

ROTARY DISTRICT 5440 PEACEBUILDER NEWSLETTER
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PEACE HEROES AND BUILDERS

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Lindsey Pointer, 2017 Rotary Global Grant Scholarship Recipient

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. You can look through previous newsletters that have been archived on the District 5440 website:

<https://www.rotary5440.org/SitePage/peace-building-newsletters>

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 HEROES



Peace heroes might be defined as individuals who promote consensus, conciliation, arbitration, mediation and retreat from aggression to resolve or avoid conflict and war. Peace heroes might also be those who are prepared to endure personal privation, physical harm, and public or governmental ridicule are especially to be honored and respected.

History is replete with stories of peace heroes who have suffered for their beliefs.¹ Prominent among acknowledged peace heroes would be Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Martin Luther King Jr. Individuals and organizations that have promoted peaceful behavior as a fundamental belief system include the Chinese philosopher Mozi (c. 470 -391 BC, founder of Mohism), the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy who influenced Mahatma Gandhi, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Amish, Mennonites, and the Church of the Brethren.

There are over forty international Peace Prizes awarded to recognize and encourage Peace Heroes.² The Nobel Peace Prize is one of the five prizes established by the will of Swedish Industrialist, inventor, and armaments manufacturer Alfred Nobel (1833-1896).³ It has been awarded annually to those who have “*done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses.*”



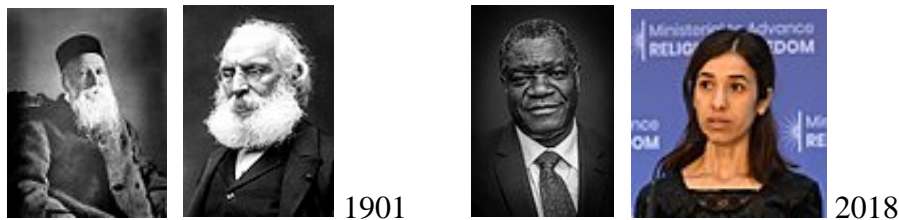
¹ List of peace activists: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_peace_activists#J

² List of peace prizes: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_peace_prizes

³ The 6 million Krone prize is worth today about \$710,000 US. An analysis of birth data on Nobel Prize winners also correlates with one or two years of additional longevity for the recipient.

Recipients are determined by a five-member committee, and awardees have included both 106 individuals⁴ and 24 organizations⁵. There have been criticisms over the years of what some believe has been the politicization of the award, its management, and individual awardees. Other critics have noted the omissions of prominent peace heroes like Mahatma Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Dorothy Day. However, legal scholars have argued that Peace Prize winners have been able to shape new norms in international law and relations, and the awards encourage peacemaking among individuals worldwide.

The earliest Nobel Peace Prize awards in 1901 were to Henry Dunant, Switzerland, founder of the Red Cross, and Frederic Passy, France, as the main organizer of the first Universal Peace Congress. The latest listed for 2018 are to Denis Mukwege, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nadia Murad, Iraq for the efforts to end use of sexual violence as a weapon of war.



Denis Mukwege is a Congolese gynecologist who specializes in the treatment of women raped by armed rebels. He has treated thousands of women who were victims of rape, some of them more than once, and spoken internationally against the unjust war against women. Nadia Murad is an Iraqi Yazidi human rights activist who was kidnapped, held as a slave and raped by the Islamic State (ISIS, ISIL, Daesh). She briefed the United Nations Security Council in 2015 on the issue of human trafficking and continues to work as an ambassador and advocate for victims. Both prize winners have received multiple death threats for their advocacy.

American Presidents who received the Nobel Peace Prize award include Theodore Roosevelt, 1906; Woodrow Wilson, 1919; Jimmy Carter, 2002; Al Gore (Vice Pres), 2007; and Barack Obama, 2009.



⁴ List of Nobel Peace Prize Laureates: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Nobel_Peace_Prize_laureates

⁵ List of multi-winner Nobel Peace Prize Organizations: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1917, 1944, and 1963; and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1954 and 1981.

⁶ Theodore Roosevelt for mediation to end the Russo-Japanese war through arbitration.

⁷ Woodrow Wilson for his role in establishing the League of Nations.

⁸ Jimmy Carter for his decades of efforts to solve international conflicts, advance democracy, and promote economic and social development.

⁹ Al Gore for his efforts to disseminate knowledge about man-made climate change and measures to counter change.

¹⁰ Barack Obama for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation.

There are many Peace Heroes that never receive a plaque or a monetary award. Their work although unacknowledged is critically important. At the PeaceHerosStories.org site you can read about individuals who exemplify the definition above and serve as role models for the rest of us.¹¹

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. 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). If you have questions or ideas, contact Bill: william.timpson@colostate.edu

CREATE YOUR OWN NOBEL PRIZE

Have you ever considered offering your own version of the Nobel Peace Prize? We should recognize when a student, faculty, or staff member, a co-worker, a friend or acquaintance, a family member or good neighbor, someone in the local news or an elected official, acts like a peacemaker, like someone who is committed to resolving conflicts in constructive and creative ways, restoring lost harmony and healing any hurts. We need to reinforce and highlight these kinds of positive behaviors.

