



Welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Association's Faith Development Office Webinar

Before we get started:

- Please mute your microphone
- Turn off your camera
- Find the Meeting Chat box and introduce yourself



Housekeeping

Audio problem? Mute audio on your computer; call in by phone.

We'll have time for questions at the end.

Recorded webinar, slides and transcript will be posted online:

www.uua.org/re/teachers/webinars



UNITARIAN
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Welcome to
“Our Whole Lives Facilitators and Faith Development”
January 2016



Presenters

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Adapted from *The Courage to Teach*
Parker J. Palmer



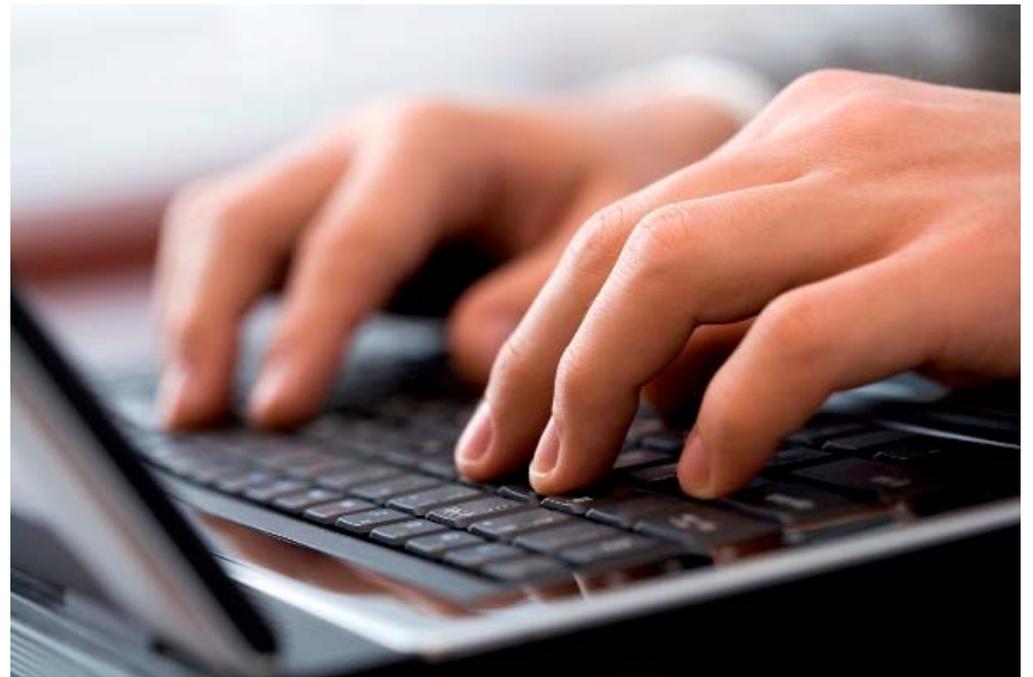
Agenda

- What brings you here today?
- Why is training necessary?
- What connects OWL with faith development and faith formation?
- Who should be trained?
- What does facilitator training involve?
- What I learned in OWL training
- How does training help create safe spaces?
- Participant assessment
- Cost concerns
- Hosting a training
- Links/Questions/Discussion
- Upcoming Webinars & link for webinar archives



What brings you here today?

Please type in the chat box your congregational/organizational role and what interested you in this webinar.





Why is training necessary?

Our Whole Lives facilitator trainings enhance:

- Knowledge and skills
- Understanding of appropriate boundaries
- Understanding of OWL values and philosophy
- Assessment
- Access to facilitator resources
- Reassurance to parents and caregivers
- Protection for participants, facilitators, congregations, the UUA and UCC, and the OWL curriculum



From a Trainer...

OWL facilitator training is essential, particularly in settings without experience in the use of a covenant and without explicit, shared core values. This is a culture-changing program for many individuals and venues.

Potential facilitators need a chance to brainstorm the impact of launching an OWL program on the people, families and institutions touched by it. I don't think the depth of this can be appreciated without intentionally being in relationship for this purpose with other people in this journey.

-- Sue Ellen Braunlin, UCC OWL Trainer



From a Facilitator...

