

Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means (the Transcend Method)

Participants' Manual

Trainers' Manual



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A summary of the approach

This summary follows the logic of the Table of Contents. There is another summary, "The Transcend Method at a Glance".

Conflict workers

I. The conflict workers (peace workers) apply for membership in the conflict formation as outside parties. Credentials: as fellow human being, bringing in general conflict knowledge and skills, with compassion and perseverance, and no hidden agendas.

Dialogue

II. Dialogue exploring the conflict, with one party at the time, is the tool; with no effort to "win"/persuade, but an ongoing brainstorming process, sharing time, questioning and answering equally, being honest, outspoken, tactful, careful and "normal". Respect for the conflict dialogue partners is essential: for them the conflict is deadly serious, they have suffered, are often highly educated, knowledgeable, experienced, but trapped in and by the conflict, seeing no way out. In return, demand respect/equality from them, as condition for joint, good work. For conflict/peace workers to be genuinely new to a conflict avoid specialization on conflict parties and issues. Aim at quality of dialogue, and involvement, not only "high level" (nos. 3-5 from above may be useful); treat everybody well regardless of level; each one of many dialogues is the dialogue. The setting can be anywhere, also "high level" offices, but open-ended time is best. Avoid recording/notes, unless agreed.

Conflict theory

III. Conflict Theory: conflict both as Destroyer and Creator, as potentially dangerous both now and in the future because of violence and as a golden opportunity to create something new.

Conflict practice

IV. Introduce empathy, nonviolence, creativity into conflict practice: understanding conflict partners from the inside, feeling their logic, identifying valid goals and nonviolent approaches to attain them, eliciting from all parties joint creativity to find ways of transcending the incompatibilities.

Violence theory

V. Violence theory: Direct, structural and cultural violence, hurting directly, indirectly, and the culture that justifies.

Violence practice

VI. Violence practice: Identify roots of violence in cultures, structures, actors and untransformed conflicts; early warnings.

Transformation

VII. There is no alternative to transformation: changing violent attitudes/behavior, applying creativity to contradictions.

Peace dialogues

VIII. Peace dialogues: explore diagnosis, prognosis, and therapy together. Avoid linearity, keep dialogue flowing back and forth. Sequence: past therapy (what went wrong when, what could have been done) — prognosis — diagnosis — future therapy. Sow seeds, ideas. Expose old codes of state-system/nation-system; positive images for Conflict the Creator and negative images for Conflict the Destroyer; emphasizing joint roles in developing new codes; preparing parties for some day meeting "at the table".

Conflict transformation

IX. Conflict transformation can then, in principle, happen at all levels of conflict, global, social, and inter/intra-personal (macro, meso, micro).

Peace transformation

X. Peace transformation also presupposes a peaceful context as provided by peace education/journalism, the continuation of the work after violence, and readiness to reopen peace agreements.

A Flow Chart

The manual consists of 50 units divided into ten blocks of five units; separated in the Table of Contents.

I	CONFLICT WORKERS	5 units	1–5
II	DIALOGUE	5 units	6–10
III	CONFLICT THEORY	5 units	11–15
IV	CONFLICT PRACTICE	5 units	16–20
V	VIOLENCE THEORY	5 units	21–25
VI	VIOLENCE PRACTICE	5 units	26–30
VII	TRANSFORMATION	5 units	31–35
VIII	PEACE DIALOGUE	5 units	36–40
IX	CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION	5 units	41–45
X	PEACE TRANSFORMATION	5 units	46–50

I

First, conflict workers are introduced, with personal and social profiles, exploring relations to the conflict parties.

II

Then follows the major conflict worker tool, the dialogue, as conversation, brain-storming; very different from debate.

III

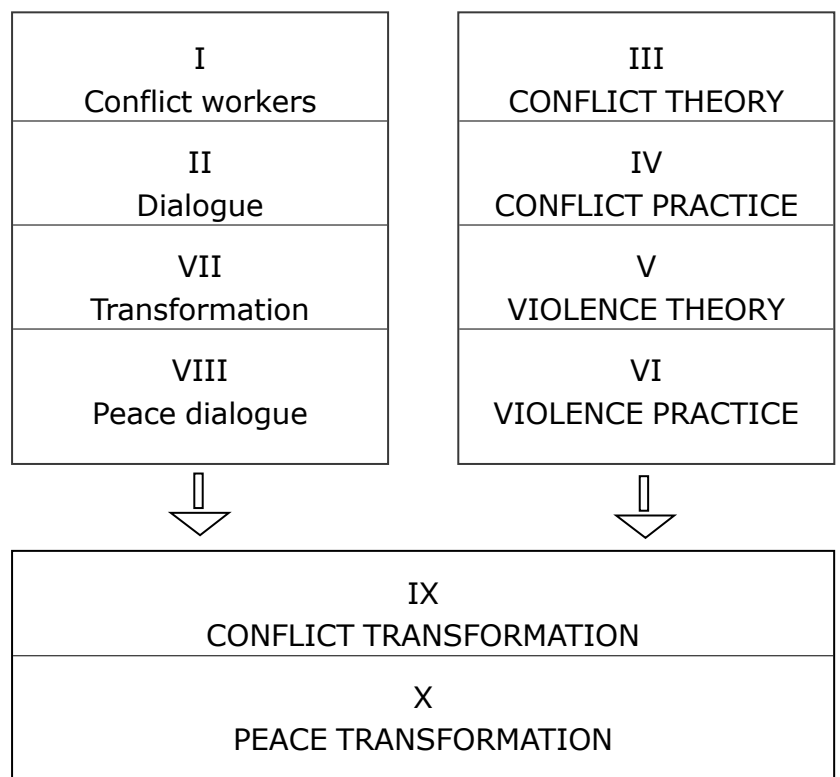
Conflict is introduced by exploring such basic concepts in conflict theory as attitudes, behavior and contradiction.

IV

This is related to the conflict worker through conflict practice concepts like empathy, nonviolence and creativity.

- V** As violence may enter, basic concepts in violence theory like direct, structural and cultural violence are explored.
- VI** This is related to the conflict worker through violence practice in diagnosis, prognosis and early warning.
- VII** The central thesis is that in order to prevent violence, and develop the creative potential of a conflict, there has to be transformation, the meaning of which is then explored.
- VIII** To bring about this the conflict worker proceeds to a focused peace dialogue; including a socio-analysis.
- IX** The goal of the whole Exercise, conflict transformation, is explored at global, social and inter/intra-personal levels.
- X** For peace transformation the conflict context has to be brought in through such measures as education and journalism.

The manual moves on two tracks. One track brings in the conflict worker, the dialogue tool and the transformation task; the other track focuses on conflict and violence, in theory and practice. The two tracks meet in conflict and peace transformation.



Points for the trainer; with a flow chart*

(*Of course, the trainer/resource person and the participant may be the same person, engaging in self-training.)

