

EMPATHY AN INGREDIENT FOR PEACE, COMPASSIONATE CIVILIZATIONS AND UTOPIAS

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Fort Collins Rotary Club

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In these newsletters of the Rotary District Peacebuilders, we want to invite readers for contributions and ideas, suggestions and possibilities for our efforts to promote the foundational skills for promoting peace, i.e., nonviolent conflict resolution, improved communication and cooperation, successful negotiation and mediation as well as the critical and creative thinking that can help communities move through obstacles and difficulties. See the end of this newsletter for more details about this project and the authors.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY

Lloyd Thomas, Ph.D. is a longstanding member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club, a licensed psychologist, a life coach and a prolific writer.

Recently, the word, "empathy" has been used (or misused) a lot in the media. Unfortunately, it has not been used much in daily social interactions. There seems to be considerable misunderstanding about what empathy really is. So today, I want to write about it and why it is so important. Empathy is defined as "the ability to recognize, feel, and *respond to* [italics mine] the needs and suffering of others." It is a learned, personal skill that facilitates your expression of caring, compassion and kindness to others. It is different than "sympathy" and is vital to your ability to express love.

Children learn empathy when their own needs and feelings are identified and addressed, usually by their parents. Children learn almost all their interpersonal skills by imitating what they see in others or how they are treated. When children are neglected, ignored, treated badly, criticized or hurt, they never develop the empathic skill to identify the needs/feelings of others...let alone learn how to express them themselves. Conversely, when their needs and emotions are recognized, clearly identified and addressed, they learn to do the same when relating to others. That is what is called *empathy*.

Empathy is often confused with "sympathy." Certainly sympathy is a component of empathy, but it is not exactly the same. For example, one can have sympathy for the sadness of another, but respond to it with derision or criticism. True empathy requires that you step outside your own emotions (like sympathy) and experience or view things entirely from the perspective of the other person. Someone once said, empathy "is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another, and feeling with the heart of another." Clearly, empathy is not an easy skill to develop.

The skill of "listening" is the foundation for developing empathy. Psychologist, Carl Rogers wrote, "We think we listen, but very rarely do we listen with real understanding, true empathy. Yet listening, of this very special kind, is one of the most potent forces for change

that I know." When you listen with the intention of truly understanding what another is experiencing, you are able to empathize and *respond* more accurately.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some [positive] difference [and] that you have lived and lived well." The purpose of empathy is to accurately and compassionately serve the needs and suffering of others [refer to the definition above]. Physician, Albert Schweitzer, wrote, "The purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others."

Albert Einstein said, "Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by [empathic] understanding." Clearly, if you want to have a peaceful, meaningful and enjoyable life, you would need to learn and practice the skill of empathy.

ADDRESS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT

William M. Timpson, Ph.D. is a professor at Colorado State University in its School of Education and a member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club. What follows is adapted from his 2009 book, 147 Tips for Teaching Peace and Reconciliation, co-authored with an international group of peace scholars that included Ed Brantmeier, Nat Kees, Tom Cavanagh, Claire McGlynn and Elavie Ndura (Madison, WI: Atwood).

In *Teaching and Learning Peace*, I (2002) describe my use of scenes from particular movies to illustrate the costs of violence and discuss alternatives. "Ever since the 1997 killings at Columbine High School, I have used a clip from the film, *Basketball Diaries*, starring Leonardo DeCaprio to illustrate how some individuals, modeling what they see in a movie, will resort to violence as a response to feeling marginalized, seeking revenge, and perhaps notoriety, by gunning down perceived persecutors. The 'dream sequence' in this movie shows DeCaprio, dressed in a long black leather coat, bursting into a classroom and gunning down classmates. How life can imitate art!

"Although the movie character wakes up and moves on, ultimately getting his life together, the Columbine killers chose to focus on this killing scene, making reference to it in their emails as they planned and then executed their murderous plot. While some students, and especially those with direct links to Columbine High School in Colorado, have found this clip deeply disturbing, most see it as directly relevant and useful for illustrating course concepts of "emotional intelligence" and "cognitive development." The question remains, however: Do these scenes add to an existing memory bank of violent images that only serves to desensitize or can they be memorable links to important new insights about peaceful alternatives" (113)?

