



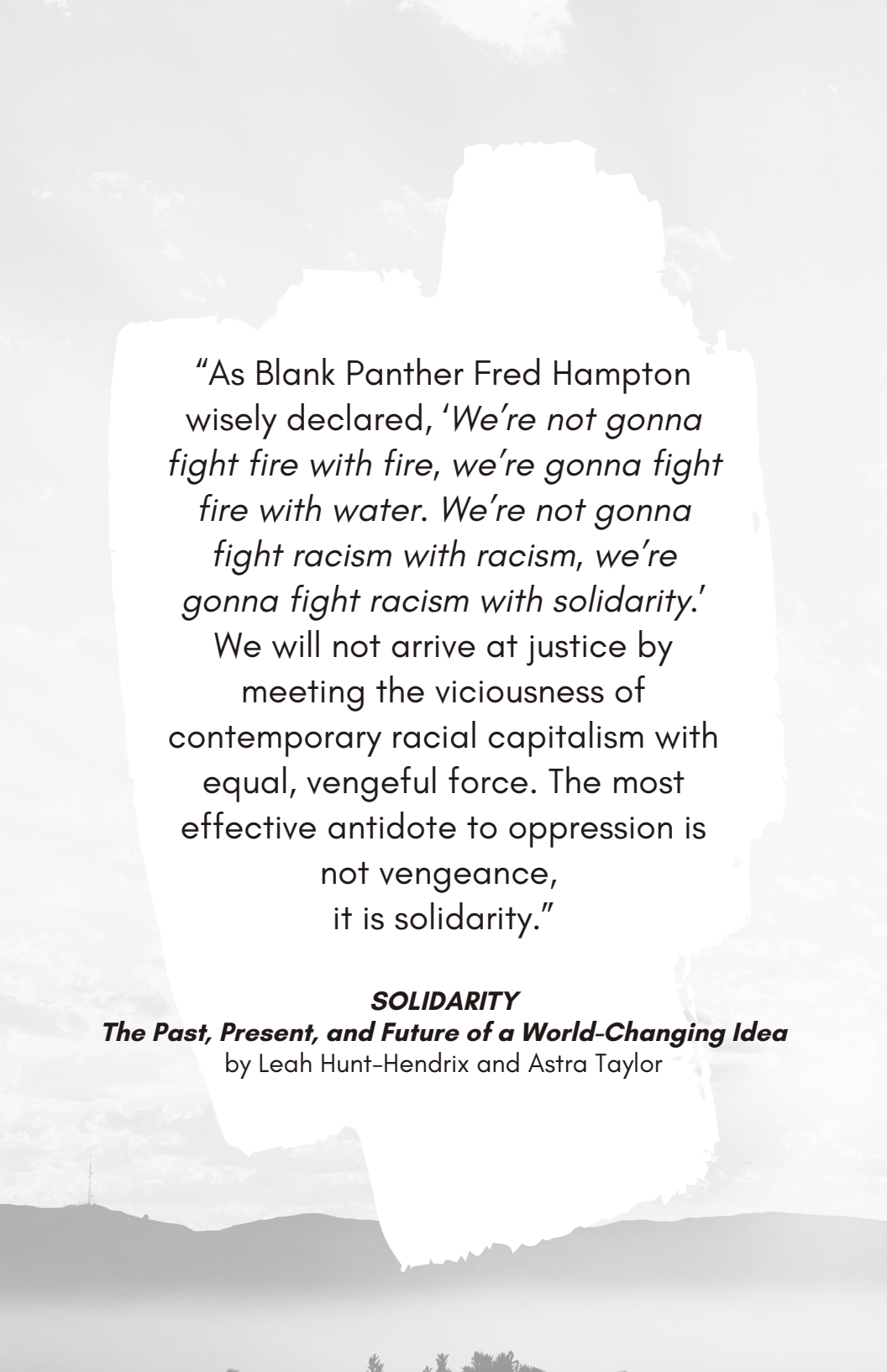
UNITED NATIONS  
MULTIGENERATIONAL SEMINAR 2024  
SEPTEMBER 21-22, 2024

**REIMAGINING TOMORROW:  
GLOBAL  
SOLIDARITY  
BEYOND EMPIRE**

REFLECTION GUIDE







"As Black Panther Fred Hampton wisely declared, '*We're not gonna fight fire with fire, we're gonna fight fire with water. We're not gonna fight racism with racism, we're gonna fight racism with solidarity.*'

We will not arrive at justice by meeting the viciousness of contemporary racial capitalism with equal, vengeful force. The most effective antidote to oppression is not vengeance, it is solidarity."

**SOLIDARITY**

***The Past, Present, and Future of a World-Changing Idea***

by Leah Hunt-Hendrix and Astra Taylor

# GRATITUDES

"We live in a world which others imagined. Most of the constructs that oppress us feel like fact, are taught to us as fact – but they are actually evidence of historical imagination. These ideas were imagined before being practiced into solidity, authority, tradition, assumption. The core patterns of U.S. historical imagination are supremacy, dominance, victory. These are not the most beautiful things imagined in human history, but the most violently upheld." adrienne maree brown, 2021 St. Louis Racial Equity Summit

In a global season of geopolitical violence showcasing the worst of human imagination, we gather in New York City and on-line across space and time to Reimagine Tomorrow as a people of faith. No one person can be the knower of all things, but together, the wisdom in the room is deep and wide and the possibilities for liberatory imagination are vastly possible. Thank you for choosing to be a part of this collective un/learning for global solidarity practice.

