

Adult Faith Formation

Spark Handbook



Session One Handouts

- 1.1a Adult Faith Formation (AFF) Pework by Session
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Handout 1.1a Adult Faith Formation (AFF) Prework by Session

Adult Faith Formation Prework by Session

Before Session #1

- Create a UUA user account. If you don't already have a UUA.org account, please go to <https://www.uua.org/forums/participating>, for directions. Add your photo and a short biography or take a moment to update the biography you may have written in the past. Contact the facilitator with your user name as soon as your account is created to access the Module materials.
- Mark your calendar for our required online sessions. The zoom address will remain the same each week.
- Read the three Module Readers:
 - "[Process, Not Program: Adult Faith Formation for Vital Congregations](#)," by Diana Butler Bass (Congregational Resource Guide, 2010).
 - The website [Lifelong Faith](#).
 - The chapter [Educating for Liberation](#) beginning on page 89 from [Widening the Circle of Concern](#) by the UUA's Commission for Institutional Change.
- Review and complete all the prework in Session 1 Handouts. It is critical to watch the [Transformative Learning Theory](#) video (16 min 26 secs) and respond to Handout 1.4b: Transformative Learning Reflection before the session.
- Bring a chalice and candle to light for our time together.

Before Session #2

- Make your own individual rubric by copying the [one in the shared folder](#). Begin adding as many faith development opportunities (in the broadest sense of the word)

to your Congregational Rubric. Then add all adult religious education/faith formation/exploration offerings in your congregation to the rubric. Consider the broadest sense of the programming, including all adult engagements regardless of who offers them, with the exception of meetings, music rehearsals and worship. Take special care to note any offerings which meet/fulfill theories engaged in Session One: Transformative Learning.

- Review all Session Two Handouts completing any pre-work noted.
- Post reflections on the Discussion Forum to integrate the previous session learning: Session #1.
- Watch “[The Relationship Between Neural Pathways and Learning](#)” video. Here is a [transcript of the video](#).
- Bring colored pencils/markers and paper to Session #2.
- Complete the three (3) module readers
- Review the shared folder and check out the recording if needed.

Before Session #3

- Continue to work on the [Congregational Rubric](#) (remember to save as your own editable rubric) by adding which of your adult faith formation offerings reflect the theories we engaged in Session Two – Building Beloved Community. This includes all the skillswork you identified so far.
- Post reflections on the Discussion Forum to integrate the previous session learning.
- Read all of **Session 3 Handouts** completing any prework, including:
 - Find your congregation’s Mission or Vision (the congregational website is a good place to look). If your Adult Faith Formation group has a vision statement, find that too. (Note; For our purposes here, a congregational mission is where we will repeatedly link the faith formation.)
 - Bring colored pencils/markers and paper for Session #3.
 - Review the shared folder and check out the recording if needed.

Before Session #4

- Come to a “settling place” on your Congregational Rubric. (Completing what your congregation has offered will be helpful before embarking on exploring other curriculums in our next session.) You are also invited (as encouragement to “settle” the Rubric) to send your Project group members your Rubric to review before the session.
- Post reflections on the Discussion Forum to integrate the previous session learning.
- Read all of **Session 4 Handouts** completing any prework.
- Prepare to be familiar with noted UU curriculum resources — [Roots and Wings](#), [Small Group Ministries Network](#), the [Adult](#) and [Multigenerational](#) Tapestry of Faith offerings, [Transforming Hearts collective](#), [Fahs Collaborative](#), and [the Touchstones Project](#)
- Review the shared folder and check out the recording if needed.

Before Session #5

- Post your responses to the Session 4 Discussion Forum.
- Complete the [Google Form Facilitation Skills Assessment](#) to complete after reading Handouts 5.1b and 5.1c.
- Review the shared folder and check out the recording if needed.

Before Session #6

- Finalize your formal presentation with visual image of your Congregational Adult Faith Formation plan and post it in the appropriate slide for your Congregation in the Google Collaborative Slides three days before your next session to give folks and the facilitators a chance to review them. If necessary, check in with your group or seek their advice. Simply add pages after you fill ones for the next participant posting.
- If you wish, practice your presentation using Zoom. Remember Zoom has a free option for everyone with a computer or smart device. Being able to present and

share screens is an important facilitator skill and you will be running your own tech for this session.

- [Participant Evaluation](#)
- [Facilitator Evaluation](#)
- Review the shared folder and check out the recording if needed.

