

**Teal Talk S2:E11 – Addressing Individual and Institutional Oppression  
Across Ohio with Taylr Ucker-Lauderman, Andrea Burton, and Ryn Farmer**

**Laurie Hamame**

Hello, hello and welcome to the second episode of 2024. We are truly in the depths of winter over here in Ohio. We are covered in snow, bundled up from head to toe. I hope everyone is easing into the new year, and just taking good care. We know this time of year can be mentally tough in a way that the other seasons aren't. For those who may be new to Teal Talk or returning listeners, welcome and welcome back, go ahead and grab a warm beverage, and join us today as we chat with the tri-chairs of the Anti-Oppression Committee. But before we dive into the topic, let me introduce myself. I am Laurie Hamame. I'm the Communications & Resource Coordinator here at the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence. I am one of the co-hosts of our podcast and my trusty sidekick is

**Taylr Ucker-Lauderman**

Taylr Ucker-Lauderman. I'm the Chief Engagement Officer at OAESV. And I just have to say, I've been out of the office for a little bit due to like, illness, in the family. And, Laurie, when you said the name of the podcast, I was like, wait, is that the name of our podcast? And then I just had to question myself on my title. So clearly, my brain is still getting back in the office. You know, I feel like I'm in an alternate universe still. But I'm really glad to be here, especially because today I'm kind of operating as a guest instead of a co-host. We are here to talk about the Anti-Oppression Committee and I am one of the tri-chairs. So I don't usually do a little rundown of my bio, but I'll do a brief little reminder that I have been in this field -- oh gosh -- I guess about nine years. And I have, aside from OAESV, I have also worked as an advocate on the Ohio Sexual Violence Helpline as well as a Program Coordinator. And I've worked with the YWCA of Dayton, and a few other places here and there. But the main thing I would want to, I guess, communicate with you all is that my area of expertise and excitement really is how communications work coincides with anti-violence work and social change work in general. So that is why I love the role that I'm in at OAESV and also why I participate in the anti-oppression committee. So I'll pass it to one of my fellow chairs to talk a little bit about themselves. Andrea?

**Andrea Burton**

Hi, thank you so much for having me. My name is Andrea Burton. And my pronouns are she, her, and hers. I am a senior attorney of the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. Previously, I was at Legal Aid, generally, but that serves Northeast Ohio, so more of Akron area...Columbiana. I am focused on family law currently, and I've been doing this type of work specifically for about -- I'm going into my 12th year. So I just completed my 11th year. And right now my focus is more on maintaining family relationships, despite domestic violence. So I used to do a lot of protection order work, but now I do sort of reunification in terms of families who have domestic violence and mental health problems and placing children in alternative situations with other family members, but it still has very ingrained focus on domestic violence. And I do that for rural counties, specifically. I seem to be just drawn towards that area. I did it in my prior job as well. And I'm resuming that as a new senior attorney with Cleveland. Really excited to be here. So thank you for having me.

**Ryn Farmer**

And I am Ryn Farmer. I use she and her pronouns. I'm the Deputy Director at Crime Victim Services. I've been in the field for a decade now in victim services, but in all of the roles that I've had, as a macro social worker have been kind of involved in anti-oppressive work since the beginning of my career. So just have kind of incorporated that lens into how I work with survivors. And previously before becoming Deputy Director at Crime Victim Services, which I've been in this role for about three years now, I was the Director of our Day One program, so I work directly with survivors of sexual violence and human trafficking and also doing violence prevention work. But now I get to supervise all of our program directors and their many capacities. So whether it's working with elders, or working through our court system or guardianship program, we have a (unclear) program and a child advocacy center. So lots of different ways that I've been able to work with those different types of populations and supervise the program directors. And then I also in my role, focus on a lot of policy work at the state and local levels, as well as grant writing. So I get to do a little bit of everything now, which I love, and I just really appreciate being in this role and working with victims of crime in Ohio.

