith Formation](http://blueboat.blogs.uua.org/2016/02/24/adolescent-brain-development-and-faith-formation/) by Jennica Davis-Hockett (Blue Boat Blog, 2016)
* [What do We Promise to One Another?](https://youtu.be/EmZLK2bEh6Q) (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2013)
* [Becoming: A Spiritual Guide for Navigating Adulthood](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Becoming-P17648.aspx) edited by Kayla Parker (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2015)
* [Bless the Imperfect: Meditations for Congregational Leaders](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Bless-the-Imperfect-P17371.aspx) edited by Kathleen Montgomery (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2013)
* [Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Summary Report from August 2007](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/yaya/consultation_summary_report_2007.pdf) by Unitarian Universalist Association (2007)
* [Essential Skills and Strategies in the Helping Process](https://books.google.com/books/about/Essential_skills_and_strategies_in_the_h.html?id=jTBHAAAAMAAJ) by Robert E. Doyle(Pacific Grove: Wadsworth Group, 1992)
* [The Skilled Helper](http://www.amazon.com/The-Skilled-Helper-Management-Opportunity-Development/dp/0495601896) by Gerard Egan (Pacific Grove: Wadsworth Group, 2002)
* [Adventures in Peacemaking: A Conflict Resolution Guide for School-Age Programs](https://www.amazon.com/Adventures-Peacemaking-Conflict-Resolution-School-Age/dp/0934387117) by William J. Kreidler and Lisa Furlong (Educators for Social Responsibility and Project Adventure Inc.:1995)
* [The Center for Nonviolent Communication](http://www.CNVC.org)
* [The Strauss–Howe generational theory, created by authors William Strauss and Neil Howe.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strauss%E2%80%93Howe_generational_theory)

# Facilitator Feedback Form

We welcome your critique of this program, as well as your suggestions. Thank you for your feedback! Your input improves programs for all of our congregations.

You may choose to [complete this feedback form online](https://uua.wufoo.com/forms/r9fugxv07rkxhm/).

Otherwise, please forward your feedback to:

Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

[youth@uua.org](mailto:youth@uua.org)

OR

Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Ministries and Faith Development  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
24 Farnsworth Street  
Boston, MA 02210-1409

**Workshops You Field Tested: \***

☐ Workshop 1: Web of Youth Ministry

☐ Workshop 2: Living in Covenant

☐ Workshop 3: Meaning of Leadership Worship

☐ Workshop 4: Shared Leadership

☐ Workshop 5: Active Listening

☐ Workshop 6: Creating Inclusive Community

☐ Workshop 7: Leadership Styles

☐ Workshop 8: Building Multigenerational Connections

☐ Workshop 9: Conflict Resolution and Transformation

**Number of Participants: \* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Age Range: \* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Did you work with (a) co-facilitator(s)? \***

☐ Yes ☐ No

**Congregation: \* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Overall, what was your experience with this program?**

**What specifically did you find most helpful or useful about this program?**

**In what ways could this program be changed or improved (please be specific)?**

**Did you enrich the program with any resources that you would recommend to others?**

**What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your life going forward?**

**What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your congregation going forward?**

**Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Your Email: \* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

# Participant Feedback Form

We welcome your critique of this program, as well as your suggestions. Thank you for your feedback! Your input improves programs for all of our congregations.

You may choose to [complete this feedback form online](mailto:https://uua.wufoo.com/forms/r9fugxv07rkxhm/).

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Ministries and Faith Development  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
24 Farnsworth Street  
Boston, MA 02210-1409

**Workshops You Participated In: \***

☐ Workshop 1: Web of Youth Ministry

☐ Workshop 2: Living in Covenant

☐ Workshop 3: Meaning of Leadership Worship

☐ Workshop 4: Shared Leadership

☐ Workshop 5: Active Listening

☐ Workshop 6: Creating Inclusive Community

☐ Workshop 7: Leadership Styles

☐ Workshop 8: Building Multigenerational Connections

☐ Workshop 9: Conflict Resolution and Transformation

**Your Age: \* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Congregation: \* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Overall, what was your experience with this program?**

**What specifically did you find most helpful or useful about this program?**

**In what ways could this program be changed or improved (please be specific)?**

**Did you enrich the program with any resources that you would recommend to others?**

**What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your life going forward?**

**What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your congregation going forward?**

**Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Your Email: \* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

# Workshop 1 The Web of Youth Ministry

## **Introduction**

“There is, finally, only one thing required of us: that is, to take life whole, the sunlight and shadows together; to live the life that is given us with courage and humor and truth.

We have such a little moment out of the vastness of time for all our wondering and loving. Therefore let there be no half-heartedness; rather, let the soul be ardent in its pain, in its yearning, in its praise.

Then shall peace enfold our days, and glory shall not fade from our lives.”

– Kendyl R Gibbons

This session describes the elements that comprise a balanced youth ministry using the model of the Web of Youth Ministry.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Introduce the components of the Web of Youth Ministry
* Explore the many forms that youth ministry takes in and beyond congregations
* Address how to create a balanced youth ministry that is appropriate to the size of the congregation and youth developmental needs and interests.

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Have a broader understanding of the components of youth ministry
* Apply the web of youth ministry to their own setting and consider what changes they might like to work towards.

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 10 |
| Activity 1: The Web of Youth Ministry | 10 |
| Activity 2: Actions and Ideas | 30 |
| Closing | 10 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Familiarize yourself with the eight components of the Web of Youth Ministry so you can discuss them easily. Reflect on what components are strongest in your congregation’s youth ministry and what components could be strengthened.

## **Opening (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Newsprint and markers
* Chalice lighting words: [As Surely as We Belong to the Universe](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/25349.shtml) by Margaret A. Keip

*As surely as we belong to the universe*

*we belong together.*

*We join here to transcend the isolated self,*

*to reconnect,*

*to know ourselves to be at home,*

*here on earth, under the stars,*

*linked with each other*

* Check in question:

*Beyond youth group, what is your favorite part of your church community?*

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Post the chalice lighting words on newsprint and post
* Post the check in question in the designated place

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants. Invite participants and facilitators to go around the circle and say their names and briefly answer the check in question (in 3 or 4 sentences). Remind participants that check in is not a time for cross talk - clarifying questions can be asked if necessary. After everyone who wants to has had a chance to check in, ask for a volunteer to light the chalice.

### **Including All Participants**

Let participants know they have the right to pass or pass for now. For participants who have trouble being concise you can ask them “how would you sum up your experience in one sentence?” For participants who have trouble refraining from cross talk remind them of the group covenant and to be respectful of their peers’ time to share and the leaders’ time to facilitate.

## **Activity 1: The Web of Youth Ministry (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1, Web of Youth Ministry

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of handout for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn about the Web of Youth Ministry and explore the components.

Tell participants that there are six components to a balanced youth group and ask them if they can name them. They should list: Leadership, Social Justice, Community Building, Worship, Learning, and Youth / Adult Relations. Tell participants that youth group is but one way congregations can support their young people and create a whole web of youth ministry to support them.

Say something like:

*The Web of Youth Ministry is a multifaceted and spirit-filled model for our ministry with youth, an expansion and reframing of the older balanced youth program model. It expands the model to include new areas such as pastoral care and identity formation, and reframes youth ministry in more explicitly religious and faith development language. This model acknowledges that youth ministry extends beyond the traditional youth group setting, and that congregations should offer multiple pathways for youth to participate in and benefit from the ministry of our congregations.*

Distribute Handout 1, Web of Youth Ministry and ask participants to take turns reading the components of the Web of Youth Ministry. Provide definitions or clarification of terms as needed.

Tell the group that this workshop is the beginning of a leadership journey and that the group will be developing leadership skills in each of the areas of the Web of Youth Ministry.

## **Activity 2: Activities and Actions (30 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Newsprint (at least 8 sheets) and markers
* Chime and time keeping device

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Write the name of one component of the Web of Youth Ministry at the top each of the eight sheets of newsprint. Under the title draw a line vertically down the middle of the sheet. In one column at the top write “things we currently do” and in the other column write “things we could do.” Post the sheets around the meeting space.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants brainstorm specific activities or actions that fit within each component of the Web of Youth Ministry.

Have participants form small groups (2-3 people) and explain that they will engage in a “walking brainstorm” to generate lists of activities or actions that fit within each component in the Web. Tell them to write down the things the congregation is currently doing in one column as well as things that could be done in the other column. Ask each group to move to one of the eight sheets of newsprint and when the chime sounds, spend about 3 minutes writing down their ideas. Sound the chime every 3 minutes and have groups move to the next sheet of newsprint until all groups have visited each sheet. Feel free to shorten the time as needed.

Gather the group back together. Pointing to the lists, ask for observations from the group with questions such as:

*Why does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have less activities compared to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?*

*What can we do to better incorporate it in programming?*

*Why is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ such a big component for this group?*

*Do you notice any trends, either on your own sheet or with what we have up here?*

*Why do you think that might be?*

*Is our programming balanced?*

Ask for a volunteer/s to take a photo of each list and share with the group. Save the newsprint sheets for use in other sessions.

### **Including All Participants**

Make certain that all participants are able to reach and write on the newsprint and that there are no obstacles to moving around the room.

## **Closing (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Newsprint and markers, computer and projector, or Singing the Living Tradition hymnals (enough for two or three people to share one)
* Take it Home sheet
* Handout 2 Project or Program Proposal
* Love Will Guide Us YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/ZWrgMtB27Js>

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Inform the congregation’s leadership team that the Taking It Home activity includes an option for submitting a proposal to implement an idea generated in this session.
* Practice the song #131 Love Will Guide Us
* Write the lyrics to the song on newsprint or a Power Point slide or set out hymnals for participants.
* Make copies of Taking It Home and Handout 2 Project or Program Proposal for each participant.

### **Description of Activity**

Each session ends by distributing a handout to each participant called Taking it Home which is a review of the session and an invitation to participants to practice the things they’ve learned throughout the week. Invite participants to gather in a circle. Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. Pass out Taking It Home and Handout 2 Project or Program Proposal and explain that at the end of each session the co-facilitators will pass out a Taking It Home handout. Explain that these handouts contain ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends. Inform participants that these are not mandatory assignments but that knowledge has more value when it is put into practice.

Review the handout and explain that one of the options this time is to create a proposal to implement an idea they generated in the Activities and Actions activity. Go over the questions in the handout with the participants. For item number seven where they are asked to write a list of steps starting with the end goal and working backwards, give an example like this using the newsprint for a visual aid:

*If your end goal is to implement a quarterly evening multigenerational worship, start with writing that at the top of your list. To successfully do this, you would need to advertise it to your community, so write that underneath your goal. To successfully advertise, you’d need to create fliers. To create fliers, you’d need to pick a time and date, theme and speakers. To solidify all that information you would need to work with a team to create the liturgy. And so on.*

Ask if there are any questions about the handout.

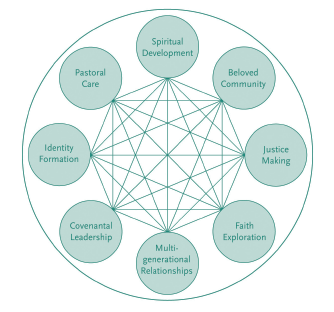
You can offer that the group can continue a discussion about this session at a later date or in a closed Facebook group if your group has one. End the workshop by inviting the group to sing #131 in Singing the Living Tradition, Love will Guide Us. The group can sing a cappella or along with the video.

## **Leader Reflection and Planning**

As adults working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this workshop offered an opportunity to examine how your congregation incorporates the eight components of the web of youth ministry into its programming. What trends did you notice during the “walking brainstorm?” What ideas that the group came up with excited you? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator?

## Handout 1 Web of Youth Ministry

A model for considering the balance in your youth programming, The Web of Youth Ministry presented below is adapted from the Renaissance Module Ministry with Youth.



**Covenantal Leadership**

Youth leadership is a covenantal practice in which youth are safe, recognized and affirmed as full and vital participants in the life of our shared Unitarian Universalist faith community. Advisors encourage youth to take on more responsibility as they grow and develop. The goal is for youth to become empowered and effective leaders through intentional leadership development over time.

**Multigenerational Relationships**

Multigenerational faith communities have programs that both meet the specific developmental needs of different age groups and bring people together across age groups. Dynamic youth ministry strives to connect youth with people of all ages through inviting them to help with religious education programs, building mentor relationships between youth and adults, forming multigenerational choirs, allowing youth to use their leadership gifts in worship services and workshops, celebrating life milestones such as Coming of Age and bridging into adulthood, and having fun outdoor retreats open to all families and ages.

**Spiritual Development**

This is the intentional cultivation of spirituality through both individual and group spiritual practices. As spiritual beings, youth experience awe, gratitude, wonder, appreciation and “at-one-ness.” Youth ministry should encourage and offer opportunities for engagement in practices that nurture and enliven their spirits.

**Beloved Community**

Being held in the arms of a beloved community is an essential part of being a religious person of any age. In youth ministry, beloved community has three dimensions: local, Unitarian Universalist, and interfaith. Youth should be grounded in a local community that creates deep, affirming, authentic and long-lasting relationships. Through camps and conferences, youth can connect with the wider Unitarian Universalist faith movement and see the diversity of experiences that exist within Unitarian Universalism. Interfaith community enriches youth ministry and celebrates differing religious perspectives found in the world.

**Justice Making**

Youth practice answering our faith’s calling to work for justice and to be in solidarity with others who also work for justice in many settings, including in our lives, our local communities, and the wider world. Service trips can help open youth’s eyes to the realities confronting other people and inspire them to work for justice. Organizing a social justice project within the congregation can connect youth to the rest of the congregation and place youth as leaders in the social justice work of the community. Youth can also engage in advocacy and education around social justice issues that are important to them.

**Pastoral Care**

Like people of all ages, youth have specific pastoral needs that are met in communities where people know how to listen deeply. Everyone works together to create a religious community that provides pastoral care with youth. This includes creating safe congregations, supporting youth who are in crisis, and celebrating their joys and accomplishments. Pastoral care with youth is also strengthened when ministers have a direct relationship with the youth in their congregations.

**Faith Exploration**

Structured learning environments promote the free and responsible search for truth, meaning and purpose as a part of youth faith development. Faith exploration takes place when youth engage with workshops at camps and conferences, as well as through curricula that challenge youth to look deep and develop their faith. Because the Unitarian Universalist approach to religious education acknowledges that we are all both learners and teachers, when youth are asked to lead or facilitate education programs, it is a learning and leadership development opportunity.

**Identity Formation**

Dynamic youth ministry supports youth in their journeys to figure out who they are as spiritual beings, relational beings, racial/ethnic and sexual beings, people of faith, justice makers, lifelong learners and leaders, as well as how they fit in multigenerational communities. Youth ministry helps youth develop a healthy identity in these areas and learn to live with integrity so that their Unitarian Universalist faith is inseparable from their identity as a whole person.

## Handout 2 Project or Program Proposal

On a separate sheet of paper, write your answers to the following questions:

1. Which idea generated from the Activities and Actions activity would you like to implement in your congregation? Which component(s) of the Web of Youth Ministry does this idea reflect?
2. What is the mission of your congregation? If you do not know the answer, you can look on your congregation’s website or ask your parents/guardians, advisor, religious educator or minister. How does your idea fit with the mission of your congregation?
3. Write a short “elevator pitch” explaining why your congregation would benefit from implementing this idea.
4. Who are the “stakeholders” in this idea? A stakeholder is a person or group that will have interest in or concerns about the idea. Stakeholders can affect or be affected by the idea.
5. Who could be your partners to bring this idea to life?
6. How much money would it take to get this idea off the ground? How much money would it take to keep it going?
7. Starting with your end goal and going backwards, write a list of steps you would need to take to make this idea a reality.
8. Next to the steps in the list above write the dates of reasonable deadlines for completing each step. Start with the first step you will need to take (at the bottom of the list).

Next, write an email or a script for a phone call to your advisor, religious educator or minister explaining your idea, how it fits with the mission of the congregation and a deadline you think is reasonable to implement the idea. Ask to set up a time to talk in person or over the phone with the leadership team (advisor, religious educator and/or minister) about a potential budget, timeline and partners for your idea.

## Taking It Home

“There is, finally, only one thing required of us: that is, to take life whole, the sunlight and shadows together; to live the life that is given us with courage and humor and truth.

We have such a little moment out of the vastness of time for all our wondering and loving. Therefore let there be no half-heartedness; rather, let the soul be ardent in its pain, in its yearning, in its praise.

Then shall peace enfold our days, and glory shall not fade from our lives.”

– [Kendyl R Gibbons](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/6038.shtml)

**IN TODAY’S SESSION…**

We learned about the six components to a balanced youth group and the eight components to the Web of Youth Ministry. We examined what our faith community is already doing within the Web of Youth Ministry and generated a list of possibilities to incorporate in the future.

**CARRY ON THE CONVERSATION: Think about** what area(s) of the Web of Youth Ministry excite you most and tell your advisor, minister and/or religious educator. **Have a conversation** with your parents about the Web of Youth Ministry and tell them what ideas the group generated excite you most.

**TAKE ACTION:** Using Handout 2 Project or Program Proposal, **write a proposal** to implement the project or program that excited you most from the list that the group generated. **Consider** who would need to be involved, how much time and money it would take to implement, a timeline for the steps that need to be taken and what the benefits would be for the congregation. **Ask** your minister, advisor or religious educator for a time to meet to discuss your proposal.

**ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE:** Make a list of all the things you have to and choose to do in a typical week. This list could include: going to school, chores, hanging out with friends, volunteering, watching movies, etc. Then make a list of all the things that make your spirit come alive. This list could include: listening to or playing music, meditating, doing yoga, gardening, camping, running, reading or writing poetry, journaling, dancing, having deep conversations with friends, etc. Then combine your lists and make a pie chart of how much time you spend doing all your activities. Notice how much time you spend doing the things that make your spirit come alive compared to the things you have to and choose to do. If there is an imbalance, commit to prioritizing and making time to do more things that make your spirit come alive this week.

# Workshop 2 Living in Covenant

## **Introduction**

*Covenant is the silk that joins Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations, communities, and individuals together in a web of interconnection. The practice of promising to walk together is the precious core of our creedless faith. –* [*UUA.org*](http://www.uua.org/governance/covenant)

This session describes why and how Unitarian Universalists live in covenant with one another and the world we live in and guides participants in creating a covenant they can live into throughout the year.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Explain how and why Unitarian Universalists covenant with one another and the larger world
* Provide tools for participants to create a covenant
* Guide participants in creating a covenant they can live into throughout the year.

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Reflect on the reasons Unitarian Universalists use covenant to create sacred communities
* Learn three models for creating covenant they can use within and beyond Unitarian Universalist contexts
* Brainstorm and create an aspirational covenant.

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 10 |
| Activity 1: Why we Covenant | 10 |
| Activity 2: How we Covenant | 10 |
| Activity 3: Creating a Covenant | 25 |
| Closing | 5 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Read your congregation’s covenant if there is one and ponder ways you’ve seen fellow congregants live into your shared covenant. Read Jennica Davis-Hockett’s Blue Boat Blog post titled [3 Models for Youth Group Covenanting and Beyond](http://blueboat.blogs.uua.org/2015/02/24/3-models-for-youth-group-covenanting-and-beyond/). What comes up for you as you read this post?

## **Opening (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Newsprint and markers
* Chalice lighting words: Worship Web [Bold and Courageous Together](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/bold-and-courageous-together) by Erika A. Hewitt

*Reader 1:*

*The word courage comes from the Latin cor, which means heart. According to poet Mark Nepo, the original use of the word courage meant to stand by one’s core: a “striking concept that reinforces the belief found in almost all traditions that living from the Center is what enables us to face whatever life has to offer.”*

*Reader 2:*

*To “encourage” means to hearten; to impart strength and confidence. This is our work, as a religious community: to encourage one another; to be bold in engaging the world around us, as well as what scares us internally; to give one another the confidence and heart to life as fully as possible.*

*All:*

*With full hearts,*

*we affirm our relationships with one another;*

*we recognize our agency and our connective power;*

*and we accept our responsibility to be bold and courageous.*

*We light this chalice,*

*symbol of that we are, all that we have done together,*

*and all that we will be as our shared ministry encourages those within, and beyond, our walls.*

* Check in question:

*When was a time that making a promise to someone else strengthened your relationship with them?*

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make a copy of the Reader 1 and Reader 2 chalice lighting words
* Ask for two volunteers for the Reader 1 and Reader 2 sections of the chalice lighting
* Post the chalice lighting words for All on newsprint
* Post the check in question in the designated place

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants. Invite participants and facilitators to go around the circle and say their names and briefly answer the check in question (in 3 or 4 sentences). Remind participants that check in is not a time for cross talk - clarifying questions can be asked if necessary. After everyone who wants to has had a chance to check in ask for a volunteer to light the chalice, invite Reader 1 and Reader 2 to read, then signal to the group to read the chalice lighting words written on newsprint.

### **Including All Participants**

Let participants know they have the right to pass or pass for now. For participants who have trouble being concise you can ask them “how would you sum up your experience in one sentence?” For participants who have trouble refraining from cross talk remind them of the group covenant and to be respectful of their peers’ time to share and the leaders’ time to facilitate.

## **Activity 1: Why We Covenant (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1 The Temporary Autonomous Zone
* Laptop and projector
* Video: [What do We Promise to One Another?](https://youtu.be/EmZLK2bEh6Q)

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of handout for all participants.
* Load the video.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants reflect on the reasons Unitarian Universalists use covenant to create sacred communities.

Ask the group if they’ve ever felt a sense of belonging in a UU community that they haven’t felt elsewhere. Say something like:

*It is easy to mistake that feeling of belonging as somewhat magical, or like it happens naturally because of the people present. But that magic doesn’t happen on it’s own. The magic we create is very intentional. That magic is what Sufi writer Hakim Bey calls a “Temporary Autonomous Zone.” It is an impermanent utopian experience that can be transformative.*

Pass out Handout 1 The Temporary Autonomous Zone and ask for volunteers to read it aloud.

Tell participants that one way to create a temporary autonomous zone is by creating and upholding a covenant, which is the sacred promise we make to ourselves, each other and the world.

Watch the video What do We Promise to One Another? and tell participants that in this session they will create a covenant together that answers the questions posed in the video.

### **Including All Participants**

For participants with auditory processing disorders or are hearing impaired, turn on closed captioning for the video. For participant who are sight impaired, encourage them to sit close enough to the screen to see and/or close enough to the speakers to hear.

## **Activity 2: How We Covenant (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 2 Models for Covenanting

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of handout for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn three models for creating a covenant they can use within and beyond Unitarian Universalist contexts.

Ask the group by raise of hands who has participated in a covenanting process before. Ask them by show of fingers how confident they feel in participating in a covenant building process. One finger means “I’ve never done it/don’t quite get it,” five fingers means “I’m a total veteran; I do it all the time.” Note that there are advantages and disadvantages to being both novice and expert. Share this quote from Shunryu Suzuki, Sōtō Zen monk and teacher, author of Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind:

*In the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert’s there are few.*

Pass out Handout 2, Models for Covenanting and tell the group that different kinds of models will be useful for different types of groups. In the future, they may want to create a covenant with a committee they’re part of, their family, their roommates after they leave home or a student group. Mention that some people of different faiths may be averse to the way Unitarian Universalists use the word covenant because in some faith traditions, as mentioned in the video, a covenant is something that can only be made by God to God’s chosen people. Say that they may want to consider sharing the concept, using the word “promise” instead of “covenant.” Invite them to keep this resource so they can refer to it when they want to lead a covenanting process in the future.

## **Activity 3: Creating a Covenant (25 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 1, Questions for an Aspirational Covenant
* Newsprint
* Various colors of markers

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Write the italicized phrases from Leader Resource 1 Questions for an Aspirational Covenant on newsprint leaving space between phrases for brainstorm ideas.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants brainstorm and create an aspirational covenant their group can live into throughout the year.

Explain to participants that they are going to practice covenanting in a way that might be unfamiliar to them. They’re not going creating a list of agreed upon behaviors rather, they are going to create a statement of aspiration - what the group aspires to be, using the brainstorm model in Handout 2 Models for Covenanting.

Tell the group you are going to scribe the brainstorm so they each have an opportunity to participate. Invite participants to share ideas and remind them that in this phase of brainstorming there is no judgement. Ask participants the first question from Leader Resource 1 Questions for an Aspirational Covenant and invite participants to finish the sentence “We treat ourselves…” If a participant offers an idea and you are unclear what to write say “can you sum that up in one sentence?” or “can you elaborate?” or “what I think you’re saying is…” and attempt to summarize their idea. Write down all ideas as close to verbatim as you can. Do this for each question in the leader resource.

Tell the group that the second stage of brainstorming is synthesizing similar ideas. Ask participants if they notice phrases with a common thread. Circle those ideas with one color marker. After demonstrating this, invite a volunteer to scribe using different colored markers for different ideas or themes. Encourage the group to continue synthesizing ideas. After a number of common themes have been identified, ask the group if there is anything on the newsprint they feel doesn’t fit in the covenant. Ask the scribe to cross those things off.

Ask for a volunteer or two to rewrite the covenant with you on a new sheet of newsprint while the other participants talk quietly amongst themselves. After the break ask a volunteer to read the covenant aloud to the group and ask the group to sign it if they agree with what it says.

Inform participants that being part of a Living Tradition means that we can revisit and amend our covenant in the future if we feel the need. If you are doing the Creating Inclusive Community session with participants, tell them that they will have an opportunity to update the covenant in this session. Ask for a volunteer to take a picture with their phone and share it with the group.

### **Including All Participants**

If your group has a few members who are quick to share and share often, consider limiting contributions to two or three times per participant. If your group has many members who are reluctant to share, consider encouraging all participants to share at least one or two ideas.

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Taking it Home
* Handout 3 Personal Covenant

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of Taking It Home and Handout 3 Personal Covenant for each participant

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to gather in a circle. Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. Pass out Taking It Home and explain that it contains ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends. Point out the section on creating a personal covenant. Inform the group that a covenant does not need to be reciprocal, meaning you can practice being in covenant with yourself or with other people even when they are acting mean or selfish. Go over Handout 3 Personal Covenant with the group.

You can offer that the group can continue a discussion about this session at a later date or in a closed Facebook group if your group has one. End the workshop by inviting participants to take a deep breath and close their eyes if they are willing and share the prayer A Web of Holy Relationships by By [Lyn Cox](http://www.uua.org/directory/people/lyn-cox), available on [Worship Web](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/web-of-holy-relationships).

Spirit of Life,  
Who draws us together in a web of holy relationships,  
Make your presence known with us and in us and among us.  
  
Remind us that we are not alone in history,  
Ignite us with the courage of the living tradition.  
Remind us that we are not alone in entering the future,  
Anchor us with patience and perseverance.  
Remind us that we are not alone in our times of grief and pain,  
Comfort us with your spirit, manifest in human hands and voices.  
Remind us that we are not alone in joy and wonder,  
Inspire us to honor and extend the beauty we find in this world.  
  
Divine music of the universe,  
Let our hearts beat in diverse and harmonious rhythms,  
Cooperating with an everlasting dance of love.  
May we move with the rhythms of peace.  
May we move with the rhythms of compassion.  
May we move with the rhythms of justice.  
  
Source of stars and planets and water and land  
Open our hearts to all of our neighbors  
Open our souls to a renewal of faith  
Open our hands to join together in the work ahead.  
  
So be it, blessed be, amen.

## **Leader Reflection and Planning**

As leaders working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this workshop offered an opportunity to consider the importance of covenant in our lives as Unitarian Universalists. What did you learn from this session on covenanting? How did participants surprise you in the Creating a Covenant activity? Did your understanding or ability to explain how and why we covenant increase after preparing this session? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator? Share your feedback and learnings from this session with the minister and religious educator.

## Handout 1: The Temporary Autonomous Zone

Attribution: from the Tapestry of Faith program [Resistance and Transformation Session 8](http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/resistance) by Colin Bossen and Julia Hamilton

However strong the desire to do so, the likelihood is small that a community can sustain itself when it is organized around values different from those of the dominant culture. Financial and other outside pressures are often too much to bear. Most efforts to create enduring utopian communities have failed within a few years.

However, the experience that utopian communities seek to create—a vision of justice and equality realized in a particular time and place—happens more often than many suspect. These experiences occur whenever two or more people gather and treat each other with equity and compassion. The Sufi writer Hakim Bey has named this phenomenon the "temporary autonomous zone."

Temporary autonomous zones are places where—for however brief a time—a community flourishes by experiencing and embracing values counter to those of the dominant culture. Rather than just conceptualizing a community where members live according to their values, participants in a temporary autonomous zone actually embody those values in their interactions with each other. The experiences that people have in temporary autonomous zones can be transformative. Such experiences suggest that another world, one with different values and social norms, is possible. Some people believe so because they have lived in it, even if only briefly.

In his work "The Temporary Autonomous Zone," Bey argues that temporary autonomous zones come in many forms and have occurred at many times throughout human history. He posits that communities as widely varied as revolutionary communes, 18th-century pirate enclaves, contemporary all night dance parties and the common dinner party can all be described as temporary autonomous zones.