I offer gratitude the ancestors whose imaginations made their survival possible so that we might reimagine together in this equinox season of transition and transformation.

# GRATITUDES

To the UU College of Social Justice team and everyone at UUSC, the UUA, and First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn whose skillful labor and commitment made this seminar possible, I offer profound thanks. Without you, this experiential education container would not exist. With you, we are offered justice education as faith formation, an invitation to be changed even as we work to change the constructs of oppression. To the tech wizards making the wonders of multiplatform learning possible, deep respect and appreciation.

To the educators and the organizers who invite us to resist, reimagine, and recognize what is ours to do and to the religious leaders who accompany us as we show up again and again in the practice of faithful solidarity - your work ripples out beyond your knowing, seeds of love and life growing where you have never been, but where your efforts are known and trusted. Thank you, beloveds.

-Rev. Deanna Vandiver,  
Director, UU College of Social Justice



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# HISTORY OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR

Unitarian Universalism's long history with the United Nations can be traced back to the early 20th century. Both the Unitarians and the Universalists were active in the League of Nations Association and later closely monitored the creation of the United Nations.

In 1946, the American Unitarian Association appointed Elvira Fradkin as an official delegate to the United Nations. In the 1950s, the Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association adopted resolutions in support of the United Nations.

In 1956, Universalists and Unitarians convened the first annual UN Seminar at the Church Center. With the merger of the two denominations in 1961, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) formed an Advisory Committee on the United Nations.

The founding of the Unitarian Universalist Association Office at the United Nations (UU@UN) can be traced to April of 1962. By 1965, the network had grown to over 300 envoys.



# HISTORY OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR

At its height, over 500 congregations had UU@UN envoys ensuring their voice at the United Nations.

Thematic Intergenerational Spring Seminars began being offered by the UU@UNO in the early two Thousands and past themes and statements, including *Beyond Borders: Breaking Barriers of Race and Immigration (2012)* and *Sacred Roots: Indigenous Rights, Resistance and Reclamation (2014)*, can be found on the UUA website under past seminars.

After careful review, in 2023 the UUA determined that the vital work of the UU@UN is more closely aligned with the mission and strategic priorities of UUSC. Given this, the UUA made the bold decision to use Unitarian universalism's historic leverage within the UN sphere to bolster UUSC's human rights advocacy work.

In collaboration with UUSC and the UUA, The UU College of Social Justice was given the task of carrying forward the essential justice education work of the seminar, now known as the UN Multigenerational Seminar.



## AN INVITATION: WHY USE THIS BOOKLET

*What we know of the world is shaped by what we have experienced in the world.*

The things that are held deepest in our bodies are often the things that we question the least.

The closer we are to privilege, the less often our worldviews are challenged. Privilege often means that the world bends to our understanding of it. Distance from privilege often means having to bend ourselves to the world. This creates a wide kaleidoscope of values and meaning as we navigate our multiple identities. We most often experience this in our bodies as emotions.

We made this booklet as a resource for you to be in conversation with yourself throughout the UN Multigenerational Seminar.

Through the act of recording both what happens **externally** (what presentation you attended, what ideas or quotes stuck with you) and **internally** (how your body felt, how your breath was, how you cared for your physical needs), we hope that you maintain the internal space to stay curious about why certain ideas do or do not resonate.