In the summer of 2008, I took a tour of the political murals in Belfast, Northern Ireland to hear some background explanations from a local guide for the "Troubles" and their aftermath that took the lives of so many in the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's. "Aaron" grew up Protestant but was steered clear of the violence by parents who had the "moral courage" to teach tolerance. When his own mother was badly injured in a bombing, however, his father decided to move toward the outskirts of Belfast even though those who left were often referred to as "shirkers." Aaron later found out who set the bomb but decided not to retaliate. He insists that he has forgiven that man. Murals like the one below are pervasive in Belfast, Derry and other cities, marking areas and the controlling paramilitary forces.



Identify times in your own life when you decided not to retaliate. List the consequences. Compare these with times when you did retaliate. What insights do you get when you share these with others and hear their stories?

In *Teaching Diversity*, Roe Bubar and Irene Vernon (2003) describe the challenges they face as Native American lawyers and scholars when teaching about Indian history and law. “One of the great difficulties in teaching federal Indian law is coming to terms with our own legal education and the indoctrination process we ourselves endured . . . Colonization, boarding school policies, assimilation, and relocation policies were largely glossed over, and the underlying cultural racism that is pervasive in our laws, politics, and court decisions was not addressed. When we began to teach federal Indian law, we both found it was difficult to reread certain cases because we began to experience again the anger we felt over what we did not learn. We were forced to remember all those academic conversations about a justice system that demeaned Native American beliefs and histories” (160-161).

A study of peace and reconciliation has similar challenges. There can be a general suppression of dissent, especially in times of war or when there is a drumbeat call to “support our troops.” For some there may also be a kind of indoctrination into a surface patriotism that insists “my country right of wrong.” Others may struggle to identify their own beliefs or find alternative views when government controls the media. In the midst of these challenges is also the requirement for “emotional intelligence,” for handling anger or difficult memories of violence.

Analyze the effects of “indoctrination” on your own thinking. Read about Dan Goleman’s notions of “emotional intelligence” or Howard Gardner’s ideas about “multiple intelligences”—intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence—and assess your abilities to handle anger?

COMPASSIONATE CULTURES: UTOPIA?

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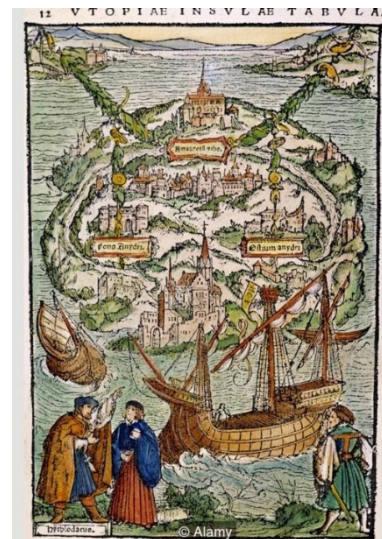
How often have you heard someone exclaim: “How wonderful it would be if”, or “All our problems would be solved if”:

- Everybody just loved everybody else, or
- We could live without interfering or bothering one another, or
- Everybody would be treated equally, or
- Everybody would contribute equally, or
- There was a place designed so people could live with no problems; thus, a place where all desires are satisfied, i.e. Utopia.

Utopias (imagined places where everything is perfect) have been conceived by socialist, capitalist, monarchial, religious, democratic, anarchist, ecological, feminist, patriarchal, egalitarian, hierarchical, racists, left-wing, right wing, reformist, Naturism/Nude Christians, free love, nuclear family, extended family, gay, and lesbian idealists. Many proposed utopian societies were conceived because the creators had empathy about the poor, the work burdened, those deprived of equal opportunity, and the marginalized. But utopian visions are often contradictory because most people have different conceptions of what is desirable or “right.”¹

The term “utopia” was first coined by Sir Thomas More for his 1516 book, *Utopia*, that created a fictional island off the coast of South America in the Atlantic Ocean where individuals could live without interference.^{2, 3} The new society would avoid the many ills he saw in his medieval world including tendency of kings to start wars, execution to punish theft, the nobility preying upon the poor, unfair distribution of property, waste and laziness. It is basically a socialist state, but it also had the feature of “Big Brother” watching all, because there were to be supervisors watching everybody to make sure there are no slackers, and everybody contributes equally to the economy. In some details More's *Utopia* reminds me of Mao's insistence that everyone benefit from hand labor and an enforced time in the countryside. Moore wrote about war and conflict that:

“Utopians do not like to engage in war. If they feel countries friendly to them have been wronged, they will send military aid, but they try to capture, rather than kill, enemies. They are upset if they achieve victory through bloodshed. The main purpose of war is to achieve that which, if they had achieved already, they would not have gone to war over.”