### **Laurie Hamame**

Wow, I have three VIPs in the podcast studio today. Thank you to the three of you for giving an intro of who you are, what you do, and why this work matters in your life. So I guess I'll share a little bit about what this episode is about and what we're talking about today. So we've discussed many times on this podcast and in various episodes, that there is an inextricable link between sexual violence and oppression. And even in our OAESV mission statement, we state that we do this work the work of eradicating sexual violence through an anti-oppressive lens. On this episode, we will be chatting about the ways that the anti-oppression committee supports OAESV's mission, and sharing exactly what the anti-oppression committee, or AOC, is. So the three of you are part of this committee, and I would love to start by just giving a general description of what the AOC is and what you do. \*prolonged silence\* The silence of three people wanting to share it at the same time \*laughs\*.

### **Andrea Burton**

Yeah, I can take that. So the AOC is, it's a group gathering of, sort of, like-minded people who work in the anti-violence, anti-racist lens, anti-oppression committee really centered around providing services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, but it's for everyone, right? This is just a conglomerate of people who come together, and it's since under the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence, but we are from organizations throughout the state of Ohio that's committed to doing this work. And the groups of individuals that come to this AOC are sort of running on a couple things, right? We want to be supportive to the Women of Color Caucus, which is also sort of an OAESV organization, which is supportive of the individuals who work within the rape crisis centers that are and identify as women of color. And we also are working towards ending violence in general, right, like so the process or idea that any violent act is a mark against people's basic human rights, and it's oppressive in nature. And so we try to therapeutically come up with ways to do that by also internally looking at our organizations which foster and continue to sometimes encourage these ideas. But we're also looking at it from the view of trying to provide the best services for individuals who come by removing those barriers that might prevent their services for being as wraparound or as full as it can be. And we try to create trainings, which are tailored around providing that information to providers of those services. And we also try to be supportive of organizations where people of color are underrepresented in this field, like, (they) can come together in sort of a

camaraderie to identify with one another and find support. So that's what we've been really doing. And it's hard to say that because, like, we're at a strategic point where we're revamping what has been done in the past and rethinking and taking all this information that we've gathered, and trying to make something meaningfully come out of it other than analysis. That's sort of what AOC does, in a very broad nonspecific way of saying it.

Ryn Farmer

I just wanted to mention that the Anti-Oppression Committee has been around for a really long time, over a decade, and Andrea and Taylr and I all are newer to the committee. So none of us have been here for a very long time. So just wanted to also highlight that this work isn't new, it's been going on for a long time, thanks to many, many women of color in the field in Ohio and allies as well. And so as we're coming in, we want to make sure that we're honoring the work that has been done by the Anti-Oppression Committee, because they have done a lot of work in the past. And then also taking some of the current events that we have today and some of our own skills and knowledge of the current members that we have to move the work forward and continuing to take action. I think that's one of the biggest things that we've heard over the years is, you know, it's great if we come out with these resources, or it's great if we have these conversations about what's happening in the world, or how oppression is impacting survivors or the workers in the field. But if we don't actually do something about it, then this work is for naught. So that's something that we've been really focusing on with our current strategic plan, and always examining our own privilege that we hold to make sure that we're not putting things out there that are gonna further oppress workers in the field or survivors. That's one of the biggest things of understanding how our own privilege plays out in the field of sexual violence and domestic violence and making sure that we're listening to others who've been impacted, and making sure that their voices are at the forefront of this work.

**Taylr Ucker-Lauderman**

Yeah, and let me just go ahead if it's okay, and I'll shout out some of the women of color who are or were long-standing members of the AOC. So I'm thinking about Rosa Beltré, our president and CEO, Shandra Ingram, our Vice President of Operations at OAESV, and then also coming to mine is Teresa Stafford currently of Hope and Healing, previously from Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, and Vanessa Miller previously of the Ohio Attorney General's Office. So those are women that really did a lot of work getting this group started, getting it to where it's at, and paving the way for us to even be here talking about it right now.

