

Sexuality as a Constellation

Leader Resources

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Leader Resource 1: E-mail to Sexuality Adventurers

Dear Friends,

We are so glad you have chosen to journey with us as we explore the tantalizing, mysterious and at times dangerous worlds of sexuality in our Unitarian Universalist faith. Spending but a few hours together, we hope to create a community committed to working towards the full celebration of sexuality in our congregations and gain tools to make that happen. Many of you may have apprehensions about being in this workshop--from your own experiences of being at the border between sexuality and religion or experiences of sexual violence or oppression. Other may be raring to go to dive deep into the erotic. Together we hope to create a space where all of these experience are held. No matter queer, straight, bisexual or trans*, kinky, vanilla or a bit of both, out or in the closet or think that it's irrelevant, activist or witness or both at different times; Nothing can separate us from our inherent worth and dignity and the web of community that brings us all together and thus together in community we work to realize this in deeper ways. We see this training as a training of trainers.

To best be able to use our time together we have put together a video and a community covenant that we would appreciate you watching and taking a look at **before** the workshop. The video will take about an hour to watch. We all lead busy lives but consider this hour to just one of the investments we make to become better allies and Unitarian Universalists. We made the movie ourselves (forgive us for the quality and the techy of it) but it will set up much of the discussion we hope to have as well as provide you a chance to think of questions you want to bring! The community covenant provides the frame to how we want to be together during our time together. You can provide comments to suggest alterations or ask for clarification. We have started to put together a work-in-progress resource collection for you for before/during/after the workshop. It contains information on our framing, resources for different sexuality related topics and after the workshop will also play host to a copy of our workshop outline so that you can use/adapt this workshop for your own congregations. It can be found at sexualityandouruufait.com.

Sean & Samaya

PS: We are excited you are coming. Please watch this video and read this document before arriving at the workshop. The video is long but important.

Leader Resource 2: PowerPoint Presentation

Please take some time to download the PowerPoint presentation and familiarize yourself with the slides and when to advance them.

Leader Resource 3: Reading - Your Body is Welcome Here

by Sean Neil-Barron

- Line 1 Your body is welcome here, all of it.
- Line 2 Yes, even that part. And that part. And yes, even that part.
- Line 3 The parts you love, and the parts you don't.
- Line 4 For in this place we come with all that we are
- Line 5 All that we have been,
- Line 6 And all that we are going to be.
- Line 7 Our bodies are constantly changing, cells die and cells are reborn
- Line 8 We respond to infections and disease
- Line 9 Sometimes we can divorce them from our bodies,
- Line 10 and other times they become a permanently part of us.
- Line 11 Your body and all that is within it, both wanted and not wanted has a place here.
- Line 12 Our bodies join in a web of co-creation, created and creating.
- Line 13 Constantly changing, constantly changing us
- Line 14 Scarred and tattooed, tense and relaxed

Line 15 Diseased and cured, unfamiliar and intimate

Line 16 Formed in infinite diversity of creation

Line 17 Your body is welcome here, all of it.

Line 18 So take a moment and welcome it

Line 19 Take a moment to feel in it.

Line 20 Take a moment, to be in it.

Line 21 And yes, especially that part.

Leader Resource 4: Circles of Sexuality Meditation

I invite you to settle into your body, to focus in on your breath as it enters and leaves your body, to open the eyes of your heart, mind, and spirit to all that is.

As we settle into our bodies and feel the rhythm of our breath, we reach out to the power in the universe or into our deepest human wisdom. We begin to let go and begin to open ourselves to this moment. We move deeper within our bodies and begin to attune the mind's eye and hearing to the messages we've received about sexuality throughout our lifetime.

"Sex is a biologically based need which is oriented not only toward procreation but, indeed, toward pleasure and tension release. It aims at genital activity culminating in orgasm. While sex is infused with a variety of human and religious meaning, the focus is upon erotic phenomena of a largely genital nature.

Sexuality, on the other hand, is a much more comprehensive term associated with more diffuse and symbolic meanings, psychological and cultural orientations. While it includes sex and relates to biological organ systems, sexuality goes beyond this. To be sure, sexuality is not the whole of [who we are], but it is a very basic dimension of our personhood. While our sexuality does not determine all of our feelings, thoughts and actions, in both ways obvious and covert, it permeates and affects them all.

It is crucial to bear in mind that sexuality involves much more than what we do with our genitals. More fundamentally, it is who we are as body-selves, who experience the emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual need for intimate communion, human and divine."