¹ How utopia shaped the world, <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20160920-how-utopia-shaped-the-world>

² Utopia comes from the Greek combining “not” and “place” and means “no place.”

³ Similarly, *Erewhon* is a novel by Samuel Butler written in 1872 where a utopian country is located somewhere in New Zealand. *Erewhon* spells “Nowhere” backwards.

In Moore's Utopia every family also has two slaves taken from criminals or from other countries, euthanasia is permissible, premarital sex is punished by lifetime of enforced celibacy, adultery is punished by enslavement, no travel except with an internal passport (if you travel without permission you are placed in slavery). Religions are encouraged and respected, but atheists are despised. Women are restricted to household tasks. It appears that Moore's utopia of 500 years past would not appeal to many people today!

Alternatively, in 1567 the Dutch painter Pieter Brueghel the Elder imagined the fictional utopian *Land of Cockaigne, Ireland*, where life is easy, food is free, and no bosses exist. An imaginary place of extreme luxury and ease where physical comforts and pleasures are always immediately at hand and where the harshness of medieval peasant life does not exist.



Thomas More's original utopian dreamland has given rise to everything from hippie communes to all female enclaves to Shaker villages to dystopian predictions of the future. None of these seemed to be successful over time. But is it hopeless and unrealistic then to envision a world without war and where peace and happiness prevail?

Perhaps what is necessary for a utopia is the integration of empathy, compassion, and consideration with a realistic view of human behavior, an expectation and respect for different opinions, and even man's contrariness. Even Moore did not expect all utopian inhabitants would cooperate without supervision. Making hard decisions that affect others requires more than simple empathy, it also requires what is called **emotional intelligence (EI)**. EI is the capability of one to recognize and understand the emotions of themselves and others, discern the importance of such feelings, and use the information to guide thinking and behavior. Emotional intelligence recognizes there are limits to just emotional empathy, and sometimes there is a need for more rational emotion-free decision making.

On the other hand, one can have a high EI but a low empathy which could lead to such a person being manipulative because they can discern which empathetic buttons to push. EI without empathy can lead to an inflexible utopia where there is "imposed" justice and "imposed" fairness, but little love and compassion. EI combined with empathy followed by the compassionate desire to help and alleviate hurt and suffering is most likely to lead to actions which serve others.

Conclusion: So, we need an empathetic compassionate society managed by people with high emotional intelligence. That would make a great utopia. How do we go about achieving such a world? Well, there are people with ideas, but it is a work in progress. One idea was proposed by Dr. Nalini Chilkov, founder of Integrative Cancer Care program, who argues we all must cultivate the capacity to be concerned about the welfare of others.

The path to a compassionate society arises from the intentions and actions of individuals within that society. One small act of kindness and generosity ... one act of tenderness ... one act of selflessness ... each of these moments makes a difference. No act is too small. Strung together, each kind gesture becomes a pearl that makes a beautiful strand of loving kindness with which to encircle self and other, close family, friends, coworkers, community, strangers and world.⁴

EMPATHY IN RESTORTIVE JUSTICE

Lindsey Pointer is a PhD Candidate in Restorative Justice at Victoria University of Wellington and is a past recipient of the Rotary Global Grant Scholarship. She works as a restorative justice facilitator, trainer and researcher. She notes: "A fellow restorative justice facilitator in New Zealand, Rod Holm, recently sent me this case study, which shows the incredible power of restorative justice to cultivate empathy and compassionate responses, even in the wake of major harm and between people who otherwise would not have a chance to connect."

Restorative Justice Case Study by Rod Holm

In this recent case, a colleague and I were faced with an RJ conference that arose out of a car crash. Setting up the conference had two significant logistical problems, one of geography and one of language. The victim and the offender lived in different cities some hundreds of kilometers apart. Neither party was able to travel to the other city, yet each was keen to take part in an RJ conference. So it would have to be done through skype, and each party agreed to this. (The victim lived in our city.) The second problem was that the offending driver spoke no English, although her partner did. (They had come to live in NZ more than ten years earlier.) Opening telephone conversations were, perforce, with him and it was subsequently agreed by all that he could act as interpreter.