1

A suitable point of departure may be the Flow Chart (page 4) giving structure to the Table of Contents. Use both as transparencies, asking the participants to trace arrows on the Table of Contents. The basic point is the distinction between “the problem” — conflict and violence — the bottom track, and the upper track, “what to do about it” — dialogue, dialogue for peace, transformation — ending with conflict and peace transformation. To this could then be added A Summary of the Approach, as a transition to:

2

The one page version, The Transcend Method at a Glance, with real life examples. As an example of an example, the exercise that was used when this manual was tested in 1997 is included: The Lima Hostage Crisis. It ended with the attack on April 22, 1997, 126 days later, liberating all but one of the hostages, killing all the Tupac Amaru, at the loss of two of the commandos. The point about the exercise is to have an alternative vision of what might have happened, given that few seem to have been really happy about the outcome. The example serves to illustrate the distance between some current practices, and more desirable processes and outcomes. To what extent that process/outcome would also have been feasible is a good discussion topic. The trainer might like to add or substitute another example to get a good discussion going.

3

Conflict Theory and Practice: A Perspective is the basic introductory document. Use transparencies for the Phase I–III Diagram often, with reference to the tasks in each phase.

4

Creativity, Transcendence and Conflict Transformation can be discussed anywhere during the training, but particularly in connection with Units 19, 20, 34 and 45.

5

The bulk of the Trainer’s Manual is the commentary with Exercises on the bulk of the Participants’ Manual: the 50 Units. The **Participants’ Manual** is to the left, and the **Trainers’ Manual** to the right for each unit.

6

A happy message: there is a short, only 15 units, version of the manual: Units 1, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 22, 38, 46-50. This introduces conflict workers and dialogues (2 units each), conflict theory (3 units) and conflict practice (1 unit), then violence theory (1 unit), peace dialogues (1 unit) and ends with peace transformation (all 5 units). You might like to try this first, and then add the other units.

7

Estimates of time needed for the TRANSCEND Method training:

- the long version, unabridged: two sessions a day for one week; covering one block each session, spreading introductory material.
- the short version, abridged: four sessions over two days; one for introductory material, then five units for each session.
- the mini-version, two sessions, "The Transcend Method at a glance: a two-page version", with an example; and "Points for the trainer", with a flow chart.
- the micro-version, one session only, "The Transcend Method at a glance: a one-page version", with an example. Hopefully participants will read more.

8

Two Tales: About Camels, Numbers and Many Things: Any time!

The Transcend Method at a glance: a one-page version

Basic Premise I

following Hindu thought, remember:

Conflict the Destroyer and **Conflict the Creator**; conflict as a source of violence and conflict as a source of development. The conflict worker has the third role as **Preserver**, transforming the conflict by avoiding violence, promoting development.

Basic Premise II

following Buddhist thought, remember:

Codependent origination, everything grows together in mutual causation. Conflicts have no beginning and no end, we all share the responsibility; no single actor (like statesmen) carries all the responsibility (monopoly) and no single actor carries all the guilt.

Basic Premise III

following Christian thought, remember:

Ultimately, the responsibility for conflict transformation lies with individuals and their individual responsibility and decisions to act so as to promote peace rather than violence, and the principle of hope.

Basic Premise IV

following Daoist thought, remember:

Everything is yin and yang, good and bad, there is the high likelihood that the action chosen also has negative consequences and that action not chosen may have positive consequences; hence the need for reversibility, only doing what can be undone.

Basic Premise V

following Islamic thought, remember:

The strength deriving from submitting together to a common goal, including the concrete responsibility for the well-being of all.

Basic Premise VI

following Judaic thought, remember:

The truth lies less in a verbal formula than in the dialogue to arrive at the formula, and that dialogue has no beginning and no end.

These points from world religions have inspired the following process:

- 1 Map the conflict formation: all parties, all goals, and all issues;
- 2 Bring in forgotten parties with important stakes in conflict;
- 3 Have highly empathic dialogues with all parties singly;
- 4 Each conflict worker may specialize on one conflict party;
- 5 In these dialogues identify acceptable goals in all parties;
- 6 Bring in forgotten goals that may open new perspectives;
- 7 Arrive at over-arching goals acceptable to all parties;
- 8 Arrive at short, evocative, goal-formulations;
- 9 Help define the tasks for all parties with that goal in mind;
disembedding the conflict from where it was,
embedding it elsewhere,
bringing in forgotten parties, goals;
- 10 Verify how realizing that goal would realize parties' goals;
- 11 Help parties meet "at the table" for self-sustaining process;
- 12 Withdraw from the conflict, go on to the next, being on call.

The Transcend Method at a glance: an example

The Lima Hostage Crisis: A Possible Conflict Transformation

The takeover of the Japanese Embassy in Lima, Peru, took place 17 December 1996. There are at least six parties to the conflict, and their main goals appeared to be as follows:

1

Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement,
MRTA (14 guerrillas);

- release of up to 450 MRTA prisoners (ultimately reduced to 30)
- to continue the armed struggle, "from the jungle".

2

The remaining 72 Captives (the others were released),

- to be released, unharmed.

3

The Peruvian Government (President Fujimori),

- not to yield to terrorism, not releasing prisoners,
- release of the captives, unharmed.

4

The MRTA prisoners,

- to be released,
- to continue the struggle.

5

The US Government,

- that Peru's government, in fact nobody,
- yields to terrorism,
- release of the captives, unharmed.

6

The Japanese Government,

- release of the captives, unharmed,
- respect for Japanese extraterritorial rights,
- no violence.

Forgotten Actors,

- "Peruvian society" in search of ways to abolish misery,
- "World public opinion" in favor of all the above.

The overarching goal could be reducing/abolishing misery, and if all parties yield a little they could all find their place:

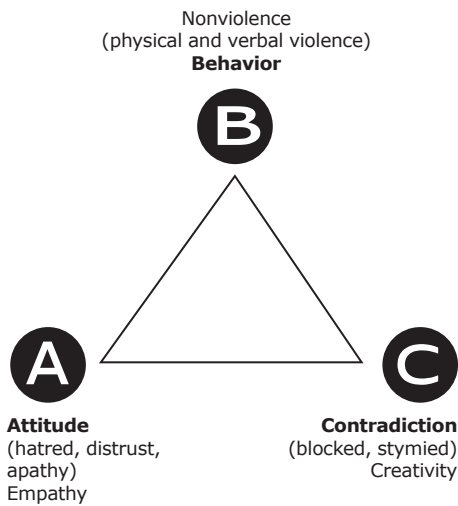
- 1** **Tupac Amaru MRTA** disarms, joins the political process in a democratic society, with access to media and elections.
- 2** The **captives** are released, finding ways in which they could contribute to misery abolition.
- 3** **The Peruvian Government** improves prison conditions and shortens sentences, giving training in village/social work, accepts MRTA as a nonviolent movement, and steps up misery abolition.
- 4** **The MRTA prisoners** accept training in the prisons as village workers/social workers, and pledge to disarm.
- 5** **The US Government** makes funding/expertise available for misery abolition projects.
- 6** **The Japanese Government** makes funding/expertise available for misery abolition projects, and holds future Emperor's Birthday receptions at multi-exit hotels.