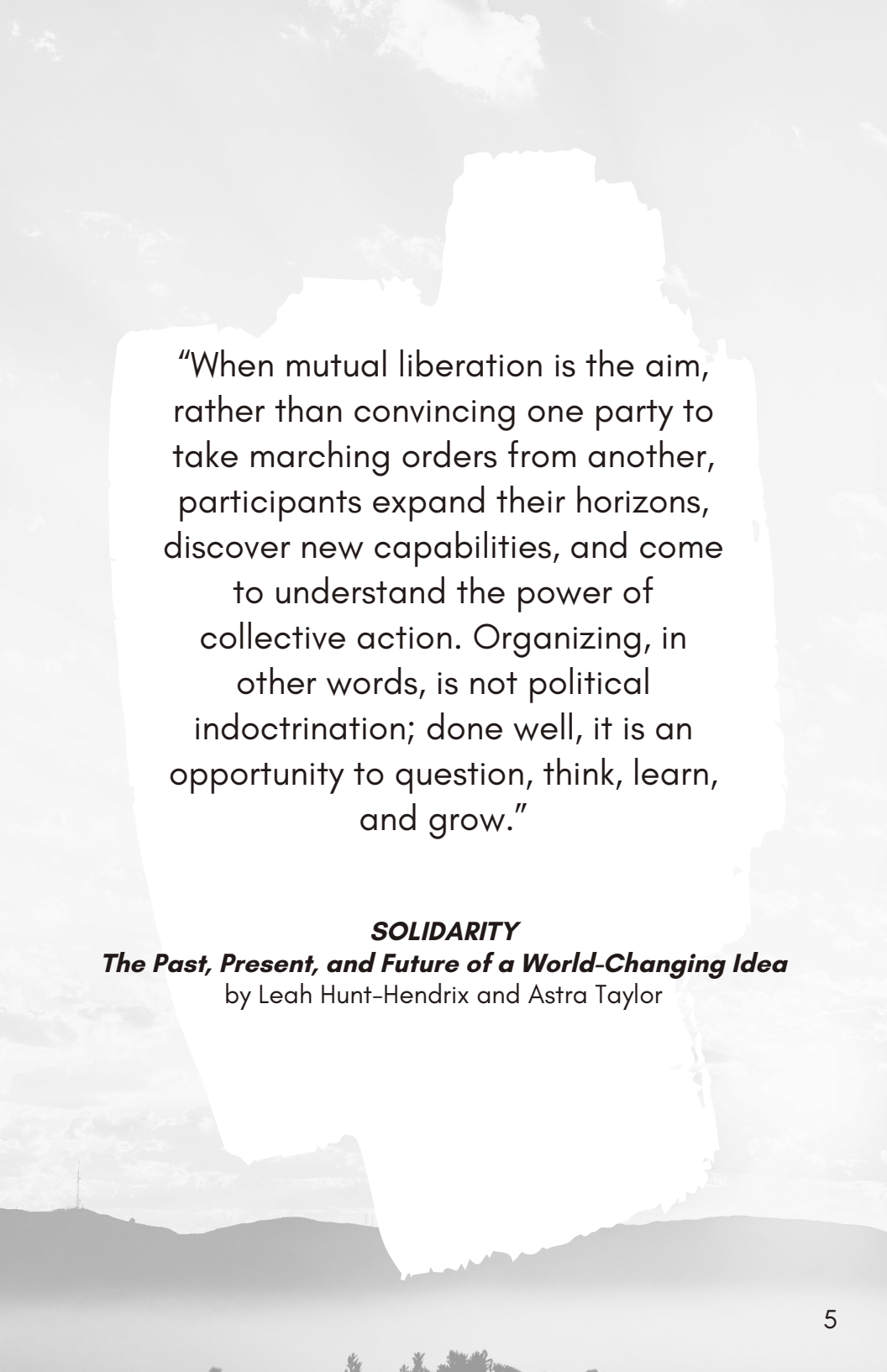
## **AN INVITATION: WHY USE THIS BOOKLET**

This is a place to NOTICE. If something happens that triggers something in your body (sometimes expressed in fear or anger, disconnect, irritation, or an elevated need to appease), we hope that you have the space to notice in order to find the care that can bring you as gently as possible to a more grounded place.

And, above all, we hope that through the careful tending of self through this learning process, we can model the attention, care, and action that solidarity asks of us.

Our goal is to create a container for relationship building between you and the content, you and fellow participants, and you with yourself. Through this process we hope that you leave the UN Multigenerational Seminar ready to join / re-engage with others from a spiritually grounded place, ready to co-create the supportive relationships we need in order to fight for the world we know can exist.

**In Solidarity,  
*UU College of Social Justice***



“When mutual liberation is the aim, rather than convincing one party to take marching orders from another, participants expand their horizons, discover new capabilities, and come to understand the power of collective action. Organizing, in other words, is not political indoctrination; done well, it is an opportunity to question, think, learn, and grow.”

**SOLIDARITY**

***The Past, Present, and Future of a World-Changing Idea***

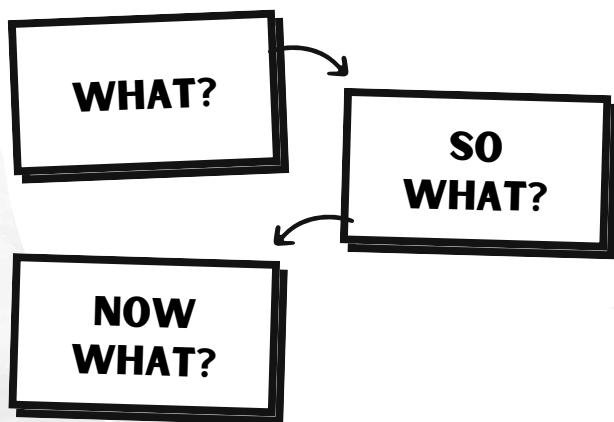
by Leah Hunt-Hendrix and Astra Taylor

# WHAT IS JUSTICE EDUCATION?

Unitarian Universalism is an **orthopraxy**, a faith grounded in how we choose to be in the world, rather than an **orthodoxy**, a faith grounded in a profession of beliefs.

In the same vein, the aim of justice education is to shape how we *act*, not just what we understand.

A simple model from experiential education to help us understand how our reflections relate to strategy is the WHAT / SO WHAT / NOW WHAT model.



# WHAT IS JUSTICE EDUCATION?

**WHAT:** This is where we notice.

- What is happening?
- What did the person say / What is my lived reality / What problem are we trying to solve?
- What did I already think about this topic?

**SO WHAT:** This is where we make meaning.

- Why does this matter?
- How am I feeling about this?
- How does this relate to my values / my identities / my dreams for the future?