Our mind's eye turns now to the messages and locations of where we learn about sexual health and reproduction. Who were the people in your lives that gave you factual information about sexuality? What were the feelings and attitudes that surrounded those messages? Where have you received information about the names for your body parts and intercourse? What messages did you receive as a child about producing children? About how to care and maintain health for your sex and reproductive organs? About the health consequences of sexual behaviour? Do you carry different messages now? Take a few minutes to write down any thoughts in the circle called Sexual Health and Reproduction on your sheet of paper. I will call us back after about three minutes with the chimes.

Bring your attention now to your sexual identity. What messages did you receive as a child about gender roles? Who ordered the food when you went to a restaurant? Who drove the car and what reasons were given, if any? Think about when you first realized that you are the gender you are. What was that like? Was there a moment when you made the connection between your biological sex and the gender you identified? How was that process for you? Take a few minutes to think about who gives you that tingly feeling inside? When did you first realize your sexual orientation? Were there many role models for you at that time? Has your thinking changed over the years? What were the circumstances that arose that gave rise to how your thinking has changed? Take a few minutes to write

down any thoughts in the circle called Sexual Identity on your sheet of paper. I will call us back after about three minutes with the chimes.

Bring your attention now to how you view your body. Are you happy with your body? Have you always felt this way about your body? Does your life provide opportunity for close physical connection with others? Do you have opportunities to enjoy the bodies of other in your life? Has it always been this way? Have there been times when this has not been available to you? Take a few minutes to write down any thoughts in the circle called Sensuality on your sheet of paper. I will call us back after about three minutes with the chimes.

Bring your attention now to how you experience emotional closeness. What were the messages you received about caring and sharing? About risk taking? Self-disclosure? Trust? Do you still carry the same messages today? What experiences shaped the re-forming of these messages? Take a few minutes to write down any thoughts in the circle called Intimacy on your sheet of paper. I will call us back after about three minutes with the chimes.

Bring your attention now to the messages you received about seduction and flirting? Who was responsible to initiate seduction and flirting? Think of the messages you've received about sexual harassment? Who was considered right? Who was considered wrong? Think of the messages you received about rape – about incest. What forces in your life helped to change these messages? Take a few minutes to write down any thoughts in the circle called Sexualization on your sheet of paper. I will call us back after about three minutes with the chimes.

Let these words wash over you. It was dusk. The apartment was empty save for the two of them. As they lay entwined in warm embrace, this room, this bed, was the universe. Aside from the faint sounds of their tranquil breathing, they were silent. She stroked the nape of his neck. He nuzzled her erect nipple first gently with his nose, then licked it, tasted, smelled and absorbed her body odor. It was a hot and humid August day, and they had been perspiring. Slowly he caressed her one breast as he softly rolled his face over the contours of the other. He pressed his body close against her, sighed, and fully spent, closed his eyes and soon fell into a deep satisfying sleep. Ever so slowly she slipped herself out from under him, lest she disturb him, cradled him in her arms, and moved him to his crib. Having completed his 6 o'clock feeding, the four month old had also experienced one more minute contribution to his further sexual development.

Now take a moment and look over your sheet of paper. Are there other things that come to mind after listening to this? Take about three minutes to write any further thoughts on your paper.

Leader Resource 5: Reading: I Sing the Body Electric

I sing the body electric
I celebrate the me yet to come
I toast to my own reunion
When I become one with the sun

And I'll look back on Venus
I'll look back on Mars
And I'll burn with the fire of ten million stars
And in time
And in time
We will all be stars

I sing the body electric
I glory in the glow of rebirth
Creating my own tomorrow
When I shall embody the earth

And I'll serenade Venus
I'll serenade Mars
And I'll burn with the fire of ten million stars
And in time
And in time
We will all be stars

We are the emperors now
And we are the czars
And in time
And in time
We will all be stars

I sing the body Electric
I celebrate the me yet to come
I toast to my own reunion (my own reunion)
When I become one with the stars

And I'll Look back on Venus
(I'll look back on vanity)
I'll look back on Mars
(Ill at this path)
I'll burn with the fire

(burn)

Of 10 million stars

(fire inside)

And in time (And in time)

And in time

And in time (and in time)

And in time

And in time (and in time)

And in time

WE WILL ALL BE STARS

ee cummings

CONGREGANT

Leader Resource 7: Reading: There's Something I Don't Know

There is something I don't know that I am supposed to know.
I don't know what it is I don't know,
And yet am supposed to know,
And I feel I look stupid
If I seem both not to know
And not to know what it is I don't know.
Therefore, I pretend I know it.
This is nerve-racking
Since I don't know what I must pretend to know.
Therefore, I pretend to know everything.
I feel you know what I am supposed to know
But you can't tell me what it is
Because you don't know what I don't know what it is.
You may know what I don't know,
but not hat I don't know it.
And I can't tell you.
So you will have to tell me everything.

—*Anonymous*