ADAPTING THE AD MODEL: EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE AUDIENCES, BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES

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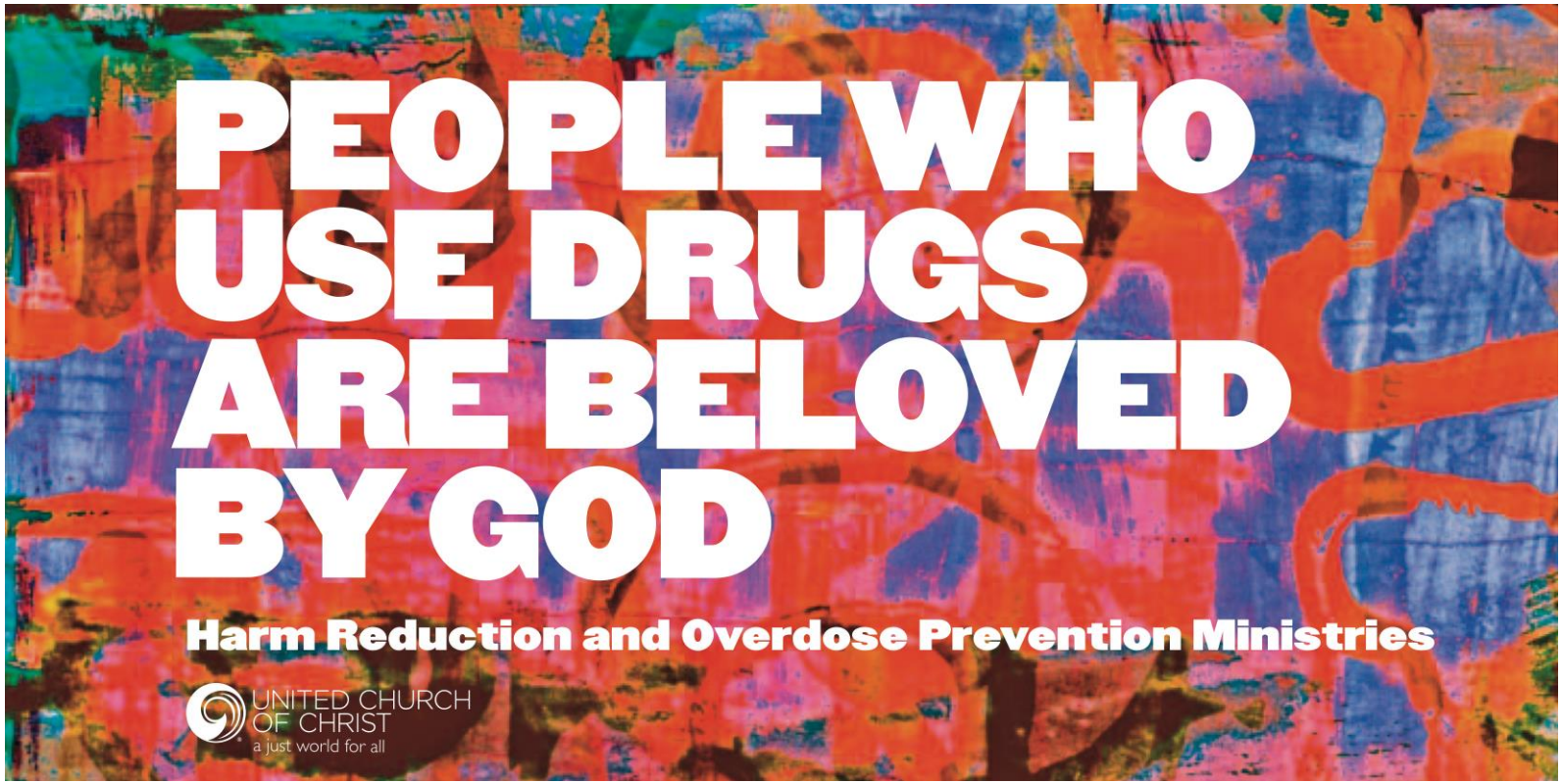
DISCLOSURE STATEMENT:

The presenter declares that she has no relevant, material or financial conflicts of interest that relate to the project described.