Many people experience temporary autonomous zones at Unitarian Universalist camps and conferences. The conferences offer a week-long or weekend space where participants create a transient community that reflects Unitarian Universalist values. Many report that such experiences are transformative. For some, especially youth, the time spent in the transient and temporary communities of camps and conferences is as central to their understanding of Unitarian Universalism as their participation in a congregation. This suggests that, for at least some Unitarian Universalists, temporary autonomous zones play an important part in supporting their ongoing faith development.

## Handout 2: Models for Covenanting

Attribution: [3 Models for Youth Group Covenanting and Beyond](http://blueboat.blogs.uua.org/2015/02/24/3-models-for-youth-group-covenanting-and-beyond/) blog post by Jennica Davis-Hockett

**Scaffold Model - add/change/rearrange**

The facilitators of the group provide a starting point for the covenanting process. This is a very basic list of “good ideas.” the group can agree to accept this covenant in total or choose to edit it by adding elements unique to the group, changing elements that don’t fit for the group and/or rearranging the elements to fit their needs and priorities.

This model works best for

* A group of people that has never covenanted before and needs a lot of guidance,
* A group who has a very short amount of time to build a covenant.

**Brainstorm Model - from nothing to something**

The facilitator of the group guides the group through the three stages of brainstorming:

* Offer any ideas without judgement,
* Synthesizing by grouping like ideas and discarding ideas the group agrees are not needed
* Rewriting the synthesized ideas neatly on a separate piece of paper
* Making a decision to accept the final product

The scribe supports the group by writing down verbatim what group members say.

This model works best for

* A group that has the luxury of time
* A group the size of which allows for every voice to be heard
* A group that would benefit from going through this process as a community building exercise.

**From Many to One Model**

Each person writes down a few key points they would like to be included on the group covenant on a piece of paper or a note card. This is done in silence or with minimal talking. The group elects a small number of delegates to synthesize the items and write a draft covenant to bring back to the group. The whole group provides feedback and adopts the covenant by consensus.

This model works best for

* A group where some people are dominant speakers and others’ voices go unheard,
* A very large group,
* A group that has difficulty coming to agreement.

## Handout 3 Personal Covenant

Developed by Jennica Davis-Hockett, Leadership Development Associate for the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Find a quiet, comfortable space where you can be alone. Remove all distractions and let others know you will be unavailable for the next 30 minutes. Spend some time meditating on your responses to the following questions. Then, on the back of this sheet of paper or in a personal journal write your thoughtful responses. This personal covenant is for you alone, you do not need to share it with others.

**How do I want to treat myself?**

* *How do I listen to my body to make sure I get enough sleep and relaxation, eat good food, stay hydrated and get enough exercise?*
* *What expectations do I set for myself? How do I ensure they are reasonable?*
* *Do I talk to myself like I would a friend I care about?*
* *How do I set aside time for my spiritual practices?*
* *How do I set personal boundaries? How do I help others respect them?*

**How do I want to treat others?**

* *How do I show people I care about them?*
* *How do I treat people I don’t get along with in a way that still honors their inherent worth and dignity?*
* *What expectations do I set for others? How do I ensure they are reasonable?*
* *How do I respect other people’s boundaries?*

**How do I communicate with others?**

* *How do I communicate my needs to others?*
* *How do I express my gratitude for others?*
* *How can I communicate with others when I’m frustrated with integrity and respect?*
* *How can I practice listening to others?*
* *How can I offer feedback to others?*

**How do I want to treat my environment?**

* *In what ways do I practice respect for the interdependent web of which I am part?*
* *How do I create spaces that invite comfort, creativity and studiousness?*
* *How am I a steward of my home?*

**How do I live my Unitarian Universalist faith?**

* *What aspects of my faith are important in times of celebration?*
* *What aspects of my faith do I rely on when times get tough?*
* *How do I share my faith with others?*
* *How do I live the seven principles?*

**How do I become a person others can count on?**

* *How do I make sure I keep my promises?*
* *How can I use my talents for the benefit of others?*
* *How can I increase my skills?*

**What sacrifices am I willing to make in the name of the highest good?**

* *What am I willing to give up because it isn’t healthy for me, my family, others or my planet?*
* *What am I willing to do for others that doesn’t necessarily benefit me?*

**How do I make amends?**

* *How do I find the courage to say I’m sorry when I am wrong?*
* *How do I renew a promise that I have broken?*

Just like the covenant your group created in this week’s session, this personal covenant is a living document. Keep this covenant in a place you can refer to often and feel free to add to or remove things from this covenant as your spiritual journey evolves.

## Taking It Home

*Covenant is the silk that joins Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations, communities, and individuals together in a web of interconnection. The practice of promising to walk together is the precious core of our creedless faith. – UUA.org*

**IN TODAY’S SESSION…** we explored how and why Unitarian Universalists covenant with one another and the larger world, reviewed three different ways of creating a covenant and created an aspirational covenant the group will live into throughout the year. The practices we used in this session can be used in daily life.

**EXPAND YOUR AWARENESS** At school this week, **notice** if there is an “unwritten code” between you and your friends of ways you behave together online and in real life. **Find and review** your congregation’s or community’s covenant and **pay attention to your behavior** and the behavior of other community members. Are they living in covenant? How can you express your gratitude if they are or offer feedback if they are not? **Read** [3 Models for Youth Group Covenanting and Beyond](http://blueboat.blogs.uua.org/2015/02/24/3-models-for-youth-group-covenanting-and-beyond/), a Blue Boat blog post by Jennica Davis-Hockett to expand your understanding of how Unitarian Universalists use covenant.

**PRACTICE COVENANTING Create a personal covenant**, a promise you make to yourself. Use Handout 3 Personal Covenant. **Make a promise** to a friend or family member, and keep it.

## Leader Resource 1: Questions for an Aspirational Covenant

**How do we we treat ourselves?**

*We treat ourselves…*

**How do we treat each other?**

*We treat each other…*

**How do we communicate?**

*We communicate by/with…*

**How do we treat our space?**

*We treat our space with…*

**How do we treat those not part of the group?**

We treat those not part of the group…

**How do we uphold our faith?**

*We uphold our faith by…*

**How do we become people others can count on?**

*We become people others can count on by…*

**What sacrifices are we willing to make in the name of the highest good?**

*We are willing to sacrifice…*

**How do we make amends?**

*We make amends by...*

# Workshop 3 Meaning of Leadership Worship

## **Introduction**

*“The only rational way of educating is to be an example.”*

- *Albert Einstein*

This session is a worship. Participants will listen to stories, sing songs and engage in activities that explain the basics of what leadership is and how they can serve the world as leaders.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Allow participants to explore the meaning of leadership in a spiritual context

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Begin connecting with their inner leader
* Consider different qualities of leadership.

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 5 |
| Activity 1: Reading and Singing | 10 |
| Activity 2: Leadership Reflection | 10 |
| Activity 3 (select one): 3A The Leader Within, 3B Sculpting Leadership, or 3C Piecing Leadership Together | 20 |
| Activity 4: Guided Meditation | 10 |
| Closing | 5 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Reflect on what being a leader means to you. Think about how your Unitarian Universalist values and principles inform your leadership and how leading in a Unitarian Universalist context may differ from leading in a secular context.

## **Opening (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Altar cloth
* Group covenant from Workshop 2: Living in Covenant
* Music player
* Soft music
* Singing the Living Tradition and Singing the Journey hymnals (enough for two participants to share one) and/or projector with slides of the hymn lyrics
* Optional - lamp or additional candles

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Set out the altar cloth and chalice and ensure that the lighter works or that the batteries work if using a battery operated candle
* Choose one of the following activities: Activity 3A The Leader Within, 3B Sculpting Leadership, or 3C Piecing Leadership Together
* Gather materials for all activities
* Practice the readings with a worshipful flow
* Set the lighting in the meeting space differently than it usually is
* Practice the songs you’ve chosen; if you are not confident in your singing voice, find a song leader and ask them to practice the songs
* Post the covenant
* Begin playing soft music for participants as they enter the space.

### **Including All Participants**

While you can make subtle changes to the lighting in the room, if there are members of your group who are hard of hearing and use lip reading, tell them ahead of time about your plan to change in lighting so they can sit closer to you. You may want to incorporate smells into your worship space, only do so if you are sure there are no sensitivities to the scents you plan to use.

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants. Invite youth to turn to their neighbors on either side, ask their neighbor’s name if they do not know it, then say their neighbor’s name and tell them they’re glad they’re here. Tell participants that today’s session is unique because you will be worshipping together instead of doing a workshop. Invite participants to open their hymnals or sing along to the words projected on the screen for the hymn you’ve chosen from the list below.

Opening Hymn*#389 Gathered Here (Singing the Living Tradition (SLT))*

Alternate Opening Hymn 1: *#188 Come, Come, Whoever You Are (SLT)*

Alternate Opening Hymn 2: *#360 Here We Have Gathered (SLT)*

Alternate Opening Hymn 3: *#361 Enter, Rejoice, and Come In (SLT)*

Alternate Opening Hymn 4: *#1003 Where Do We Come From? (SJT)*

Alternate Opening Hymn 5:*#1020 Woyaya (SJT)*

Read the Chalice Lighting,*#32 in* [*Lifting our Voices*](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Lifting-Our-Voices-P17627.aspx) *by Bernadette R. Burns*

*Let us take a moment to relax and catch our breath. Let us bring our focus here, to this room, to this group of people and to this moment. We bring a myriad of talents, ideas, needs, and styles. Yet within this diversity, there is a common bond between us. We love this fellowship, and we are willing to work together to improve and strengthen this community of ours and our lives.*

## **Activity 1: Reading and Singing (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 1: *Julia Phelps, A Good Teacher*
* Enough Singing the Living Tradition Hymnals for participants to share or slides with the hymn lyrics projected on the wall or a screen

### 

### **Preparation for Activity**

### None

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants listen to a story about leaders helping others see things in a different way and sing a song.

Read Leader Resource 1, Julia Phelps, A Good Teacher. Spend a few moments in silence before inviting participants to open their hymnals or sing along to the words projected on the screen for the hymn you’ve chosen from the list below.

Hymn *#123 Spirit of Life (SLT)*

Alternate Hymn 1: *#184 Be Ye Lamps unto Yourselves (SLT)*

Alternate Hymn 2: *#298 Wake, Now, My Senses (SLT)*

Alternate Hymn 3: *#347 Gather the Spirit* *(SLT)*

Alternate Hymn 4: *#1009 Meditation on Breathing (SJT)*

Alternate Hymn 5: *#1064 Blue Boat Home (SJT)*

## **Activity 2: Leadership Reflection (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Pencil or pen for each participant
* Piece of paper or note card for each participant
* Collection basket

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants explore the many different types of leadership.

During the activity, ensure that the atmosphere remains worshipful. Begin by pointing out that there are many ways to be a leader. Explain that often the people who ‘get up and talk,’ are ‘in charge,’ or are the face of an organization, group or movement are often the ones considered leaders by society. It is important to realize that there are many ways to be a leader.

Pass around a pen or pencil, and piece of paper or notecard to each person. On the paper, have participants think of a person in their life they consider a good leader; someone they respect and admire. Ask them to brainstorm by themselves the qualities that make them a leader and write these qualities and traits down on the paper.

After participants have finished their brainstorm, have them fold their paper in half, pass around the collection basket and invite participants to place their paper in the basket. Pass around the basket a second time and invite participants to remove a new piece of paper. If someone gets their own, it doesn’t matter. Once everyone has one, invite participants to take turns reading out one of the qualities of leadership on their card at a time, popcorn style.

## **Activity 3A The Leader Within**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Blank paper or note cards
* Pens or pencils

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants identify and articulate what type of leader they would like to be.

Ask participants to close their eyes and imagine themselves as a leader. Acknowledge that in many ways, they already are. Ask them to imagine the type of leader they would like to be. After a few moments, invite them to open their eyes. Hand out index cards and tell them not to put their name on it. On one side, they should write a one to two sentence leadership mission statement. Give them an example:

“As a leader, I work with others to create a community where all are welcome.” Or “I lead so that our youth group can be the best it can be.”

On the other side, they should then write down the skills and personality traits they have that will enable them to be this kind of leader.

It should take 10 minutes for the introduction and time to write. Invite participants to turn to a partner and share their statement either by speaking it aloud or allowing their partner to read it. Remind participants they always have the right to pass if they are feeling uncomfortable. Also remind participants that this might feel risky to some so to listen with an open heart and refrain from judgement. Use the remaining time to invite folks to share statements and characteristics with the group, reminding them they have the right to pass. Depending on the group size, you may or may not have time for everyone. Collect the index cards. After the session, write down all the characteristics that folks named as already having on newsprint and display them somewhere in the meeting space the next time you meet. You can also tape the cards ‘statement-side-out’ to another piece of newsprint, or otherwise display them so that folks can see the various statements.

## **Activity 3B Sculpting Leadership**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Clay or pipe cleaners in a variety of colors
* Basket

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Divide the clay or pipe cleaners equally for the number of participants you will have and put them in the basket.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants create a visual representation of a leadership quality they possess or want to possess.

Pass around the basket with clay or pipe cleaners and invite each student to take one set. Once every person has clay or pipe cleaners, ask them to think of a leadership quality they possess or want to possess. Have them use the materials they have to create a sculpture to represent this quality. For example, if the quality is inquisitiveness, someone might make a question mark, representing their willingness to ask questions.

Allow for 10 to 12 minutes for participants to create their sculptures. When everyone has finished, have them place the sculptures on the altar, or around the chalice for the remainder of the worship. Invite participants to share the meaning of their sculpture with the group.

## **Activity 3C Piecing Leadership Together**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Mural paper
* Scissors
* Markers of various colors
* Optional: purchased puzzle pieces such as [Community Puzzles](http://www.thecommunitypuzzle.com/)

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Cut the mural paper into puzzle pieces. The pieces can be shaped however works best for your group.
* Optional: Purchase blank puzzle pieces.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity, participants visualize how different leadership qualities can connect to and support each other.

Pass one puzzle piece to each person, along with a colored marker. Have participants write down what leadership qualities they bring to this group, and what they hope to learn from the group. Ask them to be creative. Maybe they want to draw a small picture to help represent what they write, use multiple colors, or write their words in a circle.

Once everyone has finished, invite participants to create a complete puzzle and tell participants that alone, they may at times feel small and inadequate, but if they combine their leadership skills with others, a beautiful mosaic emerges.

After the worship, tape the pieces together and hang them on the wall or use the puzzle like an altar cloth for your next meeting.

## **Activity 4: Guided Meditation (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 2: To Hear One Another
* Leader Resource 3: Guided Meditation

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Practice reading the meditation

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants practice making a connection with their inner leader.

Begin by having participants get into a comfortable position. Read Leader Resource 2 To Hear One Another. Spend a few moments in silence before reading Leader Resource 3 Guided Meditation. Spend a few more moments in silence before inviting the group to bring their awareness back into the space and to open their hymnals or sing along to the words projected on the screen for the hymn you’ve chosen from the list below.

Hymn *#391 Voice Still and Small (SLT)*

Alternate Closing Hymn 1: *#170 We Are a Gentle, Angry People (SLT)*

Alternate Closing Hymn 2: *#346 Come, Sing a Song with Me (SLT)*

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Taking it Home

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of Taking It Home for each participant

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to ask their neighbors if it is alright for them to take their hand. Tell participants that within each one of us it the pulse of leadership. Say something like:

*I am going to pass the pulse of leadership by squeezing the hand of my neighbor. When they receive the squeeze, they’ll pass their pulse to their neighbor. The pulse will continue to pass through us until it returns to where it started.*

Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. If the group has done activity 3B Sculpting Leadership, invite participants to remove their sculpture from the altar, take it home with them and place it in a special place in their home so they can see it and remember their leadership qualities. Pass out Taking It Home and explain that it contains ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends. End the worship with these words from Worship Web by [Kirk Bogue](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/290314.shtml):

*With gratitude and grace we lead forward to answer the call of our faith, we move happily together into the unknown, we open ourselves to growth, we go forth to begin the change to our corner of the world, we covenant together to transform the world through love and we are moved by Spirit to accomplish good works with compassion and love for all.*

## **Leader Reflection and Planning**

As leaders working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this worship offered an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a leader in a spiritual context. What came up for you while leading this worship? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator? Share your feedback and learnings from this session with the minister and religious educator.

## Taking It Home

*With gratitude and grace we lead forward to answer the call of our faith, we move happily together into the unknown, we open ourselves to growth, we go forth to begin the change to our corner of the world, we covenant together to transform the world through love and we are moved by Spirit to accomplish good works with compassion and love for all. –* [*Kirk Bogue*](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/290314.shtml) *Worship Web*

**IN TODAY’S SESSION…** we worshiped together and explored what it means to be a leader. We listened to a story that described leadership as helping people see things the way they really are. We participated in a guided meditation where we investigated a leadership quality we struggle with.

**CREATE A RITUAL Create and practice** a ritual that reminds you of your inherent leadership qualities. Perhaps it is lighting a chalice each day or journaling about your leadership once a week. **Create and practice** a ritual that helps you develop a leadership quality you are working on. Perhaps it is committing to reading the chalice lighting words in a Sunday service a few times this year to practice public speaking or helping in religious education once a month to practice planning and giving direction.

**PRACTICE PERSONAL WORSHIP Read a passage** from your favorite meditation book (your congregation may have a library, you could borrow one from someone on staff or start your own collection by buying one from [In Spirit, the UUA Bookstore](http://www.uuabookstore.org/)) when you wake up or before you go to sleep. Suggested titles are [Becoming: A Spiritual Guide for Navigating Adulthood](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Becoming-P17648.aspx) or [Bless the Imperfect: Meditations for Congregational Leaders](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Bless-the-Imperfect-P17371.aspx). **Meditate** on a person you identify as a great leader. It could be someone you know or a famous person. Call to mind the qualities that make this person a great leader and imagine yourself embodying these qualities.

## Leader Resource 1 Julia Phelps, A Good Teacher

*By Carl Scovel, (*[*Never Far From Home: Stories from the Radio Pulpit*](https://books.google.com/books?id=fo4o7peWvZkC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false)*)*

Reprinted with the permission of Skinner House Books. *Never Far From Home*by Carl Scovel is available at bookstores everywhere or through the publisher at (800) 215-9076 or [www.uua.org/bookstore](http://www.uua.org/bookstore).

In October of 1985 I lost as good a friend and colleague as one could ask for, a lovely lady of eighty-nine. Julia Phelps taught the history of art at Harvard, the University of Trent in Canada, and the Radcliffe Seminars, and she took twelve tour groups to Europe, sometimes in the late afternoon dragging a cordon of fainthearted disciples through the Louvre or the Prado with cheer and vigor. She never lectured without slides, of course, and she was as much at home in classical Greece and Rome as in the works of German expressionists of the 1920s and 1930s. Her lectures encompassed painting, drawing, sculpture, architecture, and urban design.

After hearing and seeing her lectures on William Blake and Albrecht Dürer at our own parish house, I realized that Julia was teaching us not to remember dates and data, but how to look at a painting and thus to see the world itself in a different way. That’s what an artist does and that’s what a good teacher does. They alter the perceptions of their students.

Did you know that the word theatre comes from the Greek word, theasthai, which means to contemplate or observe? When the patrons of the Greek theatre went to see the Oedipus plays, such as Iphigenia in Aulis, or any of the great tragedies, they did so expecting that they would relearn reality. The act of observing the play was, therefore, a religious act. They were seeing again the way things really are.

Julia helped people do that. When she showed the slides of Paul Klee’s works, beginning with his early, clearly representational paintings, then continuing with his more abstract works, and ending with paintings that were piles of broken shards and fragments, she was showing us through one man’s eyes the disintegration of Western civilization into the nightmare of the Third Reich. That was the reality of the 1920s and 1930s.

It occurred to me that it is also the purpose of prayer to teach us to see reality. After we contemplate God’s goodness through silence, music, spoken prayers, a moving sermon, a lovely sanctuary, or perhaps through a walk by a lake or the sea, we cannot help but see the world in a different way.

The power of that goodness affects us and enables us to see both good and evil more clearly. I think of a woman like Julia as a seer and a prophetess, someone who envisioned a world beyond our immediate sight.

Three weeks before she died, Julia handed me a copy of an article that she had prepared for The Encyclopedia of Comparative Iconography. With characteristic grace she asked me to read it and tell her what I thought. I didn’t open the manila envelope until I got on the subway. It was an essay on heaven and began with the question of how to present in visible terms that which is invisible, nonspatial, and indescribable. What a wonderful way to end your life—with an essay on heaven!

Julia and her kind are blessings to us. Thanks be to God.

## Leader Resource 2 To Hear One Another

*by L. Annie Foerster (*[*For Praying Out Loud*](https://books.google.com/books/about/For_Praying_Out_Loud.html?id=O5g0ojHz_1gC&source=kp_read&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false)*)*

Reprinted with the permission of Skinner House Books. *For Praying Out Loud* by Annie Foerster is available at bookstores everywhere or through the publisher at (800) 215-9076 or [www.uua.org/bookstore](http://www.uua.org/bookstore).

The ringing of a bell calls us to worship.

The pounding of a drum calls us to war.

The popping of a cork calls us to celebration.

What is the sound that calls us to hear one another?

Listen… Listen carefully…

It is here, in the silence… Listen deeply…

The beating of our own hearts calls us to ourselves;

calls us to be our true selves;

calls us to be our best selves;

calls us to be what we might become.

Listen… There is another sound…

The breath of our neighbor calls us outside ourselves;

calls us to be companions;

calls us to be allies;

calls us to be partners.

Listen… we must heed the call of our own hearts,

Where love and truth, caring and justice, are born.

Listen… we must heed the call of others,

to gather together for some great purpose,

where passion and fidelity, compassion and equity, are nourished.

The hammering silence calls us together

that we may do the work we cannot do alone.

Let us heed the calls that come in the silence,

that we may be well,

and do good,

in this world together. *Amen.*

## Leader Resource 3 Guided Meditation

**The Leader in You**

We will now begin to explore our own inner leader. Get yourself into a comfortable position. I invite you to close your eyes if that is comfortable for you.

Focus on your breath… in… out… in… out.

Notice the way your belly rises with the inhale, and falls with the exhale.

Call to mind a quality of leadership that you struggle with.

Think of a time in which that quality could have helped you.

Qualities are parts of our whole, and each part exists to help us, if we are able to strengthen it. Some parts are left from our ancestors, such as competitiveness or quick judgment, which helped our ancestors survive.

Reflect on the quality, that part of you. How does it need support?

Now, reflect on a way you can deliberately support it in your daily life.

How does that quality fit in with your other leadership qualities?

How will strengthening this quality enhance your leadership ability?

Return to your breath… in… out…

Your belly… its rise… and its fall…

When you feel you’re ready, you can begin to return to the space. If your eyes were closed, you may open them, you may feel the need to stretch… whatever you need to come back to the space.

## Leader Resource 4: Alternative Words for Worship

### Alternative Chalice Lighting:

*Blessed is the Fire that Burns Deep in the Soul by Eric A Heller-Wagner (*[*Worship Web*](mailto:http://www.uua.org/directory/people/eric-heller-wagner)*)*

Blessed is the fire that burns deep in the soul. It is the flame of the human spirit touched into being by the mystery of life. It is the fire of reason; the fire of compassion; the fire of community; the fire of justice; the fire of faith. It is the fire of love burning deep in the human heart; the divine glow in every life.

### Alternative Prayer:

*“If, on a starlit night…” by Rev. Dr. Marni Harmony, Minister Emerita, First Unitarian Church of Orlando, FL (*[*Rejoice Together*](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Rejoice-Together-P16817.aspx) *pg. 94)*

If, on a starlight night,

with the moon brilliantly shimmering,

We stay inside and do not venture out,

the evening universe remains

a part of life we shall not know.

If, on a cloudy day,

with grayness infusing all

and rain dancing rivers in the grass,

We stay inside and do not venture out,

the stormy, threatening energy of

the universe remains

a part of life we shall not know.

If, on a frosty morning,

dreading the chilly air before the sunrise,

We stay inside and do not venture out,

the awesome cold, quiet, and stillness of

the dawn universe remains

a part of life we shall not know.

If throughout these grace-given days of ours,

surrounded as we are by green life and

brown death, hot pink joy, and cold gray

pain and miracles—always miracles—

If we stay inside ourselves and do not

venture out,

then the Fullness of the universe

shall be unknown to us

And our locked hearts shall never feel

the rush of worship.

## Leader Resource 5 Alternative Reading Re-Birth

(*Worship Web)* by [Betty Jeanne Rueters-Ward](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/reflection/re-birth)

At age twenty, I had the fortune of traveling the world. Through a study abroad program, I journeyed to awe-inspiring destinations like India, Cuba, and South Africa. In the process, I witnessed extreme poverty, global wealth, power disparity, and the effects of war and militarism—all while assured of my safety and physical comfort.

Throughout my voyage, I became aware of the bubble within which I had these cross-cultural experiences—and within which I made sense of my whole life. I experienced my travels as getting smacked in the face by my own privilege—and it stung. And yet, I tried to remain open, to allow myself to be changed. To question or let go of what I had known before. To submit myself to a transformative experience and to answer whatever call the world offered me, hoping I could really listen.

When I returned to the United States, I struggled with what felt like more than reverse culture shock. All around me—in my suburban home, in my congregation, and at my liberal arts college—I saw now that my “normal life” was buffered from much of the world’s suffering. Everything seemed the same, yet forever different. In the first few weeks, I went through the motions: mechanically carrying out administrative tasks by day, numbing my mind with television by night. That lifestyle kept me functioning through my grief and fear. Grief for the life I’d led, but could no longer reconcile with what I now knew about the world. Fear that I would *not*, in fact, be changed but would instead resume my previous, ignorant patterns and assumptions. I felt a great sense of urgency, a frantic need to reconfigure my life in accordance with my values.

Soon after, my first UUA General Assembly brought me back to life. I’d long had a deep love for Unitarian Universalism. Because of it I had built many of my strongest, deepest friendships. I had been trained as a leader and claimed my voice—through preaching in the pulpit or singing favorite hymns in the pews. But that week, I connected in a new way with the Unitarian Universalist commitment to social justice—a commitment I now felt aching deep in my bones.

No longer alone—rather, literally surrounded by leaders and resources for justice-making—I began to lay a new path. Throughout the following decade, I devoted myself personally and professionally to social justice, returning again and again to my faith—not only as a movement for justices but as a sanctuary of spirit. Sometimes I needed connection with others. Other times, I needed a safe place to fall apart. More than once, my quest for justice left me weary, jaded, frustrated, and lost. Yet in the cradle of religious community, knowing that I am one among many building a better world, I have been birthed and re-birthed.

# Workshop 4: Shared Leadership

## **Introduction**

*We approach youth ministry with the overarching goal of providing the thousands of current UU high school students with profound experiences of spiritual depth in order to: 1) value them as current members of our faith communities, thus practicing and modeling affirmation of each individual’s inherent worth and dignity; and, 2) help them develop a lifelong commitment to, and leadership and sense of belonging within Unitarian Universalism. – Carey McDonald, Former Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director*

This session describes the elements that comprise shared leadership and responsible youth empowerment.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Ask youth to think about how their strengths, weaknesses and growing edges may complement others in the group
* Introduce the concept of shared leadership as a spectrum of responsibility based on maturity, skill and capacity
* Explore the complexities of responsible youth empowerment through guided discussion.

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Identify their strengths, weaknesses and growing edges and recognize they don’t have to perfect every leadership skill to be great leaders
* Be introduced to the concept of shared leadership and recognize the importance of sharing leadership and collaborating with others
* Understand the meaning of responsible youth empowerment.

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 10 |
| Activity 1: Bingo | 15 |
| Activity 2: Shared Leadership Spectrum | 10 |
| Activity 3: Responsible Youth Empowerment | 20 |
| Closing | 5 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Think about a time when you witnessed what you would consider to be “Responsible Youth Empowerment.” How did you know it was responsible, what feelings did you have in that situation? Think about a time when you witnessed what you would consider “Not Responsible Youth Empowerment.” How did you feel in that situation? How could people have behaved differently to ensure it was “Responsible Youth Empowerment?

## **Opening (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Newsprint and markers
* Chalice lighting words: Worship Web [So That We Might Shine Together](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/so-we-might-together-shine) by Erik Walker Wikstrom

*When we light our chalice*

*everyone focuses on the flame.*

*Yet it is the paraffin of the candle,*

*the cotton of the wick,*

*the potassium chlorate and sulfur of the match,*

*and the oxygen in the air around us*

*that makes that flame possible.*

*As leaders we are not called to be*

*a lone beacon on a hill.*

*Rather, we are meant to work together*

*so that we might, together, shine.*

* Group covenant (from Workshop 2, Living in Covenant)
* Check in question:

*What was a time you needed help from someone else?*

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Write the chalice lighting words on newsprint and post.
* Post the group covenant developed in Workshop 2, Living in Covenant.