**Ryn Farmer**

Also shout out to CeCe Norwood. She was one of the founding members and has done a lot of work in the field. And then more recently, Olivia Montgomery also was one of our co-chairs. And then she left to take another exciting job, but did great work while she was on the committee.

**Taylr Ucker-Lauderman**

Absolutely, thank you. Andrea had mentioned also the Women of Color Caucus and they're also is the Co-conspirators in Ending Oppression, previously known as Aspiring White Allies. Collectively, the three groups, and some other offshoots as well, have been doing this group in different ways. And so some spaces are like affinity spaces for particular identities. AOC is a space for multiple identities to come together. So it's kind of a big project that has many pieces. AOC is just one piece. So I always like for people to know that as well.

## **Laurie Hamame**

Something you mentioned, Ryn, to put it simply is, you know, we can talk the talk, but if we're not walking the walk, then what's the point of all of this? So I would love to hear about, as you're strategically planning, how are you taking these hopes and goals, and then ensuring that you have actionable steps to get there? Like what are some things that you're wanting to do, and how do you actually make sure they happen?

## **Ryn Farmer**

We have an accountability committee as a part of the Anti-Oppression Committee. So, Liz Poprocki, Theresa Stafford, Shandra Ingram, and Aaron Eckhardt, and I all worked on that committee for a while. And it's evolved over the years ago so now it includes Shelly Marsh from Ohio Domestic Violence Network, and Becca Getson, who is from OAESV, and they both have helped carry the workforce. But we worked to create a resource guide for folks in the field. So we did one for boards and leaders in the field as kind of a starting point of: these are the things that you should be thinking about when you think about what it looks like to be an anti-oppressive organization, what it means to create an anti-oppressive culture within your organization. And then we created one for staff and volunteers as well. So that was just kind of a starting point; it's a cool little graphic that we sent out. So what we're doing now with that is making sure that we take a little bit of a deeper dive. So people can look at that resource and be like, "Okay, great. There's a list of books to read or articles to read." But we all know that people are busy, and they might not actually click on those. So now we're creating a guide with a summary of what that article or book says, some action steps that are in that article that we lift out. And so it'll be a shorter document, but still more accessible for folks to kind of look at, as they're intentionally working toward that culture of anti-oppression within the organization. So that's something that we've done, but as we're looking at the strategic plan, we made sure that over the next couple of years, we have an actual timeline, we have which committee is responsible for it, we have who in the committee is responsible for getting it done, so that we can have a little bit more accountability in terms of how we're checking in with each other, that the work is getting done. I know that folks like to have kind of those expectations set. And so we've really been working at setting expectations for the members of the committee in terms of moving forward. And so I think we have great work there. I'll let Andrea talk about our self-inventory, because I think that's one of the key pieces that we've been working on that will help us continue moving forward with our action.

## **Andrea Burton**

So we're really revamping our handbook, our reassessment to the commitments, that AOC espouses. And so we understand that there's trauma and burnout associated with this field, of course. In the anti-violence field, a lot of what you focus on is trauma, right? It's a direct correlation, and we're providing direct services to people who are victims of it. So we get vicarious trauma. The inventory checklist is essentially something that every AOC member is going to be tasked or committed to do yearly. And which, you know, you go through a checklist of statements. And if you answer a majority of those questions in the affirmative, then there may be a chance or opportunity for you to take a step back. Now, the walk the walk and talk the talk section of this is that the AOC is troubleshooting ways in which there exists policies within organizations currently, or within the AOC, that we can implement that says, "Here are services that can be provided, if you are suffering from burnout or vicarious trauma, to help alleviate that and reduce the stress, maybe in addition to

stepping away from this committee and doing this work." So the goal then is they can be an example of the resources that are provided by using a similar inventory checklist, or just at least acknowledged by HR and managers and staff when there is likely some type of vicarious trauma that's impacting a person's ability to function both inside and outside of work. And that's our goal and intention with the inventory checklist.

