

0:00:06.040,0:00:10.960

hey I am Norrie Gall I'm the Administrative Director of the Annual Program Fund for the

0:00:10.960,0:00:21.400

UUA I use she her pronouns I am blond haired and a white woman in her mid 40s with a pink

0:00:21.400,0:00:30.040

streak across the front of my hair and I am wearing a maroon ball peasant dress I

0:00:30.040,0:00:38.880

I'm located in Beverly Massachusetts and I'm going to turn it to Sherri

0:00:38.880,0:00:44.800

hi everyone my name is Sherri Lysy I use she her pronouns I am the Administration

0:00:44.800,0:00:51.480

and Finance Manager in the New England Region I am a middle-aged White woman wearing pink

0:00:51.480,0:00:58.680

glasses a black bandana a black long sleeve shirt and denim overalls in the background

0:00:58.680,0:01:05.160

are a couple doors and a couch and my dog I am coming in from Raymond Maine in The

0:01:05.160,0:01:15.960

Lakes Region hello everyone I am Darrick Jackson he him pronouns I am the Director

0:01:15.960,0:01:21.680

of Ministries for Lifelong Learning for the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association

0:01:21.680,0:01:28.560

I am a mostly bald African-American man with purple glasses a purple shirt and

0:01:28.560,0:01:36.400

a black beard with reddish highlights beard I am speaking to you from wayth

0:01:36.400,0:01:44.160

Massachusetts I'm EvIn Carvill Ziemer you can use they them or any pronoun I'm basically

0:01:44.160,0:01:48.480

pronoun indifferent I am the Developmental Lead

for the New England Region in Congregational

0:01:48.480,0:01:55.320

Life I am a White non-binary person with black glasses and short dark hair wearing

0:01:55.320,0:01:59.840

a blue buttoned button-up collar shirt and I'm located in Western Massachusetts

0:02:03.240,0:02:09.800

hi I'm Jennica Davis-Hockett I use she her pronouns I am a Youth and Young

0:02:09.800,0:02:16.400

Adult Ministry staff person in the Lifespan Faith Engagement office I am a White woman

0:02:16.400,0:02:24.560

with brown bangs and a bun I'm wearing glasses and a brown and purple sweater

0:02:24.560,0:02:34.040

in my backyard with a plum and locust tree behind me and I am in Salt Lake City Utah

0:02:34.040,0:02:41.120

and I am Sarah Getty McNeill she her are my pronouns I am a White middle-aged early 40s

0:02:41.120,0:02:48.360

woman with salt and pepper or brown with lots of gray shoulder length hair and bangs I'm wearing

0:02:48.360,0:02:58.000

brown rimmed glasses and a teal button-up shirt I'm in my home in Bloomington Indiana and behind

0:02:58.000,0:03:08.280

me has a chalice and some other altar type items and some plants thank you everybody we

0:03:08.280,0:03:15.920

have prepared a series of questions to ask for the folks that were in the original group that

0:03:15.920,0:03:25.440

conceived of and developed the first six modules of the Neurodivergence Skill Up Sherri and I are

0:03:25.440,0:03:32.720

new to this group starting in the late spring and so we are going to be asking the questions

0:03:32.720,0:03:41.200
and inviting Darrick Evin Jennica and Sarah Getty
to respond and so I'll go with the first question

0:03:41.200,0:03:47.000
which I'll open to all of you which is how did
this idea come up I'm looking at Evin because

0:03:47.000,0:03:53.960
I know go ahead well there was a Facebook post
I think we should let acknowledge that as UUA

0:03:53.960,0:03:58.720
staff we pay attention to the conversations on
Facebook and there was a Facebook thread in Lara

0:03:58.720,0:04:03.760
that kicked this conversation going don't
know if you want to say anything about that

0:04:03.760,0:04:14.080
Jennica I remember seeing it in a Teams message
so we use teams at the UUA and that maybe it was

0:04:14.080,0:04:20.680
Sarah Getty had posted something and I immediately
wanted to hop on this project because I felt like

0:04:20.680,0:04:27.600
the UUA staff's own understanding of supporting
neurodivergence in congregations could use our

0:04:27.600,0:04:34.440
own skill up and what better way to skill up then
in partnership with people who are neurodivergent

0:04:34.440,0:04:42.360
as we're sharing information to congregations
and I'd been doing a lot of youth work and a

0:04:42.360,0:04:49.720
lot of youth trainings and was feeling similarly
behind I had youth participants who expected me to

0:04:49.720,0:04:54.880
have at least the competence of their classroom
teachers if not more competence and making them

0:04:54.880,0:04:59.800
feel like they belonged and were part of it and I
had less and so they were coming saying need this

0:04:59.800,0:05:04.560
or adults would say like come on I felt like I was

being told to get I needed to get with the program

0:05:04.560,0:05:12.400

and I knew I did I needed that but I didn't know where to turn and as a parent I was following a

0:05:12.400,0:05:17.520

number of different social media platforms and invoices and realizing how much real difference