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants. Invite participants and facilitators to go around the circle and say their names and briefly answer the check in question (in 3 or 4 sentences). Remind participants that check in is not a time for cross talk - clarifying questions can be asked if necessary. After everyone who wants to has had a chance to check in ask for a volunteer to light the chalice and another to read the chalice lighting words.

### **Including All Participants**

Let participants know they have the right to pass or pass for now. For participants who have trouble being concise you can ask them “how would you sum up your experience in one sentence?” For participants who have trouble refraining from cross talk remind them of the group covenant and to be respectful of their peers’ time to share and the leaders’ time to facilitate.

## **Activity 1: Strengths, Weaknesses & Growing Edges Bingo (15 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1, Blank Bingo Cards
* Newsprint and markers
* Pens or pencils for each participant

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Write and post definitions of Strength, Weakness and Growing Edge.
* Make copies of handout for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn to identify their strengths, weaknesses and growing edges and recognize they don’t have to perfect every leadership skill to be great leaders.

Pass out blank bingo cards, one for each participant. Tell participants to spend a moment thinking about their strengths, weaknesses and growing edges when it comes to leadership.

Share these definitions and examples:

*A strength is a characteristic, skill or a talent that comes naturally or that you have practiced to proficiency. You may have a strength of following through on your commitments, listening to others without judgment or playing an instrument in front of a crowd, for example. A weakness is a characteristic you feel holds you back as a leader that you don’t think you could or want to change and have to put systems in place to overcome. You may have a weakness of being overwhelmed by large crowds, staying focused for long periods of time or being an organized note-taker, for example. A growing edge is a characteristic, skill or talent that does not come naturally or that you want to develop further. You may have a growing edge of speaking up if you’re naturally quite, practicing self-care if you get easily overwhelmed by deadlines or being kind to yourself when you make a mistake, for example.*

Tell participants to write one strength, weakness or growing edge in each box and try to have an equal number of strengths, weaknesses and growing edges. Tell participants not to label the attributes they write down as strengths, weaknesses or growing edges.

Say something like:

*You are going to move around the room and play bingo for 5 minutes - with a twist. When you meet with another person, try to find a strength, weakness or a growing edge that complements one of your attributes. For example: person A might have “am very organized” and person B might have “leave things to the last minute.” Or person A might have “very serious about getting things done” and person B might have “good sense of humor.” Write the other person’s name and attribute in the corresponding box on your bingo card. You might find that things you thought were weaknesses or growing edges complement someone else’s.*

When time is up (or when all boxes are filled, whichever comes first), lead a discussion asking questions like:

* What did you learn about yourself in this activity?
* What did you learn about others in the group in this activity?

End the discussion by making the observation that no one person has to embody all great leadership qualities to get things done.

### **Including All Participants**

For participants with mobility issues, ask them if they’d prefer to sit in a chair and have people come to them. Monitor the group to ensure all participants visit the person in the chair. For participants with impaired sight, ask if they want another participant to partner with them and support their reading when helpful. For participants with reading or writing disabilities offer to serve as scribe as they dictate their answers to you and partner with them as they move about the room, filling out their card.

## **Activity 2: Shared Leadership Spectrum (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 2, Youth/Adult Shared Leadership
* Newsprint and markers
* Dot stickers of any color
* Pens or pencils for each participant

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of handout for all participants.
* Pass out pens or pencils
* Draw shared leadership spectrum on newsprint and post.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn about the concept of shared leadership and recognize the importance of sharing leadership and collaborating with others.

Point to the shared leadership spectrum drawing Say something like:

*In a shared leadership model no one person (youth or adult) has to do everything on their own. Leaders have guidance, support, mentorship, partnership and companionship from their fellow leaders. Finding leaders that complement your skill set is important for creating a dynamic team. Your skill level, capacity and maturity will determine where you fall on the spectrum of shared leadership and the level of support your fellow leaders can offer. As your skill level, capacity and maturity increases, support from your fellow leaders can decrease. And, in this setting, even if you are a very mature and skilled leader, we are still here to support and partner with you in your endeavors.*

Tell participants to take a look at the shared leadership handout and put a pen or pencil mark on the line where they think they are developmentally. Tell participants that being self-aware of their own development no matter where they land on the spectrum is more important than being (or saying they are) a highly skilled leader. Suggest that they can refer back to their bingo cards for guidance.

Invite participants to come up to the drawing and put a dot sticker and write their name on the spectrum in the same place they put their mark on their handout.

### **Including All Participants**

For participants with mobility issues, ask if they want a fellow participant to place their dot on the drawing for them. If someone is uncomfortable sharing, remind them they have the right to pass, but encourage them to step outside their comfort zone and remind them we work to make this is a safe space free of judgement where we encourage one another on our spiritual journeys.

## **Activity 3: Responsible Youth Empowerment (20 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 1 Examples of Youth Empowerment
* Leader Resource 2 Responsible Youth Empowerment
* Newsprint and markers
* Tape or sticking putty

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Review the [Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Summary Report from August 2007](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/yaya/consultation_summary_report_2007.pdf) before the session.
* Cut statements from Leader Resource 1
* Cut statements from Leader Resource 2 into strips.
* Label two sheets of newsprint “Responsible Youth Empowerment” or “Irresponsible Youth Empowerment” and post in the meeting room.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants explore and discuss the meaning of responsible youth empowerment.

Ask for two volunteers who are willing to read examples of youth empowerment aloud to the group. Give each of the two volunteers one of the examples from Leader Resource 1. Explain to the group that after they hear both examples they are going to vote on which example they believe is responsible youth empowerment and which example they believe is irresponsible youth empowerment. Ask the two volunteers to read their examples aloud, but tell them not to read the paragraph in the brackets yet, and then take a vote. After the vote, ask the volunteers to read the paragraphs in brackets. If the vote was contentious, tell the group that some clarity may be provided and there will be room for more discussion in the second part of this activity.

Hand out the strips from Leader Resource 2 with tape or sticking putty and invite participants to place them on the designated newsprint - “Responsible Youth Empowerment” or “Irresponsible Youth Empowerment” where they believe the statements belong.

Once all statements have been posted, take time to consider any statements that ended up in the wrong category. Some may be nuanced and contested. Invite participants who are having trouble identifying what responsible youth empowerment looks like to read the [Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Summary Report from August 2007](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/yaya/consultation_summary_report_2007.pdf). If disagreements continue past the time you have allotted for this activity, summarize or ask a participant to summarize what they’ve heard in the discussion to acknowledge what has been said.

Say something like:

*The concept of youth empowerment has been a cornerstone of Unitarian Universalist youth ministry for a long time and is ever evolving. Conversations like this help us clarify for ourselves and one another what we mean when we use the term. I encourage you to carry on this exploration by paying attention to experiences you have that feel like responsible youth empowerment and ask your peers and adults whose opinion you trust what their understanding of responsible youth empowerment is.*

You can offer that the group can carry on the conversation at a later date or in a closed Facebook group if your group has one.

### **Including All Participants**

For participants with reading disabilities, ask if they want to choose a fellow participant to partner with. For participants with mobility issues, ask if they want to tell a fellow participant to place their strip on the newsprint.

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Newsprint and markers, computer and projector, or Singing the Journey hymnals (enough for two or three people to share one)
* Taking it Home
* Lean on Me YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/MYI0AoXlOwE>

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Practice the song # 1021 Lean on Me.
* Write the lyrics to the song on newsprint or cue the video or set out hymnals for participants.
* Make copies of Taking It Home for each participant.

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to gather in a circle. Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. Pass out Taking It Home and explain that it contains ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends.

You can offer that the group can continue a discussion about this session at a later date or in a closed Facebook group if your group has one. End the workshop by inviting the group to sing #1021 in Singing the Journey, Lean on Me. The group can sing a cappella or along with the video.

## **Leader Reflection and Planning**

As leaders working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this workshop offered an opportunity to focus on supporting one another in our leadership journeys. Were you surprised by how participants self-assessed their strengths, weaknesses, growing edges and leadership capacity? Did your understanding or ability to explain responsible youth empowerment increase from facilitating this workshop? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator? Share your feedback and learnings from this session with the minister and religious educator.

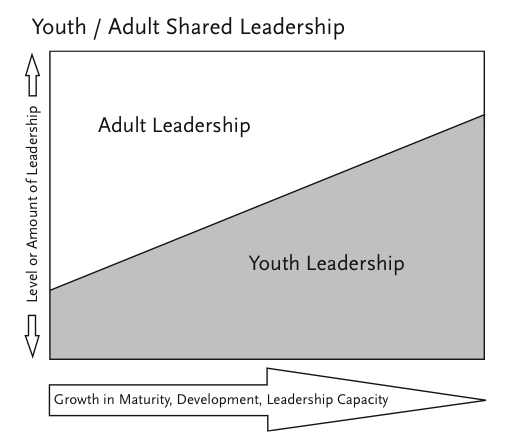
## Handout 1: Blank Bingo Card

For each box, write one strength, weakness OR growing edge. Try to have an equal number of strengths, weaknesses and growing edges. Don’t label the attributes you write down as strengths, weaknesses or growing edges.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## Handout 2: Youth Adult Shared Leadership

Attribution: Ministry with Youth Renaissance module by Jesse Jaeger.



## Taking It Home

*We approach youth ministry with the overarching goal of providing the thousands of current UU high school students with profound experiences of spiritual depth in order to: 1) value them as current members of our faith communities, thus practicing and modeling affirmation of each individual’s inherent worth and dignity; and, 2) help them develop a lifelong commitment to, and leadership and sense of belonging within Unitarian Universalism. – Carey McDonald, Former Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director*

**IN TODAY’S SESSION…** we identified our strengths, weaknesses and growing edges and recognized we don’t have to perfect every leadership skill to be great leaders. We were introduced to the concept of shared leadership and recognized the importance of sharing leadership and collaborating with others. We also explored the meaning of responsible youth empowerment.

**INCREASING YOUR LEADERSHIP CAPACITY: Take a look** at your bingo card. Identify one or two growing edges you listed. Set a small goal you can accomplish in one week to increase your leadership capacity in that area. Maybe it’s reading an article on the topic, identifying a mentor or a role model that has that quality or finding an experience that will stretch you in that area.

**CARRY ON THE CONVERSATION: Ask three people** you consider mentors or role models (youth and adults) where they think you land on the shared leadership spectrum for a specific task or leadership role. **Ask three people** whose opinion you trust how they would define responsible youth empowerment. Do you agree with them? **Read** the [Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Summary Report from August 2007](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/yaya/consultation_summary_report_2007.pdf) on UUA.org.

**ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE:** Find someone you trust and ask them if they would like to **do partner yoga** with you. Follow along with this video, or choose a few poses, or asanas, to practice with your partner: <https://youtu.be/Uh5ADKbrSBU>. Notice how you have to balance your strength and flexibility with your partner’s.

## Leader Resource 1: Youth Empowerment Examples

Example 1:

The youth group has been asked to lead a worship service in six weeks. One person in the group has participated in leading Sunday service before, and three youth total have been to a Sunday service this year. They use the majority of their group time over the next six weeks to plan the worship service with the youth group advisor. The advisor makes sure to stay out of their way and not impose their ideas on the group. By the third week of planning there is a small, but very committed group of youth attending youth group to plan. Overall, the worship service goes well, although some youth feel it could have gone better, and the rest of the congregation gives the youth group a lot of praise.

[This is an example of irresponsible youth empowerment. Youth are asked to do something that is beyond their skill level, capacity or experience with little to no help from trusted adults. Youth who were not invested in the process dropped out of youth group. Even though the end result of the service was mostly positive, the process was not supported and the youth group did not learn all they could about planning Sunday services. While the youth who participated in the service received praise, the did not receive feedback from trusted adults or have time to process how they felt the service went.]

Example 2:

The minister attends a youth group session and asks what interest the youth have in planning a Sunday worship service. There are mixed levels of experience in and excitement about planning the service. The minister invites youth who are interested, but have very little experience, to participate in lighting the chalice or doing a reading once or twice before committing to planning worship. The youth who have experience and excitement are invited to become worship associates to help plan a few Sunday services. The youth who are not excited are invited to attend a few worship services throughout the year. After each youth has gained experience, the minister asks the group again and commits to helping them bring their ideas to life for a worship service at the end of the year. Those who are interested stay after youth group for 30 minutes over the course of a month to plan it. Overall, the worship service goes well and the minister and other trusted adults provide healthy and helpful feedback.

[This is an example of responsible youth empowerment. A person who usually plans worship (the minister) invites youth into a conversation about their comfort level and excitement about planning worship. The minister then invites youth to develop their skills at a level that is appropriate for them. The youth who are not interested in taking on a leadership role are not excluded from youth group because planning happens after youth group. The minister shares their experience and skills with the planning group and commits to lifting up the group’s vision. The group receives feedback, which adds to their learning experience.]

## Leader Resource 2: Responsible Youth Empowerment

Attribution: [Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth Summary Report August 2007](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/yaya/consultation_summary_report_2007.pdf)

Cut these statements into strips for use in Activity 3. When handing out the strips during the activity, do not indicate to participants to which category the statements correspond.

*Responsible:*

Love and trust between youth and adults, between youth and youth, and between adults and adults

Mentoring relationships among children, youth, and adults, which draw from direct experience and wisdom

The development of youth confidence and self-identity through building community, learning to use their voices effectively, and realizing a more robust expression of themselves

Encouragement for all to grow together in accountability

Youth defining their issues and participating in the decisions that affect their lives and impact their communities

Youth and adults having access to information through direct and honest communication expressed with grace, humility, and respect

Trust in the competence of youth skills and insights

Appreciation of the prophetic wisdom and energy of youth to be agents of social change, justice, and service

The recognition that youth ministry is an integral Unitarian Universalist ministry and part of our collective past, present, and future

*Irresponsible:*

A gift that the adults in the congregation give to youth because they are inherently disempowered

Youth have complete control over the decisions about youth programming for the year

Inviting the youth into the sanctuary or Sunday worship space only when they perform a youth-led worship

Accepting that when youth make mistakes they do not need to be held accountable because mistakes are part of the learning process

Youth keeping issues that impact the health of the community in confidence and only giving information on a need to know basis

Equal rights for every person in the congregation

Hand holding, coddling and hovering to help youth make more adult decisions

A struggle for power within the congregation

People in youth ministry working independently of the mission, vision and covenant of their congregation, district/region or community

Adult presence and input is minimal; holding the space means continually stepping back

# Workshop 5: Active Listening

## **Introduction**

*Come sit by our fire and let us share stories. Let me hear your tales of far off lands, wanderer, and I will tell you of my travels. Share your experience of the holy with me, worshipper, and I will tell you of that which I find divine. Come and stay, lover of leaving, for ours is no caravan of despair, but of hope. We would hear your stories of grief and sorrow as readily as those of joy and laughter, for there is a time and a place and a hearing for all the stories of this world. Stories are the breath and word of the spirit of life, that power that we name love. Come, for our fire is warm and we have seats for all. Come, again and yet again, come speak to me of what fills your heart, what engages your mind, what resides in your soul. Come, let us worship together. – Worship Web* [*Jennifer Kitchen*](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/come-sit-our-fire)

This session describes why listening is an important aspect of leadership and provides practical skills for active listening.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Give participants the opportunity to practice listening and synthesizing information
* Explain non-verbal communication, how to paraphrase and ask probing questions

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Experience feeling truly listened to and be able to identify key aspects of active listening
* Understand the impact of body language
* Practice paraphrasing to communicate they are truly listening
* Learn ways to ask questions to get more information that will be helpful for their leadership.

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 10 |
| Activity 1: Listening Practice | 10 |
| Activity 2: Nonverbal Communication | 15 |
| Activity 3: Paraphrasing and Asking Probing Questions | 20 |
| Closing | 5 |
| Alternative Activity 1: Back to Back Listening | 10 |
| Alternative Activity 2: Mirroring | 15 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Think about a time when you truly felt heard and reflect on the behaviors and tools the person used to signal that they truly heard you.

## **Opening (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Newsprint and markers
* Chalice lighting words: Worship Web [The Silence](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/silence) by Sara Eileen LaWall

*Spirit of life and love,*

*In the silence*

*In the stillness*

*We hear the call of our own heart*

*Its tender dreams*

*Its sorrows and its triumphs*

*In the silence*

*In the stillness*

*We hear whispers of days gone by*

*Of dreams still becoming*

*The promise of the future*

*We celebrate together*

*Our individual journeys and dreams*

*And our collective ones*

*Knowing the journey is so much richer*

*With others to share in it.*

*In the name of all that is holy we pray.*

*Amen.*

* Group covenant (from Workshop 2, Living in Covenant)
* Check in question:

*When was a time you really felt heard?*

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Post the chalice lighting words on newsprint and post
* Post the group covenant developed in Workshop 2, Living in Covenant.
* Post the check in question in the designated place

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants. Invite participants and facilitators to go around the circle and say their names and briefly answer the check in question (in 3 or 4 sentences). Tell participants to really *listen* to other people’s answers today. Remind participants that check in is not a time for cross talk - clarifying questions can be asked if necessary. After everyone who wants to has had a chance to check in ask for a volunteer to light the chalice and another to read the chalice lighting words.

### **Including All Participants**

Let participants know they have the right to pass or pass for now. For participants who have trouble being concise you can ask them “how would you sum up your experience in one sentence?” For participants who have trouble refraining from cross talk remind them of the group covenant and to be respectful of their peers’ time to share and the leaders’ time to facilitate.

## **Activity 1: Listening Practice (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Bell or chime

### **Preparation for Activity**

### None

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants will experience being truly listened to and identify key aspects of active listening.

Split the group into pairs and ask them to decide who will be partner A and who will be partner B. Tell them partner B will begin by telling a story for 30 seconds about a favorite experience. Inform them if they run out of things to say before the 30 seconds is up, to find something more to talk about. Ask participants to chose a story they would not mind sharing with the whole group. Tell them you will ring the bell or chime when 30 seconds is up and that is the signal for partner A to share a story of their own with their partner. After partner A has shared their story tell the partner As to find a new partner B. Tell the partner Bs to tell the story they heard from their original partner as if it were their own to their new partner.

After both people have told the story of their original partners, ask participants to switch partners one more time, telling the most recent story they heard to a new person.

Call the group back together and ask for one or two volunteers to tell the most recent story they heard to the group. Ask the group if the story sounds familiar to anyone. If it has been transmitted well, someone will recognize their story.

Ask participants what they noticed about how people listened and were listened to. Ask questions like:

*Did you pay more attention once you realized you needed to remember what was said?*

*Did you feel like any of your partners weren’t paying attention to what you were saying?*

*How did that feel?*

*Did you have trouble remembering new stories because you were thinking about the stories you had to tell?*

Conclude by saying something like:

*A vital part of being an effective leader is being a good listener. Interactions with your co-leaders will go more smoothly if you can demonstrate that you are truly listening. The people you are leading will be more likely to trust your leadership if you can demonstrate that they are being heard.*

### **Including all Participants**

For participants with auditory processing issues or who are hearing impaired, this activity can be challenging. Ask these participants how they prefer to do this activity so they can listen well. Some options are for the person to speak and listen with their partner in the hall to cut down on background noise, take notes or ask their partner to repeat key points of their story. If they choose to go into the hall, monitor the group to ensure they remember their fellow participants in the hall.

## **Activity 2: Nonverbal Communication (15 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1 Nonverbal Communication
* Newsprint and markers

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of handout for all participants.
* Write “Active Listening Skills” on newsprint and post.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn how our body language affects how we are heard and how we listen.

Begin by asking for a volunteer. Ask them to tell a story about the last time they were in church. As the person tells their story demonstrate a number of negative body language signals (yawn, cross your arms in front of your chest, look away, check your watch, etc.). Do not make verbal comments to the person so participants can focus on your body language. Continue this for about a minute. Afterwards, ask the volunteer and the group what they noticed about the way you were listening to the story.

Ask the volunteer to retell the story. This time be attentive and focused on the person, using positive body language, (body posture open, some eye contact, facial expressions that reflect what the person is saying, etc.). Do not make verbal comments to the person so participants can focus on your body language. Afterwards, ask for a volunteer to act as scribe. Then ask the volunteer storyteller and the group what they noticed that was different about the way you were listening to the story this time. Ask the scribe to write what the group noticed on newsprint.

As you pass out Handout 1 Nonverbal Communication say something like:

*Non-verbal communication is happening all the time and is often unconscious. Sometimes you can receive deeper information about a person’s mental/emotional condition by the non-verbal signals they give you.*

Ask for volunteers to read the handout aloud.

After reading the handout conclude with something like:

*Keep in mind that the way we communicate non-verbally is often shaped by our culture. Be aware that if someone’s level of eye contact or physical proximity is different than yours it may be because they received different cultural messages about what is the appropriate level of eye contact or physical proximity. Mirroring someone’s nonverbal signals can make a person more comfortable than suggesting or demanding that they mirror yours when you are in a leadership position.*

### **Including all Participants**

For participants with visual impairment, ask them if they’d like to sit closer to you. After you demonstrate listening, verbally review your behaviors.

## **Activity 3: Paraphrasing and Asking Probing Questions (20 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handouts 2 Paraphrasing and Synthesizing and 3 Asking Probing Questions

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of handout for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn ways of communicating so others know they are truly being listened to and learn ways to ask questions to get information helpful for their leadership.

Pass out Handout 2 Paraphrasing and Summarizing and Handout 3 Asking Probing Questions. Briefly explain the basics of paraphrasing and asking probing questions by saying something like:

*Paraphrasing is a great way to let people know that you’re really listening to them and that you care about what they are saying by reflecting what you hear from the other person. When you paraphrase it is helpful to include the basic elements of what they’re saying and the emotions they convey. A very simplified version of paraphrasing that you can use is: “It sounds like… and you feel...” These examples and the practice we’ll be doing may seem unnatural or mechanical. With practice, you’ll learn to incorporate paraphrasing into conversation in a natural fashion.*

*When paraphrasing or summarizing what someone has said, it is helpful to be tentative in your paraphrasing to leave room for the other person to correct you (“it sounds like…” “if I’m getting this right…” “correct me if I’m wrong,” etc.). Sometimes you might be off track, and that’s ok. There are times, however, when you’ll be able to see things (trends, underlying messages, etc.) in what the person is saying that they hadn’t noticed, and this can be very helpful to them.*

Ask for two volunteers to read Person A and Person B on Handout 2 Paraphrasing and Summarizing as an example.

*In addition to paraphrasing or synthesizing what someone has said, you can ask probing questions. Asking probing questions is basically a way to get more information from a person. If a person is upset they may not think the same way they do normally. By using probing questions, you can help a person examine themselves, their situations, and their reactions. If things get too off topic, probe questions can be used to refocus.*

Ask for volunteers to read the headings and examples under Use of Probing Questions in Handout 3 Asking Probing Questions.

Break the group into triads. Tell the groups to choose one person as the speaker, one as the listener and one as the observer. Instruct the groups that the speaker will talk about a recent event in their lives that produced a moderate, but not extreme, reaction in them; the listener will listen attentively to them, practicing the paraphrasing, summarizing and probing questions that they just learned, as well as the non-verbal communication from the previous activity, and the observers will remain completely quiet and simply observe the entire process. After three minutes, stop the exercise. Ask the observers to share what they noticed about the interaction with their small group. Continue the process until everyone has had a chance to be in all three roles.

Gather the big group together and ask questions like:

*How did it feel to be the speaker?*

*How did it feel to be the listener?*

*What did you notice as the observer?*

Close the discussion by paraphrasing or summarizing the group discussion. Point out that you just practiced the technique the group learned.

**Including all Participants**

For participants with auditory processing issues or who are hearing impaired, this activity can be challenging. Ask these participants how they prefer to do this activity so they can listen well. Some options are for the person to speak and listen with their partner in the hall to cut down on background noise, take notes or ask their partner to repeat key points of their story. If they choose to go into the hall, monitor the group to ensure they remember their fellow participants in the hall.

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Taking it Home

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of Taking It Home for each participant.

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to gather in a circle. Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. Pass out Taking It Home and explain that it contains ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends.

You can offer that the group can continue a discussion about this session at a later date or in a closed Facebook group if your group has one. End the workshop with this guided meditation by [Stephen W Dick](http://www.uua.org/directory/people/stephen-w-dick) available on [Worship Web](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/5519.shtml).

…Let us pause to listen to the unheard world . . .

Relax into a comfortable position . . .

Breathe in and out very slowly . . .

Quiet yourself and listen to the rhythm of your breath, your heart . . .

Listen to the silence . . .

You will think something . . .   
    let it pass into you and through you . . .

You will feel something . . .   
    let it pass into you and through you . . .

Spend some time in the unheard world . . .

(Several moments of silence)

We begin to return now to the world we usually hear . . .

As you do, try to bring something of that unheard world with you . . .

And, remember to give yourself permission to return to the unheard world. Amen.

## **Leader Reflection and Planning**

As leaders working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this workshop offered an opportunity to practice active listening to honor each individual’s inherent worth and dignity. What did you notice about your participants’ ability to listen and synthesize information in the Listening Practice activity? How can you incorporate practicing active listening skills in future sessions? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator? Share your feedback and learnings from this session with the minister and religious educator.

## **Alternative Activity 1: Listening Back to Back (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 4 Back to Back Tangram Building

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make a copy of Handout 4 for each participant
* Cut the tangram into shapes and paperclip each set

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn to listen and follow directions to complete a task and to provide clear and concrete directions for another person to complete a task.

Break participants into pairs and ask them to decide who is partner A and who is partner B. Have each pair sit back-to-back either on the ground or in chairs facing a table or other flat surface. Give both partners a tangram set. Instruct partner A to arrange their puzzle pieces into a shape where all pieces are touching. Tell the pairs that person A must now verbally describe the shape they have created and instruct their partner to create the same shape with their pieces, step by step. Tell the groups that the goal is for the shapes to match each other exactly. Once partner B has finished their shape, invite the group to take a look at their partners shapes to see if they match. Repeat this process with partner B creating a shape and describing it for partner A to replicate. After both have had a turn giving direction and listening invite the group into a circle and ask questions similar to:

*What was it like to describe and provide instructions to your partner?*

*What was it like to listen to and recreate your partner’s shape?*

*What can we learn about listening and providing instruction when you are in a leadership*

*role?*

### **Including all Participants**

For participants with spatial learning disabilities or auditory processing issues, ask them how they prefer to do this activity so they can listen well and recreate the shape. One option is to create a group of three where one partner can see the shape of partner A it and provide suggestions or clues to partner B if they get stuck.

## **Alternative Activity 2: Mirroring (15 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1 Nonverbal Communication

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of handout for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants practice communicating non-verbally, learn how to mirror the movements and facial expressions of others and why that is an important part of listening.

Invite participants to find a partner, stand facing each other about three feet apart and decide who is partner A and who is partner B. Invite partner A to think of a simple story of something they did this week: perhaps how they got ready for school; something that happened at dinner or a conversation with a friend. Instruct them that this should be a story they wouldn’t mind telling to the whole group. Tell them that partner A, silently, will begin making simple gestures, movements and facial expressions to tell their story and partner B is to mirror or duplicate their partner’s movements and facial expressions exactly, just as a mirror would. Coach them to look into each other's eyes rather than at their hands to facilitate more precise communication. Tell participants that if they are doing it well, the facilitators will not be able to tell who is the leader and who is the "mirror." Remind participants that slow, fluid movements will help their partners more easily mirror them. After one or two minutes, instruct participants to switch roles and give partner B a moment to think of their story before beginning.

If time allows, challenge the groups to attempt mirroring each other without designating a leader. Or you can challenge partner A to close their eyes and, by following the heat signature in their partner’s hands, attempt to mirror partner B who will keep their eyes open so they can track partner A’s progress, and then switch roles.

After each person has had a turn leading and mirroring gather the group into a circle pass out Handout 2 Nonverbal Communication. Ask participants to read the handout silently. Say something like:

*Subtly mirroring someone’s behavior is one nonverbal cue we can give to show someone we are actively engaged and listening to them. In fact, we often unconsciously mirror people in attempt to build rapport with them. You can also use mirroring to gain a sense of empathy for how someone else is feeling. In this activity we literally “acted out someone else’s story” and hopefully you were able to glean what their story was.*

Then ask questions like:  
 *What do you think was your partner’s story?*

*What do you think was the emotion behind your partner’s story? How could you tell?*

*What did it feel like to mirror your partner?*

*What did it feel like to be mirrored?*

### **Including all Participants**

For participants on the autism spectrum who have trouble with eye contact or physical proximity, ask them how they want to participate in this activity. One option is to encourage them to tell their partner at what distance they feel comfortable in this activity and don’t enforce eye contact.

## Handout 1: Nonverbal Communication

At the heart of leadership lies communication. For many of us, even in the digital age, speech is the form of communication with which we are most comfortable. It is far from the only means of communication. Here are some other examples of in-person communication.