To achieve this four bilateral talks would also be useful:

- A** Direct negotiations between MRTA and Peruvian government.
- B** Direct negotiations between Prisoners and the Government.
- C** Captives and Prisoners meet and form joint pressure group.
- D** MRTA and Captives conduct dialogues on Peruvian society.

And mediators trusted by the parties (Fidel Castro, the Pope).
And pressure from "Peruvian society" and "World Public Opinion".

Conflict theory and practice: a perspective



A **conflict** has its own life cycle; almost like something organic. It appears, reaches an emotional, even violent climax, then tapers off, disappears — and often reappears. There is a logic: — individuals and groups (such as nations and states) have goals:

- goals may be incompatible, exclude each other, like two states wanting the same land, or two nations wanting the same state;
- when goals are incompatible a **contradiction**, an issue, is born;
- any actor/party with unrealized goals feels frustrated and more so the more basic the goal, like basic needs and basic interests;
- frustration **may** lead to aggression, turning inward as **attitudes** of hatred, or outward as **behavior** of verbal or physical violence;
- hatred and violence **may** be directed toward the holders of the goals standing in the way, but it is not always that “rational”;
- violence is intended to harm and hurt (including oneself), and **may** breed a spiral of counter-violence as defense and/or revenge;
- that spiral of hatred and violence becomes a meta-conflict (like meta-stasis relative to cancer), over the goals of preserving and destroying.

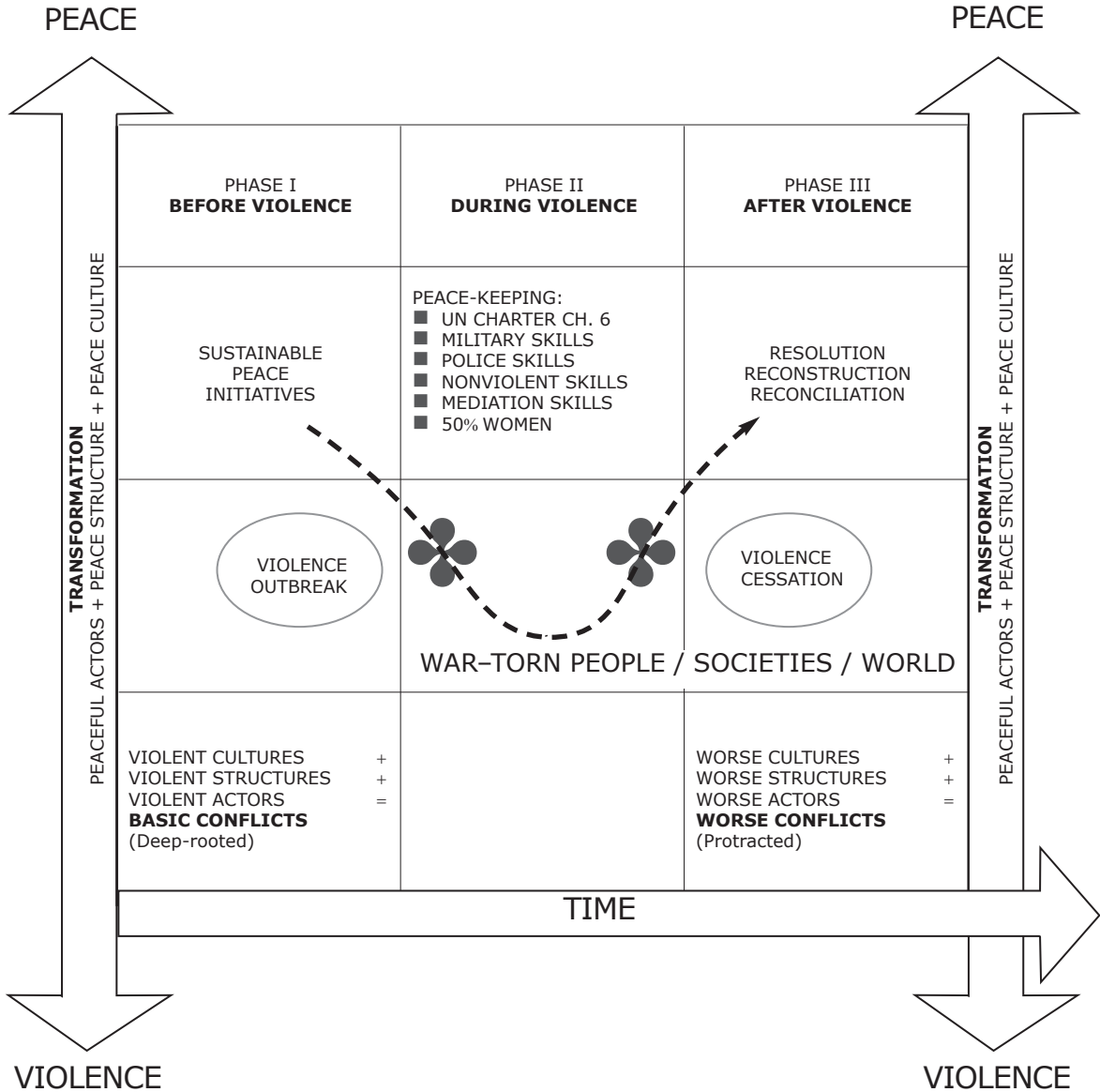
In this way, a conflict may almost get eternal life, vexing and waning, disappearing and reappearing. The original, root, conflict recedes into the background like when Cold War attention focused mostly on such means of destruction as nuclear missiles.

Conflicts may combine, in series or parallel, into complex conflict formations with many parties and many goals, because the same parties and/or the same goals are involved. The elementary conflict formation with **two** parties pursuing **one** goal is rare, except for pedagogical purposes, or as the polarized products of hatred and violence leading to simplified conflict formations. The normal conflict has **many** actors, **many** goals and **many** issues, is complex, not easily mapped, yet that mapping is essential.

Life-cycle of a conflict

The **life-cycle** of a conflict may be divided into three phases, before violence, during violence and after violence, separated by outbreak and cease-fire. This does not imply that violence is unavoidable, or that conflict = violence/destruction.





The Diagram may look formidable, but is actually quite simple. On the horizontal axis is time, in the Greek sense of *khronos*, time that flows, physical time. But then there are two *kairos* points, time that stops, time that punctuates the flow of time: the outbreak of violence and the cessation of violence, the cease-fire. No doubt these are important events.

But there was also conflict before the violence broke out. Four foci for conflict work have been indicated: violent cultures that legitimize violence, like *machismo*; violent structures that exploit, repress and alienate people; violent actors, bullies, with no concern for the hurt and harm these three cause; and: how they combine into basic conflicts that are in addition left unattended.

The Table then indicates **what to do** in the three phases. This manual focuses on Phase I, with some remarks on II and III.

I. Before violence

To describe this as the “prevention” phase to avoid violence is very cynical. A basic conflict is enough reason in itself for serious attention. People are already suffering. Moreover, a conflict is also an invitation for the parties, the society, the whole world to move ahead, taking the challenge presented by the issues head-on, with an attitude of **empathy** (with all parties), **nonviolence** (also to stop the meta-conflicts from developing) and **creativity** (to find ways out).