0:05:17.520,0:05:25.000

and diversity there is in neurodivergence and so the idea of like having one person one expert had

0:05:25.000,0:05:30.000

been feeling wrong to me so suddenly I had this idea what if we just forget the idea of experts

0:05:30.000,0:05:35.080

and have have something really possibly messy with different people with their own ideas what

0:05:35.080,0:05:39.760

if we made that shift and for me that was the big shift that made this feel possible was we don't

0:05:39.760,0:05:43.760

have to pick one person and then hope they get it all right and apologize for the things that

0:05:43.760,0:05:50.080

they get wrong it could be messy that could be okay yeah and I will just say you know similar

0:05:50.080,0:05:57.440

to Evin's story I've been a religious educator in congregations for a number of years and I had

0:05:57.440,0:06:04.720

helped support families with children with all kinds of neurodiversity and I felt very under

0:06:04.720,0:06:08.480

equipped and so as the Professional Development Programs Manager as someone who's trying to

0:06:08.480,0:06:14.360

provide professional development trainings for our religious educators and musicians specifically but

0:06:14.360,0:06:21.160

also for our ministers and partnership with Darrick and all of our staff this felt like a

0:06:21.160,0:06:29.560
gap that really we needed to try to do our best to
fill and I found willing partners in these three

0:06:30.840,0:06:36.200
now add to that as well is that similar
conversations around among ministers had

0:06:36.200,0:06:42.760
been happening around no Divergence to know what
the UUMA had been providing and how we were being

0:06:42.760,0:06:48.400
accessible in the ways that are programming and
so the timing was just that we were asking these

0:06:48.400,0:06:53.760
questions and doing our own reflection and
then the invitation came to participate in

0:06:53.760,0:06:59.880
this and it felt like this the time is right
to do some movement and some education and

0:06:59.880,0:07:04.800
the both personal learning and also
learning that then can have a wider

0:07:04.800,0:07:12.760
reach to really rethink about who
we are as Unitarian Universalists

0:07:12.760,0:07:17.840
some of this has been touched on with
your last answers but I'm curious if

0:07:17.840,0:07:21.800
there's anything more specific
anyone would like to speak to in

0:07:21.800,0:07:26.480
terms of what your hopes and dreams
for the impact of this project would

0:07:26.480,0:07:33.400
be on the achievable level my hope was to
start a conversation that this would go

0:07:33.400,0:07:40.760
from the quiet we don't know this to an out
loud we are figuring out making experiments

0:07:40.760,0:07:47.480
and including people and my big audacious

goal is what if your congregations were

0:07:47.480,0:07:52.280

known as the community that you could take your neurodivergent family to and belong and feel

0:07:52.280,0:07:59.440

welcomed I've actually seen that happening in some of the

0:07:59.960,0:08:07.040

neurodivergent web or Facebook groups I'm a part of so that is really really awesome

0:08:07.040,0:08:17.760

yeah I think my big audacious goal is that we're that Unitarian Universalists are adding the faith

0:08:17.760,0:08:29.440

perspective to building inclusive communities in a way that really centers the neurodivergent voice

0:08:30.640,0:08:37.920

yeah I echo all of those and I think my achievable one might be even

0:08:37.920,0:08:43.120

more than just a conversation but that there are people actually beginning to take

0:08:43.120,0:08:49.760

on this work for themselves actually really educate and to deepen and my audacious goal

0:08:49.760,0:08:55.800

would be that Unitarian Universalism is engaged in the work of transformation

0:08:55.800,0:09:01.960

in our local communities around neurodiversity and engagement inclusivity of

0:09:01.960,0:09:10.240

all I agree and affirm all that has been said and for me specifically I was thinking I want

0:09:10.240,0:09:17.960

to give our religious professionals especially our religious educators tools to go into teacher

0:09:17.960,0:09:24.800

trainings and the classrooms with our our kiddos our young people and to feel more confident in

0:09:24.800,0:09:31.760

being able to navigate those spaces and to help support those families and also as we were talking

0:09:31.760,0:09:38.920

especially Evin raised the point that we while we wanted to give hard and fast tools that this issue

0:09:38.920,0:09:43.960

actually is way more complex and the more that we investigate it the more complex it becomes right

0:09:43.960,0:09:50.760

so even in not knowing necessarily how to navigate things having more confidence and reassurance that

0:09:50.760,0:09:55.600

that is okay that we don't necessarily have to have all the answers but that this is a

0:09:55.600,0:09:59.880

conversation and that's something that we continue to explore and learn about and we will be doing

0:09:59.880,0:10:08.040

that for decades to come one of the reasons we're recording this session is Sherri and I and

0:10:08.040,0:10:13.880

Reverend Patrice Curtis joined the team I think we had some assumptions about what this programming

0:10:13.880,0:10:21.840

looked like and what I found was that it had evolved beyond what I could have conceived

0:10:21.840,0:10:28.560

and so one of the questions that launched this recording for me and I'd love to hear from you

