

ROTARY DISTRICT 5440 PEACEBUILDER NEWSLETTER  
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**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION**

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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 You can look through previous newsletters that have been archived on the District 5440 website: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](mailto:Robert.Meroney@ColoState.EDU).*

**CAN DIPLOMACY LEAD TO PEACE**

Diplomacy is defined as the skill for dealing with people who have different opinions, goals, and objectives in a way that avoids or resolves conflicts. Diplomacy is accomplished by negotiation or bargaining. Usually each party in a negotiation wishes to ensure that their priorities are dominate, and they concede as little as possible. Effective diplomacy allows both parties to achieve important priorities, maintain their self-respect, and avoid grudges or sanctions which engender future disagreements. Successful negotiations create a resolution that enables nations to collaborate and cooperate with one another, whereas diplomatic failures can result in war, economic instability, hegemony and lack of alliance.

Diplomacy dates to ancient times. Treaties between different cities in Mesopotamia, now Iraq, date back to 2850 B.C. Egyptian and Canaanite leaders exchanged diplomatic letters in the 14<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Writings on the walls of ancient Mayan buildings in Mexico indicate native Americans in Mayan cities exchanged diplomats.

National diplomacy occurs when a government uses the components of national power to assure its own priorities. These may include political connections and influence, geographic dominance, economic give and take, industrial dominance, and even military might. Thus, diplomacy pursues its objectives by persuasion, compromise, and threat of force.

Such arm-twisting must be done with finesse and the realization that overt bullying and force may result in such resentment and bitterness, that even if short-term goals are accomplished, future peace could be jeopardized.

Sometimes, one side in a negotiation refuses to compromise. When this happens, others involved may impose sanctions. This may work, but such strategies may also only sustain, amplify or extend conflict. When emotions are intense, such that one side deems the other evil, irrational, or unethical on principle, instead of writing off all possibilities of a negotiation, it will be very

important for the negotiators to examine the costs and benefits of failure to reach a compromise. Hans Morgenthau argued that one must apply political realism to international negotiations between states. He noted that it may be appropriate for an individual to sacrifice him/herself on a point of ethical or moral principle, but it is not appropriate to sacrifice an entire nation in such a manner. It is the job of successful Diplomats to make things HAPPEN. Even partial agreements may lay the groundwork for future communication, negotiations, and compromise.

Can one identify examples of successful International Diplomacy? First, let's admit that agreements, treaties, and other negotiations are often time limited in that the conditions for such can change with time. This may not mean that the Diplomatic effort was a failure, just that it is a continuing process. Listed below are examples of what might be deemed successful diplomatic achievements:

- The agreements between Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin to cooperate during WWII to fight Nazism and the regime of Adolph Hitler.
  - This included the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1942, the Percentage Agreement in 1944, the Yalta Agreement in 1945.
  - Post-World War II politics eventually demanded inclusion of the interests of the U.S., New Zealand, India, and China, as well as France and governments in exile.
  
- During the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis negotiations between President John F. Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev it was agreed that Russia would remove existing medium range missiles and bombers in Cuba and the United States would remove similar missiles at the border of Russia in Turkey, end the quarantine of Cuba, and promise not to invade Cuba. The agreement also resulted in establishing a “hot line” communication between Russia and the United States.
  - The medium-range ballistic Russian missiles in Cuba would have reached all territories in the United States, permitting a first strike Nuclear engagement.
  - Similarly, the U.S. missiles along the Turkish/Russian border could strike anywhere in the Soviet Union.
  - The United States agreed to cancel Operation Mongoose, a planned invasion of Cuba scheduled for October 1962.
  - The canceled U.S. “quarantine” against Cuba was very close to an actual blockage, which under international law would have been considered an act of war.
  
- The Reykjavik Summit meeting between President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in 1986 resulted in the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.
  - The summit meeting itself did not accomplish its stated goals, but it facilitated the 1987 Nuclear Forces Treaty.
  - These negotiations can be argued to have maintained “The Long Peace” that persisted after World War II until today during which there has been no major direct confrontation between major powers.