The task is to transform the conflict, upwards, positively, finding positive goals for all parties, imaginative ways of combining them, and all of this without violence. **It is the failure to transform conflicts that leads to violence.** Each act of violence can be seen as a monument to that human failure.

The diagram suggests four foci for conflict work in Phase I Violence may be rooted in violent cultures that justify violence; in violent structures (of repression, exploitation and alienation, of keeping apart people who want to be together or too close those who want to be apart); and in violent actors attracted by violence (to show prowess, to gain power) and by hatred (to build their own identity against other groups). As hatred and dispositions to violence increase, empathy, nonviolent approaches and creativity are even more needed, but in a deeply polarized conflict formation such talents are given less chance. However, never forget the conflict, those goals that stand in each other's way. Those conflicts bring together the violent cultures, the violent structures and the violent actors; any inattention carries increased harm and hurt in its wake.

A concrete example: Turkish “foreign workers” (often they are German citizens), in Germany. A minimum four-foci program:

A focus on
the cultures

We are generally speaking of cultures of hard nationalism, demanding “Germany for Germans, Turkey for Turks”; and cultures of violence: conflicts are not to be solved, in a way satisfactory to all parties, they are there to be won. To challenge such cultures is necessary, but will take much time. Missing peace cultures have to be substituted.

A focus on
structures

There is usually a combination of exploitation and excessive closeness. Missing peace structures, like a Council for Inter-group Relations where nations can meet and solve issues before they become even more intractable because of violence spirals, will have to be introduced.

A focus on
actors

Sometimes they can be identified because they themselves announce their readiness to use violence. Take them seriously, engage them in dialogues about all aspects of the situation. Neglecting them will make them more intractable. If violence

A focus on the conflicts

occurs then a judicial process keeping them in prisons is insufficient. The dialogue has to continue, if not with victims or their families, then with others of the same nation.

The issues may include scarcity of schooling, housing and jobs, and threats to identity. Obviously, any country's capacity to receive foreigners has an upper limit. A ceiling is not necessarily a concession to hard nationalism, nor is increasing a country's capacity a concession to pressure from the outside.

An identity based on hard nationalism is more problematic. In our shrinking world there is only room for soft nationalisms, filled with respect and curiosity about the Other, and with capacity to enter into a dialogue.

The general task is clear: to bend the conflict process upward, into the "peace region", by making cultures, structures and actors more peaceful so that conflicts can be handled without violence. The whole conflict syndrome is transformed and embedded in the upper half of the Table, where it should be.

Concretely a focus on peaceful cultures may bring in **the human rights tradition**, and the focus on peace structures calls upon **the democratic tradition**. Both are useful examples of broader approaches. But they are not unproblematic, for instance because of cultural differences. They fit better in Western I-cultures with high emphasis on individualism, individual rights and individual minds, voting in elections and then being counted for majority rule. They fit less in we-cultures with high emphasis on groups (clans, tribes, nations), collective rights and dialogues to consensus.

A focus on peaceful actors may bring in more women, and more actors in the religious/intellectual or merchant traditions, less in the aristocratic/warrior tradition. This may serve to mobilize sufficient empathy, nonviolence and creativity to transform the conflict; whether this comes about through dialogues with all parties separately, or through direct dialogues, "at the table".

Structural violence may be as bad as, or worse than, direct violence. People die or lead miserable lives because they are politically repressed, economically exploited or deprived of the freedom to be close to those with whom they identify or forced to be close to those they do not like. To refer to this as "early warning" of direct violence to come is, as mentioned, cynical and disrespectful of the suffering already there. The direct violence should be seen as **too late** warning of unbearable structural and cultural conditions, exploited by cynical actors.

But the MDCs originally developed by producing themselves, as import-substitution. Imports to reduce the deficits become

like transplants that may not take hold and are rejected after some time. And any import means more resources for some people and less for others. Conflicts are bound to arise; and the friction and possible violence may more than cancel any material gains made because of inattention to culture and structure.

The widely recognized *Human Development Report* by UNDP measures a wide variety of factors — including: economy, consumption, health, education, gender, environment, access to communication and information, military spending and food security — to arrive at an overall comparison of human development globally. This laudable report, however, does not consider measures of social peace: whether persons in the countries examined live in fear of direct violence: from representatives of the state (e.g. violent police or judicial system which authorizes capital punishment); from their neighbors (e.g. ethnic conflict and crime rate); or family members (e.g. tolerance of violence against women). The 1998 edition has an index of state accession to human rights instruments, but no measures of compliance. To measure “freedom from fear”, it may be useful to consider rates of imprisonment, violent crime and intra- and inter-national military aggression.

A more basic definition of development may read as follows:

development is the building of conflict transformation capacity.

Reduce cultural violence through work done in schools, deglo-
rifying and demystifying violence, adding how to handle con-
flicts with empathy, nonviolence and creativity.

Reduce structural violence through the 1966 human rights
conventions against repression (political and civil rights) and
exploitation (economic, social and cultural rights).

This is not a substitute for the economic development men-
tioned above. But after some cultural and structural recon-
struction a society may be ready for more meaningful
economic development. Projects that could improve the liveli-
hood of millions could be better rooted. So Phase I should
include the 3 R's, resolution, reconstruction, and reconcilia-
tion, not waiting for violence to strike, or for violence to end.

II. During violence

During violence, the primary task, is of course, to stop the violence, because it is bad in itself, and because it makes the original conflict more intractable. First some reflections on why human beings make the Phase I to Phase II transition.

The first answer comes out of the original, root, conflict: violence is used to incapacitate the other party(ies) so as to impose one's own goals. This is sometimes called a "military solution", an oxymoron if the word "solution" means "acceptable".

The second answer also comes out of the original conflict but is less rational: aggression because of frustration, of being blocked by somebody; violence out of hatred.

The third answer comes out of meta-conflict logic: conflict as an opportunity to gain honor and glory by winning; and to show courage and gain honor and dignity through violence even when not winning.

The fourth answer also comes out of the meta-conflict: violence as revenge for violence suffered, now or in the past.

These are four important reasons to be taken very seriously. At no point, however, is there any assumption to the effect that violence is in human nature, like the drives for food and sex. The latter are found all over where there are humans, in space and time. The drives may be suppressed, but that only proves the point about their universality. Violence is there all the time as a potential, but that potential is only activated when:

- a basic conflict is left unattended (a negative cause!), without empathy, nonviolence and/or creativity, to impose an outcome, or out of frustration; or
- the culture justifies the transition from conflict to meta-conflict as an opportunity to win, gaining honor through violence; or justifies violence as a compensation for violence.

The conclusion is clear: basic conflicts, like basic wounds, should not be left unattended, nor should violence be justified.