0:10:28.560,0:10:33.480

all is what were some of the assumptions going in about what this programming would

0:10:33.480,0:10:41.000

look like Evin you mentioned messy but I'm wondering beyond that what were some of the

0:10:41.000,0:10:48.640

imaginings well our original document says that we would have two sessions two live sessions one

0:10:48.640,0:10:52.520

during the day and one during the evening maybe we would record the first one and play it during the

0:10:52.520,0:10:59.400

second and there'd be a Q&A and that was what we've done that's how we do webinars so

0:10:59.400,0:11:07.000

we assumed we do it that way that's our initial sketch for months looked like that yes and we

0:11:07.000,0:11:13.560

assumed we would be able to churn out one a month and you can see us all laughing about

0:11:13.560,0:11:23.840

that we also kind of assumed that these would be just one person having some time and maybe

0:11:23.840,0:11:29.360

interviewed by one other person member of the team but it would be just kind of these one-on-one

0:11:29.360,0:11:31.840

conversations that were preached to those

0:11:31.840,0:11:41.720

webinars I'm curious if you can just speak a little bit more to why you moved away from the

0:11:41.720,0:11:50.400

assumption of okay this is how we do webinars so this is how we will do this program as well

0:11:50.400,0:11:54.640

it wasn't one thing it just keeps changing and I think whatever this team does is going to

0:11:54.640,0:11:59.640

keep changing one of the things we did early is we brainstormed a list of religious professionals

0:11:59.640,0:12:04.560

who we knew are neurodivergent in some way were kind of out about it on some level and we

0:12:04.560,0:12:10.080

invited them to be part of this project and we talked to them and that's where

0:12:10.080,0:12:14.720

our panel idea came because they were having so much excitement with their ideas so that was one

0:12:14.720,0:12:20.960

shift that happened early on and I think one thing

that allowed us to make so many changes is that

0:12:20.960,0:12:29.480

we have been really trying to be humane with→
ourselves with other people and the piece about

0:12:29.480,0:12:36.040

quality over quantity and undermining→
urgency those pieces of White supremacy culture

0:12:36.040,0:12:43.320

have been a part of what we're trying to undo→
in ourselves in and in our in our Association

0:12:43.320,0:12:50.080

so that just lent itself to a slower pace and→
more openness to shifting because we have more

0:12:50.080,0:12:56.680

time we rescheduled things like we're→
not ready yet I would also say that some of

0:12:56.680,0:13:04.160

the changes came from our participants as→
well and just what ways of being or recording

0:13:04.160,0:13:11.240

or doing helps them present from their best→
selves and so that might mean that we had to

0:13:11.240,0:13:15.840

shift and change what we did what we thought→
was going to be the best way because it's not

0:13:15.840,0:13:20.480

going to be the best way for them and that was→
something that was really important for us to

0:13:20.480,0:13:25.280

learn so people engage in different ways and→
they can communicate in different ways and how

0:13:25.280,0:13:32.040

do we highlight those those strengths and gifts→
so we can really get a good helpful video from

0:13:32.040,0:13:38.960

them Jennica this is my memory you can tell the→
story you might remember it but I remember my

0:13:38.960,0:13:49.560

life went to hell and you and Heather and Alex→
recorded that so the very first recording we did

0:13:49.560,0:13:57.160

we had a plan just like the assumptions that we laid out and then our lives changed Evin was

0:13:57.160,0:14:03.880

called in a home direction for some time and so we said so why don't we record this first

0:14:03.880,0:14:09.320

webinar with Heather Petite and we'll just put it on the web and then we'll share it out from there

0:14:09.320,0:14:18.480

and after we did that we found that that worked so well that it was easier on the interviewers

0:14:18.480,0:14:26.400

it allowed our presenter to have more time to riff and try things out a couple of times and

0:14:26.400,0:14:33.600

we were able to edit it and then it allowed our viewers to access it anytime they wanted

0:14:33.600,0:14:40.040

and so our reach went so much further that way and it was actually less of a heavy lift for

0:14:40.040,0:14:48.320

us to create this professional live thing over and over again yeah we just found that it was

0:14:48.320,0:14:54.040

so much more inclusive for everyone right in our own capacities and so it was this dance that we

0:14:54.040,0:14:59.040

were doing constantly with our presenters and with ourselves at our own processes

0:14:59.680,0:15:03.880

that we just kind of landed on this process that would work best for

0:15:03.880,0:15:10.720

everybody and then there's been messy things there's been doing panels turns out to be

0:15:10.720,0:15:16.400

confusing and challenging especially we ran up against the assumptions we have about

0:15:16.400,0:15:22.120

time limits of a presentation and how to edit time

panel because the panel members were

0:15:22.120,0:15:24.912
had a conversation they submitted their
answers on their own time

0:15:24.912,0:15:32.840
is that the best way different people think better in the moment or don't think better in the moment so

0:15:32.840,0:15:36.960
I think we still have a lot to learn about how to make it possible for many

0:15:36.960,0:15:41.320
people to share their wisdom we reached out to one person for a potential panel that still