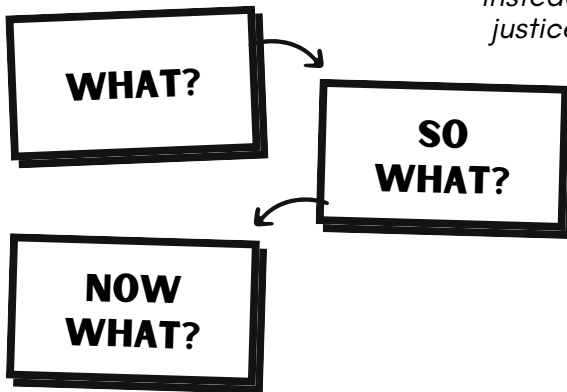
**NOW WHAT:**

- So with this meaning, what do I do?
- This is NOT about how to resolve our feelings! Our feelings will come with us, and they will require ongoing attention, community and care, but the goal of NOW WHAT are the action steps to address the justice issue

# WHAT IS JUSTICE EDUCATION?

*We may or may not have prior knowledge of the justice issue, even though we probably live within the systems that created it.*

*If we do not fully process our feelings, we will turn the NOW WHAT into actions to take care of our feelings, instead of the justice issue.*



*Learning TO care is not the same as learning HOW to care.  
If we are new to a justice issue, following the leadership of seasoned organizers is a great way to move to NOW WHAT.  
Justice action should ultimately aim to improve the material conditions of the people being harmed. That may or may not center us.*

# SEMINAR SCHEDULE

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

**9:30 - 10:00AM**

**Check-In** | Light breakfast provided

**10:00 - 11:00AM**

**Welcome, Songs, and Context Setting**

*Rev. Deanna Vandiver, Director of Justice Education at UUSC*

*Rev. Sara Green, Community Development Strategist and Organizer*

**11:00 - 11:30AM**

**Break**

**11:30AM - 12:30PM**

**Keynote: Statelessness**

*Deepti Gurung, Nepali Activist and Cofounder of the Citizenship Affected People's Network (CAPN)*

*Neha Gurung, Human Rights Lawyer and Cofounder/ Director at CAPN*

**12:30 - 1:00PM**

**Small Group Conversation**

**1:00 - 2:00PM**

**Lunch/ Break**

**2:00 - 2:30PM**

**The United Nations as a Tool of Global Solidarity**

*Mayuri Anupindi, Global Advocacy Strategist at UUSC and former UN Lawyer*



# SEMINAR SCHEDULE

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

**2:30 - 3:30PM**

**What We Leave Behind: Processing Through the Visual Arts**

*Marissa A. Gutierrez-Vicario, Doctoral Fellow and Lecturer, Teachers College, Columbia University, Adjunct Lecturer, The City College of New York*

**3:30 - 4:00PM**

**Personal Reflection & Song**

**4:00 - 4:30PM**

**Break**

**4:30 - 5:30PM**

**UU Religious Leaders Panel**

*Rev. Meagan Henry, Assistant Minister, Religious Education and Pastoral Care at First Unitarian Society of Brooklyn*

*Rev. Dr. Michael J. Tino, Co-Lead Minister of the Church of the Larger Fellowship*

*Rev. Morgan McLean, International Engagement Program Manager at the UUA*

**5:30 - 6:30PM**

**Small Group Conversation**

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

**8:30 - 9:00AM**

Check-in | Light breakfast provided

**9:00 - 11:00AM**

Intro to Theatre of the Oppressed (In-Person only)



# SEMINAR SCHEDULE

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

### **11:00AM - 12:15PM**

Worship Service at First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn

### **12:15 - 1:30PM**

Social Hour and Lunch/ Break

### **1:30 - 3:00PM**

Medial Literacy as Liberation

*Julianne Chandler, Journalist, Editor, and Educator*

### **3:00 - 3:30PM**

Personal Reflection & Song

### **3:30 - 4:00PM**

Break

### **4:00 - 5:00PM**

Building a Public Narrative

*India (Dia) Wood, Organizer for UUs for Justice in the Middle East, Seminary at Union Theological Seminary*