### **Taylr Ucker-Lauderman**

It's an important reminder that, like Andrea said, we are also doing these things that we're suggesting internally in the group. The group is not without faults; we are human beings that have grown up and been socialized within the same oppressive systems. And so we are learning to break that ourselves as individuals, together as a group, of people with different identities. So that has been a big challenge, I think, for the group for maybe the entire time of its existence. Because there has been harm, there has been -- I want to say, like, stalling -- is the word I want to use, even though I don't think it's intentional, but we've learned and we know from other social change folks as well that those problems exist, even with people that want it so badly to change, right, and are taking the action for it to change. And especially for people in the group that are white or might hold other big areas of privilege, we've learned that sometimes all we were doing was talking. And sometimes all we were doing was planning and strategizing, and then not, sometimes, carrying that through with action that was actually affecting the organizations around the state and even the organizations that were a part of the group. So I do want to acknowledge that that's a reality, because I don't want anybody to try to replicate this work and run into that and think that maybe they've done something wrong. That's just the reality that we're dealing with. And it gives us I think, a really, maybe, a helpful insight into what other people and other groups might need. So we're using our tools threefold, once with ourselves. Secondly, with the organizations we're a part of, and hopefully, thirdly, with other organizations that maybe we don't even know about yet, but maybe come across our resources. And then I think one big example of that has also been our training that was created. So we have an online training -- I forget how many hours it is total -- but it does take quite a bit of time for folks to complete. But it is really this intro into anti-oppression work, and talking about what that really means and what that really might mean for you as an individual. And we see this as a really good entryway for people in this field to start talking about and learning about anti-oppression principles within the anti-violence field. So that is something that anybody can take part in by going to our website, which I'll say now and then we'll also say, again, at the end, [oaesv.org/aoc](http://oaesv.org/aoc). There is a signup link.

### **Andrea Burton**

One of the things about that training that Taylr mentioned is that it's all run by people who work in this field. And many of the people identify as marginalized or oppressed people within their communities. It's always in a perpetual state of revamping, because our knowledge of how this field works and the type of oppressive tactics that exist, are ever-evolving; it should never be static. And so I think that that's pretty exceptional. And we're always adapting it for accessibility for individuals, you know, meaning that it's available in Spanish, it's available for people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, which are specific groups within our service area that are triply marginalized usually because of ableism. And so when we say the AOC, we're not just narrowly talking about race; we're talking about the intersectionality of lots of different things that often go hand-in-hand, but also because many of the organizations that have past contributed or are currently on this focus on providing services to communities that typically have a total lack of them. And so that's also an

additional way in which the AOC is really walking the walk is making sure that there's that accessibility angle to it. And I will add that from a different angle, or maybe one that wouldn't be typical or expected, we had a policing or defund the police committee and Jayvon Howard; of course, people who work at AOC will know him. He and I worked pretty heavily on a white paper regarding defunding the police and all the ways in which it means different things to different people. And looking at that from an anti-racist lens, which I think is really not done very commonly or very well. And we were very proud of that product of work. So that committee no longer exists because as work is completed, different committees come up to fulfill very specific strategic ideas or notions or plans or intentions. And so we're progressively moving away as we fulfill certain roles, not of course, understanding that we're solving the world's problems at all. But suggesting that we could do more by taking things piecemeal and working on different things in order to accomplish as much as we can. And sort of empowering people to carry on that work if they have an interest, fully recognizing that one group or one individual can't do everything that in these types of oppressions that exist.