0:15:41.320,0:15:46.400
hasn't happened and they said basically they'd love to participate but they would

0:15:46.400,0:15:51.640
want to participate in the written form and we had a like whoa we're only doing one kind of

0:15:51.640,0:15:59.360
thing so I wonder how else it will change that actually kind of leads into the next question

0:15:59.360,0:16:06.320
you know different brains do their best work in different ways and one of the things that struck

0:16:06.320,0:16:13.480
me was how different things were being done in this group to create content and that you know

0:16:13.480,0:16:19.000
so you've mentioned some of the ways but what are ways that you've shifted what you've done to

0:16:19.000,0:16:28.920
be accommodating and inclusive so your presenters can do their best work one of the things that I

0:16:28.920,0:16:33.600
you know this was a learning process for me too I have been in my position for almost five years but

0:16:33.600,0:16:38.760
I still consider myself very much learning and especially from my colleagues and so one of the

0:16:38.760,0:16:46.000
things that I learned early on was it's helpful to
to send the questions in advance and to let people

0:16:46.000,0:16:54.120
review them that's just inclusivity that we
we could provide and then also we invited folks to

0:16:54.120,0:17:01.720
participate however they wanted in that they could
record they could record with an individual they

0:17:01.720,0:17:11.480
could be on a panel they could record themselves
prior to showing up so we we really with each

0:17:11.480,0:17:16.800
presenter worked with them individually and asked
them what works best for you what would

0:17:16.800,0:17:23.200
help make this more successful for you and that
meant that our team then needed to be able to be

0:17:23.200,0:17:30.480
responsive and that's something that I also found
amongst our team was that we were able to flex

0:17:30.480,0:17:35.680
and to support one another and to say like hey
I can do this thing but I can't do that thing so

0:17:35.680,0:17:42.480
it took a lot of flexing on our side as well as
working with the presenters yeah and same thing

0:17:42.480,0:17:50.960
with the live Q&A we would try to bring if no
participants had submitted questions in advance

0:17:50.960,0:17:57.880
we try to bring some questions as the design team
just to kind of prime the conversation and then

0:17:57.880,0:18:05.200
as questions would be flowing in during the live
watch party we would be ordering them and having

0:18:05.200,0:18:12.400
a side conversation and a Google doc right at the
very first session one of our presenters we

0:18:12.400,0:18:17.640
were kind of moving stuff around or maybe one of

us popcorned a question in that was out of order

0:18:17.640,0:18:23.720

and afterwards one of the presenters was like I-†
was banking on that order I had a very specific

0:18:23.720,0:18:29.240

process for how I plan to deliver my content-†
and so when you threw a question in out of order

0:18:29.240,0:18:35.840

that really threw me off and so ever since then-†
we were like okay so we also have really

0:18:35.840,0:18:41.800

incorporated all along our presenters' feedback and-†
how the process works and maybe we do something

0:18:41.800,0:18:46.600

that one presenter would say this is how it really-†
works for me and then another presenter would be

0:18:46.600,0:18:52.320

like actually I prefer it this way or I need-†
to work best in this way so it's been a it's been

0:18:52.320,0:18:58.720

a learning juggle for us about how to support-†
the presenters in delivering their best content

0:19:00.920,0:19:05.880

this phrase has been a thread that has-†
come up through the answers to all of

0:19:05.880,0:19:13.000

these questions nothing about us without-†
us and so I just kind of want to highlight

0:19:13.000,0:19:21.080

that here and mention it as clearly a core-†
tenant to the project that this has become

0:19:21.080,0:19:29.560

and curious how are some of the ways that this-†
has shown up more specifically within in your experiences

0:19:34.558,0:19:40.659

I would say maybe the first place-†
where that started was in the very early stages

0:19:40.659,0:19:43.320

as we were planning is that we brought-†
a group together to have have a kind of a

0:19:43.320,0:19:49.040
thought team to say here's what we're thinking→
of doing does this actually we want your voices

0:19:49.040,0:19:54.000
in to make sure that you know we're→
not just creating something you know that

0:19:54.000,0:19:58.760
actually has no relevance to your lives and→
your experience of Unitarian Universalism or

0:19:58.760,0:20:04.160
your roles but what are the topics and things→
and ideas that you would want to present what are

0:20:04.160,0:20:08.880
the things that you know we would notice
here's the structure does that resonate with

0:20:08.880,0:20:17.480
you and so it was really important to be able to→
use that as the kind of a guiding post for really

0:20:17.480,0:20:24.920
beginning the work and and I would say that→
we've carried that through in how we've really

0:20:24.920,0:20:32.240
tailored each presentation to the presenter and how→
they work instead of just laying out this

0:20:32.240,0:20:37.440
we're going to do we have a conversation with→
them and it has really I would say everyone has

0:20:37.440,0:20:44.520
been unique in some way shape or form and how it's→
operated because of who was involved in the

0:20:44.520,0:20:52.000
process it's also been a challenge there are some→
religious professionals and Unitarian Universalists