However, violence does not last and spread forever; if it did there would be no humans around. Violence abates, for instance because belligerents run out of:

- means of destruction (hardware/weapons, software/people);
- targets to destroy (material, people);
- willingness to destroy (less "fighting spirit", more disgust);
- the hope of winning; the parties predict the same outcome.

Waiting for this to happen, “they are fed up, ready for the table”, means sacrificing people, in our era women and children. Rather, these are four ways of terminating violence: through embargoes on weapons and mercenaries; evacuating people and removing targets (scorched earth tactics); demoralizing soldiers by clarifying visible and invisible consequences of violence so as to induce conscientious objection; pointing out that in the longer run all parties lose because of the spiraling violence.

But there is also the fifth possibility of intercession between the parties. If the concern is with **peace by peaceful means** this opens for Chapter 6, but not for Chapter 7, operations under the UN Charter. What is suggested in the Table is that peacekeeping operations could be improved by calling on expertise not only in the means of violence and the military mentality, but also in police skills, nonviolence skills and mediation skills.

Since women would tend to relate more to people than to hardware they could perhaps constitute 50% of the units. Moreover, the numbers should be vastly increased. In short, a blue carpet of peace-keepers, not only blue helmets, should be created that is so dense that there is little space left for fighting. This peacekeeping would not wait till the violence is “over”, but would also include the “3 Rs”: reconstruction, reconciliation and resolution. Recasting the definition of peacekeeping to include more than only the “blue helmets” recognizes the contribution to peace made by countless actors in local, national and international NGOs, civil society organizations, journalists and political actors. Financial cost of increasing civilian involvement in peacemaking and peacekeeping is significantly less than the cost of international military and police involvements. (In the Somalia operation, the military security expenditures were estimated at 10 times the civilian humanitarian inputs.)

III. After violence

Reconstruction After Violence: An Overview

After violence, the relief that violence is over may make people blind to the invisible, long-lasting consequences of violence (such as traumas and desire for more glory and revenge), and blind to how cultures, structures and actors may have become even more violent. The task is more difficult and more complex than before the violence. The mere task of **reconstruction** after the violence, rehabilitating the wounded and rebuilding after material damage, may be so difficult that **reconciliation** to solve the meta-conflict and **resolution** to solve the original, underlying conflicts are forgotten or postponed, even forever.

The tasks to be engaged in are formidable:

- Rehabilitation: the trauma and collective sorrow approach
- Rebuilding: the development approach
- Restructuration: the peace structure approach
- Reculturation: the peace culture approach

Reconciliation After Violence: An Overview

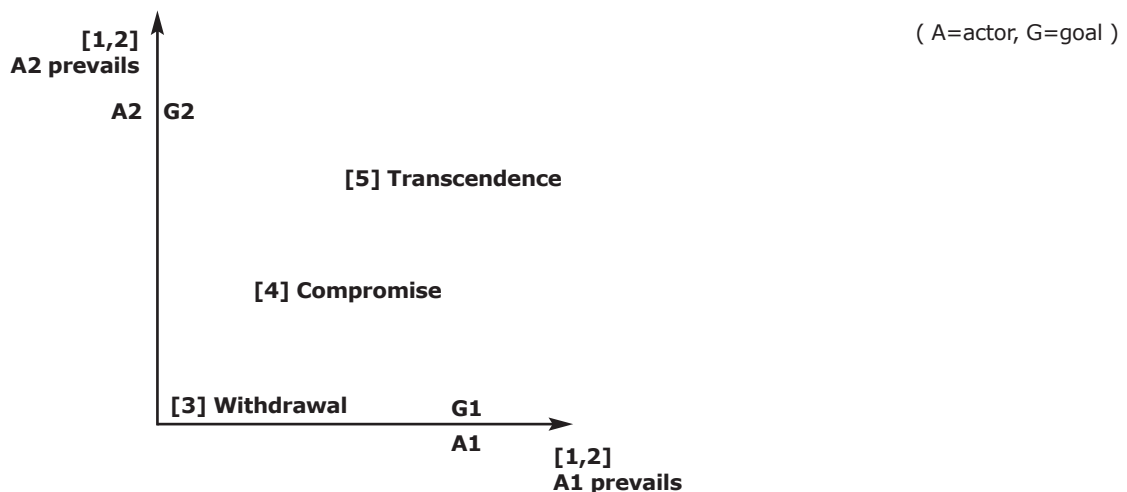
- The exculpatory nature—structure—culture approach
- The reparation/restitution approach
- The apology/forgiveness approach
- The theological/penitence approach
- The juridical/punishment approach
- The codependent origination/**karma** approach
- The historical/truth commission approach
- The theatrical/reliving approach
- The joint sorrow/healing approach
- The joint reconstruction approach
- The joint conflict resolution approach
- The world is poorly equipped for most of these tasks.
- The **ho'o pono pono** approach

There is an "Executive Outcomes" for violence, but not for undoing violence. And there is a simple reason why this is so important. The expression "after violence" is too optimistic. Do nothing about the roots of a basic conflict, no conflict transformation, and the violence will be reproduced when the horrors of the last violence are no longer in conscious, "only" in the subconscious memory. And "after violence" easily becomes "before violence".

Conflict Outcomes and Conflict Processes

Exercise: a table, on the table an orange, two kids seated at the table; what happens? As many ideas as possible, please! And don't be arrogant, most people manage at most 8 of 16:

Figure 1 : Conflict — The five basic outcomes



The diagram (see Unit 14 below) presents the five general **types** of outcomes in a conflict with two parties. Here [1] and [2] are the same; they both mean that one party prevails. In a concrete conflict each general type has several **specific** interpretations:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| [1,2] | One Party Prevails
The Rule of Man: Fight it out, might is right (to be avoided)
The Rule of Law: Adjudicate, some principle (like need, taste)
The Rule of Chance: Some random method
Compensation: Broadening (triangle), deepening (double conflict) |
| [3] | Withdrawal
Walk away from the situation
Destroy or give away the orange
Just watch the orange
Put it in the freeze |
| [4] | Compromise
Cut the orange
Squeeze the orange
Peel the orange; divide the slices
Any other division |
| [5] | Transcendence
Get one more orange
Get more people to share the orange
Bake an orange cake, have a lottery, divide the proceeds
Sow the seeds, make plantation, take over the market |