We worked through exercises in the curriculum such as Values Voting and discussed the differences among us. This provided an excellent opportunity to:

- think through my own values and opinions;*
- to work through the reasons for differences within the group (including varying interpretations of language);*
- and to think about how to facilitate this exercise for others.*

--Martin D. Dooley, Ontario



From a Facilitator...

Training let me get comfortable with the language. We have so many cultural issues here in the United States regarding what is ok and what is not ok to be said by adults to children [regarding] human sexuality.

*-- Rick Shick, MAT, First Congregational Church, UCC,
Colorado Springs, CO*



From a Facilitator...

Training teaches you how to be unshockable and why that's important, and it gives you practice. You will need this.

It covers how to help worried parents understand their kids are better off with age-appropriate factual education about sexuality, especially at K-1 level.

Taking time out of one's daily life for OWL training gives it more impact. It requires concentrated, intensive time.

--Natasha Warner UU Church of Tucson, AZ



What connects OWL with faith development/faith formation?

When supplemented by the Sexuality and Our Faith curriculum, Our Whole Lives is religious because it seeks to nurture:

- Religious community
- Spiritual depth
- Prophetic vision and action for justice
- Values congruent with participants' religious beliefs
- Skills, attitudes, and knowledge to live out their values
- Respect for the worth and dignity of every participant



Who Should be Trained?

- Anyone who plans to facilitate OWL
- Staff and clergy who wish to understand and support the program more knowledgeably
- People who possess maturity, knowledge, character, skills, and commitment
- People in UUA congregations who are age 25+ for Elementary and Secondary levels, and 21+ for YA/Adult.
- People in UCC congregations who are 21+ years old
- People with other sexuality education, medical, and educational experience



From a DRE...

I'm trained in all levels except Young Adult. I don't normally teach, but I can attend the Parent Orientations and have discussions with parents ...with the weight of church staff.

My presence and backing also make OWL clearly an RE course within the structure of the RE program – not just a health/sex class.

*-- Patti Withers, CRE/ML; DLRE,
Bay Area UU Church, Houston, TX*



Can we skip training if our people have related experience?

I have been a nationally certified sex educator, I taught AYS [About Your Sexuality], and I have skills for communicating with small children. I could have taught this curriculum for young children with comfort and some confidence without the training, but the parents shouldn't be expected to trust my competence without validation of my credibility.

Also, the issues have changed over the years, and my sensitivity to contemporary sensibilities such as transgender awareness and media exposure would not have been adequate without the training.

-- Kay Doggett, Beacon UU Congregation, Flagstaff, AZ



Can we skip training if our people have related experience?



Cindy Fine, OWL Facilitator

<https://youtu.be/VO-ujH3aFx8>



From a Facilitator...

As someone who has been concerned with sexual justice and education for a number of years, I entered the training feeling like an expert already. But in the three days of training, I learned far more than I expected.

--Kelly Ryan, Pastor, Bethel UCC, White Salmon, WA

What does training involve?

Typical Components for OWL 7-9 and 10-12 Training Friday evening

Welcome, Background on *Our Whole Lives*, Opening Reading

Group Introductions

Expectations, group covenant and housekeeping

Our Whole Lives Values

Guided Visualization, “The Journey”

Distribution of peer facilitation assignments, daily evaluation, closing reading

Adjourn, peer facilitation planning time

One of the benefits of training was being a group member and experiencing how things like creating the group covenant can be awesome ways to build group cohesion, reflect our values, and have some fun.

--Beth Collins, First Universalist Church, Denver, CO

Saturday

Experiential Learning Cycle

Circles of Sexuality

Curriculum overview

Basic Facilitation & Co-Facilitation Skills

Understanding Adolescents

Dealing with Learning Differences and Classroom Difficulties

What is Religious about Sexuality Education?

Biological Sex, Gender Identity, Expression & Roles, & Sexual Orientation

Sexual Abuse & Sexual Assault

STIs and STI Prevention

Sexuality and Our Faith

Answering Difficult Questions/The Question Box

Sunday

Peer Facilitation

Parent Orientation: Rights, Responsibilities, and Roles

Boundaries: Yours, Parents', Participants'

Implementation & Scheduling Tips

Closing Activity and Evaluations

Because our sexuality is central to our sense of self in the world, and how sensitive it can be, [sexuality education] needs thoroughly-trained facilitators who go through Our Whole Lives training to offer it in responsible ways.