Handout 1.1b Important AFF Quick Links Page

[Readers](#)

[Congregational Rubric Template](#) (copy and make your own if you haven't already)

Handouts

- [Session 1 \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Session 2 \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Session 3 \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Session 4 \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Session 5 \(Word\) \(PDF\)](#)

[Discussion Forum](#)

[Google Collaborative Slides](#) (Facilitator will make a copy of the template, title it for the Module Session and relink it here)

Google Sample Slides

Google Forms

- Session 5 [Self Evaluation of Facilitator Skills](#)

Online Videos to Watch or Websites to Visit

- Session 1 [Transformative Learning Theory](#)
- Session 2 [The Relationship between Neural Pathways and Learning \(MP4 7:36\)](#)

[Participant Evaluation](#)

Handout 1.1c: Preparation for Module Evaluation

Visit the [Renaissance Program participant Online Evaluation Form](#) to review the questions to enable you to think about your responses throughout the program.

Please complete and submit it within one week of completion of this Module. The official Renaissance Certificate will be sent to you within ten days of receipt of evaluation. All feedback is confidential and is seen only by Renaissance staff; feedback to leaders is shared only in the aggregate. Your candid comments are very helpful in developing strong leaders and a strong Renaissance program.

There are three areas on which you will be asked to provide feedback:

I. Module Leadership – consider each leader separately

- Group Facilitation Skills
- Knowledge of Content Area
- Sensitivity to Different Learning Styles
- Teamwork with another Leader
- Organization/Communication
- Other Comments or Suggestions for Leaders

II. The Learning Experience

- What was most valuable for you?
- Please share at least three significant learnings from the module:
- What expectations did you bring to the module? Did the module meet your expectations? Please explain.
- In what ways will you use the learnings from this module?
- How will you share your learnings in the congregation or with peers?
- Other comments or suggestions about the learning experience?

III. Preparation Materials

- I read: all/most/some/none of the pre-session readings and videos.
- I found the pre-session assignments: very useful/somewhat useful/not useful
- Other comments on the materials used in the program.

Handout 1.2: Learning Management Systems

Online learning requires a system to provide the course materials.

- An in-person learning management system often looks like
 - A syllabus or collection of session agendas
 - A listing of any required readings or materials you may need
 - Any supporting material you need
 - Handouts received in the session
 - Emails home
 - An evaluation

The Adult Faith Formation Learning Management System includes:

- The UUA Module AFF pages which is an online organized place for:
 - Session Agendas
 - A place that holds all the handouts
 - Session-by-session prework directions
 - Supporting videos or readings
 - Evaluations
 - Discussion Forum, which contains some preparatory and reflection questions to deepen the learning.
 - AFF Module Slides which house our individual and collaborative work
 - Sample Action Plans Google Slides
 - Shared Google Folder holding the Session recordings
 - Additional Resources and Facilitator Resources

Prework Question

Distance learning requires some method to organize resources and learning activities for participants. What do you use in your congregations?

Handout 1.3: Creating Covenant and the 8 Guidelines for Equity and Inclusion

The 8 Guidelines for Equity and Inclusion—Visions, Inc.1.

- **“Try on”** is an invitation to be open-minded to others’ ideas, feelings, worldviews and ways of doing things so that greater exploration and understanding are possible. The invitation also includes feeling free to take those things that “fit” and to leave or file away those things that don’t fit.
- **“It's OK to disagree”** assumes that disagreement is not only inevitable but can help individuals and groups produce better outcomes. By acknowledging what we have in common and by recognizing, understanding, and appreciating what is different between us, individuals and groups can shift the pressure to “be”, “think”, or “act” the same into permission to generate all possible ideas and strategies. This guideline assumes we can disagree and still stay connected and do great work.
- **“It's not OK to blame, shame or attack ourselves or others”** assumes that most of us have learned well how to show our disagreement by making the other person wrong. This happens in direct, indirect, verbal and non-verbal ways. When we attack, shame, or blame ourselves and others, we are less likely to take in what others are sharing and less likely to problem-solve across our differences.
- **“Practice self-focus”** assumes that our learning about differences can be accelerated and maximized when we listen to our internal thoughts, feelings and reactions. When we find ourselves getting irritated with someone about cultural differences, we can blame or shame them or ourselves, or we can figure out internally what is causing our irritation. An effective tool for practicing self-focus is using “I”, rather than “we”, “you”, or “one” statements. When we intend to refer to others, be specific about who those others are --by name or group. In addition, when speaking about our own experience or opinion, use "I have found..." or, " I think, I feel, I believe..." and include feeling words, e.g. mad, sad, scared, happy, relieved, etc.
- **“Notice both the process and content”** means notice both, “what we say”, “how “and “why” we say or do something and how the members of the group react. For example, notice who's active and who's not, who's comfortable and who's not, who's interested and who's not, including ourselves. Ask about both the process and content and share our own thoughts and feelings too.