Basic Thesis: The more alternatives, the less likely the violence

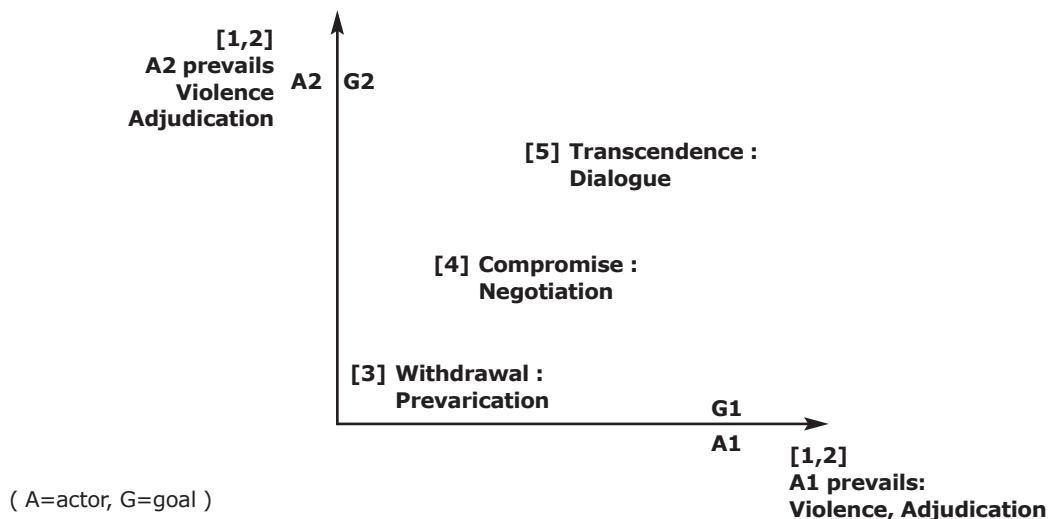
The Transcend method is biased in favor of transcendence, trying to go beyond, “disembedding” the conflict from where it is located, and “embedding” it elsewhere. Go beyond that one orange, get one more (“teacher, you forgot one orange!”).

Or focus on the most important part of the orange, the seeds, plant them. So much for basic conflict outcomes, how about the basic processes or approaches used in conflict? They are related:

- Thesis No. 1:** **Violence** tends to lead to [1,2], **one party prevails**.
Violence is used to impose the victor’s goal over the vanquished;
 or: **to prevail=being on top, violence is a process**
- Thesis No. 2:** **Adjudication** also tends to lead to [1,2], **one party prevails**.
Adjudication is used to decide who is right (not guilty, not liable);
 or: **to prevail = being right, adjudication is a process**
- Thesis No. 3:** **Prevarication** tends to lead to [3]; **withdrawal**.
 Time not ripe, status quo preferred;
 or: **to withdraw, prevarication is a process**
- Thesis No. 4:** **Negotiation** between parties tends to lead to [4] **compromise**,
 assuming one party does not dictate;
 or **to obtain a compromise, negotiation is a process**
- Thesis No. 5:** **Dialogue** with the parties tends to lead to [5], **transcendence**,
 defining a new situation.
 or: **to transcend the conflict, dialogue is a process**

The outcome is already hidden in the process, and the process chosen depends on the outcome wanted in a conflict.

Figure 2 : Relation between conflict outcome and conflict process



Let us now go back to the distinction between the original, root conflict and the meta-conflict. The root conflict is about finding some outcome, solution, exit, transformation, whatever it is called. The meta-conflict is essentially about one thing: **to win**. There is only one outcome: one party prevails. The meta-conflict can be fought with physical means, violence, war and usually leads to victory for one and defeat for the other (in rare cases with a draw, e.g., because the war is drawn-out).

Or it can be fought with verbal means, like in a court, which has much of the same structure. Adjudication is a way of deciding who is right and who is not but guilty, or liable; it is not a good process to obtain the other three outcome types. There is usually a very asymmetric decision defining the winner.

The meta-conflict is often used to decide the root conflict. **The winner takes all**, including what is disputed in the root conflict. This outcome may be acceptable, and it may be sustainable. But it also may not; the meta-conflict may be seen merely as display of physical or legal power. And any decision in favor of only one party already sounds simplistic and divisive, not denying that there also are conflicts where one party simply is **right**. Nor is there any denial that courts are better than wars.

Withdrawal may work short term, but sooner or later the conflict has to be taken on. The traditional approach is negotiation between the parties; the problem being that the parties may treat the table as a verbal battlefield and at best end up with a flat compromise that satisfies nobody and does not provide us with opportunities to move forward. Hence the bias in favor of the fifth outcome, transcendence, going beyond. The best method is the dialogue, with each other, but to start with perhaps better with a conflict worker. To this we now turn.

Comments on “Conflict theory and practice: a perspective”

The Chart, or Table, with the three phases is, of course, fundamental to the whole exercise. It has to be emphasized that:

- the root of the whole problem is always an unattended conflict with violent cultures, structures and actors coming together;
- a bad mistake is to use violence as a signal to start acting, because of the original conflict. Even worse is to let violence run its course till parties are “ripe” for deals;
- what has to be done in the three phases is not that different; not like one team leaving the stage and another taking over.

The 3 R’s, Resolution, Reconstruction and Reconciliation are always needed, one way or another:

- Resolution, to solve the original, root, conflict,
- Reconstruction, to repair damage done, and
- Reconciliation, to solve meta-conflicts, also from the past.

Exercise

Look at the twelve possibilities for reconciliation in Phase III. Brainstorm on similar lists for Phases I and II, given that the 3 R’s should be present, one way or the other, in all three phases. Design a concrete program for action.

The same applies to peace-keeping: good soldiering should arrive before the outbreak of violence and not be withdrawn after the cease-fire — like good policing that prevents both violence and its resumption. This is even more important after violence, the situation has usually become worse:

- violence produces more dreams of glory and revenge, hence worse cultures;
- violence produces more repression and exploitation to sustain the war effort, and more polarization, hence worse structures;
- violence lowers the threshold against violence and makes otherwise peaceful actors violent, hence worse actors.

The orange example can be used as an exercise to open a training session, meaning that the Participants' Manual should be handed out afterwards, not before (since the answers are there). One way of doing this was tried out in England at a national conference on bullying in schools, with children, parents and teachers as participants. Twenty participants volunteered, they were seated opposite each other, in pairs, at a long table, with the smallest children at one end and the older parents and teachers at the other, discussing in pairs.

"One orange, two persons; what will you do", avoiding the word conflict since it is not obvious that there is any, they may refuse to take it on (one child said: "we'll just walk away and leave the orange"). Giving the youngest children the first chance, working up the table, proved less necessary; the children had as much or more orange imagination as adults.

When somebody suggested "fight it out" they had to sit in the corner and in the end received an orange "to think more creative, less destructive thoughts". The other oranges were used as prizes for imaginative proposals. In the end the chart with 16 outcomes was shown and compared with what had come up, training them in types of outcomes. The focus was on conflict imagination: more outcomes imagined beyond "fight it out", less likely the violence. Violence is then seen as having a negative cause: conflict illiteracy, lack of creativity. Hence the basic focus of the whole approach is to develop creativity. And the orange example also brings out another point: it is limited what one single person can come up with, several persons will come up with more, and if they really start dialoguing, brainstorming about it then they will come up with much more.

The diagram in Figure 1, with the four or five types of outcomes ([1] and [2] are only different when it matters to us who prevails), is basic in the sense that it can be used in all conflicts to identify types of outcomes. But it has to be used with care: as the diagram is two-dimensional it accommodates only conflicts between two parties (A1 and A2, with the incompatible goals G1 and G2). Real life conflicts are more complex, but "prevail", "withdrawal", "compromise" and "transcendence" are nevertheless always meaningful. In the orange example the task is to find what these words mean in practice: one kid ends up with the orange, they walk away, they split it, they sow the seeds.