## 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](mailto:DrLloyd@CreatingLeaders.com)*

### **SOME PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS THAT HELP RESOLVE CONFLICTS**

1. *Respectful understanding.* When you are genuinely sensitive to, and respectful of others' individual uniqueness, you become more likely to love them. One cannot learn to understand others unless s/he *listens* to them with no other intention than understanding him or her. If you are talking, you are not listening. If you are talking to another with whom you disagree, talking about your own point of view rarely changes anyone's thoughts...unless s/he feels respected.

2. *Truthfully sharing your emotions, thoughts, ideas and opinions.* After you have understood another, only then can you practice Satyagraha. Gandhi writes, "Satyagraha is gentle, it never wounds. It must not be the result of anger or malice. It is never fussy, never impatient, never vociferous. It is the direct opposite of compulsion. It was conceived as a complete substitute for violence. The reformer [peacemaker] must have consciousness of the truth of his cause. He will not be impatient with the opponent, he will be impatient with himself." Peacemakers always remain open and receptive of feedback.

3. *Engaging in "active non-violence."* Words are never as powerful as actions. Peace on any level is never attained by violent action. Violent actions invite violent reactions. Gandhi believed in "the oneness of humanity and the wrongness of violence." His idea of forgiveness was: "You detest the deed, not the doer." Distinguish between another's actions and who they are as human beings. "Always love for the Adversary." When you are in conflict, you must engage in active non-violence [civil disobedience] because: "the effectiveness of non-violence makes violence as a mode of effectively creating peaceful outcomes irrelevant. The right actions make the structure of oppression irrelevant."

4. When one believes in non-violent actions, s/her must also be *willing to suffer the reactions of others no matter the impact they have on oneself.* Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. studied Satyagraha and declared, "you must be willing to suffer others' violence while always remaining oriented toward 'the adherence to Truth.'"

5. *Peaceful interpersonal relationships, no matter how small or large, are born of joyful compassion.* Gandhi wrote, "I seek to act more womanly [because] women are the essence of compassion." "Nonviolence, like charity, begins at home." "I learnt the lesson of nonviolence from my wife, when I tried to bend her over to my will. Her determined resistance to my will, on the one hand, and her quiet submission to the suffering on the other, ultimately made me ashamed of myself and cured me of my stupidity. She became my teacher in nonviolence."

Peacemaker, Thich Nhat Hanh, wrote, "If in our daily life we can smile, if we can be peaceful and happy, not only we, but everyone will profit from it. This is the most basic kind of peace work."

## 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](mailto:william.timpson@colostate.edu)*

### MAKE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Working towards peace and reconciliation means ongoing efforts—daily, weekly, monthly, annually—on many fronts—political, social, economic, cultural, psychological, behavioral, and more. Jen Fullerton has extensive experience in Human Resource Development and has seen the concept of “Emotional Intelligence” grow in popularity in the corporate field as organizations make efforts to develop more effective communication among employees and help them resolve conflicts and tensions in constructive, sustainable ways. She writes about her frustrations when the benefits of training too often disappeared without follow-up. “A consultant conducted a workshop in an organization where I formerly worked. The workshop was excellent. However, it proved to be more of a temporary bonding experience than a real or deep learning experience because the communication tools were quickly forgotten after the workshop. Employees in the division resumed their old habits and little of substance changed.”

Fullerton draws an example about workplace conflicts from Deborah Tannen’s (1998) *The Argument Culture*: “Women at work frequently express puzzlement at how men can argue with each other and then continue as if nothing happened. In a parallel way, men at work are often surprised when women are deeply upset by a verbal attack—taking personally what the men feel is simply part of getting the job done” (195-196).

Assess your own experiences with workshops or training in conflict resolution, reconciliation, communication, or other aspects of peacemaking. Consider what kinds of follow up would have ensured greater success.