-- Kelly Ryan, Bethel UCC, White Salmon, WA



What I learned in OWL training...

- *Boundaries—what personal things to share and not share.*
- *The experiences of others and their organizations' challenges in offering OWL.*
- *Invaluable suggestions for answering concerns during parent orientation.*
- *How to work with co-facilitators so could support each other, be respectful, keep a safe space for ourselves, and do a better job facilitating.*
- *To be look for signs that something might be triggered in a participant and how to create a safe space if this happens.*

-- Amy Taylor, UU Church of Bloomington, IN



From a Facilitator...

We ran one 7-9 session without our facilitators being trained. After it ended, we had the chance to attend training. I quickly lost count of how many things I suddenly realized I wished I had done differently.

It's not that we did any irreparable harm, but we went through so much confusion and stress and lack of confidence that was just unnecessary.

Plus, the resources we took home from the training and the access to other facilitators via the OWL facilitator email list have been very valuable as well.

-- Name withheld upon request



How has training helped facilitators create safe spaces?

A child in the 5th grade asked, “What happens if I already had sex--is that bad?”

The child had oral sex with a boy down the street. The parents were aware of it but didn’t report it, and an older boy was later allowed in her bedroom alone.

The trained facilitator told me about the child’s question, and I interviewed the parent and made a consulting call to Child Protective Services.

After the consult and the child’s entry into therapy, I added a session (not OWL) on assertiveness training.

-- Name withheld for confidentiality



How has training helped facilitators create safe spaces?

- *Our trained facilitators knew to refer a parent to me who suspected her junior high youth had a budding pornography addiction.*
- *A 7th grader had been sexually molested by a cousin years before. The facilitators helped create a safe space and allowed her to make choices about her comfort level with group activities in OWL.*
- *Our facilitators shared leadership of the session on Sexuality and Disability with a congregant who has Cerebral Palsy.*
-- Name withheld for confidentiality



From a Facilitator...

The trainers provided a real-life examples of zingers, shock questions, unintentional mishaps; how to negotiate with reluctant or unrealistic parents; and how to recover from missteps.

At the time I couldn't have imagined any of them actually happening to me, and yet many of them have, and years later, I am still incredibly grateful for the training.

--Name withheld by request



From a Facilitator...

One of our youth came out to her parents as transgender. One parent immediately reached out to me for resources; the other blamed OWL for this happening in their family.

I reached out to the national staff and other OWL trainers for support and resources, [which] I could do because of my training.

The youth told me that because of OWL, she was able to figure out what had been going on, name it, reach out, and find supportive people.

We offered a series of events at our church to invite more understanding of trans people. I'm happy to say that, with continued support and education, the parent who was initially negative came around and now is a huge advocate for their young adult child.*

--Name withheld for confidentiality



Training Participant Assessment

- Approved to facilitate
- Not approved to facilitate
 - Voluntarily opted out
 - Poor attendance
 - Inappropriate behavior/attitude
 - Inadequate skills
 - Approval pending



Training Participant Assessment

- Speaking
- Listening
- Respect
- Interpersonal Skills
- Knowledge of Curriculum
- Commitment to OWL Values and Assumptions
- Commitment to the OWL Curriculum as Published
- Peer and General Facilitation Skills
- Receiving Feedback
- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Comfort with Own Sexuality
- Respect for Boundaries
- Respect for Diversity



From a Facilitator...

When I was trained, two people discovered they did not have the comfort to discuss sex and sexuality as openly, directly and honestly as would be needed in a classroom.

They received trainer feedback and support that honored their discomfort so they didn't try to "muscle through."

--Name withheld for confidentiality



Cost concerns: What do you value?

Cost

- Time
- Energy
- Money

Benefit

- Professional training in providing sexuality education in faith communities
- Infusion of excitement and relevance
- An investment in healthy relationships for youth and adults
- Safe congregation practices



From a DRE...