The next diagram, in Figure 2, is based on the same four or five outcomes, but now related to process, not to outcome. Note the word "tends to": there is a relation, but it is not an iron law.

Some participants may be surprised that adjudication, “rule of law” is in the same category as “rule of man”, violence. But the logic is similar: the idea of winner/loser, or more basic: of “being right”. “Right” becomes almost something material, like “having right”, and may stand in the way of finding more productive outcomes, for instance in a marital conflict.

The approach of these manuals aims at transcendence, and the use of dialogue for that purpose. But that does not imply a total rejection of other outcomes and other approaches, including, in extreme cases, minimum use of violence after other methods have been tried, and the situation is truly intolerable.

Transcendence means redefining the situation so that what looked incompatible, blocked, is unlocked, and a new landscape opens up (see the camel tale at the end). Creativity is the key to that lock, block. The conflict has been transformed. To this we now turn.

Creativity, transcendence, conflict transformation

1.

Is there a formula for creativity?

Maybe not. But there may be a heuristic, the formula of a formula so to speak, that nonetheless could be useful in getting a handle on that precious phenomenon. But let us first take note of some comments often heard in the context of creativity:

"It is so simple! Why didn't we think of that before!"

"It makes what we used to say and do so small, like we were not able to get our eyes off the ground and see reality".

"It is like a new reality opening up for our eyes!"

"In the light of this new thinking/idea what used to be, and what we used to do, is only a special case, in the corner so to speak, of a vast space opening up".

"God said, Let Newton be, and all was Light" (Pope).

"It is so threatening. Are we ready for that much novelty?"

It looks as if the old and conventional must still be there as an identifiable special case ("this is where we used to be"); but now seen in a new light that shines on new vistas. Otherwise it is "crazy", not "creative". When Columbus balanced an egg on its end by cracking it, the unbalance-able egg was still there. To the remark that "anybody could have done it if it is that simple", his much quoted answer was "But I did it".

In this story the old is hidden in the new. Cracks at the end of the egg could be made smaller and smaller, yet the egg would balance till some limit is reached. At that point it becomes clear that the old could not accommodate the problem, as little as Euclidean geometry could accommodate Einstein's problems. He had to explore four-dimensional Riemannian and Lobachevskian geometries (with Euclid as a special case). Some continuity between old and new thoughts and acts is useful. And so on, and so forth. Let us jump to the conclusion and offer a "creativity formula", suggested as a hypothesis:

Creativity, in thought, speech and action, is based on:

A

Identification of a phenomenon as blocked, closed.

B

Identifying in the context of that phenomenon:

- A parameter that is constant, hence unthought of
- Change that parameter, as a thought experiment
- Hypothesis: that will unblock, open, the phenomenon

C

Test this hypothesis in the real world.

In other words, creativity is linked to the scientific process. Hardly surprising, since that process has to do with creativity, and creativity has to do with change of paradigm, something easily accommodated within the formula just given. Work **within** a given paradigm is also identified with science, but then more as a puzzle (Kuhn), not as a "break-through". That term is also used for negotiations; reflecting the sense of relief of a rat struggling in a maze to find an exit, and then suddenly finding an exit (the small solution), or jumping out, discovering that the mace has no ceiling (the big solution).

The experience resembles what a social scientist encounters introducing a "third" variable in multi variate analysis. What looks like no relation at all between X and Y becomes different when Z is introduced: when Z is low X and Y are positively, and when Z is high negatively, related. The zero relation is still there, hidden in a more complex reality as some kind of average. The creative act consists in identifying that third (fourth, fifth) variable that had not been introduced into the picture before, like cracking before balancing. The rewards in insight are tremendous. Boring data start singing; to the new music.

Two very different examples come from Japan, and they both relate to music. The first case is *kara-oke* (empty orchestra). There is a stage and a hall with people, the audience, and the "listeners". There is microphone and amplifier on the stage. Conventional spatial arrangement of people would put the singer on the stage and the audience in the hall. Karaoke rotates people between hall and stage, making all potential singers, and all of them listeners. Like professional singers the amateurs choose a program they want to sing; unlike them they cannot be assumed to know the texts by heart so that is provided by a prompter, moving with great precision, with the music. The spatial arrangement has not been reversed, with the singers are in the hall and the listeners on the stage. Rather, singers and listeners are no longer stationary, rotating between hall and stage.

In another, more recent example dancers are equipped with sensors on various parts of the body, particularly legs and arms. As they move music is produced, tones and rhythms. As they dance in special ways that music becomes more attractive, much like special music can bring about attractive dancing. With quick movements and adequate arm and leg work, with some wiggling of feet and hands and some belly work, complex music can be produced. The possibilities are legion. The time order between music and dance has been reversed; rather than music directing the dancing and the dancer following, the dance is now directing the music, with music following. Movement translates into music, which is nothing new, but this time movement of the total body, not just fingers and lungs/lips/tongue. Advanced electronics was probably a necessary if not a sufficient condition for this particular act of creativity.

Sticking to Japan, the reaction of a Swiss watch maker when told that the Japanese now combined time pieces and computers in a "watch" (watch in the sense of something to watch) was: **"Eine Uhr ist eine Uhr und ein Rechenwerk ist ein Rechenwerk"** ("a clock is a clock and a computer a computer", the idea being that "never the twain shall meet".) This physical separation of two different functions was exactly what Japanese manufacturers challenged, and with great success.

Thus, the creative act may not introduce any new element at all, only put them together, in space and time, in a new way. Spatial arrangements and time orders that have been taken for granted are challenged. For that reason it is particularly easy to be creative in cultures with very definite views on correct spatial orders: there is so much to challenge. A culture firmly dividing the world in center and periphery, assuming causality to flow from center to periphery rather than vice versa (from stage to hall, for instance), and conceiving of time as linear with clear views on what comes before and what after (like music and body movement, for instance) invites creative challenges. But if such unilinear ideas are firmly entrenched like in Western culture we would also expect considerable resistance.

Thus, if **cause = center = God** and **effect = periphery = Nature + Man**, the latter created in His image, then such ideas as democracy, secularism and evolution stand out as revolutionary. The first vested power with the people/periphery, like a country without a capital. The second made god a periphery, suggesting that He was created by Man in Man's image. And the third was that Man was an emanation from Nature by Darwinist competition, like Adam Smith arguing that out of this process came the best of all worlds.

2.

From creativity to transcendence

By "transcendence" we mean creating a new type of reality. Something that potentially was always there is becoming empirical reality. An example from the theory and practice of conflict might be the idea of a **condominium**, of two or more countries owning a territory, disputed or not, together. The old formula for Andorra comes to mind, so does the Antarctic, certain aspects of Spitsbergen and Aland, the old arrangement for the New Hebrides, the Cameroons, etc. The conflict between two countries over a disputed territory may end by one winning in military battle or court battle, by a compromise dividing the territory, by both of them withdrawing their claims, leaving the territory to somebody else (such as the inhabitants!), or by the two owning the territory together. Clearly only the last outcome transcends empirical reality; the other conform to the formula that each km² is owned by one and only one state.