0:20:52.000,0:20:58.760
who are neurodivergent but it feels too→
risky professionally for them to be out and

0:20:58.760,0:21:04.000
and yet this whole conversation started with a→
Facebook thread in one of our other professional

0:21:04.000,0:21:07.560
groups and where there really was tension between→

people with the lived experience and people with

0:21:07.560,0:21:12.680

professional experience helping people with
particular identities and we really have

0:21:12.680,0:21:18.440

made the choice to center people's voices
who hold identity and a lived experience and yet

0:21:18.440,0:21:23.400

we're asking people with a marginalized identity
often multiple marginalized identities if they're

0:21:23.400,0:21:31.840

willing to share publicly so that's been just
a place of sadness and impact about about our

0:21:31.840,0:21:36.720

work and and what it means to say nothing
about us without us in a world that some

0:21:36.720,0:21:44.476

of our religious professionals don't feel like
their livelihoods can sustain being more out

0:21:47.134,0:21:55.400

I think too about the division of labor and
our pay structure that we as UUA and UUMA staff

0:21:55.400,0:22:06.160

with resource development in our portfolio can
have the time in our paid work to do the level

0:22:06.160,0:22:15.520

of organizing and planning and promotion and our
presenters already having part or full-time or

0:22:15.520,0:22:25.360

multiple gigs need to be able to be paid to
do the presentation of the work to provide

0:22:25.360,0:22:32.720

their best insights and our fee structure was
such that we were able to provide really

0:22:32.720,0:22:39.000

generous honorariums so that people could carve
out that time to be with us and present their best

0:22:39.000,0:22:47.280

work yeah and I go back to what was said
earlier about that we recognize that

0:22:47.280,0:22:53.120

none of us are experts and really no one is—
an expert on anything except their own lived

0:22:53.120,0:22:58.640

experience right and so we really just invited—
our participants our presenters to show up and

0:22:58.640,0:23:04.640

to speak from their own experience very—
specifically and to share with us and so

0:23:04.640,0:23:12.400

that felt like a really important piece of that—
tenant as well nothing about us without us so a

0:23:12.400,0:23:16.520

lot of the presentations have highlighted—
meeting people where they're at and making

0:23:16.520,0:23:24.520

it possible for them to contribute knowing—
people's capacity fluctuates throughout time

0:23:24.520,0:23:29.040

can you speak to some of the ways the team—
has worked together in a way that allows you

0:23:29.040,0:23:35.368

to bring yourself to the table and keep—
this sustainable through the year and beyond

0:23:38.772,0:23:43.640

so I was serving as the I think we called—
it like the conductor at the time

0:23:43.640,0:23:51.200

the project manager and we set up a weekly meeting—
that everyone had on their calendars and we said

0:23:51.200,0:23:56.080

we're just going to keep moving forward even if—
everyone can't make it to every meeting so we'll

0:23:56.080,0:24:02.880

take good notes so people can catch up if they've—
missed a meeting or two and we'll also really

0:24:02.880,0:24:08.480

evaluate do we need a meeting today because there—
were some times where our project had been pushed

0:24:08.480,0:24:15.400

further out or we would say oh I can probably make—

it for the first five minutes but I'm exhausted

0:24:15.400,0:24:21.920

because we were also mid pandemic as well and so sometimes we'd cancel meetings sometimes half of

0:24:21.920,0:24:28.360

us would show up and we'd move a project just one one more step down the path and

0:24:29.200,0:24:37.960

that process or that structure felt like it held the team without

0:24:37.960,0:24:43.600

every member having to give their full entire self for every step of the project

0:24:46.965,0:24:51.120

and we've just been I think really gracious with each other I think everybody's had

0:24:51.120,0:24:55.000

life life happens we have families we've got children we've got extended families

0:24:55.000,0:25:00.480

we've got a world with COVID and we would just say like I'm out right now I can't

0:25:00.480,0:25:06.969

and someone pick it up and and I've really appreciated working on a team with that generosity

0:25:09.300,0:25:13.440

yeah I think one of the benefits of this team was that we had really great

0:25:13.440,0:25:19.120

communication and part of that was saying that we had a weekly meeting and even if we just checked

0:25:19.120,0:25:24.760

in for a few minutes with one another or if we said we canceled the meeting but we

0:25:24.760,0:25:30.840

were always in communication and we kept showing up just to let each other know where we were

0:25:30.840,0:25:38.600

so that we could then pass the baton if we needed to right and because the

0:25:38.600,0:25:44.600
team was large enough there was always someone+
who was willing and able to say yeah I can I got

0:25:44.600,0:25:49.783
you this week like I can I can pick this up+
where you need to let it go that was really awesome

0:25:52.334,0:25:58.320
and we we postponed so many+
events we postponed and rescheduled

0:25:58.320,0:26:03.000
so many events and that was okay+
it wasn't a bad thing it was what

0:26:03.000,0:26:08.120
needed to happen at the time to honor our+
capacity but also often our presenters capacities