I spend lots of my yearly budget sending people to be trained. Parents don't want some random person they don't know teaching sex ed to their kid; but trusted, tested RE teachers who have gone through a 25-hr training? That's another ballgame.

*-- Patti Withers, CRE/ML; DLRE,
Bay Area UU Church, Houston, TX*



From a Facilitator...

I sympathize with churches trying to cut costs on OWL training. [Our solution is to] finance our OWL program by parent fees. [We also] require prospective teachers to commit for at least 2 years.

On the positive side, we're drawing in a lot of community families not affiliated with the church, and that's keeping enrollment up.

--Natasha Warner , UU Church of Tucson, AZ



Why isn't training online?

- *Assessment*
- *Boundaries*
- *Camaraderie*
- *Development of a culture of inclusive space*
- *Experiential learning and learning through example*



Why should we consider hosting a training?

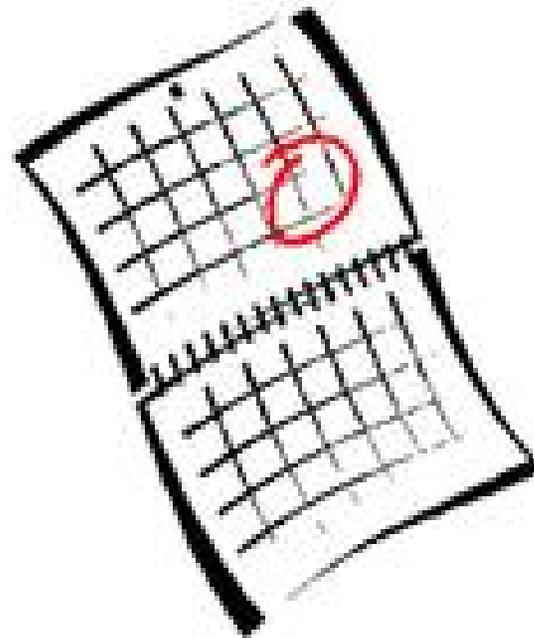
Hosting the training let us train our own facilitators nearly for free. We collected a nominal fee from the 'outside' folks, recruited our congregation to offer [optional home hospitality], and our CE board catered the meals. The registration fees almost completely covered the trainers' fees.

-- Craig Neth, First Church Nashua NH, UCC



Hosting A Training

Dates: A weekend, Friday (usually evening) through Sunday (mid-afternoon)





Hosting A Training

Space needs:

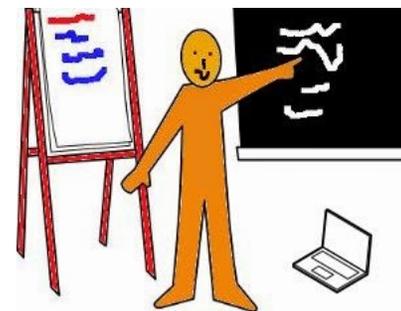
- One main meeting room for the whole weekend, with room to circle chairs for all participants and trainers
- Break out room for Saturday and Sunday





Hosting A Training

- Basic supplies
- Meals (catered or potluck with your congregation's help)





Important Links

- Why get trained? (PDF)

http://www.ucc.org/our_whole_lives_facilitator_training

- Our Whole Lives Training Calendars

http://www.ucc.org/justice_sexuality-education_training-schedule

<http://www.uua.org/re/owl/trainings>



Questions? puzzles you about OWL?





Closing Words



Photo: Georgia State University Recreational Services

Swimming

Excerpted from a speech by Elizabeth Canfield



Upcoming Webinars

Naming Race

Elizabeth Nguyen, Sheila Schuh, Lauren Wyeth, Kirsten Hunter, Rev. Jamil Scott

Tues., Feb. 16, 1 pm Eastern
or, Wed. Feb. 17, 9 pm Eastern

Meet the UUA's

Stewardship Development Office

Vail Weller and Stew Dev Staff

Tues. March 15, 1 pm Eastern
or, Wed. March 16, 9 pm Eastern



Thanks for attending this
Faith Development Office webinar.

This webinar has been recorded
and will be posted online at
www.uua.org/re/teachers/webinars