**The Use of Silence:**

Although an excessive amount of silence can cause an uncomfortable environment, it is not something that should be avoided. A leader who effectively uses silence can add an entirely new dimension to the relationship they have with their co-leaders and participants.

Some of the uses and advantages of silence include:

* Showing a person that you are willing and able to really listen to them, and that you are not going to try to talk at every instance available to you
* Showing a person you value what they have to say and that it is worth your time to wait for them to say it
* Helping provide motivation for more reluctant people to speak
* Giving both parties time to reflect upon what has just been said and what they are presently thinking or feeling
* Giving both parties time to rest and regain their strength and composure after intense or exhausting experiences
* Providing the opportunity to really tune into other modes of communication such as facial expression, body posture, etc.

Source: Doyle, Robert E. [Essential Skills and Strategies in the Helping Process](https://books.google.com/books/about/Essential_skills_and_strategies_in_the_h.html?id=jTBHAAAAMAAJ). Pacific

Grove: Wadsworth Group, 1992.

**Nonverbal Signals**

By studying a person’s nonverbal messages with care and dedication, you send them a profound message that you are interested in and committed to them. Many people will really appreciate this extra level of attentiveness, and it can greatly enhance the relationship between you and those you are leading. This perceptiveness also facilitates your work by giving you important information about a person that might not be communicated otherwise.

Some nonverbal signals to look for include:

* Body Language: Are they sitting straight up or are they slumped? What kind of movements or gestures are they making?
* Eyes: Are they making eye contact? Are they staring at one place, are their eyes darting around?
* Facial Expressions: What might be the emotions behind the facial expressions a person is making?
* Voice: What is a their tone of voice, pitch, volume, inflection, spacing of words, emphasis?
* Space: How close did they decide to be next to you? Are they facing you or turned away? Are they higher than you or lower than you?

Source: Egan, Gerard. [The Skilled Helper](http://www.amazon.com/The-Skilled-Helper-Management-Opportunity-Development/dp/0495601896). Pacific Grove: Wadsworth Group, 2002.

## Handout 2 Paraphrasing and Summarizing

Paraphrasing and summarizing are fundamental tools in active listening. These are the foundation upon which everything else is built. Essentially, paraphrasing and summarizing consist of taking what someone has said and repeating it back to them in slightly different words. An example would look like this:

Person A: I’m really frustrated by coffee hour. Last week the coffee was not hot enough and this week it is too hot. I want 2% milk for my coffee but there is only cream and soy milk. It’s so crowded and I have a hard time finding people to talk to. The snack assortment only has sweet stuff in it and I like fruit. Even if I did like the snack options, they’re always gone by the time I get through the line and I wouldn’t get any anyways. How am I supposed to enjoy myself in this chaos?

Person B: It sounds like you’re unhappy with the food and beverage options offered at coffee hour and that it’s hard for you to connect to people. You’re not certain what to do in this situation and I hear you saying coffee hour is stressful for you.

Here are a few phrases you can use to introduce paraphrasing and summarizing:

“It sounds like...” “I hear you saying...”

“So let me see if I have this correct...” “So, basically…”

“You’re feeling… because...” “Would it be correct to say that...”

### Why Paraphrasing Is Effective and Important:

* Paraphrasing is one of the most important ways to let people know you are listening to them. It shows people that you haven’t been ignoring them or thinking of other stuff while they talk
* If you don’t know what to say or are afraid you will say the wrong thing, paraphrasing is how you show that you care and that you are listening
* Sometimes, by hearing what they have said reflected back to them, people can get a new perspective on their situation or realize things about what they’re saying which they wouldn’t have realized otherwise.

### A Few Tips to Keep in Mind

* You might not always be able to capture the essence of what a person is immediately trying to say to you. This is perfectly okay, and by being tentative, (“So, I think that what you’re saying is... is this right?”) you give the person permission to correct you,
* Asking whether you’ve heard someone correctly shows them that it’s important to you that you fully understand what they’re saying,
* It is very important for you to genuinely understand what’s going on with a person so that you can know how to respond effectively. Paraphrasing is a way to double-check that you understand correctly,
* If possible, reflect back both the facts and the feelings involved in whatever someone is saying to you. If you don’t hear much in the way of feelings, it may helpful to ask some probing questions. See Handout 3 Asking Probing Questions.

## Handout 3 Asking Probing Questions

Fundamentally, asking probing questions is simply a method of seeking more information from a person. There are many ways to seek this information and many reasons for you to do so. Probing questions are NOT meant to satisfy your curiosity about the details of a person’s life or to gather irrelevant information which will only detract from the effectiveness of your leadership.

### Types of Probing Questions

**Questions**

* “How did that make you feel?”
* “What was your response to that?”

**Requests**

* “Could you tell me a little bit more about...?”
* “So, could you describe what your ideal outcome to the situation might be?

**Statements**

* “I’m still not quite sure about…”
* “I hear you saying… and … but I’m confused about how they relate to each other.”

### Uses of Probing Questions

**Start a Dialogue**

*Example*: “So, how have things been going at church for you so far?” or “How are you doing?”

People may come to you wanting to talk about something or get support, but they’re nervous or not quite sure how or where to begin. A little probing at the beginning of a conversation can be helpful.

**Help People Explore and Express Feelings**

*Example*: “How did that make you feel?” or “What was that like for you?”

If most of what a person is giving you is just narrative detail about things that have happened or situations in their life, probing questions can help focus in on the really crucial material of a person’s feelings.

**Keep Things Focused**

*Example*: “So, of all of those things you just mentioned, which feels like it’s the biggest or most pressing right now?” “Earlier you were talking about… could you give me a little more info about that?” “So, going back to the situation with… what were you hoping to get out of that experience?”

Probing questions can be used to figure out the key issues on which to focus. Sometimes people will inadvertently wander off the topic. Sometimes people will intentionally (although sometimes unconsciously) start to stray from the topic if it is getting particularly difficult or uncomfortable for them to talk about it. You can use probing questions to keep the conversation on track and to gently challenge people to confront feelings or situations that are difficult for them.

**Help People Explore Options/Possibilities**

*Example*: “What would be some possible ways that you might respond to...?” “So, if you were to do that, what do you see as some of the potential ways others might react?”

Asking probing questions can help people explore options or possibilities in a given situation they are facing.

**Help People Remain Concrete and Practical**

*Example*: Person A: “I don’t like this curriculum it all. It’s full of boring stuff that I already know.”

Person B: “What sorts of things in this curriculum have you already done?”

Vague generalizations and nebulous statements are often not very helpful. Asking probing questions can help bring the conversation into more productive territory.

## Taking It Home

*Come sit by our fire and let us share stories. Let me hear your tales of far off lands, wanderer, and I will tell you of my travels. Share your experience of the holy with me, worshipper, and I will tell you of that which I find divine. Come and stay, lover of leaving, for ours is no caravan of despair, but of hope. We would hear your stories of grief and sorrow as readily as those of joy and laughter, for there is a time and a place and a hearing for all the stories of this world. Stories are the breath and word of the spirit of life, that power that we name love. Come, for our fire is warm and we have seats for all. Come, again and yet again, come speak to me of what fills your heart, what engages your mind, what resides in your soul. Come, let us worship together. – Worship Web* [*Jennifer Kitchen*](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/come-sit-our-fire)

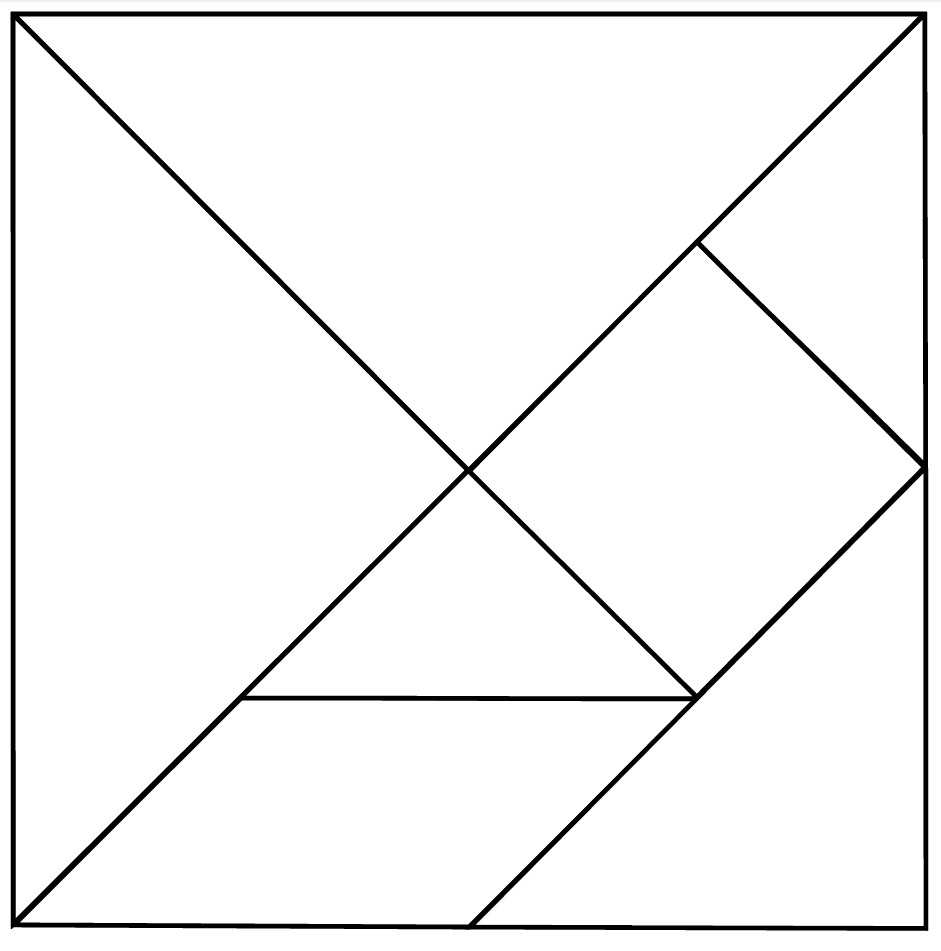
**IN TODAY’S SESSION…** we learned to identify when we are truly being listened to, explored key aspects of active listening, and learned how our body language affects how we are heard and how we listen. We practiced paraphrasing to communicate we are truly listening, and learned ways to ask questions to get more information that will be helpful for our leadership.

**USE LISTENING TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS Ask** a friend or family member to tell you a story. Practice nonverbal cues, paraphrasing and asking probing questions to show you are listening. **Tell a story** to a friend or family member who is a good listener and pay attention to their behavior. See if you can pick up any skills you could use in the future.

**USE LISTENING TO LEARN MORE Identify** a concept in school or at work you are struggling with. Talk with a peer, teacher or supervisor who understands the concept. Ask probing questions and attempt to paraphrase their answers. Reflect on whether this has improved your understanding of the concept. **The next time** you experience a miscommunication with someone you know on social media, call them or talk to them in person. Practice your active listening skills to gain clarity about the situation.

**ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE:** Sometimes it’s hard to truly listen when we don’t make time for the absence of words in our lives. **Spend five to 20 minutes listening to your own breath and the sounds around you**. If thoughts come into your head, recognize them, let them go and return to listening to your breath and the sounds around you.

## Leader Resource: 1 Back to Back Tangram Building



# Workshop 6: Creating Inclusive Community

## **Introduction**

*Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power. Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done. Arms to hold us when we falter. A circle of healing. A circle of friends. Someplace where we can be free. –* [*Starhawk*](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/community-means-strength) *Worship Web*

This session describes ways to create a climate of acceptance and identifies some barriers to creating inclusive community.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Ask participants to reflect on the cues, feelings and actions associated with creating a sense of belonging
* Introduce participants to ways to create a climate of acceptance.

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Understand the components of creating a genuinely inclusive community
* Practice ways to create a climate of acceptance as they build community.

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 10 |
| Activity 1. Mattering | 10 |
| Activity 2: Five Steps of Community Building | 15 |
| Activity 3: Establishing a Climate of Acceptance | 20 |
| Closing | 5 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Reflect on a time when you knew you really mattered to someone or a group. How did you know? What behaviors and language you use to show someone they matter to you? Review Handout 2 Five Steps of Community Building in Youth Ministry and think about what stage you think the participants of this workshop are in. What stage do you think your other communities are in?

## **Opening (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Newsprint and markers
* Chalice lighting words: Waiting by Reverend Marta I. Valentín in [Voices from the Margins](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Voices-from-the-Margins-P17223.aspx)

*Step into the center*

*come in from the margins*

*I will hold you here.*

*Don’t look back*

*or around*

*Feel my arms*

*the water is rising.*

*I will hold you*

*as you tremble.*

*I will warm you.*

*Don’t look out*

*or away*

*life is in here*

*between you and me.*

*In this tiny space,*

*where I end and you begin*

*hope lives.*

*In this precious tiny space*

*no words need be whispered*

*to tell us we are one.*

*You and I*

*we make the circle*

*if we choose to.*

*Come*

*step in*

*I am waiting for you.*

* Group covenant (from Workshop 2, Living in Covenant)
* Check in question:

*When was a time you felt like you really mattered to someone or in a group?*

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Write and post the chalice lighting words on newsprint.
* Post the group covenant developed in Workshop 2, Living in Covenant.
* Post the check in question in the designated place.

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants. Invite participants and facilitators to go around the circle and say their names and briefly answer the check in question (in 3 or 4 sentences). Remind participants that check in is not a time for cross talk - clarifying questions can be asked if necessary. After everyone who wants to has had a chance to check in ask for a volunteer to light the chalice and another to read the chalice lighting words.

### **Including All Participants**

Let participants know they have the right to pass or pass for now. For participants who have trouble being concise you can ask them “how would you sum up your experience in one sentence?” For participants who have trouble refraining from cross talk remind them of the group covenant and to be respectful of their peers’ time to share and the leaders’ time to facilitate.

## **Activity 1: Mattering (15 minutes)**

*Adapted from* [*Harvest the Power*](http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/harvest/workshop8/142219.shtml)

### **Materials for Activity**

* Newsprint and markers
* Handout 1 Establishing a Climate of Acceptance

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Post newsprint with “We Know We Matter When...” written at the top.
* Write on newsprint the four components in inclusive community referenced in in Handout 1 Establishing a Climate of Acceptance.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn to identify the qualities of an inclusive community.

Ask participants to think about others’ and their own responses to the check in question: “When was a time you felt like you really mattered to someone or in a group?”

Say something like:

*There are signs in an inclusive community that tell us we belong. The ways people interact with you, the feelings you have, the habits, rituals, traditions or strategies of a community can all be signs of an inclusive community. How did you know you mattered in the situation you talked about during check in? How did people interact with you, what feelings did you have?*

Ask a participant to act as scribe and list responses on newsprint posted for everyone to see.

Review the group’s covenant and ask if there are any items from the list of responses people would like to add to the covenant. If a participant sees something from the list they’d like to add to the covenant, ask if the group agrees then add it to the covenant. Use a separate sheet of newsprint if necessary. Ask for a volunteer to take a picture of the list and share it with the group.

Say something in reference to the list generated like:

*A genuinely inclusive community is welcoming to people of all ages, genders, races, ethnicities, abilities, economic classes and sexualities. Even if not all identities are represented in the community there are intentional strategies and habits in place so that if someone, no matter their age, race, ethnicity, gender, ability, class or sexuality walks in the door, they feel a sense of belonging. Communities are never perfect, but naming when we are less inclusive and trying again builds our spiritual muscles.*

*Our Universalist ancestors taught us that all beings are worthy of love and belonging. We can live this in small and large ways by creating inclusive communities that welcome people of all ages, races and ethnicities, classes, gender identities and sexual orientations in our ever-changing world. The United States is in a period of enormous transition. By the year 2043, non-Hispanic white Americans will be the minority as ethnic minority populations and the number of people who identify as multiracial/multiethnic are increasing (*[*United States Census Bureau*](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-243.html)*, 2012). Community building in the midst of such diversity can be challenging. However, with knowledge, skills and training, creating inclusive community is within every UU community’s reach.*

Refer to the newsprint and handout and tell the group that according to former UUA staff person Rev. Dr. Monica L. Cummings, there are four key components in an inclusive community. Ask participants to identify the components that correspond with the list created earlier in the activity.

**Note:** this workshop focuses on creating a climate of acceptance and creating space for trust to grow. Workshop 4, Shared Leadership focuses on mutual relationships and working for a common goal. Workshop 5, Active Listening addresses awareness of cultural differences in communication styles.

### **Including All Participants**

This activity may be challenging both for participants with identities of privilege and for participants with marginalized identities. Encourage the whole group to not take the concept of mattering for granted and note that identities associated with power and privilege are often unfairly valued more in an unjust society than marginalized identities. Remind the whole group that the way an unjust society views or values aspects of their identity is in no way a reflection of their inherent worth and dignity.

## **Activity 2: Five Steps of Community Building (15 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 2 Five Steps of Community Building
* Newsprint and markers
* Tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of handout for all participants.
* Tape together two or more sheets of newsprint, and put them on the wall. Divide these sheets into five equal vertical columns. Label the columns to represent the 5 stages of building community with Bonding on the far left to Deeper Sharing and Goal Setting on the far right.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn specific examples of activities they can use to build community.

Give each participant a copy of Handout 2 The Five Steps to Building Community and ask for volunteers to read the handout aloud.

Invite the group to name the best bonding activities that they have done in youth ministry, either in youth group, with the congregation or at a conference or training. Have a volunteer scribe what the group comes up with, putting them in the “Bonding” column. Repeat this for each stage of building community. If a participant has an activity but is not clear where the activity should be placed, ask for a clarification on what happens during the activity and ask what the group thinks. An activity can be listed in more than one column if it could be used in multiple categories.

After there are a number of activities in each column or time is up, whichever comes first, lead a discussion with questions like:

*What stage do you think this group is in the five steps to building community?*

*What would you do if there were newcomers to a group that was already at Deeper Sharing and Goal Setting?*

End the discussion with the suggestion that a volunteer take a picture of the list of activities and share it with the group so they can use these activities to create community at church, in school, with friends or at home.

## **Activity 3: Establishing a Climate of Acceptance (20 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1, Establishing a Climate of Acceptance
* Leader Resource 1, Non-Inclusive Role Play Facilitators’ Notes
* Leader Resource 2, Non-Inclusive Role Play Scenarios

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make one copy of Leader Resource 2 and cut scenarios apart.
* Choose two scenarios based on the skill level of the group.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn to identify barriers to creating a climate of acceptance and discuss some ways to address those barriers.

Divide participants into two groups. Pass out a scenario to each group. Give the groups 10 minutes to prepare a short presentation about the scenario. If you have chosen to use the role plays dealing with race or ethnicity, instruct groups to ensure that they are not caricaturing racial stereotypes in their skit. Then have each group present their role play.

After each role-play, say to the members of the group, “Thank you, you are no longer your role, you’re now [state their names].” Ask the larger group to name a few things wrong with this scenario without offering solutions just yet. Refer to Handout 1 Establishing a Climate of Acceptance and remind participants that to establish a climate of acceptance one must suspend judgement, stay engaged, be willing to learn and accept that they may make a mistake. For each role play lead a discussion asking questions like:

*How might the actors suspend judgement in this situation?*

*How might the actors continue to stay engaged in this situation?*

*What might the actors do to demonstrate their willingness to learn in this situation?*

*What might the actors do to demonstrate they can accept they’ve made a mistake?*

End the discussion by making the observation that creating a climate of acceptance is the responsibility of everyone in the group and that a quality of good leadership is the ability to intentionally model inclusive behavior for others.

### **Including All Participants**

Some participants may have lived these scenarios in real life. Make sure you balance your need for time management with any desires to share personal stories so that participants can feel heard and your session can remain within the designated time frame. Because the scenarios and discussions may be triggering for some participants talk with the minister, religious educator or chaplain ahead of time so they are prepared to respond.

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Newsprint and markers, computer and projector, or Singing the Living Tradition hymnals (enough for two or three people to share one)
* Come, Come, Whoever You Are YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/IQlZaMhGWIM>
* Taking it Home

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Practice the song # 188 Come, Come, Whoever you Are.
* Write the lyrics to the song on newsprint or a Power Point slide or set out hymnals for participants.
* Make copies of Taking It Home for each participant

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to gather in a circle. Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. Pass out Taking It Home and explain that it contains ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends.

You can offer that the group can continue a discussion about this session at a later date or in a closed Facebook group if your group has one. End the workshop by inviting the group to sing #188 in Singing the Living Tradition, Come, Come, Whoever You Are. The group can sing a cappella or along with the video.

## **Leader Reflection and Planning**

As leaders working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this workshop offered an opportunity to examine the ways we can help others know they belong and some barriers to creating inclusive community. What came up for you during the Mattering activity? Did your understanding or ability to explain creating a climate of acceptance increase from facilitating this workshop? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator? Share your feedback and learnings from this session with the minister and religious educator.

## Handout 1: Establishing a Climate of Acceptance

Adapted from Rev. Dr. Monica L. Cummings’ work for the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Community building can be one of the most rewarding and wonderful experiences of our lives. It can also be one the most frustrating and messy times of our lives. As we join with others to create community it is important to be mindful that the person sitting next to you or across from you may be anxious or self-conscious, may have a different perspective from you or may be present with a different set of cultural experiences and understandings. Therefore, a component of creating inclusive community is to be accepting. There are four components for establishing a climate of acceptance. Community members are willing to: create a climate of acceptance; be aware of cultural differences in communication styles; trust each other; enter into mutual relationship and work for a common goal. Here are some more tips on establishing a climate of acceptance.

### Suspend Judgment

Being accepting challenges community members to suspend judgment of others and instead look for common ground on which to build a relationship. It also requires group members to move out of their comfort zone by talking with people they do not know or talking with people who are new to the group. While it is part of human nature to gravitate toward what is familiar and comfortable, too often when that aspect of human nature plays out in group situations, there is usually at least one person left out.

### Stay Engaged

A second component of establishing a climate of acceptance is the ability to wrestle with an unfamiliar or opposing perspective and stay engaged in order to understand another’s perspective or lived experience. Understanding another’s perspective (regardless if you agree with it or not) is important because it allows one to learn what holds meaning for the other person. Once we learn what is meaningful to others the bond between us grows closer.

### Be Willing to Learn

A third component of establishing a climate of acceptance is the willingness to learn from everyone in the group. That includes being open to learning from women, ethnic minorities, transgender and working class people who have much to teach those who are middle and upper class, post high school educated and male.

### Accept that You Will Make Mistakes

The final component of establishing a climate of acceptance is acknowledging that you and other group members will make mistakes. Making mistakes is a normal part of being human (and how we learn most times). However, most of us are given the cultural message at an early age that mistakes are something to be avoided at all costs. There is a tendency to “hold back” in community because we are afraid to make a mistake. However, when we fear making a mistake we also risk not growing into our full potential. This limits our contributions to our

community and limits our confidence in ourselves.

## Handout 2: Five Steps of Community Building

Adapted by Jennifer Martin and Galen Moore from [Youth Ministry Advising: A Complete Guide](http://www.uuabookstore.org/Youth-Ministry-Advising-P17246.aspx) by the UUA Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

### Step One: Bonding

The first step in building community is to break down the cliques and barriers that exist, and to establish a relationship of trust among the individuals in the group. A problem-solving task or other activity that requires group members to work side by side can create communal bonds. As they discuss solutions and help one another accomplish the goal, group members transcend their diverse backgrounds. Cooperation is the goal. As each person’s input is accepted and welcomed by others, they begin to identify themselves as part of the team.

### Step Two: Opening Up

When an individual can share non-threatening areas of their life, an exciting step in group building has taken place. If one person perceives that another is genuinely interested in their story, then trust will develop between the two. Unfortunately, the reverse is also true. If a person perceives that others do not care enough to listen, trust – the foundation of community – will not be established. The more sympathetically a group listens, the more secure an individual feels as a member of a group.

The exercises done in this step should be flexible, so that people can share to whatever degree they feel comfortable. Participants leave these activities enthusiastic about the deepening friendships they are developing in their group. They realize that their personal imperfections and struggles are shared by the group. Individuals discover that their uniqueness is not strange but wonderful and the group accepts and loves them.

### Step Three: Affirming

The act of encouraging each other through affirmation is crucial to the growing process of a group. When a person’s peers compliment them, they feel more confident in themselves in relation to the group and can share deeper feelings. Many reclusive people become active members of the group when they realize others care about them. Participants in affirming interactions leave feeling warm and fuzzy about the group and themselves. This feeling is especially crucial at this stage of the community building process. After Opening Up, people need positive feedback before they will consider sharing further. It is important to remember that adult leaders and advisors are an integral part of the community building process and they need affirmation from their peers just like everyone else.

### Step Four: Stretching

Difficult situations naturally arise if the group is together long enough. These include problems that arise in group members’ lives like divorce, illness, drug abuse; or those that affect the group directly like division of the church, rules violation, breaks in the covenant and cliques. These situations are opportunities for stretching. If a stretching experience does not surface on its own it is sometimes necessary to initiate one.

Stretching exercises reap many benefits. When people move beyond their normal comfort level they experience the greatest potential for growth. Group members facing struggles together must actively care for each other. Individuals cannot merely say they care for each other in a stretching exercise; they must actively show it. They must create an atmosphere where people feel comfortable enough to expose their imperfections to the group. When they see that the group still likes them, they realize that their facade of perfection is unnecessary. And when self-critical members of the group discover that even seemingly perfect people have struggles, they will be less hard on themselves.

Through a simple stretching exercise, individuals also realize they can achieve much more as a group than they could as a collection of individuals. They realize the importance of each member to the entire group. Facing and overcoming difficulties give people the confidence that they can cope with the everyday problems they face and builds resilience. They learn that they can accomplish more than they thought possible, if they believe in themselves.

### Step Five: Deeper Sharing

At this stage, individuals share deeply with one another and set goals. The group becomes a setting where people can express their visions of the future and present struggles. The group will not laugh at or condemn its members if they admit they flunked a test, or that they dream of becoming a US senator, or that they have a drinking problem.

When a group member shares a problem, the rest of the group gives support and encouragement by expressing sympathy. The group can help the individual talk through possible solutions and goals. The group holds the individual accountable for their decisions, remaining supportive throughout the process.

It is important to keep in mind that not all of a person’s thoughts are appropriate to share in a group setting. A person should be discouraged from telling the entire group details of their life that might hurt another member of the group. They should be encouraged to share these struggles with one another or their mentors on a one to one basis, and in these conversations come up with a suitable way to bring it to the group.

### Action

Taking a group through the five steps is essential to create community, but it is only the beginning of the exercises’ benefits. Once they have built a sense of community, participants will be ready to risk sharing with their peers in a non-programmed way. They will also be ready to set and accomplish other goals with a united effort.

## Taking It Home

*Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power. Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done. Arms to hold us when we falter. A circle of healing. A circle of friends. Someplace where we can be free. – Starhawk*

**IN TODAY’S SESSION…** we reflected on the cues, feelings and actions associated with creating a sense of belonging. We learned about barriers to creating inclusive community and practiced tools for creating a climate of acceptance.

**SHOW SOMEONE THEY MATTER: Invite** a friend to church on Sunday. **Ask** someone who goes to your congregation but hasn’t been in awhile if you’ll see them on Sunday. If they say they can’t make it, ask if there’s anything they need. **Learn** something new about someone at school to whom you wouldn’t normally talk.

**PRACTICE INCLUSIVITY: Pay close attention** this week to who is left out of your circle of friends. Think about ways to expand your circle of friends. **Be aware** of real life non-inclusive scenarios in the media and post a comment on your social media about suspending judgement, staying engaged, having a willingness to learn or accepting that someone has made a mistake.

**ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: Practice Gratitude** by writing someone a letter or thank you card telling them how they have made you feel included in their life or community. Hand deliver it or put it in the mail, everyone likes to receive a letter!

## Leader Resource 1: Non-Inclusive Role Play Facilitators’ Notes

Divide the group into two groups and give each group a scenario from Leader Resource 2 Non-Inclusive Role Play Scenarios. Give the groups 10 minutes to prepare a short presentation about the scenario. Then have each group present.

Go over the following four guidelines with the group.

Guidelines:

1. Everyone must have a part/line. Even if your part consists of giggling in the background or your one line is, “Hey, stop that!” be sure everyone is involved in the skit.
2. Just present the problem, don’t resolve it. You can discuss possible solutions within your group, but once you present the ‘problem,’ the rest of the group will be required to figure out the best way to resolve it.
3. Don’t play yourself. If you are a youth, try playing an adult, or vice versa. Or play someone with a very different personality than yourself.

Some of the role plays are situations dealing with race or ethnicity. Make sure to check in with those groups, to make sure that they are not caricaturing racial stereotypes in their skit.

### Non-Inclusive Scenario # 1 Notes for Facilitating Large Group Discussion

This can be a sensitive role play. Some may insist that scenario #1 could never happen (it does) or that it’s not specific to communities of color. If there are people of color in the group, leaders should be sure they are not challenged to prove that this could or has happened. The take-away with this scenario is that someone in the community is being treated as an outsider and is assumed to be custodial staff, likely because of their race or ethnicity.