- **“Practice “both/and” thinking”** invites us to see that more than one reality or perspective can be true at the same time (diunital thinking) rather than seeing reality as strictly either/or, right or wrong, good or bad, this or that (dichotomous thinking). Using “both/and thinking” can be very helpful in reconciling differences and conflicts that do not present easy solutions.
- **“Be aware of both the intent and impact of your actions”** invites us to consider that in cross-cultural interactions, our intent might not match our impact. When we have a negative impact on others across culture, ensuring a successful outcome requires changing that negative impact. This guideline requires a willingness to take risks and to exchange and receive honest feedback about the impact of our words and actions on others. It is possible to be well-intentioned AND still say and do hurtful things. To be successful across differences, we must be willing to shift our behaviors and actions such that people who are different from us feel fully valued and included.
- **“Confidentiality”** invites us to honor personal sharing and to not repeat personal details outside of the group. Confidentiality assumes that feeling free to share in one setting, does not translate into comfort in other settings. So, if we want to bring up information related to a person’s sharing in other settings, we need to privately ask the person if it is acceptable to do so. Confidentiality also assumes that we will not use something someone has shared to hurt them, get them, or punish them later. This is especially important for work groups or teams involving multiple staff or organizational levels. Participants are encouraged to freely share their learnings about theory, practice and themselves in any setting of their choice.

VISIONS Study Guide for Commission on Institutional Change (C. <https://www.edomi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/8-Guidelines-for-Equity-and-Inclusion.pdf>)

Once we have affirmed the covenant, we will copy it into the AFF Module Slides.

Handout 1.4: Transformative Learning Reflection

Prework

As you watch the [Transformative Learning video](#) at home, use these questions to help you “form” a reflection which you will share in a breakout group in the session.

1. Describe a time when you experienced the discomfort or dissonance that resulted when new information did not fit your existing story/idea/knowledge/experience.
2. What did you do?
3. What did you learn?
4. Did your story change?
5. How might you make having transformative learning experiences possible for learners in your congregation? What do you have to do?

Handout 1.5a: Congregational Rubric Directions

Using the Rubric

- Make a copy of the [Congregational Rubric](#) so that you can customize it for your own congregation. You can print it out and work on it by hand, but it will be much easier to edit online.
- Open the rubric on another device or in another window (or print it out.) This allows you to review your website for offerings in the recent past and/or to look at the list of curriculum possibilities on the [Congregational Rubric](#). We will likely use the Rubric in each session, and you will use it to build your final project.
- Imagine your rubric as a picture of your congregation's Adult Faith Formation offerings down the first column. Offerings should be included whether or not they are considered part of the formal Adult Faith Formation ministry. Indeed, discounting their presence in congregational life can lead to competition for space and time. For instance if the Environmental ministry holds a three part hands-on learning opportunity on climate change, this should be included, as is Teacher Training. This rubric, and later your plan, is not limited to what you are responsible for, but inclusive of all the ways that congregants can access intentional meaning-making opportunities. Your plan serves the congregation and is not an organizational chart.
- The top horizontal row notes characteristics of specific offerings. These are characteristics that you will be learning about in this module. And as is always the case, trying to balance these characteristics across opportunities is the ideal.
- Complete the vertical list of offerings in your congregation by editing your copy of the [Congregational Rubric](#). For those whose congregational offerings may be limited, complete the column with any offerings you "hope" to add or those that staff or volunteers are planning on offering. The intention is to give you practice in making visible what was not quite as noticeable before and to provide data for your Final Project, which you can read about on **Handout 3.3a Final Project**. We are not going to discuss that here. This is part of your prework for the next session.

Handout 1.5b: Congregational Rubric Resources

Prework:

Go to the blank Congregational Rubric (following the sample rubric) and complete the listing of adult faith formation offered in your congregation. (Pandemic note: If there are offerings you stopped due to the pandemic, but expect to return to at some point in the future, include those.) Include skills-based learning or other learning available offered outside of the adult learning program.

Note that each characteristic in the top row relates to a philosophical element of Unitarian Universalist Adult Faith Formation that we will discuss in this module. As we discuss each characteristic in a session, you can complete more of the rubric

Here are links to Unitarian Universalist adult faith formation offerings:

- [Roots and Wings](#), a collaborative group of adult offerings that offer online adult faith formation; and
- [Small Group Ministries Network](#), another small group collaborative
- [Adult Tapestry of Faith](#) offerings, and
- [Multigenerational Tapestry of Faith](#) offerings.
- [Fahs Collaborative](#)
- [Transforming Hearts Collective](#)
- [Touchstones Project](#)
- Unitarian Universalist Congregations doing online Adult Faith Formation
- Regional and UUA Webinars

Links to other curated offerings, many of which would not have been available in our local communities:

- [Pendle Hill](#)
- [Smithsonian](#)
- [Parent Education Programs](#) (PEP)
- [Life Long Faith](#) (primarily Christian/Catholic)
- [Center for Courage and Renewal](#) (Parker Palmer)
- [EmbraceRace](#)
- [Insight Meditation Center of Washington](#)
- [Raising Race Conscious Children](#)