### **Ryn Farmer**

I just want to kind of add to that, Andrea, because I think we've talked about a lot of different things that we're doing and I think that we just have to acknowledge that anti-oppression is a broad topic, right? So we live in a society with a history of colonization and stealing land and patriarchy and the enslavement of human beings and Jim Crow laws and redlining districts, and xenophobia, homophobia. And so it's huge, right, to think about all of the ways in which oppression can impact our community is huge. There's centuries of systemic and institutional oppression that we have to unpack. So it can feel overwhelming. And I think that we have to remind ourselves as individuals, but also as a group that it is a lot, it is a lot. But I think that what we want to focus on is: what can we do in our small little, you know, parts of Ohio, to influence and help contribute to those efforts? Sometimes it's small things, sometimes it's big things. Sometimes it's locally, it's like within our own organizations or in our own communities. I think we have done things to help impact it across Ohio as well. And even across the nation, because we do a lot with policy work that we advocate for or advocate against, at the national level. So I think the thing that I always remind myself of is like, just because it's overwhelming, or it seems big doesn't mean that there's not something that can be done, right? And so we have to take, like each day, each week, each month each year and say, okay, what am I going to focus on? What's the most important thing in terms of my ability to make a difference that I can focus on? What can we as a group focus on? And that helps break it up a little bit? Because otherwise, it is big. And I think that's what we've been trying to do rather than saying, like, we're gonna solve this issue that's been happening for centuries. That's just not realistic, right? So what can we do within our own realms that can help us move, move more toward that. Audre Lorde talked about, you know, fighting against some oppression than others. And so we talk about that in our group, like, you know, what do we need to focus on? And sometimes we have focused on one thing over another just because of what's happening in our communities. But I think that we have to remember that there's not a hierarchy of oppression, right? That's what she says, "There's no hierarchy of oppression." So making sure that we're learning about how various identities in different communities can prevent us from seeing our shared humanity. And that's what I try to remember. Like, I think oftentimes, we hear a lot of language that dehumanizes people. And if we can remember the ways in which we have a shared humanity, that means that we all have a role, we all have a responsibility in addressing the anti-oppression. So I just wanted to mention... I, like, as

we're talking, we were saying all these things... and it's like, yeah, this is it's huge. So how do we narrow it down? How do we take what we can do to try to make a difference?

### **Taylr Ucker-Lauderman**

That makes me think, too, Ryn, about the particular place that we're in, because a lot of our organizations are grant-funded nonprofits, for example. You know, we do have limitations. So, you know, our work might be imperfect and might not be, you know, totally theoretically radical. It might be in some ways, similar to what you'll see with, you know, organizers in your community. And in some ways, it might be very different because we are working within particular parameters. And I think that's really important for organizations in Ohio that are doing this work to be able to see and receive guidance about because it's like, okay, what can I do in my pocket, like you were saying, Ryn, with the limitations and the barriers that we are given, because we are working within systems. So that's not perfect. It's not a total overthrow of all the systems, right? But it is doing what we can do right now that is within our means. So that has been something that I think comes up a lot for us in our discussions and thinking about what is the purpose of this group and the people that are in this group and who we are serving.

### **Laurie Hamame**

So thinking about all that was just said, and all the ways that you're ensuring that you do the work, what are some things that you're currently working on, or things that you have done, that you feel good about? And then what are some other ways that you want to do more?

### **Taylr Ucker-Lauderman**

I have one that I can start with, because it's on my mind, especially because of what I said at the beginning about being interested in communication and social change. And this is something that I'm excited about, and also, it's something that we've been needing to do better at which is, say more and provide more guidance in a faster way. So a lot of this work does take a long time and is really slow coming. But there have been absolutely times where we needed to have a quicker response, a more public response, or just a response at all that we have not. So we are really working on, what are some effective communication channels that we can have, communication processes, so that, for example, when there is a call, say, from the Women of Color Caucus -- they recently did put out a statement and it was calling out some racist behaviors from a particular local program and we haven't made any public movement on that yet. We have been talking about it internally, we have been taking steps. But we really want to have a faster and more supportive response to the groups that we are beholden to, for example, like the Women of Color Caucus. So we are working on that. And I'm excited. And I know that it's still late. We needed to do it a long time ago. So that is definitely one piece.