### **5:00 - 6:00PM**

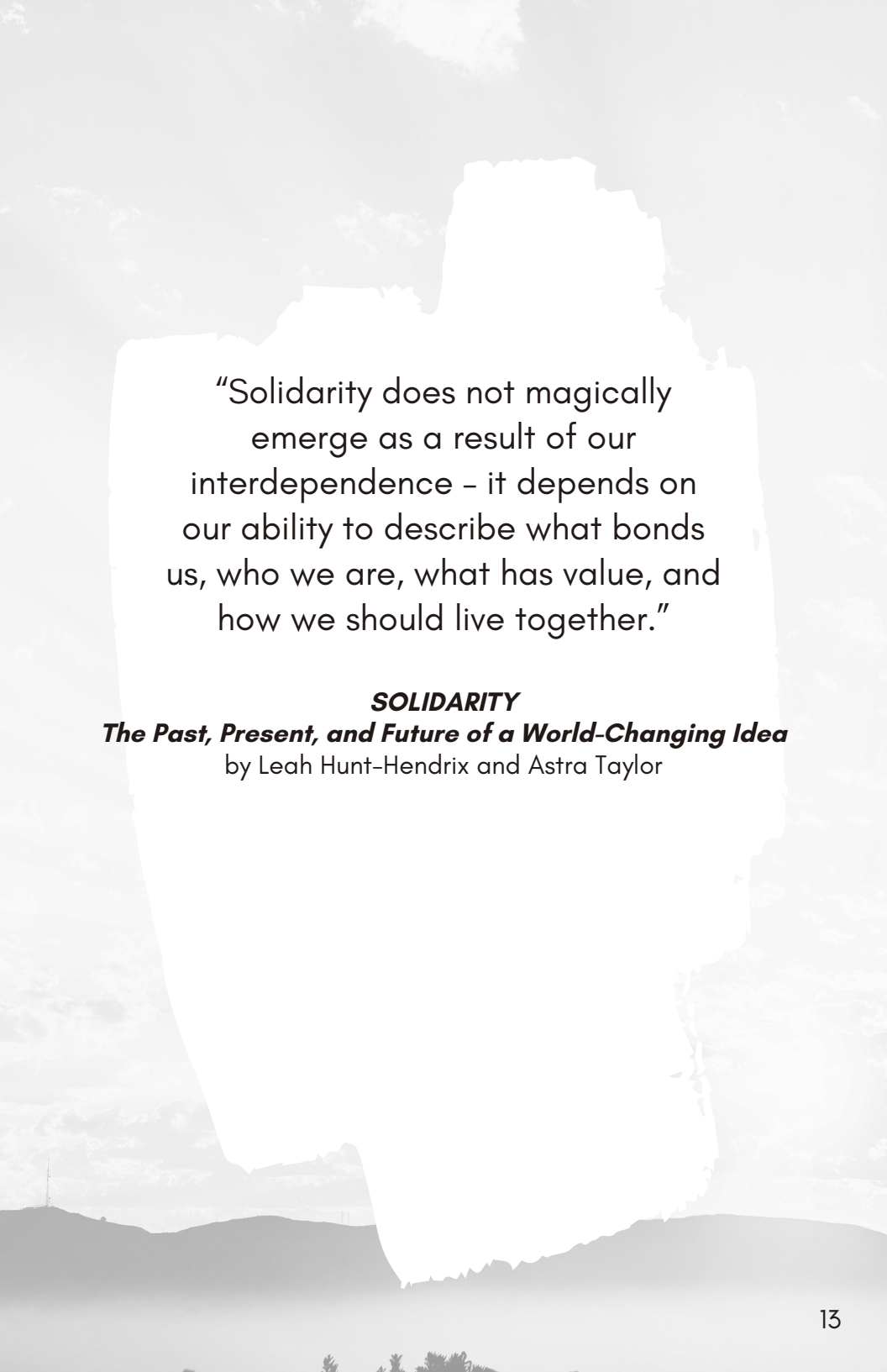
Creating a Theory of Change

*Nora Rasman, UUA Democracy Strategist for UU the Vote*

*Ivanna D'Alencon, Campaign Strategist and Coordinator at UUSC*

### **6:00 - 6:30PM**

Closing session



“Solidarity does not magically  
emerge as a result of our  
interdependence – it depends on  
our ability to describe what bonds  
us, who we are, what has value, and  
how we should live together.”

**SOLIDARITY**

***The Past, Present, and Future of a World-Changing Idea***

by Leah Hunt-Hendrix and Astra Taylor



# JUSTICE EDUCATION AS FAITH FORMATION

Justice Education, especially experiential justice education, is an essential practice for Unitarian Universalist faith formation.

Let's take a moment for a faith formation immersion in the work of Joy Berry, Children and Families Faith Development Specialist in the Unitarian Universalist Association's Lifespan Faith Engagement office.

Per Joy:

***"Without a commitment to faith that is wrought - intentionally shared learning in our congregations - the promise of faith development, and indeed the very premise of a "covenantal faith," is in question.***

Wrought is an old word that means worked. I use it because it rhymes with those common shorthand versions for Fowler's stages:

James Fowler's classic theory centers the individual's progress through six stages of faith. The first four have "shorthand" names that make it easy to remember how development happens in each:



# JUSTICE EDUCATION AS FAITH FORMATION

*Faith is  
Caught in stage one,  
Taught in stage two  
Bought in stage three  
Sought in stage four*

*But also because wrought is a good old word: it describes something strong but flexible, able to be forged, changed, and strengthened, through active work. It's resilient and malleable: it's meant to be shaped with tools, through human effort. Its final form is determined by how it is \*worked\*.*