The group discussion should focus on responding to an event like this: talking with the youth and affirming that they are a valued member of the community, speaking with the adult about what transpired, having conversations as a planning team for the next event around how to prevent this kind of occurrence. A long term response may be a commitment to anti-racism, anti-oppression and multiculturalism training.

### Non-Inclusive Community Scenario #2 and #3 Notes for Facilitating Large Group Discussion:

Some participants in the room may have experienced something like scenario #2 in their own youth groups and may want to share what they did in that situation. A little is ok, but encourage them to talk about what they would do in the situation that was presented, instead of explaining their experience in great detail.

Things that should be done after a situation like this include support for the upset youth, conversations with those using the derogatory language and perhaps a mediated conversation with all the involved parties. There may also be a need for community healing as community has been broken. Even those who were not involved will certainly have heard about it before long.

Suggest that the actors in scenario #2 could create a covenant as a youth group at the next meeting about how they want to be in community and the group’s values. Youth groups should be a place that is inclusive, regardless of a person’s race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious belief, class, ability, education, or social group. We need to be intentional about making them so.

### Non-Inclusive Community Scenario #4 Notes for Facilitating Large Group Discussion

This question is often included in introductions in an effort to avoid assumptions and make space for transgender people to feel included. However, it can sometimes have the opposite effect. “It doesn’t matter to me,” can be interpreted as dismissive or as an example of privilege. It can also sometimes have the effect of negating an individual’s insistence on a particular set of pronouns: “If others ‘don’t care’ what they’re called (which is a privilege because they will likely be called by the correct pronoun anyway), then why should it matter what I call you?” Participants being dismissive of the exercise can isolate a transgender person in the room, and being forced to share puts those not yet ready to come out to the group in a very awkward, uncomfortable position where they either have to lie or out themselves. A possible “remedy” is to create an optional space during introductions where people can share what information they feel the group should have to welcome them. This can include pronouns, allergies, needs, or other identifiers.

## Leader Resource 2: Non-Inclusive Role Play Scenarios

### Non-Inclusive Scenario # 1

Guidelines:

1. Everyone must have a part/line. Even if your part consists of giggling in the background or your one line is, “Hey, stop that!” be sure everyone is involved in the skit.
2. Just present the problem, don’t resolve it. You can discuss possible solutions within your group, but once you present the ‘problem,’ the rest of the group will be required to figure out the best way to resolve it.
3. Don’t play yourself. If you are a youth, try playing an adult, or vice versa. Or play someone with a very different personality than yourself.

Role play the following situation:

*It’s Sunday morning and your weekend conference is coming to a close. Adults from the congregation are cleaning up from coffee hour and there is some mixing between the groups. One of the adults approaches a youth of color, assuming they are on the custodial staff and not a member of the conference, and hands them a bag of garbage to be taken outside (tells, doesn’t ask) and returns to talking to the other youth about their experiences at the conference.*

Be creative with how you present this problem, taking care not to caricature racial stereotypes. Maybe you are a group witnessing the interaction instead of playing it out. Maybe one person witnessed it and is telling you all what happened. People should have varied reactions. The important part to get across is that sometimes people assume that people of color that they don’t recognize aren’t part of our communities.

### Non-Inclusive Community Scenario #2

Guidelines:

1. Everyone must have a part/line. Even if your part consists of giggling in the background or your one line is, “Hey, stop that!” be sure everyone is involved in the skit.
2. Just present the problem, don’t resolve it. You can discuss possible solutions within your group, but once you present the ‘problem,’ the rest of the group will be required to figure out the best way to resolve it.
3. Don’t play yourself. If you are a youth, try playing an adult, or vice versa. Or play someone with a very different personality than yourself.

Role play the following situation:

*Your youth group is out in the community doing a service project. Several of youth from your group are off to the side talking amongst themselves and are overheard using derogatory language to mock a group of people. Some of those who overhear are members of that group and are visibly upset. Others laugh. Another says that it’s not appropriate and an argument starts. Some of those who were upset do not take part and walk away.*

Language is powerful. Keep in mind that people may be upset if you actually use offensive language in your skit even if you don’t mean it. Be creative; try to figure out a way to portray the situation without using words that folks in the room may be hurt by.

### Non-Inclusive Community scenario #3

Guidelines:

1. Everyone must have a part/line. Even if your part consists of giggling in the background or your one line is, “Hey, stop that!” be sure everyone is involved in the skit.
2. Just present the problem, don’t resolve it. You can discuss possible solutions within your group, but once you present the ‘problem,’ the rest of the group will be required to figure out the best way to resolve it.
3. Don’t play yourself. If you are a youth, try playing an adult, or vice versa. Or play someone with a very different personality than yourself.

Role play the following situation:

*During get-to-know-you time, participants are asking each other questions. One person asks an Asian-American participant where they’re from. When they respond that they are from a particular US city, the person presses. “No, I mean, where are you from?” The participant responds again that they are from that particular area and gets a response of “No, before that.” They go back and forth a few times before the questioner says, “No, I mean, where are you from? What are you?”*

Be creative with how you present this problem, taking care not to caricature racial stereotypes. Maybe you are a group witnessing the interaction instead of playing it out. Maybe one person witnessed it and is telling you all what happened. People should have varied reactions. The important point to get across is that sometimes people make assumptions about the national origin of people of color, suggesting that they cannot be “from America.”

### Non-Inclusive Community Scenario #4

Guidelines:

1. Everyone must have a part/line. Even if your part consists of giggling in the background or your one line is, “Hey, stop that!” be sure everyone is involved in the skit.
2. Just present the problem, don’t resolve it. You can discuss possible solutions within your group, but once you present the ‘problem,’ the rest of the group will be required to figure out the best way to resolve it.
3. Don’t play yourself. If you are a youth, try playing an adult, or vice versa. Or play someone with a very different personality than yourself.

Role play the following situation:

*You are at a conference and introductions include what gender pronoun you would like others to use for you. Some participants says ‘it doesn’t matter what you call me’ while one participant looks very uncomfortable about having to answer the question and tries to skip it. The person is then asked, directly, to share.*

Be creative with how you present this problem, taking care not to caricature those who are transgender or gender variant. Some participants can be dismissive, others ‘Her, of course, duh,’ and other reactions, and the “it doesn’t matter” group is mostly made up of people who are not transgender or genderqueer. At least one should be visibly uncomfortable about having to say their pronoun.

# WORKSHOP 7: Leadership Styles

## **Introduction**

Be the kind of leader you would follow. – Anonymous

This session describes formal leadership roles and different leadership styles, explores when they may be applicable and gives participants the opportunity to practice embodying different leadership styles.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Explain the formal leadership roles of process observer, facilitator and recorder
* Explain seven different leadership styles and how they relate to the seven principles
* Provide participants with practice for embodying different leadership styles.

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Understand the importance of formal leadership styles in a group setting
* Lean that they may need to adjust their leadership style to fit the context in which they are leading
* Explore ways to bring the seven principles alive through their leadership.

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 10 |
| Activity 1: Formal Leadership Roles | 10 |
| Activity 2: Leadership Styles and the Seven Principles | 15 |
| Activity 3: Working with Others - Human Knot | 20 |
| Closing | 5 |
| Alternative Activity 1: Working with Others - Lilypad Leadership | 30 |
| Alternative Activity 2: Working with Others - Meal Preparation | 60 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Read Handout 2 Leadership Styles and reflect on times in the past when you have embodied some of these leadership styles. How did you know this type of leadership would be helpful? Are there particular styles that feel more comfortable for you to embody? Are there others that are more challenging for you to embody? Reflect on how the way you lead reflects your values.

## **Opening (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Newsprint and markers
* Chalice lighting words: Worship Web [A Character All Our Own](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/quote/character-all-our-own) by William Ellery Channing
* *Each of us is meant to have a character all our own, to be what no other can exactly be, and do what no other can exactly do.*
* Group covenant (from Workshop 2, Living in Covenant)
* Check in question:

*Think of a time when a group you were part of had to make a decision or reach a goal. What role did you play or how did you act to help the group come to a decision or reach their goal?*

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Post the chalice lighting words on newsprint.
* Post the group covenant developed in Workshop 2, Living in Covenant.
* Post the check in question in the designated place.

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants. Invite participants and facilitators to go around the circle and say their names and briefly answer the check in question (in 3 or 4 sentences). Remind participants that check in is not a time for cross talk - clarifying questions can be asked if necessary. After everyone who wants to has had a chance to check in ask for a volunteer to light the chalice.

### **Including All Participants**

Let participants know they have the right to pass or pass for now. For participants who have trouble being concise you can ask them “how would you sum up your experience in one sentence?” For participants who have trouble refraining from cross talk remind them of the group covenant and to be respectful of their peers’ time to share and the leaders’ time to facilitate.

## **Activity 1: Formal Leadership Roles (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1: Formal Leadership Roles
* Newsprint
* Markers

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Familiarize yourself with the handout so you can summarize the descriptions for the group.
* Make copies of handout for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn about the formal leadership roles of the recorder, facilitator, and process observer.

Pass out Handout 1 Formal Leadership Roles. Explain that in group discussions where there is a purpose and goal, assigning members of the group to serve as recorder, facilitator, and process observer can provide the group with direction, help them stay focused and reflect on how their time was spent. Provide a summary for the role of recorder then ask for volunteers to read the bullet points under General Hints For Recording In Full View.

Provide a summary for the facilitator role then ask for volunteers to read the bullet points under Getting Things Started and Facilitating During Discussion. Ask the group to name some personality traits or skills useful to being an effective facilitator. Ask for a volunteer to write down these personality traits or skills on newsprint, using the recorder tips they learned from the handout.

Provide a summary for the role of process observer and, if the group did Workshop 5: Active Listening, remind them that they practiced process observation in groups of three while practicing asking probing questions and paraphrasing. Tell the group that a process observer plays a vital role at the end of a meeting or discussion and ask for volunteers to read the numbered list under The Role of Process Observer.

Invite the group to close their eyes and say something like the following, reminding participants that raising their hand is optional:

*Based on what you already know about yourself, your skills and personality, raise your hand if you think facilitating a group conversation would be easy for you, raise your hand if you think it would be challenging. Raise your hand if you think scribing would be easy for you, raise your hand if you think it would be challenging. Raise your hand if you think process observing would be easy for you, raise your hand if you think it would be challenging.*

Without naming specific people, tell the group what you noticed. Were there varying comfort levels with each of the formal leadership roles? Tell participants that we may be naturally drawn to specific types of leadership roles based on our personalities and comfort levels and that even so, different situations may call us to be a different type of leader than we’re used to.

Tell the group that even if you are not assigned a formal leadership role, you can play a vital part in leading a group. Note that it is important to not only pay attention to the content of a conversation (what is said) but to the atmosphere (how people are feeling) of a conversation so that you can respond with an informal leadership role that can help move a group forward.

## **Activity 2: Leadership Styles and the Seven Principles (15 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 2 Leadership Styles
* Newsprint
* Markers

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Familiarize yourself with the handout so you can summarize the descriptions for the group.
* Make copies of handout for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn about informal leadership roles and how they relate to the seven principles.

Pass out Handout 2 Leadership Styles and summarize the first two paragraphs, saying something like:

*Even if you’re not in an official leadership role like facilitator, process observer or recorder, you can play an important part in a group or community. A leader does not have to be “in charge” to make an impact. As Unitarian Universalists we can be leaders just by lifting up our principles and values. On your handout there are seven leadership styles that represent some of the ways we as Unitarian Universalists can put our values into practice. Some of these styles may come easily to you, some may be more challenging. Everyone can practice “try on different hats” or practicing different leadership styles. Think of the colors associated with each leadership style as the color of hat you would be putting on if you embodied each leadership style.*

Invite participants to read the roles aloud, going in a circle. Remind participants they have the right to pass. Ask if there are any questions about the leadership styles. Ask participants if there is a particular style or two they feel they’d be good at, or have already practiced, then ask if there are styles that seem challenging for them and why.

## **Activity 3: Working with Others - The Human Knot (20 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 1 Leadership Hats
* Stapler
* Optional: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and purple markers

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Print, cut and assemble leadership hats, enough for one per participant. You will not need the Recorder hat for this activity. On the Facilitator and Process Observer hats, the words should be facing out. For the leadership styles, the words should be facing in.
* Optional: mark each leadership style hat with the corresponding color as noted on Handout 2 Leadership Styles.

Place hats on a table or other surface so that the words for the leadership styles are facing away from participants.

Make sure you have an open space large enough for all participants to stand in a circle with their arms outstretched.

Optional: Review this [YouTube video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZR9NhosZO90) showing how the human knot game works.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants practice “trying on different hats” and embodying different leadership styles.

Ask for two volunteers to serve as process observer and facilitator and give them the corresponding hats. Invite the rest of the participants to choose a hat from the table and, without telling anyone, read the leadership style on the inside. Tell them that they are to embody the leadership role or style written on their hat while playing this game. Give participants a moment to review their role or style on their handouts if necessary.

Have participants stand in a very close circle, shoulder to shoulder. Then invite them to take the hands of two others in the circle. Participants may take hands across the circle or near their position, but may not hold both hands of the same person. When everyone is holding the hands of different people, tell participants the object of the game is to untangle the great, big knot they’ve created.

Remind participants to think about the leadership style they will be embodying and spend a moment in silence with this prompt:

*Think silently to yourself about what strategies or behaviors you might use within your leadership style to help your team untangle this knot.*

Instruct the process observer and facilitator that they have five minutes to help the group brainstorm and come up with ideas about how they plan to untangle the knot. After the team has brainstormed for four minutes, tell them they have one minute remaining and invite the process observer to share their observations.

Ask the participants to continue holding hands while they untangle the knot, so that everyone ends up standing in a simple circle again. Participants may end up facing into or out of the circle, but should not drop hands at any point. Some knots, however, may not be possible to resolve completely. You may wish to play the game more than once, as time allows.

When the group has completed the task or 10 minutes are up, whichever comes first, gather the group into a circle. If the group failed to untangle the knot, remind participants that sometimes success isn’t about achieving a predetermined goal, but about how a group works together to achieve said goal. Ask questions like:

*Without revealing what your leadership style was, how did your group approach the challenge?*

*What was the most difficult part of untangling the knot?*

*Without revealing what your leadership style was, what strategies did you use to achieve your goal?*

Then invite participants to guess what leadership styles their teammates were embodying. Invite participants to reveal their leadership styles if they were not guessed.

Conclude by saying something like:

*Assuming a leadership style may be challenging if are not used to working in that fashion. However, it’s worth the challenge to practice these leadership styles and to notice when others are employing these leadership styles because they help us keep our seven principles in mind when in a leadership position.*

### Including All Participants

A participant who has mobility or balance issues can participate by sitting in a chair or wheelchair and having other participants maneuver around them. This game does involve close physical contact, and participants who are uncomfortable being touched may wish to opt out.

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Taking it Home

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of Taking It Home for each participant.

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to gather in a circle. Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. Pass out Taking It Home and explain that it contains ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends.

You can offer that the group can continue a discussion about this session at a later date or in a closed Facebook group if your group has one. End the workshop with this body prayer by [Annie Scott](http://www.uua.org/directory/people/annie-scott) available on [Worship Web](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/body-prayer-version-one).

It's important is to take time to be quiet, to be still,  
so we can be in touch with the deepest and best part of ourselves—our inner voice—  
often called prayer or meditation.  
  
I invite you to join in a body prayer.  
  
I will show you the motions—  
then invite you to move through it with me once,  
then we will all pray with our bodies in silence 3 times.  
  
We begin with our hands in front of us in the prayer pose  
to find our inner quiet  
  
We raise our arms up high  
to open ourselves to the Spirit of Life, God of Love,  
  
We bring our hands to our hearts  
to affirm the strength of our inner voice  
  
We extend our hands out in front of us  
to offer our kindness and respect to others.  
  
We lift our hands out in front of us  
to offer to others and the world all that we have to give.  
  
We lift our hands high over our heads  
reaching out to the world being open to all it might offer us.  
  
We bring our hands down  
gathering in the gifts and bringing them to our heart.  
  
And returning to our stillness,  
we bring our hands together in the prayer pose.  
  
[repeat three times and end with a slow bow as a closing.]

## **Leader Reflection and Planning**

As leaders working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this workshop offered an opportunity to consider the importance of and practice formal leadership roles and leadership styles as Unitarian Universalists. What did you learn from this session on leadership styles? How did participants surprise you in the Working with Others activity? Did your understanding or ability to explain why leading with our values and principles in mind increase after preparing this session? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator? Share your feedback and learnings from this session with the minister and religious educator.

## **Alternative Activity 1: Working with Others - Lilypad Leadership (30 minutes)**

Adapted from Adventures in Peacemaking, by William J. Kreidler.

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 1 Leadership Hats
* Stapler
* Optional: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and purple markers
* Large room with no obstacles from one side to the other
* Six paper plates

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Print, cut and assemble leadership hats, enough for one per participant. On the Facilitator, Process Observer and Recorder hats, the words should be facing out. For the leadership styles, the words should be facing in.
* Optional: mark each leadership style hat with the corresponding color as noted on Handout 2 Leadership Styles
* Place hats on a table or other surface so that the words for the leadership styles are facing away from participants

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants practice “trying on different hats” and embodying different leadership styles.

Ask for three volunteers to serve as process observer, facilitator and recorder and give them the corresponding hats. Invite the rest of the participants to choose a hat from the table and, without telling anyone, read the leadership style on the inside. Tell them that they are to embody the leadership role or style written on their hat while playing this game. Give participants a moment to review their role or style on their handouts if necessary.

Ask participants to stand at one end of the room. Tell participants that there is a great, deep river flowing in front of them and the object of this game is to get every participant to the other side of the river by only stepping on the ‘lilypads’ (paper plates). Hand out the paper plates and give the following directions:

*You must use the lilypads as stepping stones, but be careful because the river is flowing quickly. The lily pads have the power to hold anyone safely above the river. No one may touch the river. If someone falls off of a lily pad and into the river, they must start over. The lily pads must be used constantly or the group may lose them in the river’s current. That is, there must always be a foot on each pad. Lily pads that are carried away in the river’s current will be removed. The group may hold hands or find another way to stay connected to each other and the pads as they cross the river. At anytime a natural disaster may occur, making your trek across the river more difficult.*

Remind participants to think about the leadership role or style they will be embodying and spend a moment in silence with this prompt:

*Think silently to yourself about what strategies or behaviors you might use within your leadership role style to help your team get across this river.*

Instruct the process observer, facilitator and recorder that they have five minutes to help the group brainstorm and come to a decision about how they plan to cross the river.After the team has brainstormed for four minutes, tell them they have one minute remaining and invite the process observer to share their observations.

Allow 15 minutes for participants to try to cross the river.

When the team has completed the task or 15 minutes is up, whichever comes first, gather the group into a circle. If they failed to cross the river, remind participants that sometimes success isn’t about achieving a predetermined goal, but about how a group works together to achieve said goal. Ask questions like:

*Without revealing what your leadership style was, how did your group approach the challenge?*

*What was the most difficult part of crossing the river?*

*Without revealing what your leadership style was, what strategies did you use to achieve your goal?*

Then invite participants to guess what leadership styles their teammates were embodying. Invite participants to reveal their leadership styles if they were not guessed.

Conclude by saying something like:

*Assuming a leadership style may be challenging if are not used to working in that fashion. However, it’s worth the challenge to practice these leadership styles and to notice when others are employing these leadership styles because they help us keep our seven principles in mind when in a leadership position.*

### Including All Participants

This activity can be challenging, but not impossible for people with mobility issues. Ask participants with mobility issues how you can adapt this game for their success. Possibilities include providing more paper plate lily pads, shortening the distance of the river they must cross or asking for a partner to support them. Provide the group with consistent reminders to include all accessibility needs in their strategy and cooperation. Allow for more brainstorming time.

## **Alternative Activity 2: Working with Others - Meal Preparation (60 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 1 Leadership Hats
* Stapler
* Optional: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and purple markers
* Kitchen and food

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Print, cut and assemble leadership hats, enough for one per participant. On the Facilitator, Process Observer and Recorder hats, the words should be facing out. For the leadership styles, the words should be facing in.
* Optional: mark each leadership style hat with the corresponding color as noted on Handout 2 Leadership Styles
* Place hats on a table or other surface so that the words for the leadership styles are facing away from participants

### **Description of Activity**

If you are doing this session at an overnight or weekend event, you may choose to conclude the session by preparing a meal together. In this activity participants practice “trying on different hats” and embodying different leadership styles.

Ask for three volunteers to serve as process observer, facilitator and recorder and give them the corresponding hats. Invite the rest of the participants to choose a hat from the table and, without telling anyone, read the leadership style on the inside. Tell them that they are to embody the leadership role or style written on their hat while preparing a meal together. Give participants a moment to review their role or style on their handouts if necessary.

Instruct participants that they are to prepare a meal using the food provided but before they do so the process observer, facilitator and recorder will have ten minutes to help the group brainstorm, come to a decision and map out a recipe for their meal.

Remind participants to think about the leadership role or style they will be embodying and spend a moment in silence with this prompt:

*Think silently to yourself about what strategies or behaviors you might use within your leadership role style to help your team get across this river.*

After the team has brainstormed for nine minutes, tell them they have one minute remaining and invite the process observer to share their observations.

Your role in the meal preparation is to ensure participants are using kitchen equipment correctly and safely. Try not to intervene in their decision making or preparation. If necessary, you may prompt the facilitator to ask probing questions about the efficacy of the group’s plan or prompt the process observer to make observations about the group’s progress.

When the team has completed the task, gather the group into a circle and ask questions like:

*Without revealing what your leadership style was, how did your group approach the challenge?*

*What was the most difficult part of preparing this meal?*

*Without revealing what your leadership style was, what strategies did you use to achieve your goal?*

Then invite participants to guess what leadership styles their teammates were embodying. Invite participants to reveal their leadership styles if they were not guessed.

Conclude by saying something like:

*Assuming a leadership style may be challenging if are not used to working in that fashion. However, it’s worth the challenge to practice these leadership styles and to notice when others are employing these leadership styles because they help us keep our seven principles in mind when in a leadership position.*

## Handout 1 Formal Leadership Roles

### The Role of the Recorder

* To write clearly and note what is decided
* To write key words as spoken
* To note who will do which tasks
* To ask for clarification as needed and follow up as necessary
* To ask speakers to slow down as needed

As the group’s recorder you provide an essential service: memory. This is usually accomplished in one of two ways: either by taking notes on a piece of paper or by scribing the flow of the meeting on a large sheet of newsprint, posted or held on an easel. Both styles have their advantages.

The accompanying example of a Meeting Summary Form is one way to organize yourself for the first method, which often involves rapid note-taking in the moment and then a later transcribing for distribution. It can be thorough and very helpful, but it’s essentially a private activity that one person conducts.

The process of recording in full view, usually on large newsprint with colored markers, is a very effective method for a group to follow and helps participants stay involved. It, too, often results in a later re-organization or distribution. However, the fact that everyone has seen the initial language written down as it was offered means that people are more immediately in touch with the flow of the meeting. Seeing their ideas up on the posted sheets reinforces that people are having an impact by being heard and valued.

### General Hints for Recording in Full View:

* Think ahead and prepare your materials so that you don’t waste group time.
* Use two or three different color markers for varying aspects, themes, or portions.
* Identify clear wall space and have a helper in charge of posting the sheets.
* Put an appropriate heading on each sheet.
* Write big enough so that those farthest away can see; be generous with spacing.
* Repeat key words used by the speakers.
* Add upbeat graphics, such as stars, suns, smiley faces, etc.

### Meeting Summary Form

**Date of Meeting:**

**In attendance:**

**Roles:**

**Next Meeting Dates, Time & Location:**

**Meeting Objectives:**



**Issue I. Summary of Discussion & Decisions on the topic of:**

Logistics: (Review of summary of previous meeting, Team member updates, meeting dates, place, etc.)

Miscellaneous follow-up to last meeting:

**Issue II. Summary of Discussion & Decisions on the topic of:**

Action Planning:

**Issue III. Summary Discussion & Decisions on the topic of:**

Other items:

**Meeting Evaluation Summary:**

**Next Steps:**

### The Role of the Facilitator

* To keep the discussion focused
* To clarify (or ask for clarification) as necessary
* To help create and maintain a setting in which everyone can participate freely

### Getting Things Started

Some discussions don’t need stimulating—they just get going. Often, however, the facilitator can play an important role to help the group get started. Some hints:

* **Everyone should know what the discussion is about and the reason for having it.** They should know what, if any, outcomes or outputs are expected, and the amount of time they have to accomplish this.
* **Give participants room to be involved.** It is important not to be too directive in your role as facilitator. The group should take responsibility for what happens.
* **Use questions to stimulate and explore.** It is often helpful to phrase questions in a positive manner. For instance, instead of asking, “Why won’t this plan work?” ask, “What problems might we have to overcome if we adopt this plan?” Use open-ended questions, not ones that simply require a yes or no response.
* **Model desired behavior.** Your own attitude and actions demonstrate to group members how they can participate—you set the tone.

### Facilitating During Discussion

There are many things that a facilitator can do to help along a particular discussion. What you do will depend on your abilities, your style, and the particular group and situation. Some general hints:

* **Equalize participation.** Some may want to speak more than others, but you can prevent any person or small group from dominating. Be alert for the quieter members who can’t jump right in and draw them out.
* **Keep on the subject.** You can remind the group when the discussion strays and then offer questions or comments that provide focus.
* **Be aware of pacing the group.** Stay alert to time constraints and make adjustments or reminders as necessary. As the session draws to a close, you can point out what the group has accomplished, what is left to be done, and how much time is left.
* **Clarify and support the recorder.** Check to see that the recorder is keeping up accurately. Request examples or illustrations when a point is fuzzy, but do this in a nonthreatening fashion with questions such as, “I’m not sure I understand what you said. Could you give me an example?”
* **Summarize as appropriate.** When it’s time, you can pull together various parts of the discussion and restate them together. This might include what progress has been made and where you think the group is going. You might link ideas, identify patterns, or break something complex into simpler components.

### The Role of the Process Observer

* Pay attention to the atmosphere of the group
* Take brief notes to relay to the group at the end of the session
* Lead a reflection on the session with your group
* Lead a check out

This role holds the group’s soul: process observing is ministry to the group. It is a vivid and too-often neglected opportunity to deepen the group’s intention for community building and learning together.

When you offer to do this, you are shifting into a very integral role. Be ready to participate and note any peculiarities, highlights, problems and tender moments. This doesn’t mean you can’t participate normally, but you’ve also got an eye out for meaningful things that might otherwise slip by unnoticed or be neglected.

Discipline yourself throughout the meeting to stay alert for the subtleties of the group, particularly experiences that might turn people away from the purpose of your gathering such as a putdown or intimidation. Watch for the shy people, the revealing comment that nobody follows up on or the joy not celebrated. It’s a good idea to take some brief notes to yourself as the process unfolds.

Near the end of the meeting, the facilitator should turn to you for a report. If this is not a regular part of your group meetings, remind the facilitator beforehand that you’ll need a few minutes at the end. You can conduct this review in at least three ways:

**1. Comment** on some, probably not all, of what you’ve noted. There may not be room for dialogue at this point, so offer to be available for follow-up talks after the meeting. Be sure to say good things about the group’s process.

**2.** Lead a **group reflection** of the meeting, to see what they noticed or if they had other feelings that would be important to include before closing. Be prepared to allow some time for this style of review; sometimes the most memorable piece of the meeting emerges here. These four general questions can be helpful in leading it:

*What caught your attention at the meeting?*

*Where did you find yourself excited or pleased?*

*Where did you find the meeting bogged down or got difficult?*

*What was the significance of the meeting? (It was the meeting of/when…)*

*What did you notice about how we navigated cross-cultural differences and how attentive we were to anti-racist and anti-oppressive behavior and language?*

**3.** Lead a **check-out**, which stands in contrast to a check-in. Go around the circle and give people a chance to comment on how they’re feeling about the meeting as it’s finished. This improves the odds that no one will go home unhappy, and you may find some unfinished business to be considered.

This way, by being willing to observe their process, group members get better attuned to how they can be productive on many levels at once, not just for business.

## Handout 2 Leadership Styles

Developed by Jennica Davis-Hockett, Leadership Development Associate for the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Often times, when we hear the word “leader” we may automatically associate it with words like: boss; manager; authority figure or supervisor. But a leader is not always the person “in charge” of other people. As Unitarian Universalists we believe that there are many styles of leadership that reflect and lift up our principles and our values and that different situations call for different leadership styles.

The following leadership styles are some of the way we as Unitarian Universalists can put our values into practice. You may currently feel more competent and confident in one or a few of the following leadership styles. Some of these leadership styles may be challenging for you to embody, and that’s ok. No one can excel in every style of leadership, but everyone can practice and “try on different hats.” Think of the colors associated with each leadership style as the color of hat you would be putting on if you embodied each leadership style.