### **Laurie Hamame**

Yeah, Taylr, as someone who also works in communications work, I just want to add that it is hard to be working in a very responsive time. I remember when I used to work as a news reporter, you know, there was a constant battle of, should we be first to respond, or should we be, you know, fifth to respond but with more accurate information, perhaps? We don't want people to feel like you're not saying anything. But you also don't want to just sit on something for too long and feel like you're never going to say anything at all. So I resonate with that.

## **Ryn Farmer**

We also have an Actively Addressing Oppression Committee. And right now their focus is more on our kind of internal examining, kind of our own privilege, and examining how we have oppressed others. And so each quarter, they're bringing forth like a new podcast to listen to or an article to read. And so we're responsible for kind of doing that on our own, and then coming to the group with discussion questions or discussion points, and kind of really trying to hold each other accountable in terms of how we're learning and how we're growing as individuals as a group. And our hope is that then we can kind of replicate that within agencies as well. I know there are some agencies that have groups that meet to do that type of work. My agency, Crime Victim Services, has an Aspiring White Accomplices group that meets once a month. We just finished the workbook *Fumbling Toward Repair*. And it's a facilitator's guide toward accountability. And it was written by Mariame Kaba and Shira Hassan. And it's been really helpful in thinking about how we can hold folks accountable who have caused harm, but also create space for people who want to start making a difference in the community, even if they have caused harm, and doing that kind of transformative, restorative repair work. And now we're listening to a podcast from Serial, it's called *The Kids of Rutherford County*, and it's about the over-incarceration of juveniles in the system, juveniles of color in the system. And so when we have those conversations, we're talking about, okay, what's the organization's role? Yeah, maybe this is happening in Tennessee, but like, it's also happening here. So what's our role as an organization? And how do we speak up?

## **Taylr Ucker-Lauderman**

Andrea, do you want to talk about increasing our membership?

## **Andrea Burton**

Okay, yeah, of course. So, we're always looking to increase our membership for a few reasons. We want to diversify our way of thinking, we want to put people who have traditionally not been in positions of power, or change in positions of power change in a very fundamental, meaningful way, which is creating policies or changing strategically how organizations work and impact the various service areas in which we work. And also, we want to keep a constant flow of ever-evolving minds. And also because of course, the more people you have, the more work that you're able to do, you have fewer core people, it is harder to diversify the projects that you can do because there are just not enough people, while working within our organizations, and also doing the work that, you know, we're required to do. So we've been strategically thinking about what constant resources or organizations can be a supply, potentially, of individuals who we'd might want to seek out and asking whether they would want to join. We have a very thoughtful and meaningful process in which we do that, where it isn't anyone who wants to join can join, there is a vetting process, there are considerations about how individuals who flow will work against or with one another. And also just trying to think of organizations that have traditionally been left out, but definitely have a voice and stake in anti-racist or anti-oppressive policies. And we've created a list of what that looks like. And surprisingly, when we really took meaningful action to think about that, we realized there were a lot of resources that we had not tapped into and trying to attract, you know, from those organizations, some talent to be on this committee. There is a handbook that exists but we're ever-evolving and developing it so that it's a resource for individuals who joined to know what we've done, where we're going, where we've come from, what our history is, and also really have a strong commitment to what our intention and purpose is for people on the AOC. And we also have, or are



