

# **VUUMAC Community Guidelines**

## **Agreement and Practices for Online Content & Discussion**

This year due to Covid-19 UUMAC will be completely virtual; with this in mind, it's important that we uphold agreements that support a compassionate, respectful and anti-oppressive environment for all.

As a participant in VUUMAC and/or the online platforms designed to enhance communication between participants, I hereby agree to the following:

### Behave Respectfully

I will engage with others in a way that honors the personhood and experience of all. I will both listen and contribute to conversations. I will make space for others to participate and avoid disruption or distraction by honoring the agenda and topics for discussion.

### Self Care and Community Care

I will take care of myself and my needs. I will also take care to engage with our Unitarian Universalist communities in an empathetic, understanding and thoughtful manner.

### Practice Active and Anti-Oppressive Engagement

I will make a conscious effort to engage with and understand what others are sharing. I will be attentive to how my interactions may impact others. Words and actions have been used to historically oppress people and therefore certain words and actions can be triggering of traumatic or hurtful experiences. I will be mindful of this and participate in ways that are respectful and considerate.

### Show Up

Understanding that we are in a time of global pandemic and global uprising against state sponsored violence and that these crises disproportionately impact some of us based on our identity and social location, I will cultivate grace and practice patience. I will be mindful to side with love by showing up for others in this time.

### Be Present to Truth

We hold multiple truths gleaned from our lived experiences. None of our experiences, especially those of us who have been historically marginalized, are up for debate. I will be mindful of this during my interpersonal interactions during virtual UUMAC.

**Our Unitarian Universalist values call upon us to avoid the following harmful forms of expression:**

- Offensive language related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, mental illness, neuro(a)typicality, physical appearance, pregnancy status, veteran status, political affiliation, marital status, body size, age, race, national origin, ethnic origin, immigration status, language, religion or other identity marker.
- Threats of violence or aggressive behavior of any kind toward any individual or group.
- Stalking or following - online (or in the physical world.)
- Sexual harassment in any form, including sexual images, GIFs, sexual language, virtual contact without consent, and inappropriate social contact, such as requesting/assuming inappropriate levels of intimacy with others.
- Continued one-on-one communication after requests to cease.
- Online Trolling; deliberate provocative, offensive and/or disrespectful posts (commentary, images, gifs) intended to derail conversation
- Revealing any aspect of the identity of a person who experiences marginalization without their consent.
- Humor that evokes any of the above.

We will not be complicit when observing activity that is deliberately antagonistic and harmful. Violations of this Agreement and Practices will prompt any/all of the following action steps:

- The participant will be contact privately with a warning about their offense and given the opportunity to improve their communication for the benefit of all.
- The participant will be contacted and their content (i.e. chat dialogue, app or social media post) may be turned off.
- The participant will be removed from the space.

Sources:

UUA Agreement and Practices for Online Content & Discussion

<https://www.uua.org/ga/registration/agreement-and-practices-online-content-discussion>

Community Covenant: A Code of Conduct for Online Communities <http://community-covenant.net>

Harriet's Apothecary Safer Space/Healing

Agreements <http://www.harrietsapothecary.com/who-we-are>

Allied Media

Projects, [www.alliedmedia.org](http://www.alliedmedia.org), <https://www.slideshare.net/aeschright/enforcing-your-code-of-conduct-effective-incident-response>

## **VUUMAC Practices for Fostering Multicultural Dialogue and Community**

During VUUMAC, we gather to build relationships, which requires a commitment to remaining present to issues of power when feeling challenged. A Covenant alone can never be perfect nor lead to perfect behavior; community requires practice. This month you are invited to take these practices to heart and to speak from your truth while acknowledging your privilege.

Honor multiple truths - Your viewpoint, opinions, and actions have intent and impact. In cross-cultural interactions, your INTENT may be to speak from your truth and not cause harm. However, if you are not also invested in the other person's truth then they can experience the IMPACT as harmful. This is particularly true when people with white privilege see their opinion as the universal experience.

Consider your social location - Each of us holds multiple identities with respect to race, class, ability, gender, sexuality, age, and more. Depending on where we are and who we are with, sometimes we are in a position of power and privilege, sometimes we are disempowered or marginalized, and often there's a mix. Recognize your power and notice the power dynamics around you. Practice using your privilege to create more space for those on the margins.

Practice care toward yourself and those you engage with - With hundreds of UUs gathered, the one universal truth is: You are going to have difficult conversations this month! Practice care. If you're in a position of privilege, practice letting go of assumptions, taking your cue from the other person/s, sitting with your discomfort, and/or pausing to consider how to process the conversation. If you have one or more marginalized identities, you may want to assess how much spiritual energy you have to give to the conversation, end a conversation by asking the other person to check in with an accountability partner, and/or seek out care for yourself. Either way, consider finding your people for accountability and/or support (contact [uumacassist@gmail.com](mailto:uumacassist@gmail.com) to be connected to our Ministers and Lay Chaplain Team)