The date for the conference was set for a week or so after both pre-conferences. In those intervening days, the victim (male, mid-forties) was approached by his friends and relatives who understood his situation from their own unique perspectives. They poured scorn on the written explanation for the crash ('I sneezed') and urged him to go for the maximum amount of monetary compensation. They were further concerned that the male partner of the offender might distort or fudge what was said in some way to the disadvantage of their friend the victim. So he rang me and asked for an independent translator. After some discussion, I acceded to this request despite my initial reluctance.

At the RJ conference there were the official translator, two facilitators and the victim at our end, and the offender and her partner at the other end. The technical problem we faced at our end was that the laptop only had a 25cm screen, and the victim and the translator filled it by themselves. The victim had not opted for a support person and so I sat beside him, just out of the screen coverage. My colleague chose to sit a little way away although he twice moved behind the seated group to whisper a suggestion to me about how we might proceed at that point.

When it was clear that everybody was ready, I asked the translator to request the offending driver to say whatever she wanted to say about the accident. By great good fortune, the

⁴ Nalini Chilkov (2010), *How Can We Bring About a Compassionate Society*, Life on HuffPost, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/how-can-we-bring-about-a_b_714079

(female) translator immediately established an easy rapport with the offender, and she poured out her story, weeping quietly as she did so. She explained that they had tried very hard to contact the victim so that they could try and put things right, but could get no information from either the police or the hospital. Apologizing profusely she said that she had no clear memory of the accident, except that she knew she 'had been tired and that she had sneezed' when she took over the wheel on the long drive from their home city. (The accident happened some hundreds of kilometers away from her home.) She asked of the victim that he might find it in his heart to forgive her. A back and forth dialogue ensued with only minor and infrequent interventions from me. These were mostly suggestions to the victim that he should hold up in his storytelling at particular points so that his words could be translated.

The offending party explained their parlous economic circumstances (jobless, surviving with the help of friends and family) but offered the victim \$2000 nonetheless by way of compensation. He said that he had estimated his financial losses at \$15000 and asked if they could manage that much. (His right leg and foot had been badly mangled, rods and plates had been inserted. It would be several more months before he could walk properly again. He too had been unable to work and it would remain that way for some time yet.)

At that point, the offending driver told her story of the consequences of the crash for her. About 18 weeks pregnant at the time, the air bag and seat belt combined to squeeze her uterus so forcibly that her waters broke. Air-lifted to hospital she and her (uninjured) partner were informed that the child would be born in a couple of days, and that it would not survive. All medical resources were mustered, and with the aid of good fortune, they were able to prolong the pregnancy to 24 weeks. Born severely premature, both mother and baby were kept in hospital for many days.

At the time of the conference, they had returned home, but the child had breathing difficulties due to inadequate lung development and also had to be fed from a drip. It required 24-hour care and both of them had ceased work in order to provide the necessary care for the child and to support each other. It could have seemed that they had been plummeted into the valley of the shadow of death and were still struggling to find their way out. In the course of this story unfolding however, the partner explained that at one early stage they had consulted an herbal doctor from their own culture, and his advice had been that as the mother had lost her waters, she ought to drink plentifully, to replace them. 'So, he said, 'my partner drank eight litres of water every day for days.' For some reason, this struck everyone as very funny and there was considerable mutual laughter.

At that point the victim explained that he was concerned for the baby's welfare. 'While I do not have children of my own I do have nieces and nephews, so I have some idea of what it is like,' he said. 'Would you like to look at our baby?' asked the child's father. 'Most certainly, yes I would,' replied the victim. So the camera was taken down the corridor and into the child's bedroom. We all peered into the cot, seeing a tiny baby with a surgical white patch on one cheek. At one moment, the child opened its eyes - 'Look, look,' exclaimed the victim, 'is he smiling?' 'Yes', said the father, 'he is smiling at you.'

The victim was absolutely overcome at this point and was unable to speak. The rest of the group made small talk for a few moments, and I touched his shoulder, rubbing it gently and saying, 'It's ok, take your time.' Regaining his composure and after some reflection, the victim then said: 'Look, I have decided that I will not accept your offer of \$2000. Instead, I want you to

put it towards the welfare of your child. Maybe buy him some clothes or something.’ It was the turn of the offending party to be overcome. The child’s father vigorously wiped his eyes and his face with a large handkerchief, and the mother wept a bit harder than before. I too struggled somewhat to maintain a professional distance, saying into the camera: ‘Maybe we should stop this meeting now. The place will be flooded out.’ There was a trickle of laughter at this, and the meeting recovered some equilibrium and managed to proceed.