developing, a policy towards addressing harm within the community so that it is not retributive or punitive in nature, but rehabilitative with an opportunity to seek redress in our, um... I always call it the Aspiring White Allies because that's what I'm used to. But with a constant thread of putting, you know, people coming in and out of the AOC that have previously been are now within that sister organization. And so our goal is always to have the balance of the right pull and tug within our AOC, but also having fresh viewpoints. And certainly, I will say that this field is predominantly women. And that being acknowledged, we're always seeking people who identify as male to join to offer a potentially different perspective, and one that is missing within this committee as a whole. But also recognizing that people are a multitude of things and never just one thing. So the intersectionality that attaches to that. So if people do or have an interest in being on the AOC, that isn't to say that we will come and find you like it's the CIA. We're simply saying that they can visit [oaesv.org/aoc](http://oaesv.org/aoc). Or if you have one of our emails, you can certainly reach out if that's the most direct route to do it, and we will try to vet that process. I feel like we're pretty unique in that we're a committee that's part of a really big multitude of organizations that have a lot of power and control within the state of Ohio, and we're run by three women. That's pretty exceptional. All from different organizations, with different backgrounds, different areas of expertise. And it works well because of that. And I think that that just goes to speak of the type of people we're trying to recruit, and hopefully forward-thinking in terms of acknowledging that that's a rarity in the not-for-profit world.

### **Taylor Ucker-Lauderman**

I love that framing. Thanks Andrea. Wow. If folks want to email [info@oaesv.org](mailto:info@oaesv.org). I know Yasmin who handles that inbox would be happy to forward those inquiries along to the three of us so that we can get in touch with people who are interested. I think something that you said, Andrea, I want to lift up again. It was about organizations that are often ignored. I know that's a simplistic way to say it. For example, the non-profit industrial complex. I want listeners to know that often the service organizations that are the least funded and the least paid attention to are those that are run or largely staffed by people with identities that are marginalized. So for example, culturally-specific organizations, are often not legitimized in the same way. We know it takes a lot of funding, it takes a lot of particular involvement with different types of agencies to be, for example, a qualified rape crisis center in Ohio – and for good reason, right? But that also means that sometimes culturally-specific organizations that are doing amazing service work with folks in a particular community are maybe not included in that. And so that is a really important point that you brought up and I really hope that folks understand that. Even the simple way of being known in a network is affected by oppression.

### **Laurie Hamame**

And for people who are interested in membership, could you share a little bit about what involvement and meeting structure looks like?

### **Taylor Ucker-Lauderman**

So the involvement of members of the AOC can vary. So that's something that we have learned over the years. It differs for each person and it differs at different times of the year, different times of life, all kinds of things could happen. So we look for a lot of transparency in that. So we ask for a bare minimum. We usually meet every other month as an entire group and we try to create space in that meeting for the smaller subgroups, the subcommittees, to meet as well. And those are really action-oriented spaces and a lot of those groups will also meet outside of those every other month

meetings. And what we have talked about as a group is really being transparent about your availability and signing up for only what you can handle. So hopefully there is space within the subcommittees to say, "Great, this is a task that needs done for us to accomplish our objective, and here's what I can take on of that task." Each of our every other month meetings are three hours and then on top of that, kind of varies depending on the project, time of year, and what folks can really do. And we try our best to balance that reality with wanting to move quickly enough, right? So, it's all very complicated, but I guess my simple answer is: at least three hours every other month is a good measure of the time commitment. You guys, Ryn and Andrea, have been working on big projects within the group, so I'd love to hear what you would add to that.

### **Ryan Farmer**

No, I think that's accurate. I think that it's been really helpful that we've been intentional about creating space within those meetings for the subcommittees to meet because it helps alleviate a little bit of time between the meetings when they would have to meet. My subcommittee still meets between the meetings just because we are working on projects that we aren't able to get all of those conversations in during the meeting. But it never feels like a burden; it's always really energizing, and I've appreciated working on the accountability committee. We have a plan in place. We just met last week. We're really excited about 2024 and hoping to get some movement on the work we've been doing. So yeah, I think that's accurate Taylr. I know some committees meet outside of the meeting, but others don't, so I think it just depends on what the groups is working on at that time.