### 1. Empathic Leader

**Color:** Red for empathy, love and courage

**Quote:** Outstanding leaders go out of their way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people believe in themselves, it’s amazing what they can accomplish. —Sam Walton

Empathic leaders **ENCOURAGE** and **SUPPORT** others and want to lift others up. They excel in **SENSING FEELINGS AND MOODS** andtaking other people’s emotions into account when making decisions. They sense the potential in others and are able to **ASSUME BEST INTENTIONS** even in difficult situations. They thrive when **GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK** in a group setting. Empathic leaders **CONSIDER THE ROLE OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS** in groups and can anticipate how personal relationships may impact decision-making. Empathic leadership is a useful style to embody the **FIRST UU PRINCIPLE**: The inherent worth and dignity of every person.

### 2. Justice Seeking Leader

**Color:** Orange for action, energy and thirst

**Quote:** Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has. —Margaret Mead

Justice seeking leaders **SET HIGH STANDARDS** and expectations for a group and **INSIST ON COMMON AGREEMENTS** for the group to function. They are at once **TASK ORIENTED** and **INTERESTED IN FAIRNESS** for those they lead. They are **PROBLEM SOLVERS** who will work hard and thoroughly and want to **FIND EQUITABLE MEANS** to get a job done. They would rather **TAKE ACTION**, even if it is small and imperfect, rather than wait for the perfect moment. Justice Seeking leaders **ADMIT ERRORS** when necessary. Justice Seeking leadership is a useful style to embody the **SECOND UU PRINCIPLE**: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

### 3. Adaptive Leader

**Color:** Yellow for inclusion, imagination and enlightenment

**Quote:** A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves. —Lao Tzu

Adaptive leaders know the importance of **WELCOMING** newcomers and new ideas in a group. They **HELP PEOPLE FEEL VALUED** as an integral part of a team. Adaptive leaders are dedicated to **HELPING OTHERS FULFILL THEIR POTENTIAL** and that’s how they implement change. They are **INVESTED IN THE TRANSFORMATION** of people and groups from something good to something great. Adaptive leaders are tolerant, accepting and flexible, but they are not pushovers. Because they are accepting of other’s ideas, being able to **READJUST** and **SAYING YES, AND HOW?** serves them well. Adaptive leadership is a useful style to embody the **THIRD UU PRINCIPLE**: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.

### 4. Curious Leader

**Color:** Green for learning, independence and growth

**Quote:** You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do. —Eleanor Roosevelt

Curious leaders love learning from others and sharing their own wisdom. They **ASK FOR AND PROVIDE CLARIFICATION** to clear up confusion and interpret ideas. While they are firm in their own values, they love to **REEVALUATE** or amend their ideas based on what they learn. Curious leaders value **EDUCATION AND RESEARCH** and will often **SUMMARIZE** conversations or decisions to ensure mutual understanding. They don’t want to miss an opportunity to **LEARN FROM OTHERS**. Curious leaders revel in complexity and usually **DIG DEEPER** if things seem too simple. Curious leadership is a useful style to embody the **FOURTH UU PRINCIPLE**: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

### 5. Listening Leader

**Color:** Blue for trust, respect and integrity

**Quote:** Speak in such a way that others love to listen to you. Listen in such a way that others love to speak to you. —Anonymous

Listening leaders often **OBSERVE** quietly until they notice that something has gone unsaid. Often in the background, they **ASSIST OTHER LEADERS** and **OFFER SUPPORT** in any way they can. They are adamant about ensuring a **DIVERSITY OF VOICES** is heard and excel at **SUMMARIZING** ideas in a group and **SYNTHESIZING** a lot of information. They appreciate efficiency but are even more interested in **EXAMINING ALL SIDES** before making a decision. Once a decision has been made, listeners are quick to jump into **ACTION** to support the leaders. Listener leadership is a useful style to embody the **FIFTH UU PRINCIPLE**: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

### 6. Visionary Leader

**Color:** Indigo for insistence, intuition and faith

**Quote:** Where there is no vision, the people perish. —Proverbs 29:18

Visionary leaders focus on **BIG PICTURE IDEAS** and are not bogged down by logistical details. They **HAVE A VISION** of what their community or world could be and ideas of how to get there. They **BUILD COMMON GROUND** to achieve their goals. Visionary leaders are **LOYAL TO LOFTY GOALS** in line with their values and are especially focused on **ADDRESSING BARRIERS** to achieve those goals. They serve to **FOCUS** the group and help tie together what is currently happening with their overall purpose. They **HOLD THEMSELVES AND OTHERS ACCOUNTABLE** for championing causes with which they are associated. They are yearning for a future where peace, liberty and justice reign. Visionary leadership is a useful style to embody the **SIXTH UU PRINCIPLE**: The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.

### 7. Connecting Leader

**Color:** Purple for inspiration, magic and charisma

**Quote:** My own definition of leadership is this: The capacity and the will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character which inspires confidence. —General Montgomery

The Connecting leader is often an **INITIATOR** who speaks up first, clearly states a problem they see and suggests ideas. They act as **GATEKEEPER**, helping everyone to participate in the group. They strive to **HELP OTHERS TAKE OWNERSHIP** of a project because they know the sum of the whole is greater than its parts and that something magic happens when people come together. They not only excel at connecting others and **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**, they can **CONNECT DISPARATE IDEAS** and help a group come to a **CONCLUSION** by working towards agreement within a group. Connecting leadership is a useful style to embody the **SEVENTH UU PRINCIPLE**: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

## Taking It Home

Be the kind of leader you would follow. – Anonymous

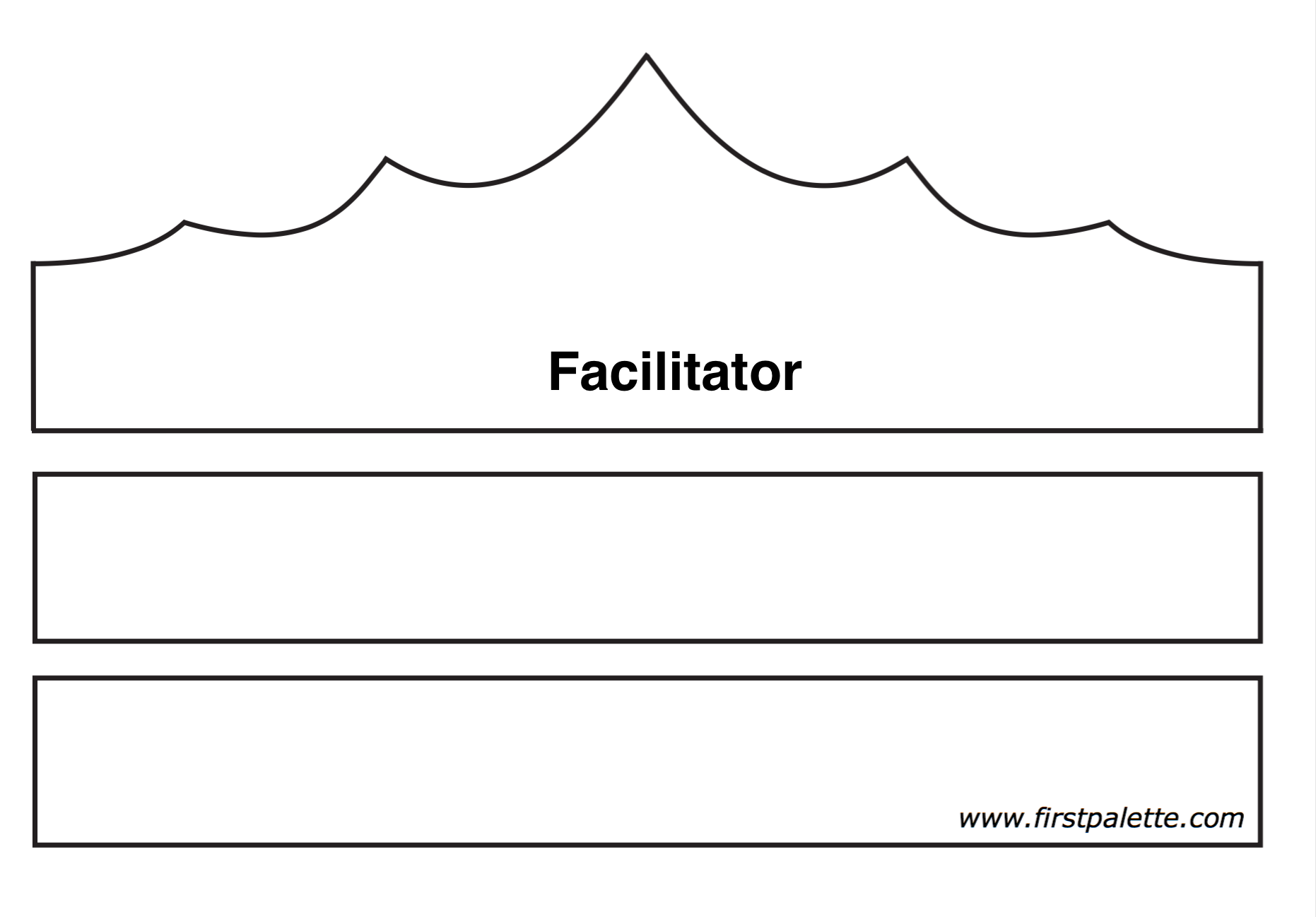
**IN TODAY’S SESSION…** we learned about and practiced the formal leadership roles of process observer, facilitator and recorder. We also learned about and practiced seven different leadership styles and reflected on the importance of leadership as a reflection of our values and adjusting our leadership style to fit the context in which we are leading.

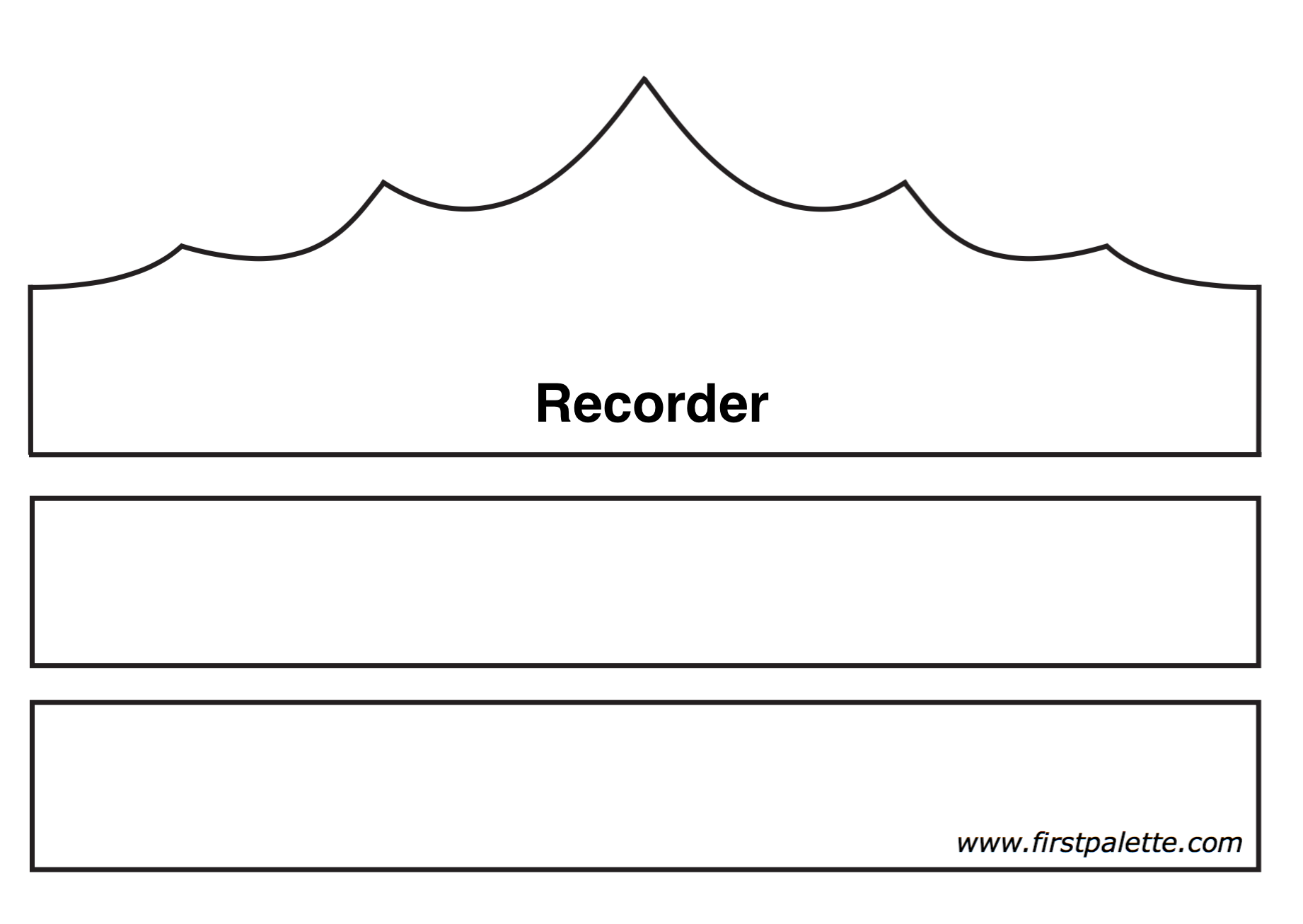
**TRY ON OTHER HATS: Commit to** practicing one of the seven leadership styles on Handout 2 Leadership Styles that may be challenging for you. **Notice** others in leadership positions and what style of leadership they are embodying.

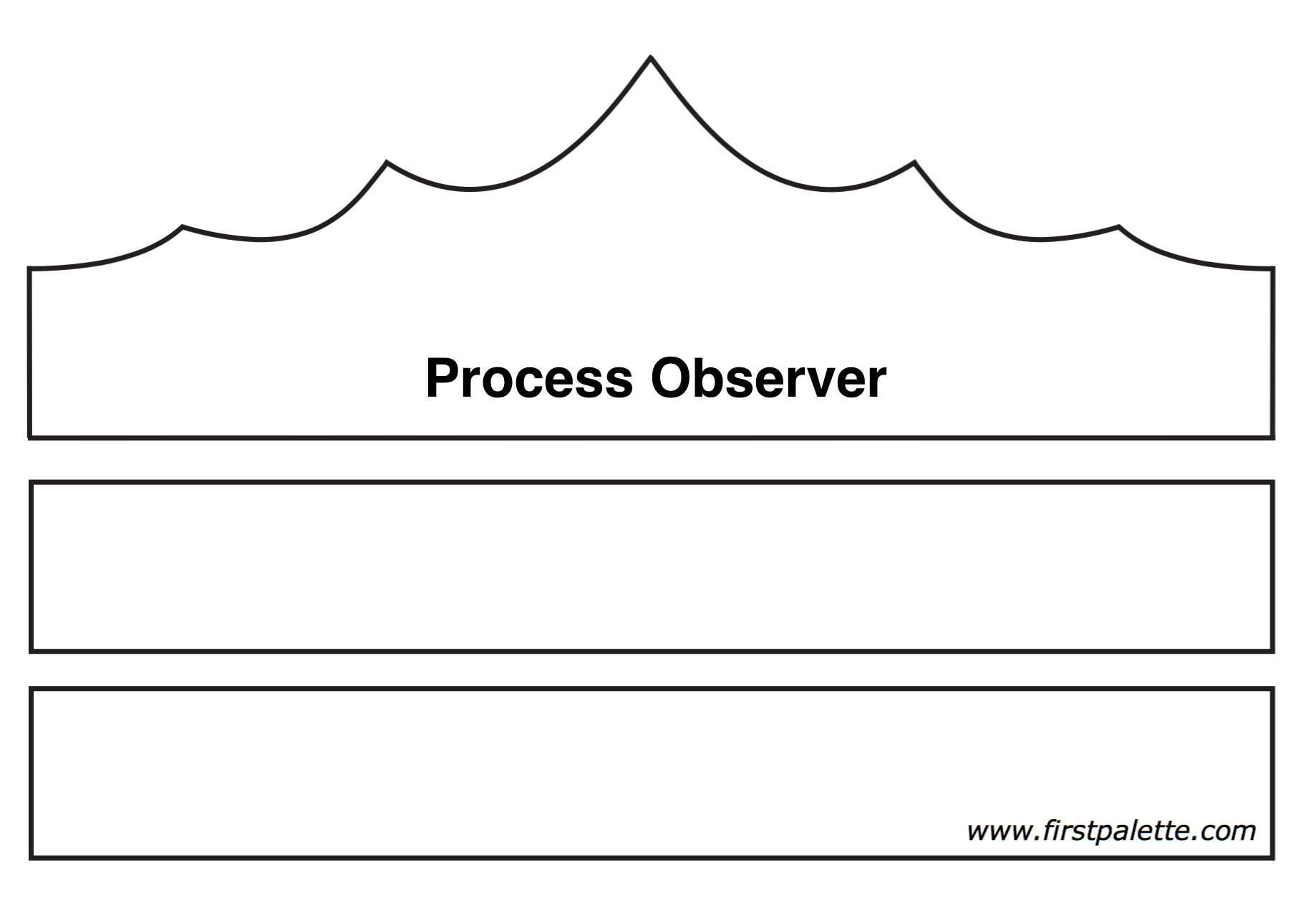
**LEARN FROM OTHERS: Do a search on the internet** for leadership quotes and pick some favorites. Read an article by or about the authors of your favorite quotes and try to decipher what their leadership style is.

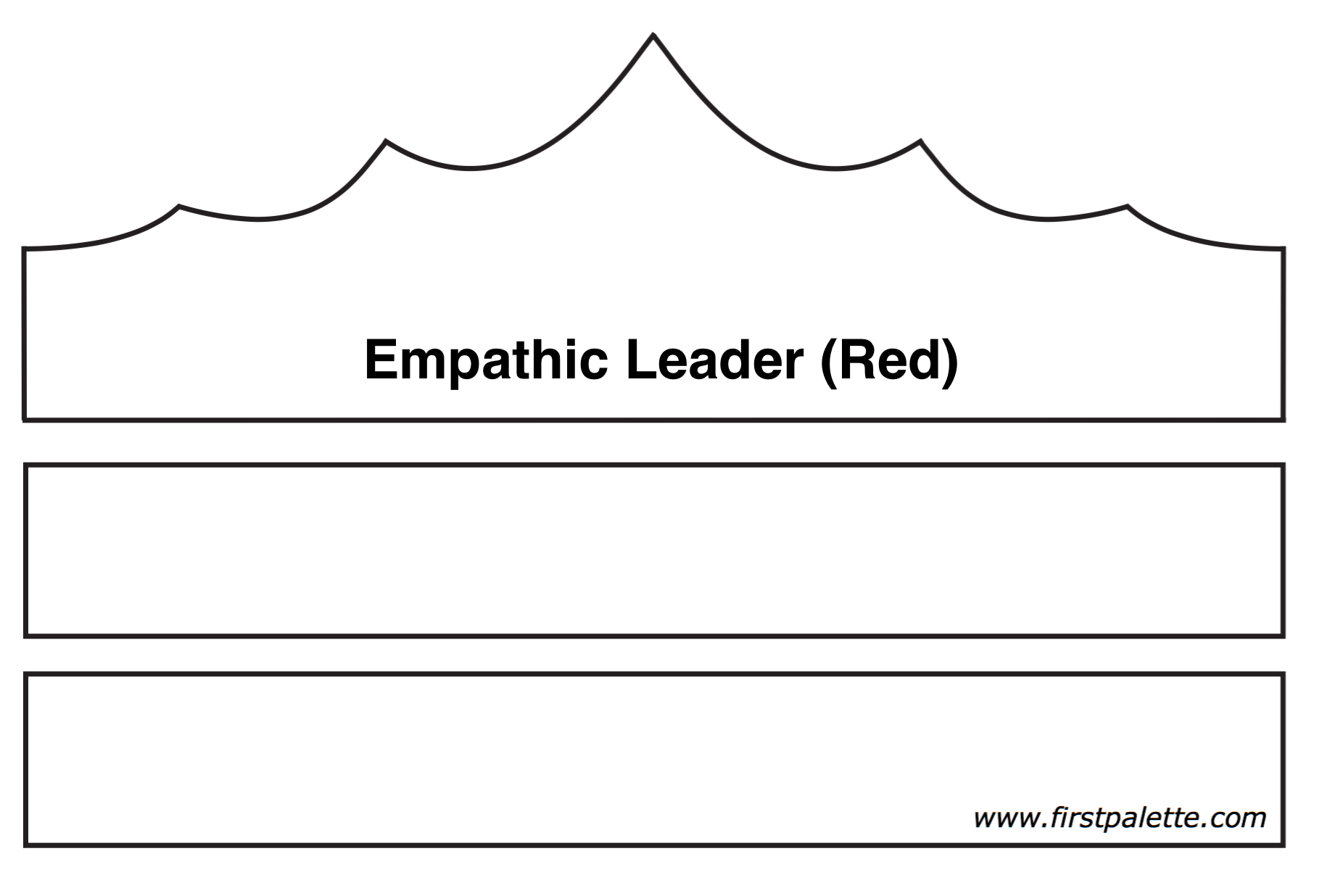
**ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE:** Search “Seven Principles” on UUA.org. Choose one or more of the principles and read the reflection. **Write your own reflection** on how you can embody the principles.