The victim’s generosity seemed amazing to the other party and following on from their expressions of surprise and gratitude, they asked him: ‘Would you care to keep in touch with us as time goes by, so that you can see how our baby progresses?’ This offer too, was accepted with alacrity by the victim, and so they exchanged contact details. This seemed like a good point to end the meeting, and after checking that both parties had said all they needed to say, I closed it with a ‘Thank you all, and goodbye.’

EMPATHY FOR NATURE

Empathy and Respect are Adaptive Traits for Civility Amongst Animals and Persons: Justice is served when those traits are in balance and are genuine across the debate!

Del Benson, Ph.D. is a Professor and wildlife specialist for Extension at Colorado State University. His work is with wildlife and recreation enterprises on private land, conservation education, hunter attitudes and behavior, public input to resource management decision making and campus environmental management. He had conducted research on land management for wildlife and recreation in Colorado, Morocco and Honduras. His 1999 book Wildlife Stewardship and Recreation on Private Lands received The Wildlife Award for Conservation Education.

Animals do it!

What do you think when the parent corrects the teen in a restaurant, when the adult child limits the activities of aging parents, or when the police confront a stranger or your friend? Do you have empathy? Do you respect the motives of one side, the other, perhaps both? As you grow in maturity, education, training, experiences, and wisdom, do you feel more open to the interests of others or have patterns developed that limit your growth?

Empathy is when you can honestly listen, learn, and understand the feelings, interests, and behaviors of others...even when different from yours. Civility is when you act and react to cues with thoughtful and constructive actions. Empathy was shown in me recently when I yawned twice when watching chimps yawn on a TED Talk about moral behavior in animals (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcJxRqTs5nk>). Chimps and bonobos seemed to show empathy when they reconciled with hand gestures and sex after fights. Elephants and chimps cooperated on tasks to receive food with the chimp showing encouragement.

Using human words and definitions for animals behavior is intellectually risky, but we know that animals use friendly or aggressive displays to encourage or discourage others into or away from the territory being protected which lessens the need for aggression to gain similar outcomes. Likewise, the invited guest or intruder benefits by understanding the welcoming gestures, respects the signals of intolerance, and avoids further aggression.

Fledgling birds flutter wings to get fed; dogs wait at the door for their humans to come home; bonobos yawn when their species or humans yawn; and Koko the gorilla “mourned” the loss of a favorite kitten and the death of comedian Robin Williams whom she had met and “talked with” via sign language (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgm7syvbLaM>).

Dogs, horses, and other animals reportedly “feel” the energy of persons around them and are used in therapies and to provide needed care for sight, hearing, emotional issues, and physical limitations of their humans. In return, animals are rewarded by food, praise or other items of interest that we might equate with respect. Animals learn to have empathy and respect for limitations to their desires and receive rewards for good behavior.

Humans should have more complex approaches to civil actions owing to bigger brains, generally longer lives, fewer instinctual behaviors, and more complex lives learn to adapt via nurturing in addition to what nature provided. I’m not sure whether we can discuss justice amongst animals; however, we can with humans, and empathy, honesty, and civil interactions and outcomes promote justice.

People need to learn to do it more!

Learning more about empathy and respect might help to justly raise children, teach in the schools, run our businesses, avoid conflict at the interface of police and suspect encounters, and when international leaders are at odds. Our social lives can be altered justly when we show empathy, respect ourselves and others, and civility is the core of this essay. Empathy among humans and receiving respect in return helps to avoid conflict, gain rewards, encourages civility, and builds peace.

Peace and civil behaviors with those we can relate to have their barriers and being involved with differences that we do not know, understand or even that we distrust, has additional risks. If empathy is lacking with others who are different, then mutual respect wanes, conflict might result, and fair treatments are less likely. Those who are different might also and reasonably retaliate with negative thoughts, psychological barriers, and more aggressive reactions against their accusers than should be expected or justified.

Take Empathy and Respect Home for Civil Justice

Humans--whether, children, co-workers, or nations--will have desires for access to limited resources that they need or want which result in conflicts with pouting, anger, aggression, and more. Civil discourse can help to understand the interests and to resolve the conflicts. Ideas, norms, rules, and eventually laws are created by elected, appointed, or assumed leaders around to allocate resources and to regulate behaviors fairly (or regrettably sometimes unfairly). In most cases, there is some form of enforcement to maintain reasonable order towards those behaviors: stern gestures of parents, rules in the classroom, Rotary 4-Way Test, formal rules and regulations.