We can also learn much about peace and reconciliation from the study of leaders, both national and community. In his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Nelson Mandela describes in detail his life in South Africa, from his boyhood to his active resistance to racial apartheid, the 27 years he spent in prison on Robbin Island, and his leadership in the movement toward democracy that eventually led to his election as President. Yet, Mandela has always been clear about the ongoing challenges that everyone must rise to meet if we are to leave our worlds better than how we found them. “I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can rest only for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended” (625). Shifting our focus from meeting conflicts with anger, defensiveness and force, we take that longer perspective, build on progress from the past and keep moving forward.

Take a moment to list several examples of peace and reconciliation that you have seen in your lifetime, whether personal, national, or international. Note what underlies them, what connects

them. Identify your role and/or reaction to each. Now look off to the future and identify those challenges that await us all and what paths lay ahead. What will be your role? What actions will you take to address the conflicts in your future?

### **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](mailto:lindseypointer@gmail.com)*

### **AN ESSENTIAL PEACEMAKING SKILL: UNDERSTANDING NEEDS**

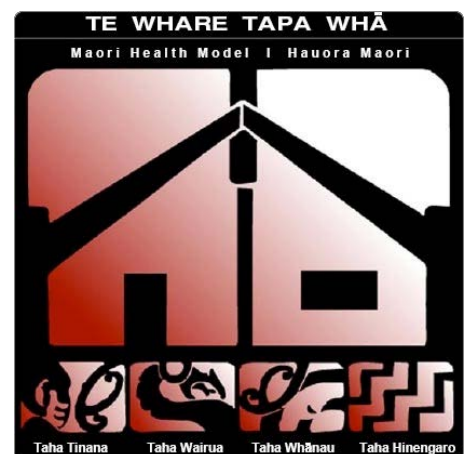
In restorative practices, we talk a lot about needs. When harm is caused through a crime, wrongdoing, or conflict in a community, that harm generates needs. One of the central questions of restorative justice is “What is needed to repair the harms and make things right?”

We also see behavior as communicating unmet needs. So often, a harmful or illegal behavior is an attempt to get a need met. For example, while I was working in Longmont, we would occasionally receive a theft case of a homeless person who stole food, or someone stealing clothing for an upcoming job interview after realizing that that person didn’t have anything appropriate to wear or the money to buy something. The needs were often more abstract. I remember a pregnant woman who stole lingerie because she was worried her husband wasn’t attracted to her while she was pregnant and they were struggling with money. Especially among teenagers, so often the drug use, vandalism, and fighting were rooted in a need for belonging and respect from their peers. More violent acts such as physical assaults were often rooted in a need for safety, respect, or even self-esteem. When you begin to view these behaviors through understanding the need the person was attempting to fulfill, you are better able to problem-solve. If you can help to identify a legal, pro-social way to fulfill that un-met need, then the behavior will not be repeated.

Having grown up in the United States and taken introductory level psychology throughout high school and university, I have often understood these common human needs through the framework of Maslow’s theories. In Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the most basic physiological needs are at the base of the pyramid and are the first things that motivate our behavior. Once those needs are met, the next level up is what motivates us. The framework has often helped me to understand and empathize with the lived experience and perspective of the offenders and victims that are referred to restorative justice.

In New Zealand, the model that is used is Te Whare Tapa Whā, a Maori framework for understanding health and wellbeing. Te Whare Tapa Whā portrays four dimensions of wellbeing as four walls or sides of a house. If one of the dimensions is missing or damaged, the entire structure (representing the person) will become unbalanced or unwell.

The four dimensions are: (1) Taha wairua- Spiritual well-being;  
(2) Taha tinana- Physical well-being;  
(3) Taha whanau- Social well-being;  
(4) Taha hinengaro- Mental and emotional well-being



This way of perceiving these dimensions of health and wellbeing, of understanding the basic human needs we all share, struck me as very true. These aspects of health are deeply interconnected. When my mental health is damaged or unbalanced, my physical, spiritual and social health also all suffer. When I am physically sick, the other areas of my life similarly feel like they aren't thriving. The needs are essentially intertwined.

