

ROTARY DISTRICT 5440 PEACEBUILDER
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STICKS OR CARROTS? OPTIONS FOR BUILDING PEACE

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Fort Collins Rotary Club
and
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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.

When you dig below the surface, these are the same skills and ideas we can see in various Rotary activities, for example, in Community and Global Grants. By sharing what we learn, we hope to spark new thinking about what can be done locally, on college campuses, elementary and secondary schools, in churches, other organizations as well as in communities of all sizes, formally and informally—wherever people are looking for new and constructive ways through conflicts.

You can look through previous newsletters that have been archived on the District 5440 website: <https://www.rotary5440.org/SitePage/peace-building-newsletters>

What aspects of peacebuilding would you like to see addressed? Let us know what you think:

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Lloyd Thomas

NOTE: Lloyd Thomas, Ph.D. is a longstanding member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club, a licensed psychologist and a life coach. We asked him if we could use this piece on paradigms that he had written for his regular newsletter. Contact him if you would like to receive his newsletters. He can be reached through email: DrLloyd@CreatingLeaders.com

Robert N. Meroney

NOTE: Bob Meroney is an Emeritus Professor of Fluid Mechanics and Wind Engineering with a long career at Colorado State University. He has been an active member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club and regularly researches a range of topics on modern life, issues and politics that

serve to spark deeper conversations among friends and colleagues. If you have questions or ideas, you can contact Bob: Robert.Meroney@ColoState.EDU.

PEACE AND THE BIG STICK!

Brute strength and intimidation have sometimes been proposed as ways to assure “peace” under the terms imposed by the those who wield the power. Big stick diplomacy, dollar diplomacy, and moral diplomacy as originally proposed by U.S. Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Taft and Woodrow Wilson, respectively, have all been used to “impose” peace under specific terms in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Big stick ideology originated with President Theodore Roosevelt's foreign policy: "speak softly and carry a big stick." The phrase first appeared in private correspondence from Roosevelt to Henry L. Sprague (Union League Club, NY City), dated January 26, 1900, during an enthusiastic celebration of winning an argument with New York's Republican committee forcing it to pull support away from a corrupt financial adviser. His idea was to negotiate peacefully, simultaneously threatening with the big stick of the military or executive power. Later Theodore Roosevelt in a 1905 speech said:

If one man says something to another, the stronger the other man is, the less he finds it necessary to answer back. He does not want to talk at all until he has to act, and then he wants to act with decision. The most contemptible of all attitudes to be in is to have talked loudly and then act with indecision. Now, just so with the nations.

Do not speak ill of other nations...Behave courteously, with consideration; do no wrong to any other power and at the same time keep ourselves in such a state of preparedness that it may be evident that we are scrupulous not to wrong others because we believe it right.



Unfortunately, he did not always follow "do no wrong to any other power" part of the quote. Roosevelt used the Big Stick approach to engineer a revolution in Columbia and support the new republic of Panama. Roosevelt later said that he "took the Canal and let Congress debate."

The big stick phrase is similar to the earlier one "Peace through strength" which is quite old and has been used by leaders like Roman Emperor Hadrian in the first century AD to Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. The American historian Andrew Bacevich, Boston University, argued it really means "Peace through war."

Alternatively, the same concept has been called "gunboat diplomacy" where foreign policy objectives are reached with the aid of conspicuous displays of naval power. This term arose during the nineteenth-century period of imperialism. It was applied by various nations including

Britain, England, Russia, Japan, and others as they built large fleets. The Opium Wars (1840, 1856), Commodore Perry forcing Japan to open (1853-54), overthrowing the Kingdom of Hawaii (1893), Panama separation from Columbia, Taiwan strait crisis (1954, 1958, 1995-96), and most recently the Spratly Islands dispute (2015)

The German politician Ludwig von Rochau introduced the concept of "Realpolitik" in 1853 arguing that pragmatism and physical force determines the right of one nation to enforce its views on another. (Some would call this political realism.) He argued that it is not what is "right" that governs the nations, and the coercion potential of the strong does not evaporate just because it can be shown to be "unjust." Thus, nations generally make policy based on the pursuit, possession and application of power. This might be described then as the Machiavellian approach, who held that the sole aim of a prince (politician) was to seek power, regardless of religious or ethical considerations. Adolf Hitler's coercion and invasion of Czechoslovakia was an example of Realpolitik. In the US people like Zbigniew Brzezinski with Jimmy Carter and Henry Kissinger with Richard Nixon followed Realpolitik principles.