FAITH IN HARM REDUCTION

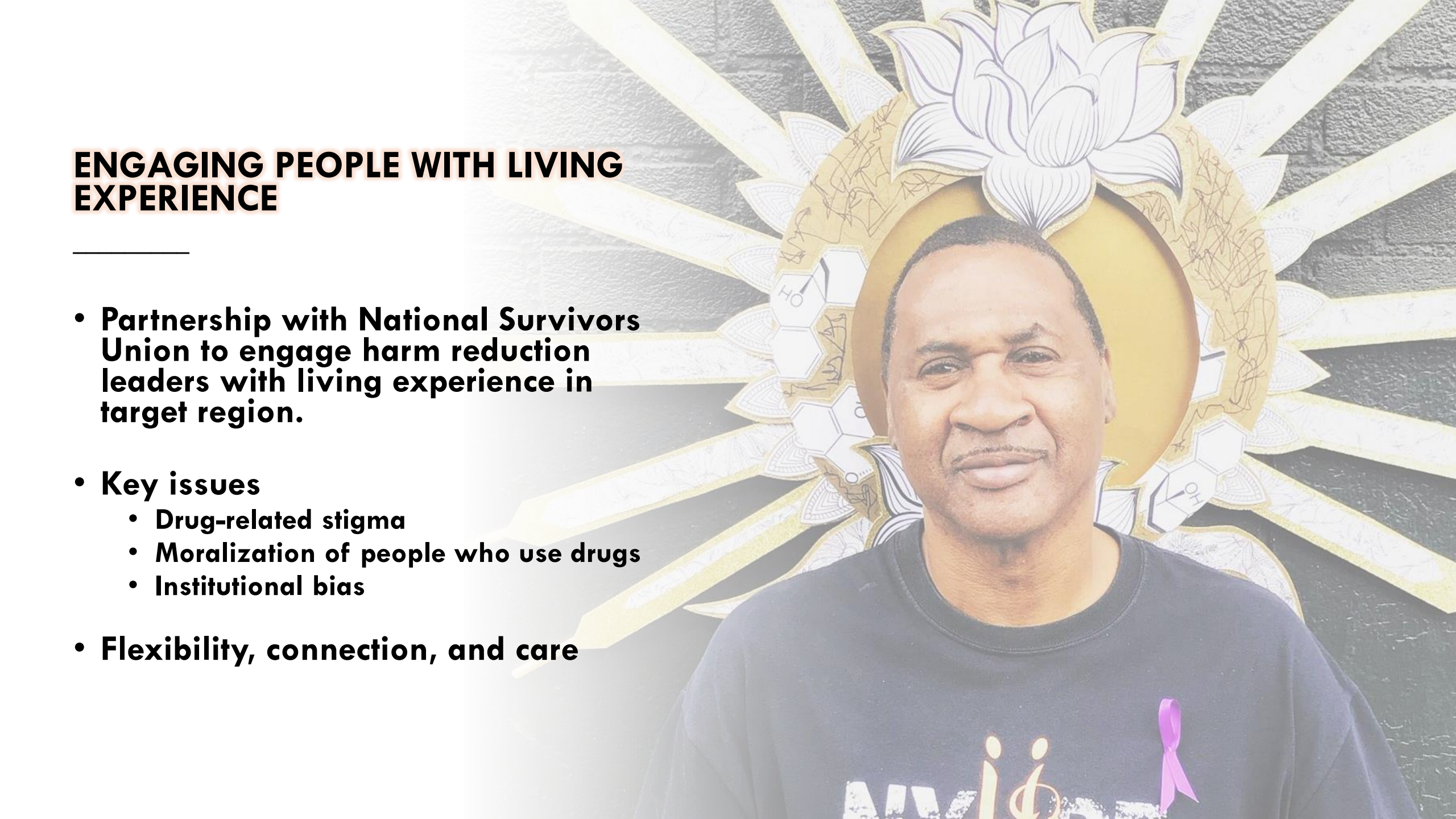


ENGAGING PEOPLE WITH LIVING EXPERIENCE

- Partnership with National Survivors Union to engage harm reduction leaders with living experience in target region.