Kim Watchorn, an experienced teacher who leads staff development efforts, wants to see the idea of a Nobel Peace Prize replicated on a local level. “All too often, too much attention goes to those who cause problems or conflicts—the drama kings and queens, the bullies, the cranks. However, rather than awarding people who are performing their ‘jobs’ in a professional manner, we could make a public acknowledgement of those special actions that honor the work of those who have stepped beyond their roles and acted with nobility in a quest for peace and reconciliation. By adding a ceremony and award we educate others about the value we place on peacemaking, the kinds of actions we will celebrate.”

Lloyd Thomas

NOTE: Lloyd Thomas, Ph.D. is a longstanding member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club, a licensed psychologist and a life coach. Contact him if you would like to receive his newsletters. He can be reached through email: DrLloyd@CreatingLeaders.com

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PEACE BUILDERS

Today, there are many people worldwide who are actively involved in “peacemaking.” So what are some of the personal attitudes, skills and actions that these people need to act effectively in ways that increase the likelihood that “peace” will become more useful than violence (war) for resolving conflicts? Here are but a few.

¹¹ Peace hero stories maintained by the Dayton International Peace Museum: <http://www.peaceherostories.org/>

The first category of peacemaking skills is personal. The second category is interpersonal (relationships) and the third category is environmental. When we become skilled in all three categories, we can honestly say we are “peacemakers.”

Probably one of the greatest peacemakers was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (usually referred to as "Mahatma," which roughly translates "Great Soul"). He once wrote, “You must become the change you want to see in the world.” That means peacemakers must become peaceful within themselves. Brother David Steindl-Rast wrote, “Only if we become calm as earth, fluid as water, and blazing as fire will be able to rise to the task of peacemaking.” What personal characteristics are most useful for becoming internally peaceful? Here are a few:

1. *A Relentless Search for Truth.*

That is what Gandhi called ‘Satyagraha.’ Satyagraha aims not at victory in the narrow sense but ‘a relentless search for Truth.’ Gandhi called it ‘Truth-force’ or ‘Soul-force,’ and its main element is: “Truth and Nonviolence are inter-related as Ends and Means. A Satyagrahi is one who practices Satyagraha. A Satyagrahi always seeks the Truth about him or herself; about others; about relationships; and about one's contribution to a peaceful resolution to any conflict. S/he views assailants as “misled.” Gandhi believed that when people who hate “learn the truth, they will be sorry for their [hateful] actions.” “Those who leave hate groups have learned the truth.”

2. *Emotional Refueling.*

Peacemakers take great care to maintain emotional equanimity. They keep their stress level very low. They meditate, maintain an optimistic attitude, enjoy being alive, maintain an “attitude of gratitude,” treat themselves as they would a loved child, never stop learning, trust themselves and others, and always stay focused on attaining their desired outcomes.

3. *Inner Peace is Reinforced by Maintaining an Optimistic Attitude.*

Gandhi's Satyagrahi is an altruistic but a practical idealist and an irrepressible optimist. Such optimism “grows from truth to truth.” A genuine builder of peace is, like Gandhi, “what he thinks, what he feels and what he says and what he does are all the same thing.”

4. *Love*

Peacemakers believe that love is the only force powerful enough to bring about peace within one's self, peace in relationships and peace in the world. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote: "Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice. Justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love. [It] is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend." He also wrote, "I have decided to stick to love...hate is too great a burden to bear." Gandhi writes, "One conquers hatred by love. ...If you hate somebody, it hurts you more than the object of your hatred."

Lindsey Pointer

NOTE: Lindsey Pointer has been working on the use of restorative principles in the criminal justice system. She is 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

BE REAL, LOVE, EMPATHIZE: INSIGHTS FOR FACILITATORS/PEACEMAKERS FROM CARL ROGERS

Carl Rogers' work identifies the necessary conditions of a therapist in order to facilitate positive change in a client. I find these necessary conditions highly applicable to the role of facilitators throughout the restorative justice process and to the role of peacemakers more broadly. Rogers names the following three conditions.

1. Congruence ("Be Real")

A facilitator or peacemaker, like a therapist, must "Be Real." We all know from experience that there is nothing more off-putting than interacting with someone who you can sense is putting on a show, or is acting in a way that doesn't align with their inner self. Maybe it is a false-sounding tone of voice or statements and gestures that feel more like a performance, those moments of unrealness can be unsettling and discourage the development of trust.