0:26:11.837,0:26:17.960
so speaking of capacities and+
the other roles that everybody plays at

0:26:17.960,0:26:26.880
work in life of course you all have your+
career outside of this project

0:26:26.880,0:26:32.880
your jobs that you are also doing+
alongside and so how has being engaged

0:26:32.880,0:26:39.732
in this particular project changed+
how you engaged in other parts of your work

0:26:42.034,0:26:50.542
for me I put together a lot of trainings a+
lot of curricula I helped support the Renaissance

0:26:50.542,0:26:53.520
Program but also the RE Credentialing Program and+
the Music Leadership Certification Program and

0:26:53.520,0:26:58.640
so it's really informed some of the conversations+
I'm having with the RE Credentialing Committee and

0:26:58.640,0:27:03.720
Music Leadership Certification Committee+
on inclusion and trying to bring some of

0:27:03.720,0:27:09.360
the learning that I've gained from the+
the learning that I've gained from the+

presenters and their wisdom that they've shared

0:27:09.360,0:27:13.520

and their lived experiences bringing that into the conversations we're having about how to best

0:27:13.520,0:27:19.560

support the candidates in our programs it's informed how I'm putting together trainings

0:27:19.560,0:27:24.880

making them more multimedia more inclusive I mentioned earlier learning to give the

0:27:24.880,0:27:30.480

questions in advance right and that's that's a very basic thing but it makes a big difference

0:27:30.480,0:27:37.070

in someone's ability to show up and to be more fully present so it's really transformed my work

0:27:40.134,0:27:46.560

for me as well it shapes the questions that I'm asking even as

0:27:46.560,0:27:52.760

I'm thinking about what webinars or programming we're trying to offer let me think about

0:27:52.760,0:27:57.480

that whatever we're doing that we make sure that this is open for different ways and different

0:27:57.480,0:28:02.080

brains and different ways of engaging and so there's questions that I wouldn't have

0:28:02.080,0:28:07.400

even thought to ask but now I stop and I do it's like oh alright that works for

0:28:07.400,0:28:13.040

me is that going to work for everyone you know let me really rethink and so I pause

0:28:13.040,0:28:17.880

a lot more just to make sure that I've kind of thought through different ways of engaging

0:28:17.880,0:28:23.440

with whatever I'm doing and you know sometimes I'm good at it and sometimes I'm like oh I missed

0:28:23.440,0:28:29.840

that but it's still that moment of pause that's not constant I think has been really helpful for me

0:28:29.840,0:28:35.560

to open up the different ways of both inviting people in to participate but also in ways in

0:28:35.560,0:28:41.792

which we present information and make sure that it's available in multiple ways for people to access

0:28:44.336,0:28:50.400

I'm doing less sort of pedagogy at the moment in my work but with online meetings I

0:28:50.400,0:28:56.882

do a lot of like get folks together in a congregation or across congregations to have informal conversations

0:28:56.882,0:29:00.320

much more camera on camera off which I was doing before but I'm I think I'm

0:29:00.320,0:29:06.360

making a wider invitation to say what you need in those spaces and include more

0:29:06.360,0:29:13.560

possibilities but the biggest impact for me is in conflict and congregations I knew before all

0:29:13.560,0:29:18.120

this work that neurodivergence could be part of that conflict but I'm seeing it a lot more often

0:29:18.120,0:29:22.720

now that I'm looking for possibilities when conflict happens in congregations

0:29:22.720,0:29:28.320

there are always multiple perspectives past trauma can be a part different cultural communication styles

0:29:28.320,0:29:33.440

can be a part and now I'm looking at what's going on with different neurotypes here

0:29:33.440,0:29:38.720

with the trauma and the cultural conflict styles like it's just a layer that I think we haven't

0:29:38.720,0:29:43.480

attended to in thinking about how people are

communicating in congregations and how they're

0:29:43.480,0:29:47.920

working differently in their committees and then how their different ways of being together

0:29:47.920,0:29:53.440

communicating working together is not always smooth so that's helping me give leaders

0:29:53.440,0:29:58.320

well people are different in these ways kinds of information but also more compassion and

0:29:58.320,0:30:02.480

just encouraging my own thinking of what are all the different things that could be going on here

0:30:02.480,0:30:07.680

because the more I have the more I come in with an expansive set of possibilities and less lock down

0:30:07.680,0:30:11.960

into well this person's a jerk that just isn't helpful for my support of a congregation I

0:30:11.960,0:30:16.552

need to have as much compassion and openness to the possibilities of what might be going on

0:30:19.667,0:30:26.840

so I accompany the community moderators who are charged with maintaining the community vibe

0:30:26.840,0:30:34.840

for the Young UU Project and the YUU Project is a national well actually international community

0:30:34.840,0:30:39.400

care network for high school aged Unitarian Universalists and those on the bridge of their

0:30:39.400,0:30:47.120

first year of emerging adulthood and centers BIPOC trans and non-binary neurodivergent

