

# Family & Relationship Structures

## The UUA's Non-Discrimination Statement

### We Are Included!

A BIG development from General Assembly 2014 in Providence, Rhode Island! Delegates added “family and relationship structures” to the non-discrimination statement of the Unitarian Universalist Association. UUPA understands this language to include polyamorous families and relationships, and also a variety of family and relationship structures different from polyamory.

### UUPA

Unitarian Universalists for Polyamory Awareness (UUPA) has as its Mission to serve the Unitarian Universalist Association and the community of polyamorous people within and outside the UUA by providing support, promoting education, and encouraging spiritual wholeness regarding polyamory.

UUPA defines polyamory as the philosophy and practice of loving or relating intimately to more than one other person at a time with honesty and integrity. UUPA advocates for any form of relationship or family structure -- whether monogamous or multi-partner -- which is characterized by free and responsible choice, mutual consent of all involved, and sincere adherence to personal philosophical values.

### UUA Non-discrimination Statement

Rule G-2.3 Non-discrimination, of the UUA Bylaws, now reads:

“The Association declares and affirms its special responsibility, and that of its member congregations and organizations, to promote the full participation of persons in all of its and their activities and in the full range of human endeavor without regard to racialized identity, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity, sex, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, family and relationship structures, age, language, citizenship status, economic status, or national origin and without requiring adherence to any particular interpretation of religion or to any particular religious belief or creed.”

### Effects

The coming years offer amazing opportunities to polyamorous UUs to claim this new language of non-discrimination for ourselves. However, with inclusion, privilege can creep in, often unrecognized. Complacency follows next. Polyamorous UUs would do well to remain cognizant of both the blessings and pitfalls of privilege as we try it on for size.

- Poly UUs risk overestimating our newfound privilege and failing to do the work that still awaits us.

- The promise before poly UUs is to make use of this privilege to “reach out in love” in multiple directions.

Now just as much as before, polyamorous UUs have work to do. We must raise awareness within our congregations, districts, regions, and independent organizations about this new language and its transformative power of inclusion for polyamorous people, both UUs and visitors. The new language of Rule G-2.3 provides a starting point for conversations about how inclusion might be implemented at various levels of the Association. Throughout these conversations, the autonomous, self-governing nature of UU congregations must be respected.

- *Love Makes a Family Polyamory Curriculum*
- *Coming out in Faith: Voices of LGBTQ Unitarian Universalists*

## **We Hold In Our Care**

As we engage this work, poly UUs hold in our care the members of our own identity group of poly UUs. This much is our obvious, most straight-forward direction of care.

We also hold in our care our allied identity groups, those who blazed a path before us, and those whose work is newer than our own. This is the very meaning of religious community and the very nature of justice. Our UU principles and sources will guide us and cover us with courage, even if our own personal courage fails us.

We further hold in our care those UU congregations, UU members, and UU religious professionals who feel discomfort with polyamorous UUs or polyamory as a topic, whether because of misperceptions, fear, or other reasons that we don't understand. Our UU faith teaches us that they too are our people. Love reaches out to those with whom we disagree, every bit as much as we want love to reach out to us.

And once again, we hold in our care the members of our own poly UU identity group, some of whom feel stress from the extension of our care beyond the immediate interests of poly UUs.

## **We Live Inclusion**

Poly UUs are called to live the inclusion we want extended to ourselves.

## **How can I learn more?**

For more information about polyamory and religion, contact UUPA:

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