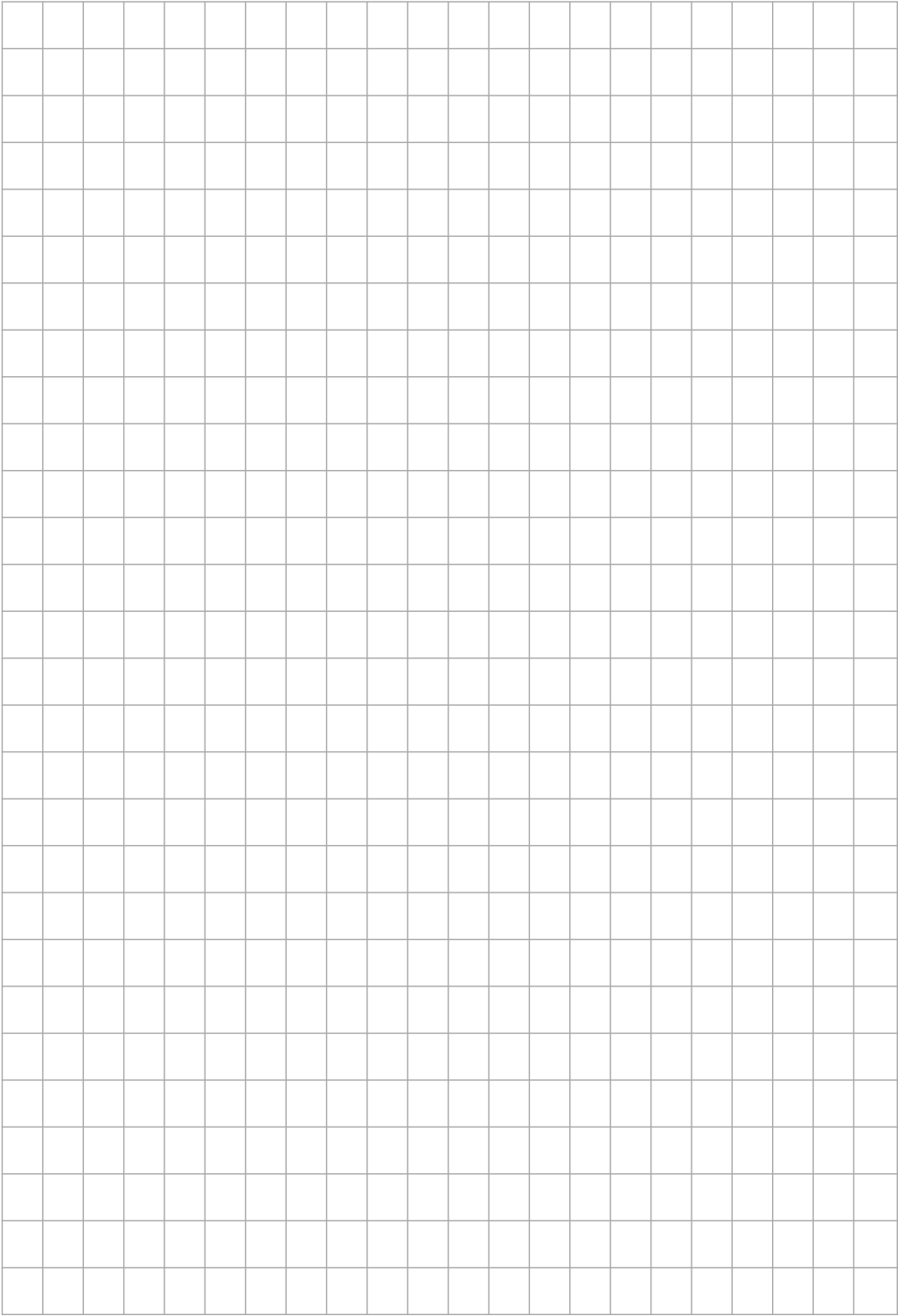
*What if Fowler's emphasis on the individual made him miss something essential, about how individual development always happens in a context of connection: that our own, and even our congregations' potential faith development is determined by how much of it happens in shared work, learning and growing together across generations?*