Empathetic leaders create laws that benefit the needs of persons while ruthless leaders create rules that benefit themselves at the expense of others. As with animals, knowing, respecting, and interacting within the rules is adaptive even though it might not be fair. Justice is served when needs of people are understood and met and the people respond with civil respectful actions. When police isolate and accuse persons merely because of their traits unrelated to the crime, that does not show empathy, is not respectful, nor is it likely justified.

However, it is generally not respectful, productive, or justified for persons being encountered by law enforcement to flee, to resist arrest, or to otherwise escape authority. Predators chase prey animals that run...so too with humans. Aggression escalates! As with territories and displays in the animal world, most humans posture and do not fight when confronted; but when fighting erupts, then results go to the most powerful or to the lucky ones.

For a child, university student, traffic violator, Rotarian, or felon to posture and resist authority with uncivilized, disrespectful methods will likely engender equal if not even more authoritative negative forces. Civil justice is served best when interests are empathetic and respectful by all sides of a conflict.

COMPASSIONATE EMPATHY AND THE “FIGHTING IRISH”

Sharyn Salem has been a health care consultant. Larry Salmen has helped support business success with technology and systems integration. The following is an excerpt of a longer essay you can read by contacting Sharyn Salmen (ssalmen@g.com) or Larry Salmen (lsalmen@g.com)

As two “Rotary Baby Boomers”, we traveled to Ireland, both South and North, from June 18 through July 7, 2019. We wanted to enjoy that rich Irish culture and know more about the backgrounds of our Irish American friends and relatives. We also wanted to know more about what led these people to the Good Friday Peace Accords after so many years of conflict, fighting and violence. And now there is the pressure from Brexit to address new problems. We had been joined in marriage across Lutheran and Catholic traditions some 44 years ago. We wondered how these people were reconciling their differences between Catholics and Protestants.

We discovered that Ireland has had a long history of land wars with Norwegian Vikings, the French, Spanish, Welsh, and English. They had a series of religious wars between the Irish Catholics and English Protestants. There was a civil war for independence in 1916 and political wars during the “Troubles” from 1968-1998. And now Brexit threatens to reshuffle all these historical reference points once again and raise new issues, conflicts and problems.

We asked which way the people of Northern Ireland would lean when many there would like to see this island as a single Irish nation. In June of 2019 England welcomed a new Prime Minister, Boris Johnson who has been very pro-Brexit.

We believe that when “compassionate empathy,” both intellectual and emotional, is combined with respect for their 800-year history that they will see the benefits of cooperation. A mutual need for economic success, we hope, will help them find a peaceful path forward. Dan Goleman’s book on emotional intelligence helps us see how empathy will challenge the people of Northern Ireland to go beyond sympathy toward an ability to experience the feelings of others. “Compassionate empathy”, Goleman argues, can actually inspire people to want to go further and help where possible.

We believe that it is for the leaders of both countries, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, to find a collaborative, compassionate, reasonable and peaceful solution which can support the financial and peaceful success of both. Trade is one part of this challenge. The question of a future unification with Ireland is another.

PRIORITIES OF THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

In these newsletters of the Rotary District Peacebuilders, we want to invite readers for contributions and ideas, suggestions and possibilities for our efforts to promote the foundational skills for promoting peace, i.e., nonviolent conflict resolution, improved communication and cooperation, successful negotiation and mediation as well as the critical and creative thinking that can help communities move through obstacles and difficulties. The Rotary Foundation has six priority areas: (1) Promoting peace; (2) Fighting disease; (3) Providing clean water; (4) Saving mothers and children; (5) Supporting education; and (6) Growing local economies. It has been argued by staff at Rotary International (RI) that long with promoting peace, “sustainability” is another cross-cutting priority that connects with all the others. RI has directed efforts in these six areas to enhance local and global impact and staff indicate that their most successful and sustainable projects and activities tend to fall within these areas: See the RI website: <https://my.rotary.org/en/learning-reference/about-rotary/our-priorities>

If you would you like to respond to one of the pieces in this newsletter, check out our blog www.rotarypeacebuilder.com and join the conversation! If you would like to contribute to a future newsletter, visit www.rotarypeacebuilder.com/submit/. Future issues are looking at the following: October—Lost Alternatives in Lives, Families, Wealth and the Environment due to War Conflicts; November—Educating for Peace at Every Level: Cooperation, Communication, Critical and Creative Thinking.