0:30:47.120,0:30:55.520

and disabled youth and it exists mostly on Discord right now and we also have our monthly meetups and

0:30:55.520,0:31:04.920

it's been really important for me and the community moderators to shape the discourse on Discord and

0:31:04.920,0:31:12.400

also at the very beginning of those meetups we really outline this is a space where you get to

0:31:12.400,0:31:18.680

come exactly as you are whether your camera's on or off whether you want to only participate in the

0:31:18.680,0:31:25.200

chat or you want to mute or unmute or you want to just stay as an observer the whole time

0:31:25.200,0:31:35.360

all of those ways of being in this community are celebrated and another aspect is right at the top

0:31:35.360,0:31:45.880

of our meetups and also on the Discord server we make it really clear like we want to accommodate

0:31:45.880,0:31:53.760

your way of showing up so please let us know and you can let us know publicly or privately what do

0:31:53.760,0:32:00.920

you need so that you can bring your whole self to this community and then we we do our best to shift

0:32:00.920,0:32:05.080

with every new person that comes to the community we realize okay the community might need to shift

0:32:05.080,0:32:14.200

so that we can expand I also think about the Peer Pastoral Care training that is on UU Institute

0:32:14.200,0:32:22.360

and Unitarian Universalist we have had a very very long history of this peer pastoral

0:32:22.360,0:32:29.240

care model it used to be called youth chaplain training that has been a real corner stone of how

0:32:29.240,0:32:36.640

we do youth ministry in Unitarian Universalism and we're continuing to evolve our understanding

0:32:36.640,0:32:45.480

of what listening looks like what listening like how someone shows that they're listening or how

0:32:45.480,0:32:52.280

someone really does their best listening and

we have now a whole section in our

0:32:52.280,0:32:58.320

peer pastoral care training that's on cultural-
considerations and neurotypes so that truly

0:32:58.320,0:33:04.843

everyone can provide that pastoral care to their-
peers and also feel heard by their peers

0:33:06.760,0:33:14.080

we've heard how you've Incorporated feedback ongoing-
you know suggestions and feedback from presenters

0:33:14.080,0:33:22.840

and I want to note that Allison King who is also-
in this group but isn't with us has coordinated

0:33:22.840,0:33:28.800

the process of doing the feedback surveys from-
participants but I'm wondering as members of this

0:33:28.800,0:33:35.626

group what sort of feedback you have had from-
participants and how that has impacted the work

0:33:39.000,0:33:42.000

I just want to say first off that-
Allison's participation in this has been

0:33:42.000,0:33:48.400

so crucial in so many ways I'm not-
sure we could be doing it without her

0:33:48.400,0:33:54.800

help we've heard all kinds of things I think-
the ones that have been most impactful for

0:33:54.800,0:33:59.120

me have been the people who send us an email-
saying didn't know I'm neurodivergent now

0:33:59.120,0:34:03.800

I understand a whole bunch of things about-
myself or thank you for doing this I feel

0:34:03.800,0:34:07.960

like there's more room for me in Unitarian-
Universalism those are the ones that that I

0:34:07.960,0:34:15.226

have really taken as fuel of like yes we-
need to keep doing this we're doing the right thing

0:34:18.400,0:34:23.760
since I was the person sending out the meeting invitations a lot of people would

0:34:23.760,0:34:30.120
respond and say oh shoot I missed this one can I watch watch it or oh shoot I registered but I wasn't

0:34:30.120,0:34:37.600
able to attend and just being able to respond with yes it's still accessible here here here and here

0:34:37.600,0:34:45.788
made me feel like the project is going to have a life beyond this team but also just the importance

0:34:45.788,0:34:54.856
of the way we've maintained the accessibility of the resources going forward feels really important to me

0:34:56.382,0:35:01.320
and we have heard that people really want to continue these conversations

0:35:01.320,0:35:08.880
and engage more with each other and learn from each other and so we are looking at ways

0:35:08.880,0:35:14.200
in which we can actually help facilitate that in the coming year as well and so we are really using

0:35:14.200,0:35:20.704
some of the feedback to help us even think about how our programming is moving forward with our work

0:35:23.634,0:35:27.840
and I'm drawn back to where this all originated which is in our

0:35:27.840,0:35:33.160
Facebook groups and I'm seeing so much more conversation about neurodivergence there

0:35:33.160,0:35:40.440
and more people coming out or questioning as Evin was saying so it really

0:35:40.440,0:35:46.400
has increased the awareness across our religious professionals and that's really beautiful there

0:35:46.400,0:35:52.200
was one team recently who said that they check

in on their neurotype as a staff team regularly

0:35:52.200,0:35:57.640

and I was just like how amazing is that that they're showing up for one another in that way

0:35:59.680,0:36:08.600

and as we wrap this conversation up thinking ahead to the future and also you know with

0:36:08.600,0:36:16.440

all of this reflection the process and the evolution and the successes of this

0:36:16.440,0:36:22.560

project is there anything that y'all haven't been able to do yet in terms

0:36:22.560,0:36:30.336

of either content or ways of making content that feel exciting to to be thinking ahead to