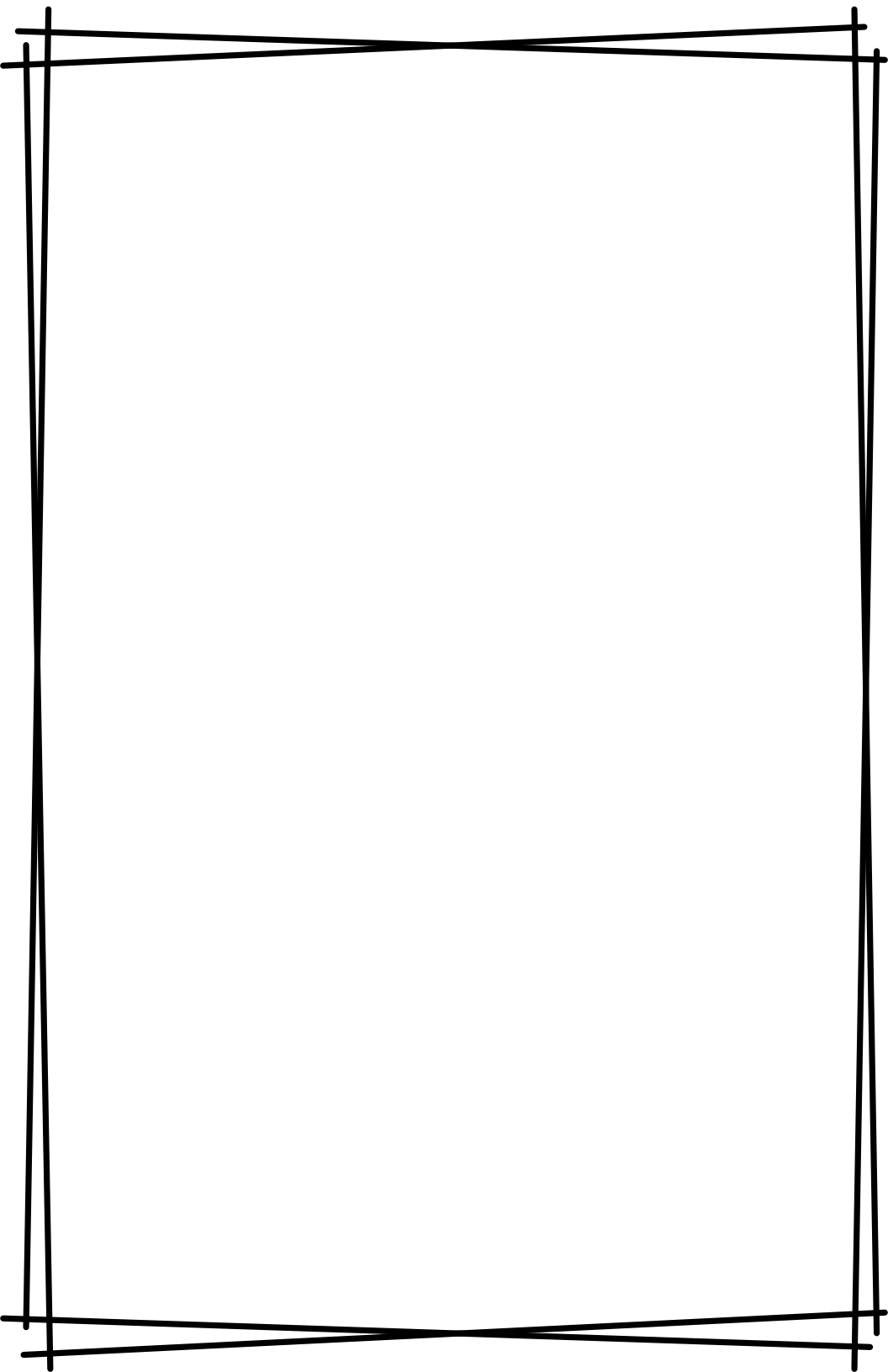
# JUSTICE EDUCATION AS FAITH FORMATION

***What if our collective learning experiences are the practice and training that determines how whole and strong and complete our faith can eventually become?"***

Experiential justice education facilitates people's ability to process an experience, integrate it into their lives, and identify new ways to relate with their environment and themselves through of the meaning they make from the experience. This is intimately and ultimately faith formation for a wrought faith.



“...solidarity requires intentional cultivation; it is not a spontaneous phenomenon.”  
Solidarity: The Past, Present, and Future of a World-Changing Idea

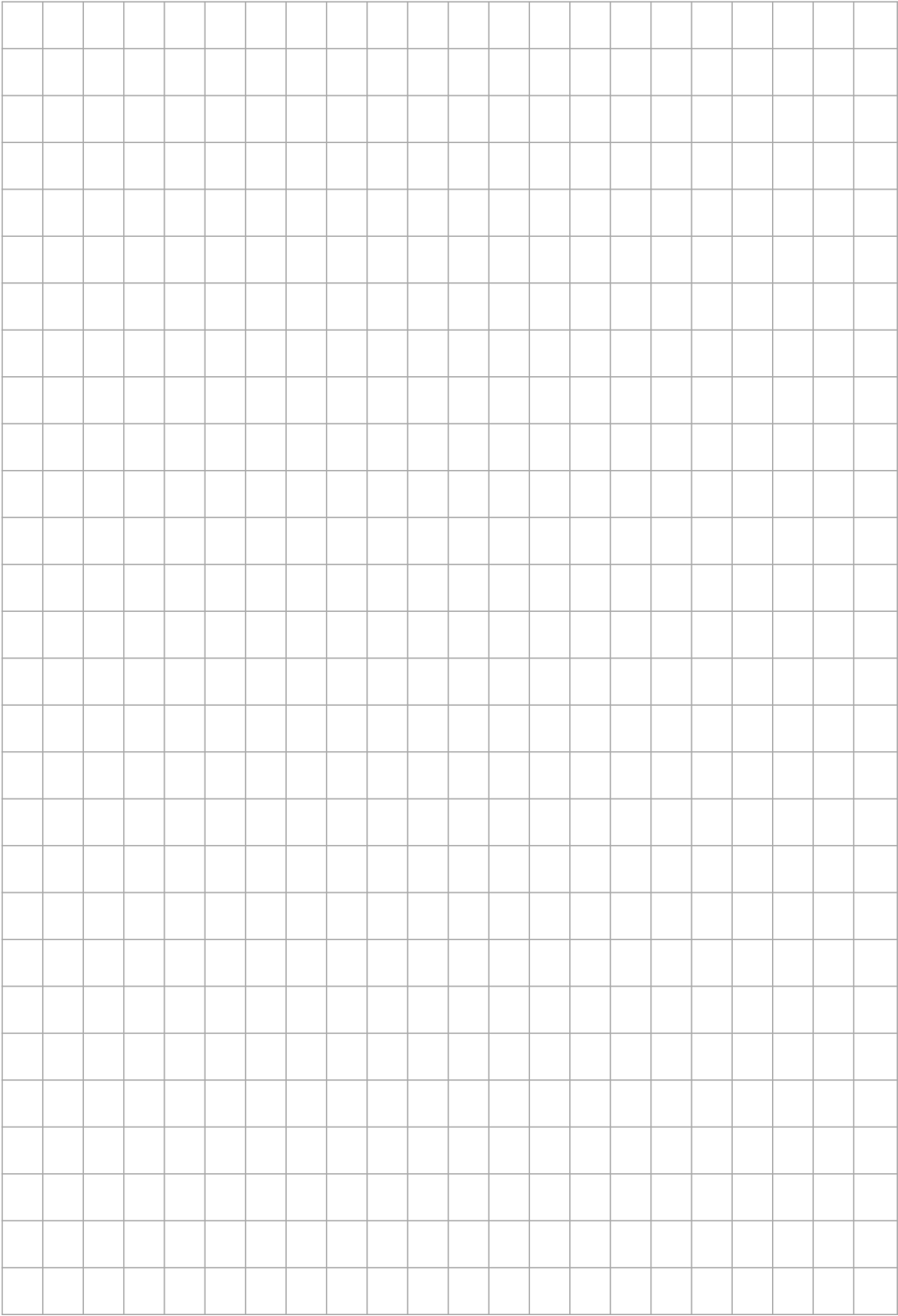


"Solidarity... involves taking strategic risks together, not offering prescriptions from on high or speaking on behalf of others."