A lot of this comes down to taking time before an interaction to center yourself, to focus inward and notice your feeling and thoughts as they come up. Breathe deeply and connect with that inner most version of self where your wisdom and intuition reside. Then go into the process with that most genuine self in full expression rather than trying to act in a way you think you should or have seen others act. Come to the process with your real, true self shining!

This also points to the importance of an ongoing practice of personal growth and discovery for all people, but especially for those in helping professions. As many wise teachers throughout the ages have explained, the cultivation of inner peace is an essential part of building peace in the world around us.

I appreciate that Rogers notes that it is impossible to be in this state of congruence at all times or in every aspect of our lives. It is a life-long journey to learn how to live more and more in authenticity. However, when you have the honor of facilitating a deeply transformative and healing process for someone, it is so important to take the time to bring yourself to that place.

2. Unconditional Positive Regard ("Love")

At a restorative justice conference a few years ago, I saw Dr. Cornel West speak and at the center of his speech was this wonderful explanation: "Justice is what love looks like in public." In order to help people, we must love them. People are more likely to change for the better when they sense that they are loved and accepted no matter what. The behavior may be seen as bad, but the person is still innately good and accepted.

This point relates closely to the dynamic of shame in the restorative justice process. As we know, offenders are often vilified and face what legal scholar John Braithwaite termed "stigmatizing shame." When an offender is degraded through shame, it poses a threat to his or her identity. The offender is likely to respond by rejecting the rejector (mainstream society) and the rules valued

by the rejector (the law). A solution to this isolation is to turn to criminal subcultures, which provide a culture of pride in delinquency, as well as personal connections and resources. In this way, stigmatization of offenders perpetuates criminal behavior and ultimately makes communities less safe.

The only way to stop this destructive cycle of shame, is to learn to love the person who caused harm unconditionally, separating the person from the behavior. Learning to love those who have caused harm I feel is one of the greatest human lessons, and it is certainly not easy. It is a lesson put into practice by many of the most powerful leaders throughout human history including Martin Luther King Jr., Gandhi, and Jesus. It is a difficult practice to learn to meet clients and hear their stories while holding this unconditional positive regard, and to learn how to not try to use your approval or disapproval to shape their behavior, but it is so necessary for effective facilitation. It is also in alignment with a restorative worldview, which sees all people as innately good and unconditionally worthy of love.

3. *Empathetic Understanding* (“Empathize”)

The final condition that Rogers emphasizes is empathy. This also relates to the dynamics of shame within the restorative justice process. Another of my favorite thinkers, Dr. Brené Brown, has said, “Shame cannot survive being spoken. It cannot survive empathy.” When we are able to genuinely feel and express empathy, it helps to transform that shame into healing and a motivation to work towards making things right.

In my experience, the more you facilitate and the more you have the opportunity to practice putting yourself in the shoes of each participant in a restorative justice process and really feeling what they feel, the easier this becomes. It is something that must be practiced, and a skill that I hope that schools will emphasize to a greater degree in the future, because I see it as one of the most essential skills to being human.

There are, of course, other important skills, understandings, and abilities that make effective facilitators and peacemakers. However, the three conditions outlined by Rogers seem like a powerful starting point. If we can learn to be real, to love, and to empathize with the people we work with, we are at a powerful starting point for facilitating positive transformation.

Del Benson

NOTE: Del Benson 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. Another book of his, Living with Nature and Wildlife: Doing Our Part, is a primer for students and teachers to learn, in simple terms, how the environment works and how people can do their part to manage it.

FATHER OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT, ALDO LEOPOLD PROMOTED THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL PEACE—CIVIL USE OF THE LAND AND PEOPLE

Self and social interests put humans in competition with natural land processes as we use our environments for health and security.

Those who benefit from land do not always make peace with it.

Aldo Leopold, the “father of wildlife management,” died fighting a land fire with neighbors, the year before I was born. He left many ideas that I share, perhaps because he influenced the professional thinkers who taught me and now I offer a graduate course about his philosophies and actions!

Before knowing about Leopold, I won an essay contest in high school. My thesis was similar to his quote “There are two things that interest me: the relation of people to each other, and the relation of people to land.” My prize was the first summer job with wildlife research, sealing my life interests, work with land and education, and helping people.

Do yourself a favor and read *A Sand County Almanac* and Leopold’s other books. Google his quotes, apply his teachings by taking my online course, or just enjoy a civil and peaceful way to live with land and people. Quotes that follow are from Leopold. Note: His use of the masculine for general reference was typical of writing in his time.

- “The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land... In short, a land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such.”
- “Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild and free. For us of the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television.”
- “One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds. Much of the damage inflicted on land is quite invisible to laymen. An ecologist must either harden his shell and make believe that the consequences of science are none of his business, or he must be the doctor who sees the marks of death in a community that believes itself well and does not want to be told otherwise.”
- “If the land mechanism as a whole is good then every part is good, whether we understand it or not... To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering.”
- “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”