0:36:32.934,0:36:38.085

I would say that I feel like we've only really scratched the surface in terms of what

0:36:38.320,0:36:44.000

I feel like there's so much content that we could probably do and I don't have like particular

0:36:44.000,0:36:49.320

subjects or things that are coming coming to mind because there's so much part of it is we

0:36:49.320,0:36:54.600

recognize I guess I can say I recognize that we only know a few of the people who are out there who are out

0:36:54.600,0:37:01.680

and engaging and you know who else has things to say or share that we might not even

0:37:01.680,0:37:07.680

know or that might be possibilities that might bring things in and so I think that's the

0:37:07.680,0:37:14.080

piece we are looking forward to is the people I know the list of people that we know and I want to know

0:37:14.080,0:37:18.080

who's out there that we don't know that might be able to really contribute something really

0:37:18.080,0:37:27.920

wonderful to this project that could release→
shift and change our understanding of this work

0:37:28.468,0:37:34.400

and in the very beginning we were like ooh and→
then we turn it into a book and then we were like

0:37:34.400,0:37:41.440

wait a minute we can't turn it into a book because→
this is living when we are constantly learning

0:37:41.440,0:37:48.920

and revising and becoming and then we learned→
that Skinner House is doing these multimedia

0:37:48.920,0:37:56.600

book things that can be edited more quickly than→
a print book and so I think there is still a

0:37:56.600,0:38:04.640

desire for how we can bring all of→
this together in one offering that could even

0:38:04.640,0:38:10.600

go beyond Unitarian Universalism and be alive→
for an interfaith context or a secular context

0:38:10.600,0:38:25.480

too I kind of have a question for Nori and Sherri→
and others what is coming next like next next not

0:38:25.480,0:38:29.158

future next but like what happens after this

0:38:31.309,0:38:40.400

so→we want to be managing expectations because we→know that what we're
going to be able to deliver→
and what we can imagine delivering are potentially

0:38:40.400,0:38:46.040

dramatically different a couple of things that→
I would note have happened that I think speak

0:38:46.040,0:38:51.480

to some of the things you guys touched on is→
that there has also been a torch passing so to

0:38:51.480,0:38:57.920

make this sustainable Jennica isn't the conductor→
anymore that role has shifted and and Sherri

0:38:57.920,0:39:05.400

has joined the team as have I as has Patrice and→

Sarah Getty and Evin are are stepping away more and

0:39:05.400,0:39:13.200

Darrick and Allison are a through thread so I just want to say that I think for creating something

0:39:13.200,0:39:21.640

that will could be sustainable and dynamic because neurodivergence isn't a static subject you can't

0:39:21.640,0:39:30.320

have taken the first six and get an A and neurodivergent skills and that's it and so what's next

0:39:30.320,0:39:35.480

is probably part of some of the hopes that you guys have expressed of having spaces where it's

0:39:35.480,0:39:43.640

comfortable to be out and be neurodivergent and feel welcome and included I'll say that the

0:39:43.640,0:39:48.960

current evolution of our group has been talking a lot about the feedback that seemed like a through

0:39:48.960,0:39:57.040

line of people wanting communication tools and a real concern about making sure they're doing

0:39:57.040,0:40:04.789

things right as if there's a specific right way and so how we can partner with people through the

0:40:04.789,0:40:11.547

process of learning and growing is one of the spaces that we're looking at that does feel fair to say

0:40:12.799,0:40:17.520

here's one thing that we've talked about about not being able to do yet that I think is fair

0:40:17.520,0:40:22.520

to say there have been times when we're like is this done or is it going to be done and every

0:40:22.520,0:40:27.320

time we've had that conversation we've landed on we haven't gotten as far into liberation

0:40:28.960,0:40:33.800

that the health insurance industry the domination of a particular therapy for

0:40:33.800,0:40:38.080

Autistic children being the only thing that you can get funded and whether or not that therapy

0:40:38.080,0:40:43.040

is helpful liberation in terms of understanding at work being able to earn a living being able to

0:40:43.040,0:40:47.720

all of that how are our young people as they leave our congregations navigating the

0:40:47.720,0:40:52.360

world what do they really need that's what comes up when we talk about are we done but

0:40:52.360,0:40:57.600

that's not just our work so if you're listening that and you're like oh I want to do that well

0:40:57.600,0:41:03.040

please help with the the liberation the the liberation piece and it has

0:41:03.040,0:41:09.360

been a helpful guiding star I think to say done isn't done until we get to discussing

0:41:09.360,0:41:15.560

liberation but we're just one little piece of all the

0:41:15.560,0:41:18.421

places these conversations are happening in Unitarian Universalism

0:41:20.338,0:41:25.240

alright well thank you everyone for participating I really

0:41:25.240,0:41:29.720

appreciate this work and being able to to be a part of it and bring both

0:41:29.720,0:41:36.680

my perspective and some of my skills to this team is really valuable so thank you