There is no question that short-term goals are achieved. Roosevelt received the Nobel Prize for ending the Russo-Japanese war, military posturing against Columbia by the U.S. permitted the construction and control of the Panama Canal and intervention in the Dominican Republic and Cuba promoted U.S. interests, commercial threats were used to dictate the Open-Door policy in China and promote U.S. bank interests in Latin America, and moral diplomacy was used to justify intervention in Mexican politics in Veracruz to affect their presidential selection and the cross-border pursuit of Pancho Villa. These actions are often defended by the claim by some of American exceptionalism and its special mission in the world.

Unfortunately, long-term consequences of "bully" style diplomacy have led to resentment, backlash (or blowback), great loss in American prestige, anti-American feeling worldwide, subsequent nationalization of American investments in bitter nations, strict regulations on foreign investors, and contempt for what some foreign critics describe as American hypocrisy.

The difficulty with peace established with intimidation is that it rarely produces a long-term solution since the underlying issues are not fully aired, discussed or resolved. Intimidation leaves little room for compromise, conciliation, or resolution in the opinion of the weaker participants. Perhaps it is time to return to the following definition of diplomacy:

Diplomacy: The art of dealing with people in a sensitive and effective way.

Synonyms are: tact, sensitivity, discretion finesse, delicacy, savoir faire, politeness, thoughtfulness, care, judiciousness, and prudence.

Lindsey Pointer

NOTE: Lindsey Pointer has been working on the use of restorative principles in the criminal justice system. She defines herself as a restorative practices facilitator, trainer and researcher and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Restorative Justice at Victoria University in New Zealand

with support from a Rotary Global Grant Scholarship and the [Fulbright Program](#) from the U.S. State Department. If you have questions or ideas, contact Lindsey: lindseypointer@gmail.com

BEYOND THE STICK AND CARROT

What is the best way to promote good, pro-social behavior? Is it rewarding good behavior or punishing bad behavior? The carrot or the stick?

This question has been asked across a wide range of contexts from the criminal justice system to schools to workplaces to international relations. Those in authority in each context have tried one or the other, or most often, a combination of both, in an attempt to persuade the members of their community to behave well.

It strikes me in examining this dynamic that we have been extremely limited in our two options: the carrot or the stick. In order to best inspire good behavior, perhaps we need to think beyond rewards and punishment. The “stick” or the threat of punishment is often employed as a deterrent for harmful behavior. The thinking goes: if people know that they will be punished for a certain action, the threat of that punishment will deter them from following through. There is an appealing logic to this line of thinking, but it isn’t as effective as we generally think. As Paul Rock notes, the ability to threaten and deliver sanctions has been found minimally effective in shaping people’s law-related behavior.¹ Additionally, re-offence rates following punishment remain stubbornly high, suggesting that the “stick” does little to prevent future negative behavior.

The “carrot” or the reward for good behavior is often used in an attempt to incentivize people to act a certain way. For example, in schools, students may receive stars or treats for good behavior or in workplaces, employees may receive a bonus for good performance. I remember classmates in High School who were paid by their parents for good grades. As Daniel Pink explains in [Drive: The Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us](#), external rewards are not actually the best way to motivate people. The problem here is that the motivation for the positive behavior is based on external factors rather than internal.

The solution to this problem may be to expand our options; to think beyond the carrot and the stick. Restorative Practices suggest that the best way to encourage good, pro-social behavior is to *listen*. Ask open-ended question with a tone of curiosity and respect and listen genuinely to the answers. Strive to understand individuals’ needs and to make them feel heard and respected.

All people share a core need to feel they are valued and that they belong. Work to create spaces in your community that foster collaborative communication with an emphasis on equal voice. One great tool for this is the restorative [circle process](#).

It is not deterrence through threat of punishment or incentivizing through promise of reward that holds the greatest influence on our behavior. Rather, it is an experience of our connection to others and a sense of being valued and heard by our community that fuels us to do well.

¹ Paul Rock, "Rules, Boundaries and the Courts: Some Problems in the Neo-Durkheimian Sociology of Deviance," *British journal of sociology* 49, no. 4 (1998).