Rather than needs being a series of levels that are achieved one after another, needs often co-exist. I remember speaking with a homeless man who had accidentally caused a fire in an unused home he was squatting in and his need for food and shelter was equally matched by his need for community and for a greater sense of meaning and purpose. In our pre-conference discussion, we talked more about God than we did about his physiological needs.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs still helps me to understand the (sometimes reckless) motivation we all feel when our needs in different categories go unmet. However, Te Whare Tapa Whā has also helped me to see how those needs cannot really be broken into neat level and will always exist as an interconnected whole, deserving a holistic response.

For restorative justice practitioners, this framework serves as a reminder to strive to keep going, past the most obvious needs, to understand the whole picture of where a person is coming from and the impacts of an incident on physical, social, spiritual, and mental wellbeing.

For more information about Te Whare Tapa Whā, visit <http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/populations/maori-health/maori-health-models/maori-health-models-te-whare-tapa-wha>

### **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.*

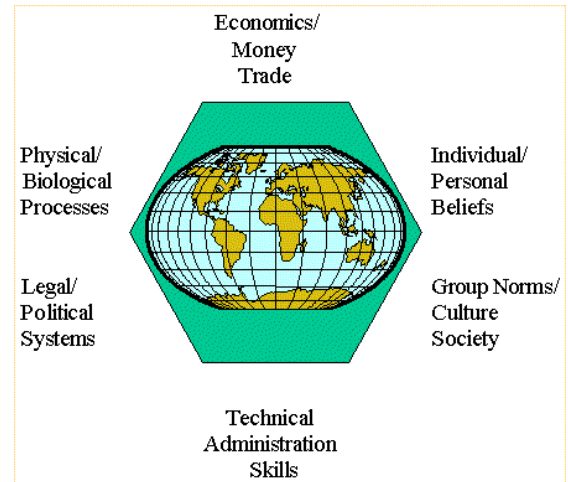
## **MANAGING CONFLICTS OF THE PLANET AND PEOPLE**

Earth's resources and access to them are at the root of many conflicts against peace of mind and competing actions taken on the land. Resources for food, shelter, water, space, distribution corridors, security, civilization, and self- enhancement use the environment or affect it in some way. Peoples' choices lead to conflict. Obtaining needed and desired resources led to human expansion, over-exploitation, pollution, human servitude, wars of protection, wars of conquest, and personal angst. We may never truly attain peace, but we can work toward conflict management and civil behaviors. If we cannot influence nations, we can influence our associations, and ourselves.

Follow 10 civil steps to be more at peace.

1. Acknowledge that problems exist.
2. Discuss directly with those in conflict using open minds.

3. Listen, learn, and understand together about the roots and symptoms of conflicts considering **all** six sides of my decision-making hexagon:
  - a. physical and biological processes;
  - b. economics, money and trade;
  - c. individual, personal and psychological beliefs;
  - d. group norms of culture and society;
  - e. formalized laws and politics;
  - f. administration including skills, and technology.
4. Review issues as close to the source as possible - in the forest, at home, around the office, in the country - where the issues and opportunities can be experienced.
5. Focus on interests of humans and land; not on positions.
6. Express your interests and understand interests of others.
7. Seek outcomes that benefit most.
8. Listen, hear, and learn even more.
9. Agree on thoughts and behaviors that can be changed. Explore differences more clearly.
10. Live up to your agreements and cycle back through the process when needed by practicing the Rotary 4-way Test for what we think say and do:
  - a. Is it the truth?
  - b. Is it fair to all concerned?
  - c. Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
  - d. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?



Everyone is correct from their point of view. Changing minds and behaviors is not easy. Civil discourse makes greater progress toward peaceful treatment of the environment and humans.