### **Andrea Burton**

And we try to reduce travel during months where Ohio may have inclement weather, so we meet virtually. And then we have, I would say probably on average, three meetings per year which are going to be in person and that includes our annual summit which is a 2-day event, one which is virtual, in which we gather, usually in Columbus, and we try to strategically think about where we've gone, what we've accomplished, and what we are setting ourselves up to within the following year. And right now, I would say we're probably at a real critical point in terms of having established a major plan over the course of two to three years. Subcommittees are falling back because they've accomplished their intention and purpose, and some people are moving with that new knowledge of what they accomplished into a new committee to work towards another project. And again, a lot of it is internally at this point because we are looking to increase our membership and sort of strategically explain what we're doing and where we're from, and also get much better at outwardly presenting to people the work that we've done because were biased and think that's its good and critical work, but have traditionally not made it as accessible except for the people and organizations in which we work for. We acknowledge that it would have value to other organizations that are in this work but are not part of our inner circle of people who are on our committees.

### **Laurie Hamame**

Awesome. Well it sounds like you're looking for more members and I hope 2024 brings many, many, many, many members. So many members, that maybe we'll have to create two AOC's. Is there anything that the three of you would like to add before we wrap up?

### **Ryn Farmer**

I do. I think we've touched on this a little bit. Something that I think is definitely not unique to our local communities or Ohio, but I think in 2020, when George Floyd was murdered by the police, there was a lot of momentum to do this type of work. There was a lot of accountability that was happening, both in the nonprofit but also in the business world. I noticed that people were like, "Ok what can I do? How can I help? What can I do to get involved?" And well-meaning, right? Not always the best of the follow-through action; some of it was performative. But what we've seen happening is that as time has passed, there are a lot of folks who either refuse to acknowledge the disparities that exist within our communities or they just simply stopped caring because they feel like it doesn't impact them; I'm talking about mostly white folks. They feel like it doesn't impact their daily lives. And so I think that our hope as the committee is that we don't forget that moment in time, we don't forget all of the other moments in time that have happened, and we want people who work in this field who are from communities that have been historically marginalized, to feel a deep sense of belonging. Because they do belong here, even if they haven't been treated like it by individuals or organizations or systems. We want that for survivors, too. And so I think that if we don't move this work forward, if we don't continue raising these issues, if we don't continue putting out action steps that folks can take, that that can't happen, no matter how frustrating or exhausting it can be, right? And so I think that each of us has a role to play, no matter where we sit in our organizations. The three of us have positions that do give us more power, maybe, than some others. The tree of us as tri-chairs do have a responsibility to take the lead on this, but regardless of where people sit in organizations, everyone has a role to play. I really truly believe that, that we do, and that it's our responsibility to make a difference in the lives of others. And I think that the committee allows us to do that in a small way, but it's also a meaningful way. So I just want to encourage folks who are listening, if you're not involved, you do have a role to play. This does impact you. If you care about people and you care about people having a voice, you need to take action. So whether or not you join the committee as a member, you can play a part in your own organizations.

### **Laurie Hamame**

That's so true. Harm isn't only happening when it makes headlines. Well this is the first time that I've had three guests on an episode, so thank you to the three of you for chatting with me today, and giving our audience a little more information about the AOC. I will have all the information in the show notes. Thank you again.

### **Ryn Farmer**

Thanks for having us.

### **Laurie Hamame**

Thanks for listening to Teal Talk. We hope you enjoyed our deep dive into intersectional issues affecting survivors in Ohio. If you like what you heard, subscribe and leave us a five-star rating and review, recommend us to a friend, and follow us on Instagram and Facebook @OAESV and Twitter @OhioAllianceESV. If you'd like to learn more about us and the services we offer, sign up for our email list, or read a transcript of this episode visit [oaesv.org](http://oaesv.org)

### **Taylr Ucker-Lauderman**

Want to share a comment or ask a question for a future episode? Just click on the link in the show notes to leave us a voicemail. And remember, we're here to help. Feel free to call our resource line at 888.886.8388 during regular business hours, or the Ohio Sexual Violence Helpline 24/7 at 844.644.6435. See you next time!