William M. Timpson

NOTE: Bill Timpson has been on the faculty at Colorado State University in its School of Education for many years and a member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club where his focus on sustainable peacebuilding in Burundi, East Africa, has been supported by two Global Grants. If you have questions or ideas, contact Bill: william.timpson@colostate.edu

WEAPONS, WOUNDS AND HEALING

In 2006 I used a Fulbright Specialist for work on sustainable peace and reconciliation studies in collaboration with colleagues at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland. I wanted to talk to people there on all sides of what had been assumed to be an “intractable conflict” dating back centuries as native Irish challenged the colonial rule of their British overlords. In the city of Londonderry, I was able to interview survivors of the intense “sectarian” violence that erupted from the 1960’s through the 1990’s and were termed the “Troubles,” conflicts that took some 3,500 lives in this tiny “nation” of 1.8 million.

This number of casualties is approximately the same number of people killed in the attack on the twin towers in New York City in 2001. On a per capita basis the numbers of casualties in Northern Ireland would be tantamount to some 403,000 deaths in the U.S. and, spread out over that time period, would amount to more than 13,000 dead per year for 30 years. Imagine the trauma and the recovery needed.

In 1998, after a groundswell of activism led primarily by women and other ordinary citizens, the leaders of Northern Ireland were able to fashion and sign the Good Friday Peace Agreement. The old paradigm of peace through “bombs and bullets,” a strategy that held this region in a vice grip of hierarchical tension and controls, would give way to power sharing and the decommissioning of weapons, the “big sticks” of anarchic terrorist warfare.

“Fiona” was too close to an assassination attempt and still carries a bullet lodged near her heart that surgeons cannot remove; and “Barbara” had to deal with a father who joined the paramilitaries and left her mother with nine kids to raise on very little while he was on the run, in and out of jail, and the family’s reputation “smeared.” While stories like these are quite common in a small nation where nearly everyone was touched by these “Troubles,” these women found that their pain began to heal through a program of neighbor-to-neighbor, facilitated story-telling.

In a program titled *Toward Understanding and Healing*, funded through a European Union effort to promote healing in areas that had experienced conflict, a small group of Derry residents come together for a 3-day residential to tell their stories, listen, accept and support each other. This may seem simple but it’s not when you recognize the cultures of avoidance, silence and fear that have developed here. You just “didn’t want to know” and you “didn’t ask.” Developed by Maureen Hetherington, the Director of *The Junction, Toward Understanding and Healing* has demonstrated the value of skilled facilitators and the power of community-based listening, acceptance and support.

When the men and their “big stick” weapons showed up, the tone and substance of discussions changed. Many citizens went into hiding. Communities were dominated by these gunmen, so

convinced of their need to show “strength” and take action. A question of “us or them” was at the core. Yet, with the population moving toward parity with relatively equal numbers of Protestants and Catholics, any “final” solution through warfare was increasingly untenable. Everyone needed another way forward, a new paradigm. Decommissioning the “big sticks” was a critical component of the Good Friday Peace Plan that is still in place and holding today.

What they heard from the ex-convicts, shooters and bomb makers who came to these sessions were stories of professed “patriotism” to defend their communities. As these men listened to the victims they began to understand the suffering and that there might be other ways forward. In turn, the women heard stories of courage in defense of families and friends. They also began to see these men in a different light and that the “big sticks” they carried were dominating relationships and options. There had to be better ways forward. As they said, “four hundred years of bombs and bullets had failed.”

Lloyd Thomas

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AND HOW DO WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESSES?

Everyone dreams of achieving success at something. Unfortunately, in today's culture "success" is usually defined by how much money you have. Businesses are "successful" if they are monetarily "profitable." Personal "success" is ranked by how materially "wealthy" you happen to be. Nevertheless, you can still feel, and *be* successful, whenever you achieve a state with which you are content or happy. Thirty years ago, the "psychology of achievement" was extensively researched. We learned the steps to take to successfully attain your desired results. Here are the most crucial elements to attaining success in any endeavor. Consider the following when evaluating what worked-the stick, the carrot or some interactive, complex mix of both along with other factors.

Step One: Clearly imagine the outcome you desire.

Step Two: Commit to memory your written description.

Step Three: Create a plan of action.

Step Four: Replace any beliefs you may have which limit you, defeat you or sabotage you.

Step Five: Create high-quality relationships.

Step Six: Take complete responsibility for your own health and well-being.

Step Seven: Develop a "financial plan" that will create a reserve, so you do not become preoccupied with money, and react out of fear of not having enough or making enough.

Step Eight: Take the "leap of faith" to risk new actions.

Step Nine: Persist. Never give up. Never quit. Learn from your mistakes and "failures."

You can be successful regardless of how much money you acquire. Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote of success: "To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."