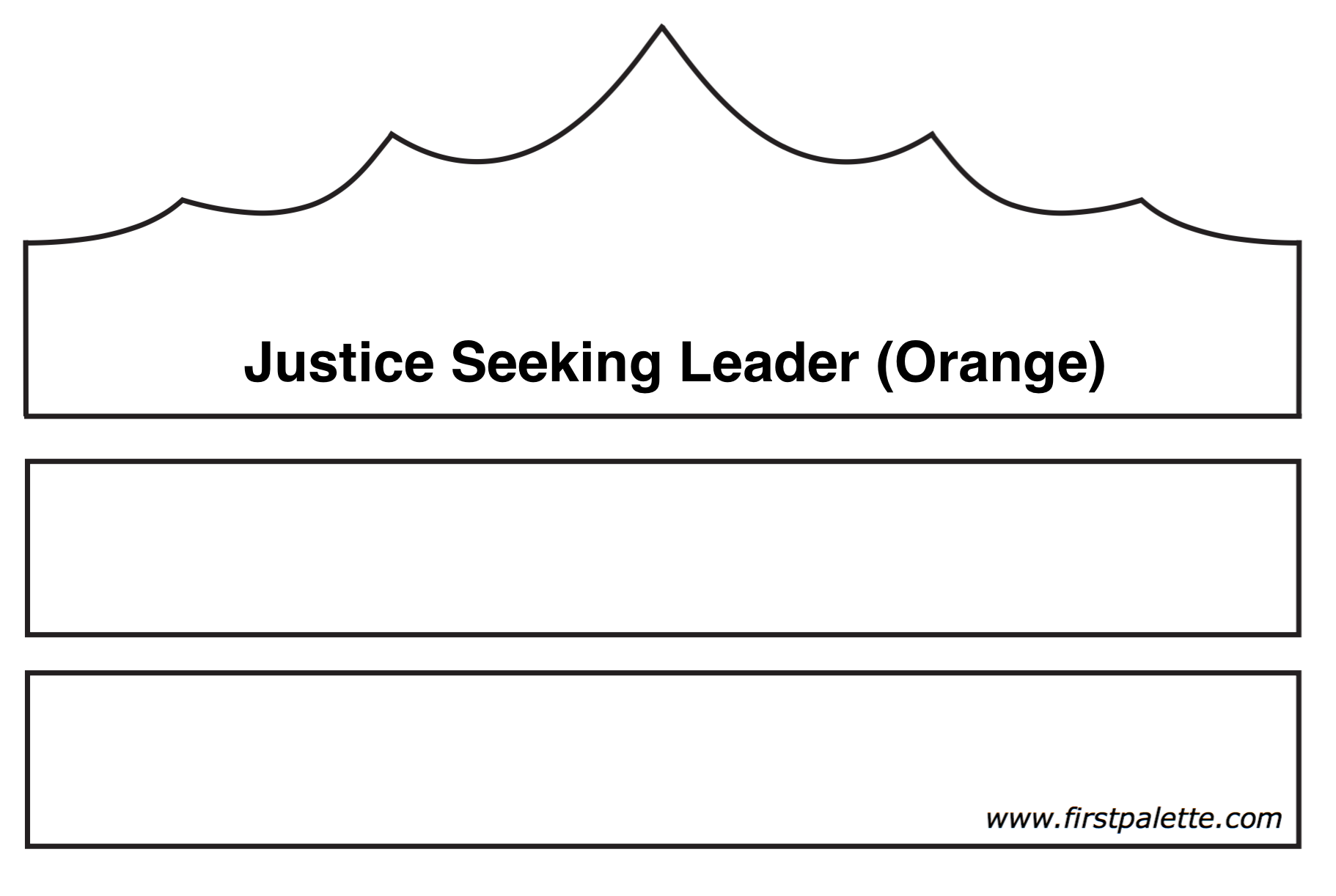
## Leader Resource 1 Leadership Hats

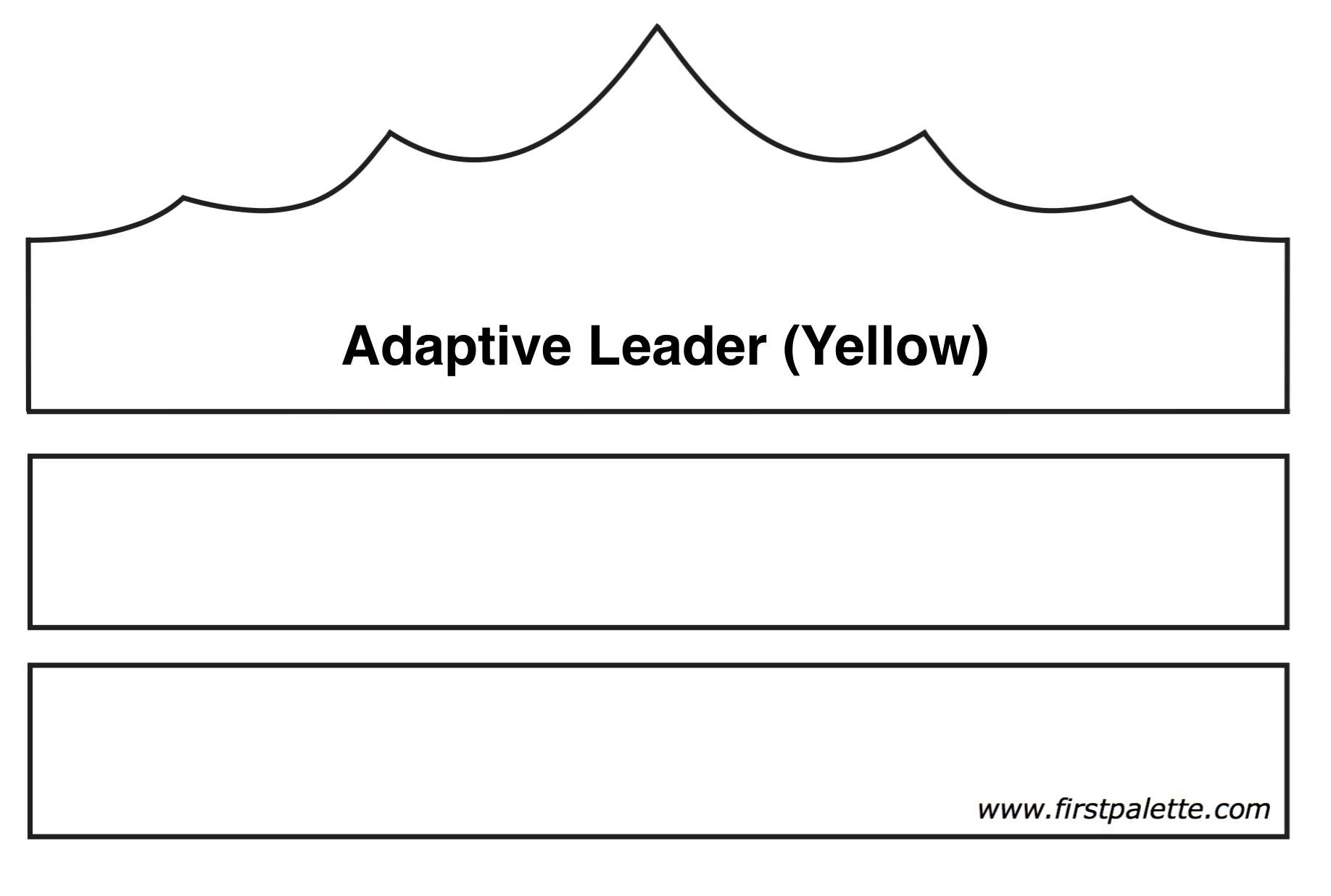


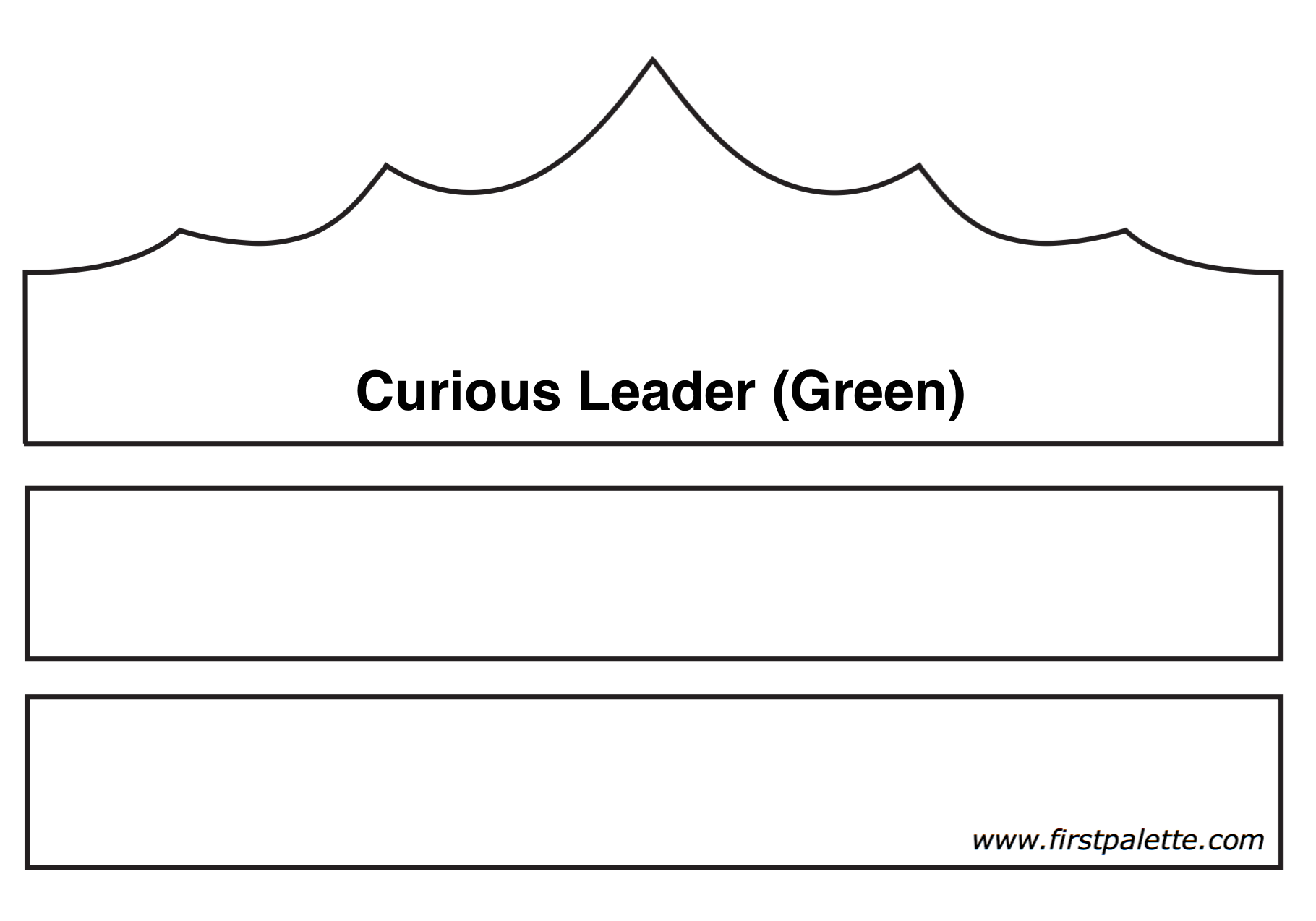


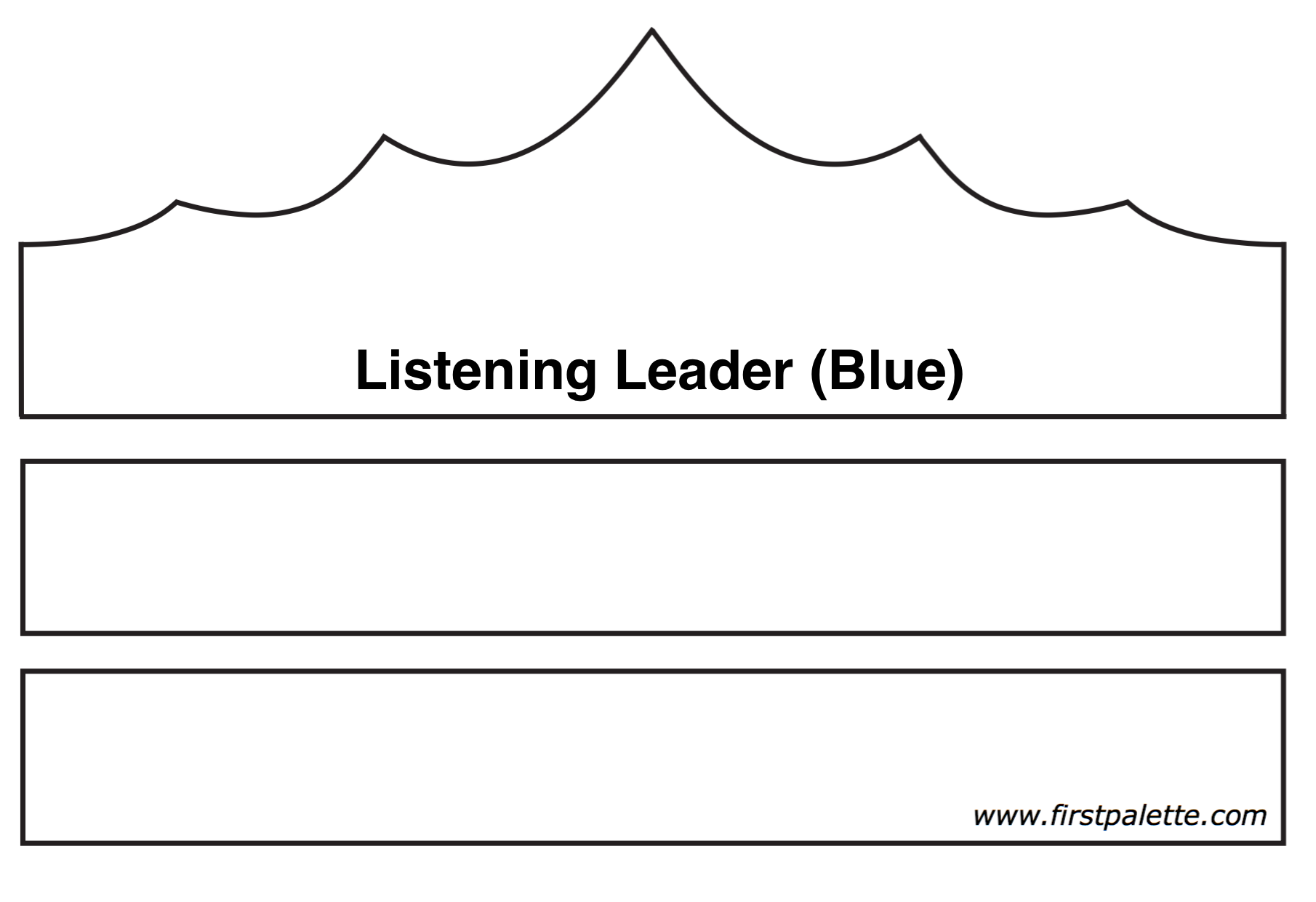


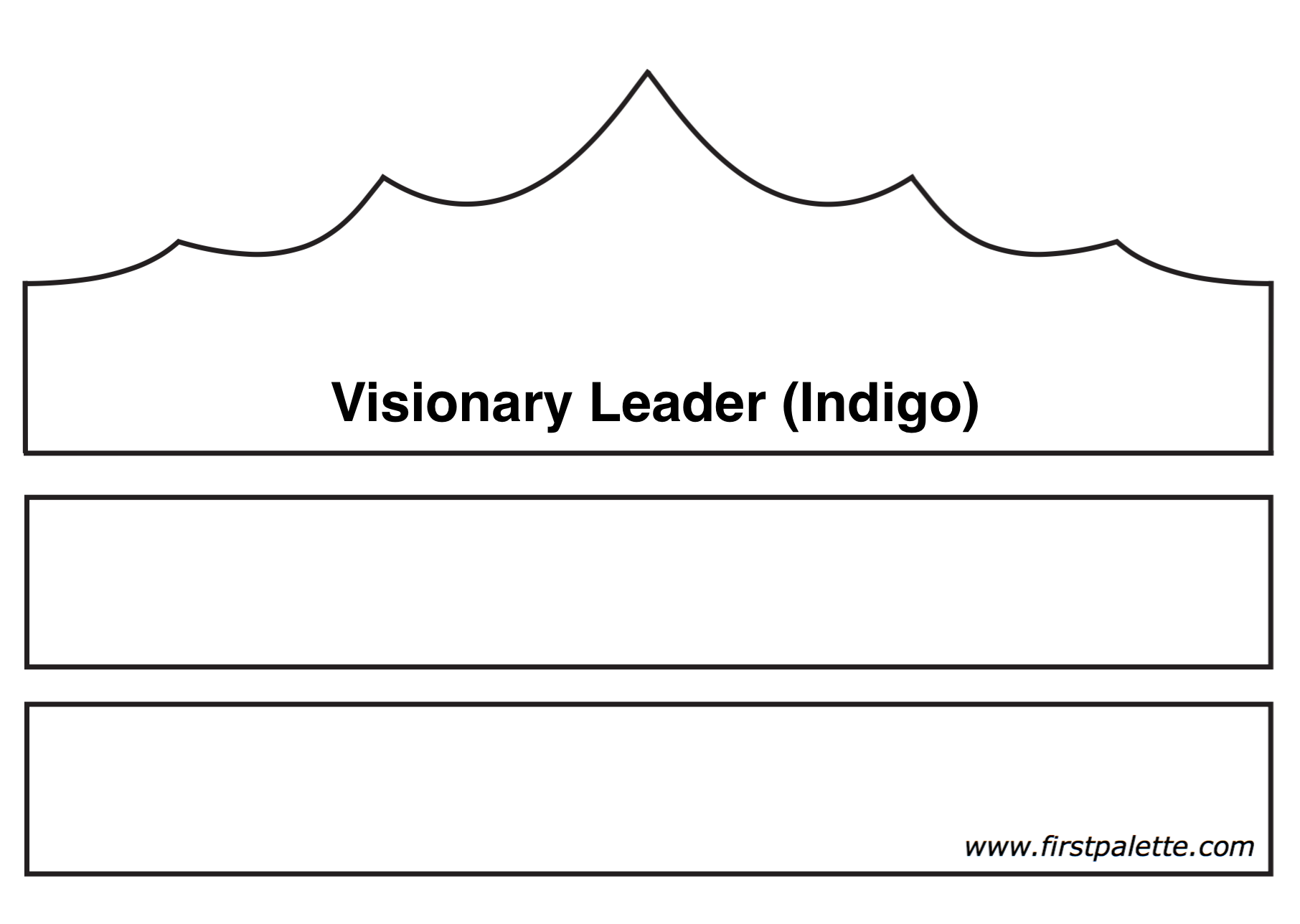


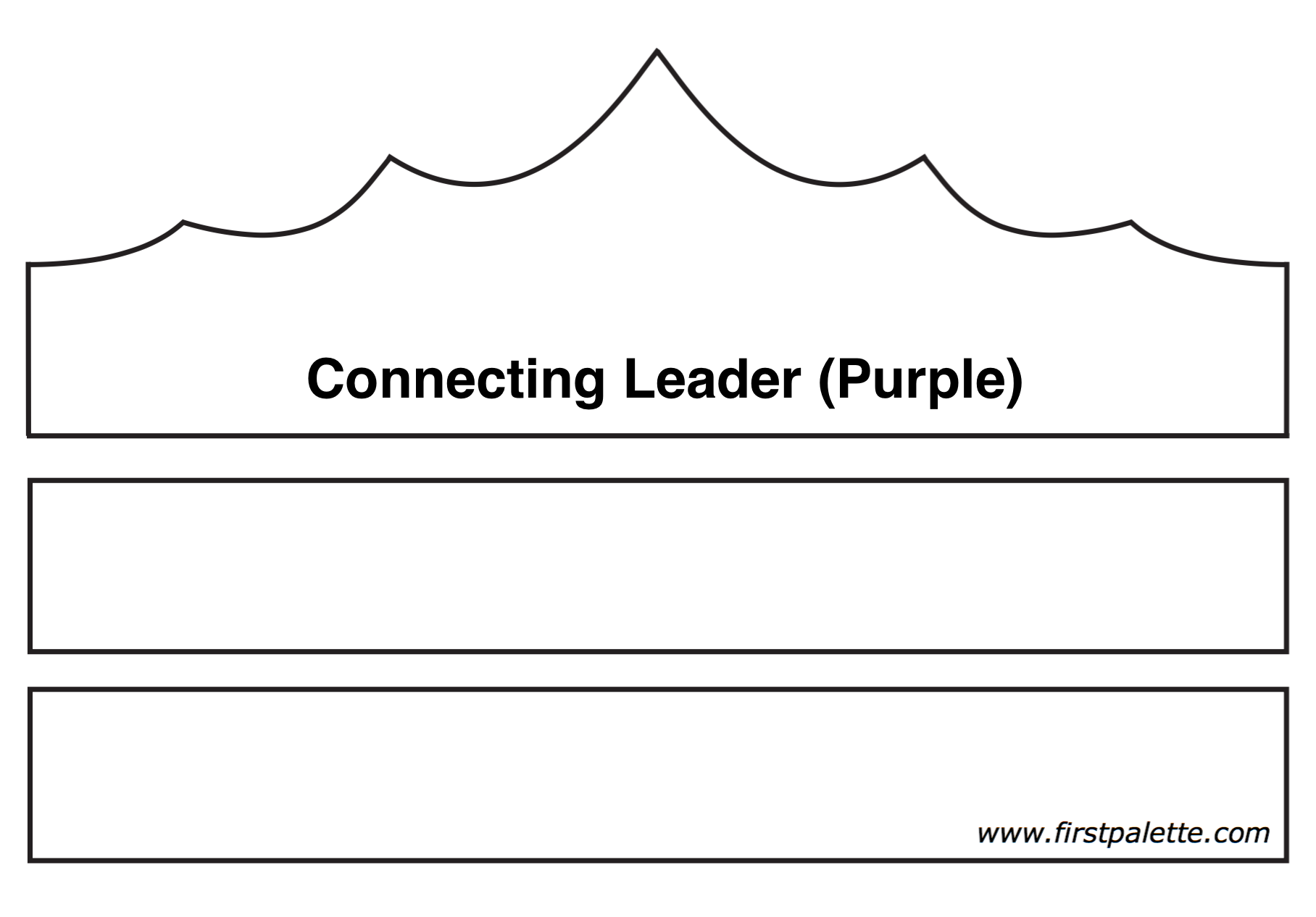












# WORKSHOP 8: Building Multigenerational Connections

## **Introduction**

*We need to remember across generations that there is as much to learn as there is to teach – Gloria Steinem*

This session brings youth and adults in the congregation together to get to know each other and discover the importance of multigenerational relationships. At least two weeks before you facilitate this session, connect with the director of religious education or minister to make a list of ten or so adults in the congregation from multiple generations who may be willing to participate in this session. See Leader Resource 1, Invitation to Join our Multigenerational Discussion for more information. Once you have identified the adults who will be joining this session, invite visitors to consider the Spiritual Preparation section of this workshop.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Demonstrate to participants the value of having people from different generations in their lives
* Create a welcoming space for youth and adults in the congregation to get to know each other
* Explore the qualities of healthy multigenerational relationships

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Think about and share their life experience as belonging to a specific generation
* Learn about the life experience of people from different generations
* Find common ground and celebrate diversity with people from different generations
* Learn how to recognize healthy connections between youth and adults

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 10 |
| Activity 1: Generational Stories | 15 |
| Activity 2: Multigenerational Fishbowl | 25 |
| Closing | 10 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Read Handout 1 American Generations and reflect on how the political and economic climate, popular music and technological inventions when you came of age may influence who you are today. Reflect on what you have learned from your elders and from those younger than you. Reflect on what you have taught your elders and those younger than you.

## **Opening (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 1 Invitation to Join Our Multigenerational Discussion
* Name Tags for everyone
* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Newsprint and markers
* Chalice lighting words: Worship Web [We Come to Love a Church](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/5433.shtml) by Andrew C Kennedy

*We come to love a church,*

*the traditions, the history,*

*and especially the people associated with it.*

*And through these people,*

*young and old,*

*known and unknown,*

*we reach out --*

*Both backward into history*

*and forward into the future --*

*To link together the generations*

*in this imperfect, but blessed community*

*of memory and hope.*

* Group covenant (from Workshop 2 Living in Covenant)
* Check in question:

*Adults: what was your favorite music genre/artist when you were in your teens/20s?*

*Youth: what’s your favorite music genre/artist?*

### **Preparation for Activity**

* At least two weeks in advance, identify one or two people from each generation listed in Handout 1 (if possible) in your congregation or UU community who are willing to hear and share stories about generational differences and similarities. Invite them to join the conversation with the group by using Leader Resource 1 as a template.
* Post the chalice lighting words on newsprint and post.
* Post the group covenant developed in workshop 2.
* Post the check in question in the designated place.

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants and guests and hand out nametags. Give visitors a moment to read over the covenant and ask if your guests have any questions about the covenant and if they agree to abide by it for this session. Invite participants and facilitators to go around the circle and say their names and briefly answer the check in question (in 3 or 4 sentences). Remind participants that check in is not a time for cross talk - clarifying questions can be asked if necessary. After everyone who wants to has had a chance to check in ask for a volunteer to light the chalice.

### Including All Participants

Let participants know they have the right to pass or pass for now. For participants who have trouble being concise you can ask them “how would you sum up your experience in one sentence?” For participants who have trouble refraining from cross talk remind them of the group covenant and to be respectful of their peers’ time to share and the leaders’ time to facilitate.

## **Activity 1: Generational Stories (15 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1 American Generations
* Leader Resource 2 Generational Questions
* Newsprint and markers

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Write the questions from Leader Resource 2 on newsprint and post.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn about generational characteristics and learn about people from different generations.

Begin by saying something like:

*Churches are one of the few multigenerational spaces we have left. Places like school or work, where we spend the majority of our time, are usually segregated into peer groups. Sometimes churches can get segregated into peer groups as well. It’s healthy to want to spend time in peer groups or identity groups and it can also be very beneficial to build relationships with people from different generations. Today we have people representing [X number] of generations in our discussion and we’re going to share what it’s like to be part of each generation.*

As you pass out Handout 1 American Generations, name each generation and ask participants to raise their hand for the generation they belong to. Give one brief fact from the list that puts that generation in context. If the group has completed Workshop 5: Active Listening, remind participants they can employ the techniques they learned in that session for this conversation. Then begin a discussion using the questions in Leader Resource 2 as a guideline. You will likely not get through all seven questions.

At the end of the 15 minutes or when the discussion naturally comes to a close, whichever comes first, say something like:

*Now that we’ve listened to how belonging to a generation is part of what make us who we are, let’s mix it up and practice being in conversation with one another.*

### **Including All Participants**

If the group has been meeting for a long time and are tightly bonded it will be important to remind them to be welcoming to their guests. If your group has completed Workshop 6 Creating Inclusive Community, remind them about going back to the bonding stage of community building when newcomers arrive and reminding them of the conversation on mattering. Help regular participants let their guests know they matter. If you notice that one generation or peer group is dominating the conversation, refer back to the covenant and invite those who haven’t spoken to speak if they like.

## **Activity 2: Multigenerational Fishbowl (25 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* A box, hat or basket that can be used as a “question box”
* Index cards
* Pens or pencils
* Newsprint and markers
* Optional depending on room set up: enough chairs for half of the participants

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Pass out the index cards and pens or pencils.
* If room set up allows, move chairs into a circle in the middle of the room, enough for roughly half of the participants. Otherwise, the people in the center circle can sit on the floor.
* Write “Healthy Multigenerational Relationships” at the top of the newsprint. Along the left hand side write “Feelings” “Behaviors” and “Differences” with enough space between each word that you can fill in responses from the group.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity, participants practice conversation to find common ground and celebrate diversity with people from different generations.

Invite participants to write a question they would want the group to answer about their church experience. Provide some examples to set the expectation such as “What’s your favorite thing about coming to church?” or “What are your thoughts on the way we do worship services?” Pass around the “question box” and collect the index cards.

Invite participants to think silently to themselves whether they prefer salty snacks or sweet snacks. Tell the group that they are to raise one finger if they like salty snacks and two fingers if they like sweet snacks. [You may choose to use another arbitrary method to break the group into two, multigenerational groups]. Ensure that the groups are fairly even and that there are representatives from multiple generations in each group.

Tell the group they are going to participate in an activity called a fishbowl and that this is a tool they can use in the future to create dialogue and practice active listening between two groups, perhaps about difficult or complex topics. Say that usually the group is divided into two identity groups or opinions, the inner circle discusses amongst themselves while the outer circle actively listens, then the groups reverse positions. Inform them that at the end it’s important to debrief, so people can share what they learned while listening in the outer circle.

Invite the people who like salty snacks to sit in a circle in the middle of the room, either on chairs or on the floor and the people who like sweet snacks to sit in a circle surrounding them. Tell participants that you are going to draw a random question from the “question box” that the inner circle is going to freely discuss while the outer circle will remain silent. The outer circle should observe the conversation and notice not just the content of the conversation but the process of the conversation. If the group has done Workshop 7 Leadership Styles, remind them of the process observer role they learned about. Ask participants to think about how people are connecting with one another across generations. Remind participants that just because someone from a generation makes a statement doesn’t mean that all people from that generation would feel the same way.

After about five minutes of conversation switch the inner and outer circles and draw another question from the “question box.”

After about five minutes of conversation invite the inner circle to join the outer circle. Ask:

*When you were in the inner circle, what was it like to share your ideas with someone who was not your peer?*

As people are speaking about what it was like to have a conversation with people of different generations, write on the flip chart any feelings they mention under or next to “Feelings”. Then ask:

*When you were in the outer circle, what did you notice about the way people behaved in this multigenerational conversation?*

As people are speaking, write on the flip chart any behaviors they mention under or next to “Behaviors.” Then ask:

*How might we behave differently in multigenerational conversations than when we’re in conversation with our peer group?*

Write on the flip chart any notes about how multigenerational conversations may be different from conversations in a peer group under “Differences.”

Mention to the group that being in a multigenerational space does not mean that youth have to act more “adult-like,” nor does it mean that adults should act more “youth-like.” Say something like:

*Whether we’re in peer groups or in multigenerational spaces we can be authentic and vulnerable. A large part of being in relationship is sharing of yourself and learning from others. That said, it’s important to be aware of the context you’re in and the people you’re around. Youth may choose to keep some games, traditions or conversation topics to just their peer groups and advisors. Adults should choose to keep current emotional struggles, complicated personal histories, drug use or sexual experiences to their peers and not share them with youth. If you are unsure whether or not it’s appropriate to share something in a multigenerational space, feel free to check in with your peers or an advisor to get their opinion before sharing.*

For the remainder of the time for this activity draw more questions from the question box and invite participants to share freely.

Conclude by saying something like:

*Having multigenerational conversations may be different than having conversations in your peer group but hopefully these conversations got you excited to reach out to people of different generations more often. All these questions in the comment box could be questions you ask one another during coffee hour or other congregational events to get to know one another better.*

### **Including All Participants**

Youth may want to just sit on the floor in the center circle. If all adults are okay with this, the group can sit on the floor. But if one person wants a chair, invite all participants to sit in chairs so that there is not a height discrepancy, which makes it hard to hear and converse. Remind participants in the inner circle that they’ll need to project their voices so that the outer circle can hear them.

## **Closing (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 3 Lemonade Adventure
* Taking it Home sheet

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Make copies of Taking It Home for each participant

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to gather in a circle. Read the story in Leader Resource 3 to the group then invite participants to go around the circle and say one thing they are grateful for in this session. Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. Pass out Taking It Home and explain that it contains ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends. End the workshop with what you are grateful for in this session.

## **Leader Reflection and Planning**

As adults working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this workshop offered an opportunity to learn more about the American generations alive today and have conversations with people outside their peer group. What did you learn about generational differences or similarities that surprised you? How do you think this lesson will impact the multigenerational ministry of your congregation or community? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator?

## Handout 1 American Generations

As a generalization, each generation has different preferences, attributes and worldviews. Because of their collective experiences, people from the same generation may share ideals. Of course, a person is not just their generation. Sex, gender, race, ethnicity, upbringing, family situation, religion, class etc. will all influence a person’s worldview. Below are the generational markers for mainstream culture in the United States.

For more information, review The Strauss–Howe generational theory, created by authors [William Strauss](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Strauss) and Neil Howe. wikipedia.org/wiki/Strauss–Howe\_generational\_theory

### GI/Greatest Generation - Born 1901-1926

**Political & Economic Climate:** Children of the WWI generation & fighters in WWII & young during the Great Depression.

**Popular Music:** Big Band and Jazz on vinyl record and the radio.

**Technological Inventions:** airplanes and the radio. Most folks grew up without modern conveniences like refrigerators, electricity and air conditioning.

**Common Values** Excellent team players, community-minded, sense of civic duty, loyalty, savers.

### Mature / Silents - Born 1927- 1945

**Political & Economic Climate:** Economic boom, women entering the workforce in specific jobs, Korean and Vietnam wars, beginning of civil rights movement.

**Popular Music:** Swing, Blues, Jazz on vinyl record, radio and TV variety shows

**Technological Inventions:** sliced bread, television.

**Common values:** job loyalty, avid readers, disciplined, self-sacrificing, cautious.

### Baby Boomers - Born 1946 - 1964

**Political & Economic Climate:** Vietnam war, hippies and yuppies, civil rights movement and feminism, two-income households.

**Popular Music:** Rock & Roll and Soul on vinyl record, radio, TV variety shows, cassette and 8track.

**Technological Inventions:** credit cards, space exploration.

**Common Values:** Optimistic, driven, team-oriented.

### Generation X - Born 1965 - 1980

**Political & Economic Climate:** Idea of “think globally, act locally” takes root, working parents and/or divorced parents, AIDS begins to spread, Cold War ends, North American Free Trade Agreement and Globalization picks up speed.

**Music:** punk, alternative, hip hop, R&B on radio, cassette, CD and MTV

**Technological Inventions:** personal computer, video games, Walkman

**Common Values:** Entrepreneurial, individualistic, misunderstood, desire a chance to learn, explore and make a contribution

### Millennial - Born 1982 - 2000

**Political & Economic Climate:** 9/11 and the war on terror, mounting college debt, housing market crash, climate crisis, first “digital natives,” rise of the creative class and YouTube stars.

**Music:** pop, rap, indie and niche music genres on radio, streaming and mp3 players

**Technological Inventions:** Internet, Google, Hubble telescope.

**Common Values:** optimistic, focused, overscheduled, pressure to succeed, expected to save the world, collaboration

### Generation Z/Boomlets/iGen/TBD - Born after 2001

**Political & Economic Climate:** First African American president, 49% of those born in 2006 were Hispanic, more births than the start of the baby boom generation, web based learning.

**Music:** niche music genres from Progressive Heavy Electro Rock to Space Trap to who knows what will come next on mp3 players and streaming.

**Technological Inventions:** Smartphones/portable computing devices, virtual reality, Facebook….

**Common Values:** maturing at a younger age, eco-fatigue, too early to tell.

## Taking It Home

*We need to remember across generations that there is as much to learn as there is to teach – Gloria Steinem*

**IN TODAY’S SESSION…** we learned about the GI/Greatest generation, Silent generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennial and Generation Z/Boomlets/iGen and got to speak with people from many of these generations. We practiced being in multigenerational community and noticed the conversation strategies that help us be in community.

**KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN:** When you are in public spaces, **notice** when you are surrounded only by your peers, notice when you are the only person from your generation, and notice when you are surrounded by people of multiple generations. Pay attention to how behaviors may be different in different contexts.

**GET CURIOUS: Ask** a family member or someone you know well from a different generation to tell you a story about what the world was/is like when they came of age or are coming of age.

**FIND COMMON GROUND:** During coffee hour or another multigenerational gathering time at your congregation or community, **start a conversation** with someone from a different generation. Find three things you have in common.

**ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE:** Ask someone from another generation what songs take them to a spiritual place. Find the songs and lyrics online. **Listen to the songs** and/or read the lyrics and reflect on what parts of the song connect to your spirit.

## Leader Resource 1 Invitation to Join Our Multigenerational Discussion

At least two weeks before you facilitate this session connect with the Director of Religious Education or minister to make a list of ten or so adults in the congregation from multiple generations to whom you can email the letter below. Consider that some people may not have or be responsive to email and may need a phone call. In that case, use the following letter as a script for your call. You may also choose to ask the youth who will be participating in this session which adults from the congregation they would like to invite. Ensure that you and the DRE or minister screen the adults you will be inviting. Coming of Age mentors, committee or ministry team members or parents may make good candidates.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

On \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(date) at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(time) our high school class/youth group will be doing a workshop on Building Multigenerational Relationships from the UUA’s *Bringing the Web to Life* curriculum. They will be learning about the value of having non-parental adults in their life, sharing their own stories with and hearing stories from members of the congregation about generational experiences and exploring the qualities of healthy multigenerational relationships.