*Solidarity: The Past, Present, and Future of a World-Changing Idea*

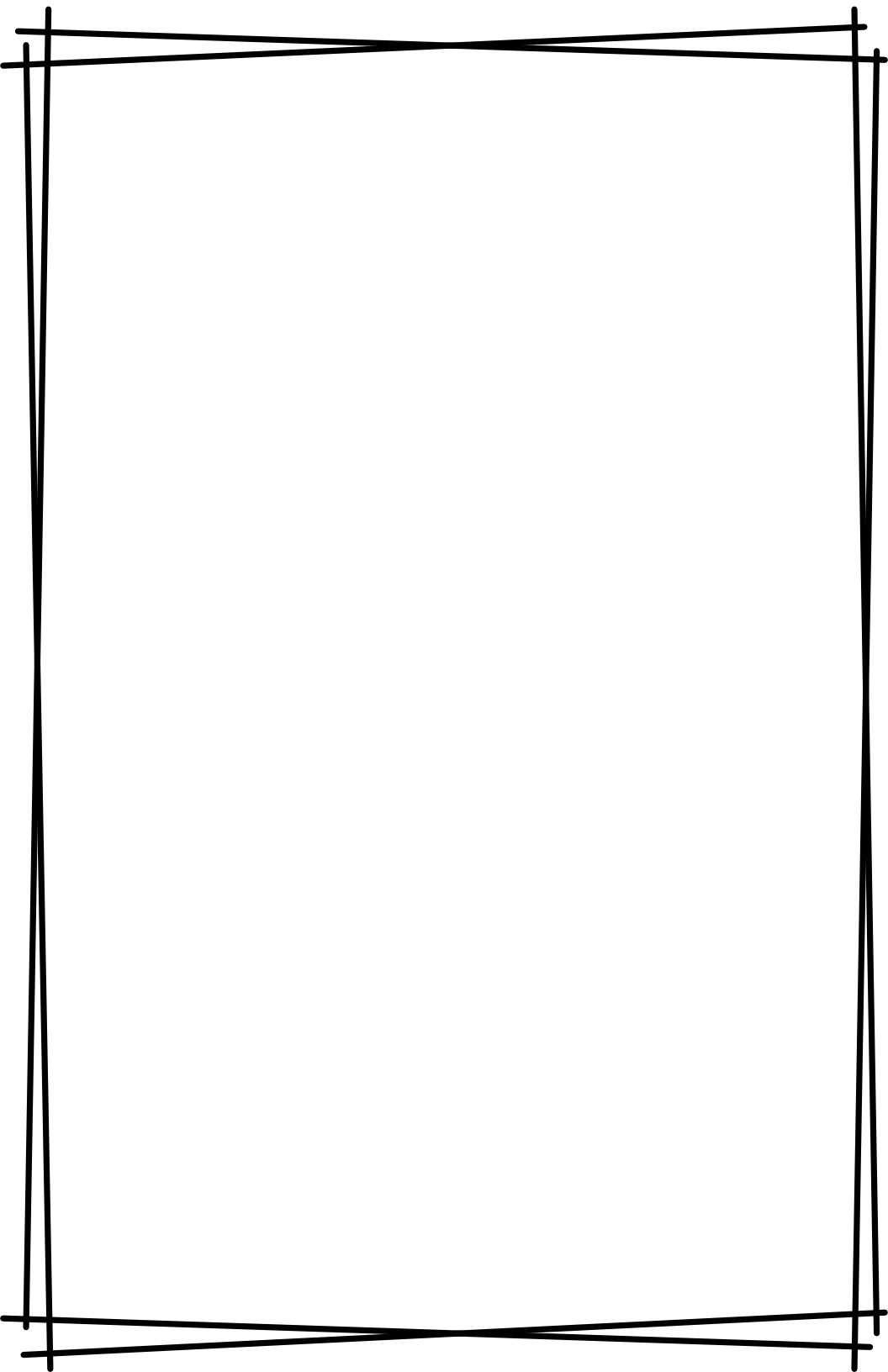






"A lack of regular social contact across difference inhibits solidarity in obvious ways: physical separation abets psychological separation."

Solidarity: The Past, Present, and Future of a World-Changing Idea



"...solidarity is not only a thought or a feeling, a theory or a principle—it is also something you do, and it must involve others."

*Solidarity: The Past, Present, and Future of a World-Changing Idea*



# THE UU COLLEGE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

The UU College of Social Justice is committed to working with partners in the U.S. and abroad in a way that acknowledges their expertise and empowers them in their justice work. The United States (as emblematic of white settler colonial power structure) has a violent history of colonialism and imperialism, often asserting that “the American way” / white supremacy value structure...is the best way.

In order to understand and integrate this legacy (and the possible connections this might have in your life and in your feelings, expectation, relationships, and actions, it is important to give yourself time for compassionate self reflection. This will allow you to bring curiosity and willingness to the sometimes overwhelming experience of being a part of the collective fight for justice and mutual liberation.

Love, **UUCSJ.ORG**