

TVUUC Right Relations Team Charter

Overview

The UUA encourages congregations to establish a Right Relations Team (RRT). Its members are a small group of lay leaders with experience and skill in helping others find positive ways to maintain and support loving relationships. Services provided are not to be confused with those of a professional certified facility. Rather, RRT members are entrusted with helping the congregation live in harmony with our Congregational Covenant.

Roles of the RRT

1. To help establish and maintain a culture in which we understand and honor our congregational covenant.
2. To provide support to individual members in developing skills they may need to overcome challenges to acting in accordance with the principles of our covenant.
3. To facilitate conflict resolution when requested.
4. To guide restorative justice with strong support and accountability for a member who needs to restore trust after actions out of step with our covenant.

Responsibilities within each of the RRT Roles

1. Establishing and Maintaining A Culture Of Respect For The Covenant
 - Articulating and modeling the practice of our covenant principles in a manner that encourages the safety and thriving of all members. Modeling and coaching communication processes and resolution that honors our covenant.
 - Creating opportunities for members to act together to review and commit to covenant principles on a regular basis.
 - Providing forums and workshops where members can enlarge and enhance skills essential to living within our covenant principles (such as listening to be influenced, eschewing bias and suspending assumptions, striving for empathy, sharing concerns, compassionate communication).
2. Supporting Individual Members
 - Offering opportunities for deep listening and reflection about conflicts.
 - Modeling and coaching communication processes and resolution that supports individuals in moving from defensiveness toward resolution of conflict.
3. Facilitating Conflict Resolution Amongst Members
 - Guiding resolution sessions between two individuals or small groups in an effort to restore community and right relationships when harm has occurred.
 - Facilitating conversations while ensuring everyone has an opportunity to share their story, learn from their mistakes, and have a voice in finding the way forward.
 - Supporting both those who have experienced harm and those who have caused harm as they work to restore right relationship.
4. Guiding Restorative Justice for Individual Members

- Establishing a group of 2-3 RRT members who will develop a plan for restoring right relations with the individual involved.
- Providing a high level of support for individuals who have broken our covenant while insisting upon high accountability of their actions as they seek restoration.
- Setting clear expectations of appropriate boundaries and behaviors.
- Establishing a plan in collaboration with the individual for restoring trust while limiting participation for a set time as appropriate to behaviors that led to the need for restorative justice.
- Monitoring the individual's accountability to established boundaries and expectations.
- Providing support to the individual in abiding by the established plan.
- Revising the plan if necessary.

Terms and Selection of RRT Members

1. The Selection Committee is composed of five church members with expertise in establishing positive relationships amongst individuals and within organizations. Its members should have expertise in providing the services offered by the RRT and/or prior service on the Spiritual Care Team.
2. Church members are informed of the opportunity to apply and the criteria for selection.
3. Applicants submit answers to a set of questions about their interest and expertise and participate in an interview with the selection committee.
4. The Selection Committee recommends applicants based on the number needed to keep the RRT to a range of 3-5 members.
5. Management Team members and a Minister review those recommended and share any concerns.
6. The Selection Committee makes an offer to selected applicants.
7. RRT members commit to serve a 2- year term with opportunity to serve longer.

RRT Operation

1. The RRT is accountable to the mission and covenant of the congregation. As such, it is a committee (team) of the Board. Because of the confidential, vulnerable nature of the work, the RRT members meet with the minister regularly for support and guidance.
2. All RRT members need to complete UUA online training together, anytime a new member joins the team. The purpose is to be able to reach consensus about services offered as well as further in-depth discussion about aspects of RRT as they complete the training. (Cost is paid by the church. Currently: \$30.00 per participant.)
3. The members select one person to serve as the Lead Member, with responsibility to ensure that RRT responsibilities are met, including:
 - Providing some form of congregational recommitment to the covenant at least once per year.

- Offering a least two workshops or forums about skill development per year.
 - Sharing information in the church newsletter and Order of Service about RRT including how to arrange individual sessions with RRT members for coaching and/or conflict resolution. The information should be provided in the Church newsletter, website, and Order of Service.
 - Conducting one church service each year on Right Relations.
4. The Lead Member schedules RRT meetings as needed or requested by a member, including planning sessions for educational responsibilities.
 5. Church members may request services from any individual RRT member and/or contact the Lead Member to schedule services with an assigned RRT member. Spiritual Care Team members may encourage individuals to engage RRT services as appropriate.

Confidentiality

The RRT holds all communication with individuals seeking services in strictest confidentiality. They seek permission from the individual before sharing details with any other person including RRT members or the minister, unless it is possible to share generalities that in no way make it possible to identify the individual.

Note: Exceptions to this confidentiality would be made in cases that might involve criminal activity, including abuse or maltreatment of a child or other vulnerable person. Also, the RRT reports to the Board solely with generalities such as “No concerns have been report to RRT in the past two months.” “We have had four individuals come to us for support. Two were able to resolve their own issue. One needed assistance speaking to the person they were in conflict with, but it is now resolved. One is not resolved and may require escalation to restorative justice by two or three RRT members.”

Sample Application for RRT

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Text OK? Yes No

1. How long have you been a member of this/other UU church?
2. What is drawing you to apply for the Right Relations Team? Why do you want to be a member?
3. What gifts and skills do you bring to the work of Right Relations? (See *Qualities Needed* list below)
4. What do you think will be challenging for you in Right Relations work?
5. Do you have any relevant training or experience in restorative practices, conflict engagement, adult education, etc.? (Life experience counts!)

Please read carefully and sign:

I understand that being on the Right Relations Team is a sacred trust. I understand that I will receive confidential information and be part of sensitive conversations. I will honor and keep the confidences placed in me. I will approach my work on the team as fairly and compassionately as I can and practice ongoing accountability to the rest of the Right Relations Team.

Signed _____ Date _____

Qualities Needed for RRT Members

1. Experienced in deep listening
2. A leader of change within a community
3. Able to manage one's own reactivity when under pressure
4. Able to avoid being triangulated into the conflicts of others
5. Patient around process and outcomes
6. Humble about their role as facilitating process, not fixing people
7. Able to see the big picture and hold multiple perspectives
8. Open to being personally transformed
9. Trusted and respected by the community
10. Sensitive to power inequities and oppression dynamics
11. Skilled at conflict engagement/resolution and willingness to learn
12. Well-grounded in principles of Unitarian Universalism
13. Committed to the congregational covenant and the church's mission