Would you be willing to be with our youth group on this day for a discussion about generational differences and similarities? I am looking for a few other congregants to join the discussion as well.

There are usually \_\_\_\_\_\_(number) youth at youth group with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(number, percentage or ratio) freshman and sophomores and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(number, percentage or ratio) juniors and seniors. This is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(adjective that best describes your group) bunch who is eager to get to know the adults in the congregation better and to have adults get to know them better.

Thanks for considering it. I’d love to hear a response either way by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(date), so that if I need to find others I will have enough time to do so.

In Faith,

## Leader Resource 2 Generational Questions

1. How would you characterize your generation?
2. What major events did you live through?
3. What is the work ethic of your generation?
4. What is your generation’s views on authority?
5. How do you think other generations characterize you? Others, is this how you see them?
6. What ideas about social justice did you grow up with?
7. What was the religious climate of your generation? How did/does being/becoming UU fit into your generation’s religious climate?

## Leader Resource 3 Lemonade Adventure

Story By [Naomi King](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/151527.shtml)

Once there was and once there was not a town on the edge of the swamp in the sultry summer weather of far south Florida, between the alligators and the ocean. In this town there were two amazing friends, Sam and Joseph. They were a lot alike. They liked the same foods. They liked the same books. They liked the same movies and music and games. They even liked the same class in school. Yes, they liked math, if you can believe such a thing.

But two weeks into summer vacation, Sam and Joseph were bored. Bored, bored, bored, bored, bored. Bored for supper, bored for lunch, bored for breakfast, and bored in between. Bored with books and bored with movies and bored with television. Bored with games and bored with music and bored with the internet and definitely, oh most definitely bored with each other.

“I’m bored,” Sam said.

“I’m bored, too,” Joseph said.

“Why am I here with you?” Sam asked. “You’re so boring.”

“Why am I here with you?” Joseph asked. “You’re so boring.”

But they were too bored to move away from each other. Each boy sighed. Sam grabbed another bag of chips and Joseph grabbed another fizzy drink and they lay down on the floor unable to open those chips or drink because the boredom prevented their fingers from moving.

Then, Joseph’s father’s car pulled up, and quick as a flash, the door was open, and Joseph’s father shouted out quickly, “Hi boys! Gotta run, but just dropping Grandpa Jeff off. Or maybe it’s Grandpa Jerry. One of the J grandpas. Gotta go. See ya later. Have fun all y’all! Bye!”

By the time these words had even made it to Joseph and Sam’s ears, Joseph’s father’s car was pulling out of the driveway and Grandpa Jeff or maybe it was Grandpa Jerry was sitting on his suitcase with his cane, blinking a little, and cleaning his spectacles with an embroidered kerchief.

This was something new. Sam and Joseph propelled themselves from their prone positions to investigate this new J Grandpa. They poked. They prodded. Finally, Grandpa J said, “Ouch! Stop that! Were you raised by wolves? No, I suppose not. You’d have better manners.” Red splotches broke out all over Grandpa J’s neck. He sighed. “That wasn’t nice of me, either. Allow me to introduce myself.”

Grandpa J introduced himself and Sam introduced Joseph and Joseph introduced Sam and then they stood there, looking at each other. “So, it’s summertime, boys, what are you doing for fun?”

Sam and Joseph just looked at one another. “Fun? We had fun. But it is gone now. Now we’re just bored.”

“Boards?” asked Grandpa J. “Yes, you should probably get some boards. Also, some hammers, some nails, some paint. C’mon boys. Let’s go find what we need.”

A brief while later they were hammering boards together and painting. The boys asked Grandpa J what they should paint. He shrugged his shoulders and said, “I don’t know what you should paint. You have colors and patterns and ideas of your own. Show them to the world.” They did, and as they did, Joseph and Sam realized, they were not bored. They were excited.

That evening, they ate delicious smoked tempeh and tomato sandwiches and laughed and talked with Grandpa J about heroes and movies and transforming action figures. “Grandpa J, we love adventures! Tell us some of yours!”

And so Grandpa J did. He told of fixing engines and of splitting wood, of wandering lost in a desert, and of meeting his true love. Joseph and Sam hoped their lives might be as exciting as Grandpa J’s was. At the end of the day, they thanked Grandpa J for all these grand adventure gifts. But he said to them, “Boys, every person has gifts and ideas and stories. Every person has adventures. Some know how to tell ‘em and some have a special gift of coaxing them out of someone else. But an adventure is always within your power.”

The boys went to sleep, having stored these words somewhere, but dreaming of the adventures they had told and heard. The next day, Sam and Joseph asked Grandpa J what they would do with what they built.

“Do? What do you think we should do?” The boys dreamed and they thought and they talked. And then they set up a lemonade stand. One by one kids came by that stand to talk and tell jokes and buy lemonade. Then the utility crew working on the electrical lines stopped at lunch and bought lemonade and talked about their boys and when they had lemonade stands. And so it went.

The weekend zipped by. It was time for Grandpa J to leave. He took each boy’s hand in his to shake “goodbye”. Sam and Joseph each said, “thank you, Grandpa J, and goodbye. Come back again! We hated being bored and you fixed that.” But Grandpa J put down their hands and looked at them steadily. “Boys, boredom is a choice. You each have gifts and ideas. So did all those people you met. You each have stories. So did all those people you met. The beginning of an adventure is always within your power. When I came here I had forgotten that and you reminded me. Thank you, and goodbye.”

We may have to say goodbye at times, but when we have gratitude, we can remember the ways each person’s life touches ours, and continue to live with that gift.

# WORKSHOP 9 Conflict Resolution and Transformation

## **Introduction**

Conflicts, even of long standing duration, can be resolved if we can just keep the flow of communication going in which people come out of their heads and stop criticizing and analyzing each other, and instead get in touch with their needs, and hear the needs of others, and realize the interdependence that we all have in relation to each other. We can't win at somebody else's expense. We can only fully be satisfied when the other person's needs are fulfilled as well as our own.  – Marshall Rosenberg

This session describes concrete skills for staying engaged during and resolving conflict.

## **Goals**

This session will:

* Introduce the idea that conflict is a healthy part of community building
* Provide insight to participants about what their peers and mentors think about conflict
* Guide participants in practicing empathy and self empathy
* Guide participants in practicing conflict resolution and transformation

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

* Recognize that conflict is a healthy part of life
* Identify and discuss successful conflict resolution skills
* Find ways to utilize conflict resolution skills into real life situations

## **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **MINUTES** |
| Opening | 10 |
| Activity 1: Opinion Continuum | 15 |
| Activity 2: Conflict Resolution and Transformation Role Play | 30 |
| Closing | 5 |

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Reflect on a time you were in a personal conflict. What worked well to resolve it? What do you wish you had done differently?

## **Opening (10 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Chalice, candle, lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
* Newsprint and markers
* Chalice lighting words: Worship Web [*The Edge*](http://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/edge)by David O Rankin

*A religion that promises a life without tension, a life without conflict, a life without suffering, is a religion of passivity, a religion of mediocrity, a religion of insignificance. Everything worth doing in the world is a desperate gamble, a game of chance, where nothing is certain.*

*What is love? Is it not a wild and sublime speculation that can end in ecstasy or despair?*

*What is courage? Is it not a hazardous risk of fortune that can end in victory or defeat?*

*What is adventure? Is it not a blind leap in the dark that can end in joy or disaster?*

*What is faith? Is it not a prayerful flip of the coin that can end in heaven or hell?*

*If I refuse to play the game, if I refuse to risk myself, if I refuse to throw the dice, I am never really alive. I am then only flesh, baking in the sun on a middling plateau, with no view of the valley and no road to the peak.*

* Group covenant (from Workshop 2, Living in Covenant)
* Check in question:

*What is one thing that is challenging for you about being in conflict with another person?*

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Write the chalice lighting words on newsprint and post
* Post the group covenant developed in workshop 2
* Post the check in question in the designated place

### **Description of Activity**

Welcome first-time participants. Invite participants and facilitators to go around the circle and say their names and briefly answer the check in question (in 3 or 4 sentences). Remind participants that check in is not a time for cross talk - clarifying questions can be asked if necessary. After everyone who wants to has had a chance to check in, ask for a volunteer to light the chalice.

### **Including All Participants**

Let participants know they have the right to pass or pass for now. For participants who have trouble being concise you can ask them “how would you sum up your experience in one sentence?” For participants who have trouble refraining from cross talk remind them of the group covenant and to be respectful of their peers’ time to share and the leaders’ time to facilitate.

## **Activity 1: Opinion Continuum (15 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Leader Resource 1 Opinion Continuum Statements
* A 15-30 foot linear space that is accessible
* Two pieces of blank 8.5x11” paper
* Tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Post pieces of paper with #1 and #10 written on them either on opposite walls or on the floor on opposite ends of the room.
* Review Leader Resource 1 Opinion Continuum Statements and choose the top five you would like participants to discuss as they will likely not make it through all the questions.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants learn to listen to others talk about their thoughts on conflict, and share their personal experiences with it.

Explain that the group will be participating in an Opinion Continuum exercise. Point out the #1 and #10 markers on the floor or wall. Tell the group that you will read a series of statements and after each statement, participants reflect silently for a moment on their own opinion. Then participants will move silently and place themselves on the opinion continuum based on the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement (10 = agree strongly, 1= disagree strongly, and 5 = neutral, don’t feel strongly one way or the other.)

Explain that conflict is a part of life that many people – adults and youth – have mixed feelings about and a range of experience with conflict – both good and bad. Tell the group that the statements you will be giving are common things people say about conflict and that the participants should give their own opinions.  Remind them of the following things:

* There are no right or wrong responses to the statements and that passing is always an option.
* When commenting, remember confidentiality and respect the privacy of others. You may share stories, but not names.
* Keep your answers brief so there is time for multiple people to share.
* Use “I” statements.
* Respond to the statement the way you understand it, knowing that it may be interpreted differently by other people.
* Refrain from judging others even if you disagree with their ideas.
* Be honest.
* When someone is speaking, actively listen to them. Do not use that time to formulate your answer.

Read the first statement from Leader Resource 1 Opinion Continuum Statements and remind participants which sides of the room are “strongly agree” and “strongly disagree.” After participants have found their spot, invite them into a moment of silence where they can collect their thoughts. Ask a few participants who have positioned themselves on various points on the continuum what some of the reasons they chose that point on the continuum are. Then go on to a different statement.

After you have read each statement or with five minutes left for the activity, whichever comes first, bring the group into a circle. Ask questions similar to:

*Did anything happen that surprised you?*

*Which statement did you find the most challenging?*

*How did this feel for you?*

Depending on which workshops from *Bringing the Web to Life* you have completed, conclude by saying something like:

*I’d like you to recall the active listening skills we learned in a previous session: the use of silence; paying attention to body language; paraphrasing and synthesizing and asking probing questions. In our next activity we’ll practice resolving conflict through role play scenarios. Active listening is a great tool to use to resolve conflict.*

*I’d like you to recall the skills we learned in the Creating Inclusive Community session: helping people remember they matter to us; suspending judgment; staying engaged; demonstrating a willingness to learn and accepting when you’ve made a mistake. In our next activity we’ll practice resolving conflict through role-play scenarios. The skills needed to create an inclusive community are similar to those needed to help resolve a conflict.  After all, conflict can be defined as a break in relationship or community.*

*I’d like you to recall the questions we asked ourselves in the Living in Covenant session: How do we treat ourselves?; How do we treat each other?; How do we communicate?; How do we treat our space?; How do we treat those not part of the group?; How do we uphold our faith?; How do we become people others can count on?; What sacrifices are we willing to make in the name of the highest good? and How do we make amends? In our next activity we’ll practice resolving conflict through role play scenarios. Remember that part of living in covenant is accepting that sometimes we break our promises to each other and that striving to repair brokenness is an invaluable habit we practice to bring ourselves closer to one another.*

## **Activity 2: Conflict Resolution and Transformation Role Play (30 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Handout 1 Transforming Conflict
* Handout 2 Universal Feelings and Needs
* Leader Resource 2 Hypothetical Conflict Situations
* Index cards: 10 for each participant
* Pens or pencils
* Flip chart paper

❏      Markers

### **Preparation for Activity**

●      Make copies of handout for all participants.

●      Write the hypothetical conflict situations from Leader Resource 2 on index cards.

●      Familiarize yourself with Handout 1 Transforming Conflict and other conflict resolution materials that you have come across in your own experiences or research.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity participants practice empathy and learn skills for resolving and transforming conflict through role-play. For groups larger than 10, you may choose to split the group in half.

Pass out one index card to each participant and ask them to write down a real conflict situation they are aware of or a hypothetical conflict situation. Remind them they may share real life stories, but not the real names of anyone involved. Collect the index cards and add them to the ones you have written.

Give each participant a copy of Handout 1 Transforming Conflict and Handout 2 Universal Feelings and Needs. Ask for volunteers to read Handout 1 aloud to the group. While participants are reading, choose a conflict situation you believe the group will be challenged by, and ultimately successful in resolving. If none of the participants’ conflict situations are applicable, choose one that you wrote.

Read the conflict on the index card you’ve chosen. Ask for volunteers who are willing to assume a character in this conflict and role-play the scenario. Explain that in a moment, these volunteers will act out one of the conflicts they’ve written on note cards, using the tips suggested in Handout 1 while the rest of the group will practice showing empathy for the actors. Ask participants to turn to Handout 2 Universal Feelings and Needs and explain that each word listed is a feeling or need that at some point all humans have, or to put it another way, these are universal feelings and needs. Ask participant to go in a circle and read one section of feelings or needs at a time. Remind participants they may choose to pass.

Distribute the rest of the blank index cards evenly among participants (not including the actors) and tell them they will use these cards in a moment to write down feelings and needs.

Read the conflict on the index card again and ask each actor to talk briefly about the conflict from their character’s perspective. Remind them not to inflate or exaggerate the characters or situation for the sake of being theatrical. Provide an example for the actors if they are confused. For example if you chose Conflict Scenario 1: “One person in a group is speaking over others, interrupting and being disruptive in general” actors might say something like:

*Actor A: I just tried to speak but [Actor C] totally cut me off.*

*[Actor C] is being rude and making it so I can’t concentrate on what’s going on.*

*[Actor B] is being too sensitive and trying to censor me.*

After each actor has shared their character’s perspective, ask the participants to take a look again at Handout 2. Instruct participants to guess one feeling and one need that the first actor’s character may be feeling or needing and write them each on an index card. For example, if you chose Conflict Scenario 1, a participant might write “Need to be heard” on an index card. Once all or most participants have written something, ask them to hold their cards up in reference to Actor A. Ask the actor which guesses they imagine might fit for their character. Emphasize that participants are guessing, not aiming for THE right answer. Repeat this instruction for each actor.

Then allow the volunteers to act out the conflict scenario, employing the tips from Handout 1. If the actors have not come to a resolution after five minutes, ask them to pause and offer gratitude to the other person for their willingness to engage in conflict with them. Then ask participants one more time to write down one feeling and one need from Handout 2 on their index cards and hold them up that the first actor’s character expressed or had throughout the role-play. Ask that actor to identify which cards being help up reflect what their character was feeling or needing and repeat this instruction for each actor.

If time allows you may choose to do another role-play with different actors and a different conflict scenario.

After the role-play(s), gather the group in a circle and ask questions like:

*What was it like as a participant to try to empathize with the characters?*

*What was it like as an actor to have your feelings or needs reflected back to you?*

*What tips from the handout seemed to work well?*

*In addition to the tips from the handout, did you learn any new conflict resolution tools from this activity?* (Write these down on newsprint.)

*What was challenging in this activity?*

*How might you use what you learned from this activity in your daily life?*

Conclude by saying something like:

*When you find yourself in conflict in the future, think about Handout 2 and practice self-awareness by identifying your own feelings and needs and practice empathy by imagining the feelings and needs of the person with whom you are in conflict.*

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials for Activity**

* Newsprint and markers, computer and projector, or Singing the Journey hymnals (enough for two or three people to share one)
* Taking it Home sheet
* Building Bridges small screen recording: <http://smallscreen.uua.org/videos/stj-1023-building-bridges>

### **Preparation for Activity**

* Listen to the recording of song #1023 Building Bridges and practice the melody.
* Write the lyrics to the song on newsprint or a Power Point slide or set out hymnals for participants.
* Make copies of Taking It Home for each participant

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to gather in a circle. Thank everyone for their contributions to the group. Pass out Taking It Home and explain that it contains ideas for ways they can continue to explore workshop topics with family and friends.

You can offer that the group can continue a discussion about this session at a later date or in a closed Facebook group if your group has one. End the workshop by inviting the group to sing #1023 in Singing the Journey, Building Bridges. If you are not comfortable teaching the song, you can play the recording before singing together.

**Leader Reflection and Planning**

As leaders working with youth in a Unitarian Universalist context, this workshop offered an opportunity to learn more about your participants’ perspectives on conflict and practice conflict transformation. What surprised you in the Opinion Continuum activity? Did any of your opinions change after this activity? What did you notice about those who participated in the role play activity? What did you as co-leaders learn from your co-facilitator?

## Handout 1 Transforming Conflict

 Adapted from Marcia Christen, Non Violent Communication Trainer

“Conflict is inevitable in every close relationship,” writes Gerald R. Weeks and Stephen R. Treat in their book Couples in Treatment. Conflict is an opportunity for learning, understanding and connection after disconnection.  Healthy conflict can help individuals and groups hold one another accountable. Additionally, conflict can teach group members that people can stay engaged and present with each other, even when they are disagreeing.

A key component to transforming conflict is empathy for yourself and for others. When engaging in conflict, even if there are expressions of judgment, blame, criticism or opinions, you can always listen for the feelings and needs that are under the surface. Conflict can range in intensity and in the number of people involved. A good practice for all leaders is to acknowledge and deal with conflict early in order to prevent it from intensifying and becoming unmanageable. Low intensity conflict can usually be managed by those involved. For conflict you are involved in and feel you can manage without involving a third party or a conflict facilitator, here are some tips for resolution.

### Conflict Resolution Tips

* Take a breath and reflect on your intention in this interaction. If your intention is to convince the other person you are right or they are wrong, take another breath. Set an intention to be present and connect with the other person.
* Out loud, make promises you are able to keep to the other person such as:

*I commit to each person being able to have a chance to share their experience.*

*I commit to check in with myself and take responsibility for what is important to*

*me and how I am feeling.*

*I will speak up if I need support.*

*I will do my best to understand your perspective and reflect back what I hear.*

*I will do my best to be willing to be shifted.*

*I will commit to hear all needs and hold them all with care.*

* Ask the other person if they are willing to make and keep those promises too. It’s ok if they are not willing, you can still keep your promises.
* Even if you disagree with what the other person is saying, actively listen while they are talking. Do not use the time they are talking to formulate a response and do not interrupt the other person. Instead, while the other person is talking you can silently empathize with the person by guessing what they may be feeling and what needs they may be seeking to fulfill.
* When the other person finishes talking, Begin by paraphrasing what the other person has said in an effort to suggest you have heard them and that what they said matters.
* Take a deep breath to formulate your thoughts, connect to what you are feeling in the moment and the needs you have. Remember your intention to connect with the other person.
* Name your feelings and try to name the feelings of the other person. For example:

*I’m getting the sense that you’re frustrated/sad/feeling left out/etc. is that correct?*

*I’m feeling frustrated/sad/misunderstood.*

* Offer observations rather than evaluations, for example:

*Observation: I remember hearing…*

*Observation: I saw…*

*Evaluation: You were wrong when you said…*

* Tell the other person what is going on for you or what you value (a universal need), and then add a request, for example:

*I really need support. Would you be willing to do something for me?*

*I’m longing for understanding. Will acknowledge my experience?*

*I value respect and need to feel heard. Could you repeat back to me what you*

*just heard me say?*

* Before seeking or suggesting a solution, take turns speaking until both or all people have a sense of being understood. Focus on understanding and reflecting back one another’s feelings and needs.
* Once each person has expressed their needs, see if there is a willingness to explore actions, requests or strategies for meeting the needs.
* Attempt to negotiate a solution where each person’s needs can be met.
* If you come to a resolution, summarize what you think that resolution is and ask the other person if they agree.
* Offer and ask for concrete steps for putting the resolution into practice.
* Regardless of whether or not you are able to find resolution, at the end of the conversation offer gratitude to the other person for their willingness to engage in conflict with you.

## Handout 2 Universal Feelings and Needs

**Words Commonly Used to Express FEELINGS**

**when Needs are Not Met**

The words below refer to internal experiences rather than to external circumstances.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gloomy**  Crestfallen  Dejected  Depressed  Despairing  Despondent  Downhearted  Dreary  Forlorn  Hopeless  Melancholic  Miserable  Mopey  Mournful  Pessimistic  Resigned  Somber  **Sad**  Agony  Disappointed  Discouraged  Distressed  Disenchanted  Dissatisfied  Grief stricken  Heartbroken  Hurt  Morose  Full of pain  Overwhelmed  Sorrowful  Unhappy | Upset  Woeful  Wretched  **Afraid**  Apprehensive  Cautious  Fearful  Frantic  Guarded  Hesitant  Insecure  Jittery  Leery  Mistrusting  Nervous  On edge  Panicky  Startled  Suspicious  Terrified  Wary  Worried  **Longing**  Yearing  Desirous  Hungry  **Envious**  Jealous  Longing | **Anxious**  Agitated  Concerned  Edgy  Fidgety  Frenzied  Harried  Hysterical  Impatient  Irritable  Overwhelmed  Perturbed  Stressed  Uneasy  Unnerved  Unsteady  **Cautious**  Hesitant  Reluctant  Resistant  Shy  Skeptical  Tentative  Timid  Unwilling  **Alarmed**  Appalled  Frantic  Incredulous  Paralyzed  Shocked  Surprised | Upset  **Bored**  Exhausted  Fatigued  Heavy  Lethargic  Listless  Tense  Tired  Weary  **Aloof**  Apathetic  Arrogant  Cold  Contemptuous  Detached  Disdainful  Grouchy  Indifferent  Nonchalant  Passive  Prickly  Unconcerned  Withdrawn  **Ashamed**  Deflated  Embarrassed  Guilty  Insecure  Mortified  Regretful | **Annoyed**  Angry  Cranky  Cross  Disgusted  Enraged  Exasperated  Fed-up  Frustrated  Hateful  Hostile  Indignant  Infuriated  Irritated  Miffed  Resentful  Resistant  Ticked off  Turbulent  Vengeful  Vexed  Vindictive  **Confused**  Ambivalent  Bewildered  Curious  Doubtful  Hesitant  Perplexed  Troubled  Uncertain  Unclear  Undecided |

**Words Commonly Used to Express FEELINGS**

**when Needs are Met**

The words below refer to internal experiences rather than to external circumstances.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Delighted**  Amused  Blissful  Ecstatic  Elated  Enchanted  Excited  Exhilarated  Exuberant  Gleeful  Happy  Joyful  Jubilant  Overjoyed  Radiant  Splendid  Tickled | **Calm**  Carefree  Cheerful  Comfortable  Composed  Confident  Contented  Expansive  Free  Good-humored  Mellow  Peaceful  Relaxed  Relieved  Satisfied  Serene  Tranquil  Trusting  Vulnerable  Warm | **Absorbed**  Alert  Alive  Animated  Confident  Curious  Eager  Energetic  Engrossed  Enthusiastic  Fascinated  Focused  Hopeful  Inquisitive  Inspired  Interested  Intrigued  Invigorated  Optimistic  Spellbound | **Amazed**  Adventurous  Affectionate  Astounded  Awe  Compassionate  Confident  Dazzled  Expectant  Friendly  Hopeful  Loving  Open hearted  Playful  Proud  Surprised | **Appreciative**  Buoyant  Glad  Grateful  Gratified  Effervescent  Exhilarated  Intense  Pleased  Refreshed  Thankful  Touched  Upbeat  Wide-awake |

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**Universal Human Needs**

This list builds on Marshall Rosenberg’s original needs list with categories adapted from Manfred Max-Neef.

Note: This list is provided only as a tool for study. No list is any substitute for each one of us finding our truth using our own words that fit our experience.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subsistence and Security**  Physical sustenance  Air  Food  Health  Movement  Physical safety  Rest/sleep  Shelter  Touch  Water  **Security**  Consistency  Order/Structure  Peace (external)  Peace of mind  Protection  Safety (emotional)  Stability  Trusting  **Freedom**  Autonomy  Choice  Ease  Independence  Power  Self-responsibility  Space  Spontaneity | **Leisure/Relaxation**  Humor  Joy  Play  Pleasure  Rejuvenation  **Connection**  Affection  Appreciation  Attention  Closeness  Companionship  Harmony  Intimacy  Love  Nurturing  Sexual expression  Support  Tenderness  Warmth  **To Matter**  Acceptance  Care  Compassion  Consideration  Empathy  Kindness  Recognition  Respect  To be heard  To be known | To be seen  To be trusted  To be understood  Understanding others  **Community**  Belonging  Communication  Cooperation  Equality  Inclusion  Mutuality  Participation  Partnership  Self-expression  Sharing  **Meaning**  Sense of self  Authenticity  Competence  Creativity  Dignity  Growth  Healing  Honesty  Integrity  Self-acceptance  Self-care  Self-connection  Self-knowledge  Self-realization  Mattering to myself | **Understanding**  Awareness  Clarity  Discovery  Learning  Making sense of life  Stimulation  **Meaning**  Aliveness  Challenge  Consciousness  Contribution  Creativity  Effectiveness  Exploration  Integration  Purpose  **Transcendence**  Beauty  Celebration of life  Communion  Faith  Flow  Hope  Inspiration  Mourning  Peace (internal)  Presence |

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## Taking It Home

*Conflicts, even of long standing duration, can be resolved if we can just keep the flow of communication going in which people come out of their heads and stop criticizing and analyzing each other, and instead get in touch with their needs, and hear the needs of others, and realize the interdependence that we all have in relation to each other. We can't win at somebody else's expense. We can only fully be satisfied when the other person's needs are fulfilled as well as our own.  – Marshall Rosenberg*

**IN TODAY’S SESSION…** We listened to each other’s perspectives on conflict and articulated our own opinions. We learned that conflict is a healthy part of community building and practiced conflict transformation and resolution.

**PRACTICE WITH PEOPLE YOU LOVE: Ask a friend or family member their opinions** around conflict. Actively listen to them and use the conflict resolution tips in Handout 1 Transforming Conflict to have a discussion with them. Do you have a friend or family member with whom there is unresolved conflict? **Practice the skills you learned with them**. If it doesn’t work out like you thought it would, that’s ok, try again.

**REFLECT ON CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:** Television, novel and movie plots often revolve around unresolved conflict. Watch your favorite TV show or movie or read your favorite book and **reflect on what the characters could do to resolve their conflict**. **Reflect on a time in the past when you were in conflict.** How did it play out? Knowing what you know now after this session, what would you do differently?

**ENGAGE IN SPIRUAL PRACTICE:** Set aside 15 minutes to **practice a Loving Kindness mediation** by listening to this YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/sz7cpV7ERsM>. The meditation will guide you through sending loving kindness to yourself, to a loved one, to an acquaintance and to someone with whom you are in conflict.

## Leader Resource 1 Opinion Continuum

After participants have been given the instructions for this activity, read the following statements, repeating when requested. These statements have plenty of complexity; if someone asks for interpretation, instruct them to find their spot on the continuum based on their own interpretation of the statement. You will likely not have enough time to get through all of these statements so choose your top five before you begin.

**Opinion Continuum Statements**

Conflicts destroy relationships.

In every conflict there’s a winner and a loser.

In every conflict both or all people, can be right.

An interpersonal conflict means that someone’s needs aren’t being met.

It’s okay to tease people about how they look or act if you’re just joking around.

Conflict should be avoided at all costs.

If you lose in a conflict, it’s the same as losing respect.

It’s important to stand up for what you believe in, even if other people don’t agree with you.

It’s important to stand up for what you believe in, even if other people may try to harm you for doing so.

If someone spreads a rumor about you online, it’s ok to do it back.

If you are in a conflict, you should you keep your feelings to yourself.

Conflict is the same in all cultures.

People LEARN to be prejudiced against people who are different.  People are not born prejudiced.

Conflict can be healthy.

## Leader Resource 2 Hypothetical Conflict Situations

### Situation 1

One person in a group is speaking over others, interrupting and being disruptive in general.

### Situation 2

A person feels like they’re not being heard in a planning meeting, so they approach the facilitator and express this.

### Situation 3

Two people are fighting back and forth about an issue and are creating a tense atmosphere for the rest of the group.

### Situation 4

A couple members of the group make joking comments to each other, but one member gets offended and upset, causing tension in the group.