- Key issues
  - Drug-related stigma
  - Moralization of people who use drugs
  - Institutional bias

- Flexibility, connection, and care



ENGAGING FAITH LEADERS

- Engage UCC Center for Analytics, Research & Development and Data
- Leverage network of Conference Ministers
- Expand outreach to include faith leadership of national ministries

DEVELOPING KEY MESSAGES

- Faith leaders are culture transmitters and creators
- Faith communities and Leaders have social, political, access, and spiritual capital
- Communities of faith have a rich history as leaders of social change

KEY MESSAGE

Use person-centered, non-stigmatizing language when talking about substance use and people who use substances.

KEY MESSAGE

Discuss overdose prevention and response strategies rooted in harm reduction with congregation and community members.

KEY MESSAGE

Provide:

- **education opportunities**
- **worship services**
- **community conversations**

for congregation and community members, including information about harm reduction, care, and treatment options.

KEY MESSAGE

Advocate for the expansion of harm reduction:

- Policies
- Practices
- Programs
  - **Promote justice and equity for people who use drugs through:**
    - Direct communication with decision makers
    - Contributing to press and media
    - Campaigning to support action by congregation and community members

KEY MESSAGE

Partner with and provide leadership opportunities for people who use drugs to expand:

- **Community education**
- **Care**
- **Justice**

OUTREACH & DETAILING PROCESS

- Group informational sessions to solicit interest
- Zoom meetings with Conference Ministers
- Introductory email with potential detailees
- Emails, phone calls, zoom conversations, and in-person encounters to establish preliminary AD session
- Baseline interview/listening session
- Cultivate safety by leading with relationship building, curiosity, confidentiality, and compassion

OUTCOMES

- **Expanded awareness of harm reduction, harm reduction justice issues, and ability to identify/ locate harm reduction resources**
- **Deepened curiosity and awareness about *"how we got here [overdose crisis, drug policy, stigma of drug use]"***
- **Taking action to strengthen congregations/communities of care in partnership with people who use drugs and people who love them**
- **Request for technical assistance/strategies to address congregational/community push-back on harm reduction**

HARM REDUCTION JUSTICE SUNDAY

Toolkit for Worship Preparation

OUTCOMES

- **Request for expanded interventions/conversation spaces/resources** to challenge drug-related stigma in faith-based settings
- **Initiating conversations with other faith leaders and communities of faith** in detailee's own community including listening sessions and personal conversations
- **Faith leaders need/request expanded spaces to discuss issues connected to personal/familial substance use** which are confidential and provide culturally relevant, peer to peer information sharing and opportunities for support

OUTCOMES

- **Interest in exploring opportunities to build intersectional ministry settings** including harm reduction and racial justice, rural/small church settings, disaster, disability and mental health justice, and youth

- **Interest in exploring the ways stigma of substance use has been embedded** in the United Church of Christ

- **Participation in Harm Reduction and OD Prevention in the Pulpit –** How to Build a Meaningful Harm Reduction Justice Sunday Service Webinar and request for accompanying toolkit

- **Article in Sojourners magazine –** ***How Churches Can Serve People Who Use Drugs (August 2024)***

NEXT STEPS

- **Ongoing collaboration with people with living experience** to expand and refine harm reduction education/AD opportunities with faith communities and their leadership
- **Launch Multifaith Alliance for Harm Reduction**
- **Develop faith and harm reduction curriculum and class for UCC seminary and Frontline Faith**
- **Create faith leader-to-faith leader conversation/information sharing spaces**
- **Expand library of harm reduction-rooted theological and liturgical resources**

Thank you! Please reach out!

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