Another example: European countries were ruled by clergy, aristocrats and **burghers**; i.e., by word, sword and money. The Kings/Emperors were aristocrats. They were dethroned, and the successor system, democracy, combined the word and the bookkeeping by substituting verbal duels (election campaigns) for the physical duels of the aristocracy, counting the numbers voting in favor of the parties. As time passed, the range of people entitled to vote was considerably expanded. No doubt a potential political reality had become empirical reality, and still is; transcending the old. It was highly creative, at least at its time. But the old was still there. Thus, there were still rulers and the ruled. And the sword was still there, in the hands of military, police and those challenging them.

3.

From transcendence to transformation

Transcendence introduces a new reality, opening a new landscape. To transform a conflict is to transplant it to that new reality. To transform a conflict would mean to transcend the goals of the conflict parties, defining some other goals, lifting a conflict ("disembedding") out of the bed the parties have prepared for that conflict, including the discourses to ensure that the incompatibility looks insurmountable (the contradiction non-transcendable), embedding it at a more promising place. For this to happen the conflict has to be transformed also in the sense of adding parties and goals the participants themselves do not always think of. To simplify by eliminating some parties (e.g., the "extremists") would be a major mistake; they will certainly make themselves heard and felt (the peace process in Israel/Palestine?) To simplify by eliminating the moderates is also a mistake (the peace process in Northern Ireland?). The road to fruitful transformation goes through complexification with the possibility of some grouping of parties and goals, yet all the time guarding against **conflict deformation**.

In the case of the Lima hostage crisis, the Transcend proposal was to see the conflict less as a problem of (unlawful, violent) invasion of property and hostage-taking, and more as a problem of reducing the misery in Peru; switching from meta-conflict to root conflict, transcending the definition of the conflict. To transform the conflict the conflict had to be expanded. Then a solution was proposed for the transformed conflict, distributing tasks to the parties; checking that this also solves the conflict as originally defined. If not, there is deformation, not transformation, and the original conflict will hit back.

If we accept that a conflict may both be a source of destruction and a source of creation, then one approach to transformation of a conflict is to act so that the creative aspects dominate. This is more than steering the conflict away from violence. It adds steering the conflict toward development, both the human development of the individual actors involved, the social development of the collective actors involved, and world development. Those who enter conflict should have ambitious meta-goals, like a better Yugoslavia, peace and development in the Middle East, reduction of misery in Peru, etc.

The position taken here is that such meta-goals this is meaningless without deep understanding of the culture and structure within which the conflict unfolds, of the actors, and above all of the conflict itself. Conflict practice has to be rooted in conflict theory; conflict theory has to grow out of conflict practice. Concrete people have to be creative, not only empathic and nonviolent (one of these alone will never do). We suggest calling these people conflict workers. Their major tool is dialogue, with conflict parties, not only facilitating dialogue among them. To do so the conflict workers need a grounding in general conflict theory and general conflict practice, and more particularly in what difference empathy, nonviolence and creativity can make.

But they also have to know the types of violence, not only the direct violence that shows up in the meta-conflict, but the structural and cultural violence, the bad structures and cultures underlying the conflict, the bad "bed" the conflict has to be lifted out of. The rest is transformation, of the conflict, for peace; by ever deeper dialogues. The result: a transformed conflict that can be handled nonviolently and creatively.

Let us take the Korean peninsula as an example. An enormous conflict energy is put into that conflict and can be released in one more war, in turmoil inside the societies (and not only in the North), with repercussions all over East Asia and beyond. Could that energy be put to more positive tasks?

Here is an example of an approach: to open the rail/road connection between the two Koreas, as suggested (for rail) by

the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia/Pacific. That border is also the border between the poor (Vietnam, China, North Korea) and the rich (South Korea, Japan, Taiwan) part of what might one day become the East Asia Common Market/ Economic Community / Community / Union, referring to the stages of the EU. Goods would flow in both directions, wealth would be created, the spin-offs for both Koreas would be considerable, and only a minimum of cooperation is needed to run the transport.

Analytically, the transformation has several aspects:

- a discourse switch, talking about economic cooperation and common culture, as opposed to military and political structures;
- a new over-arching goal is formulated, involving not only the two Koreas but their four neighbors: East Asian
- an effort to disembed the conflict from where it was and embed it in the tricky but not lethal problems of economic cooperation
- no basic change, mutual love or even mutual trust is demanded of the Koreas; only that they pursue the benefit to themselves;
- this is not a meager Pareto optimum with nobody worse off since all six parties would be better off;
- the plan is reversible, but there would be a vested interest in the other parties to provide the incentives to go on;
- within that new setting, in that "bed", all the other issues may gradually be articulated, or they may even evaporate.

These ideas for a transformation of the conflict evolved out of dialogues with the parties concerned. Worth trying?

Conflict theory, conflict practice: some more steps

The ABC-triangle: the third dimension

Workshop participants tend to find the ABC-triangle useful. It separates three components of "conflict": C, **contradiction**, the root of the conflict, from A, **attitudes** and B, **behavior**. The basic thesis, of course, is that conflict work done only on A and B is a band-aid job. There is no alternative to work on the root of the conflict, the contradiction itself.

Let us then add a third dimension: **depth**. We shall look for deep contradictions, deep attitudes and deep behavior.

Deep contradictions: Fault-lines

The basic idea is that underneath all contradictions between human parties to conflicts are **deep contradictions** that steer the surface contradictions in the conflict struggle:

the fault-lines in the human construction, of gender, generation, race, class, "normal"/"deviant", nation/culture/ideology and, for world society, states/regions. (Marx picked up only one of them, class, only economic class, not political, military and cultural; and only as ownership of means of production).

Deep attitudes, deep culture

Underneath attitudes are **deep attitudes**; in English they also start with an "A": assumptions, axioms. De-individualizing and de-mathematizing we get **deep culture**, a web of notions about what is true, good, right, beautiful, sacred.

Deep behavior, basic needs

And underneath behavior is **deep behavior**, preprogrammed, partly by instincts, partly by basic needs. The borderline is not very clear, nor does it matter.

To say "there is something underneath, deeper down" in no way means that professed goals, visible behavior and attitudes, articulated or inferred should be dismissed as masks. They should be respected and taken seriously. But they should be seen in the light of what is deeper down.

The problem of legitimacy

As mentioned, the essence of conflict, the root, is the incompatibility, the contradiction between two or more goals pursued by parties to the conflict. But do they have the right to have those goals? Are the goals valid, legitimate goals? For the parties the goals have value, otherwise, by definition, they would not have pursued them. But, does having that value in itself have value?

Three types of conflict

How do we know that
a goal is legitimate ?

Take slavery: slave-holders valued slavery for production and for the commodity market. They also valued having that value, in terms of white superiority, or in terms of giving them the leisure needed for high culture. The slave certainly also had a value: freedom. Which value had more legitimacy? That was one of the issues leading up to the US Civil War 1861-65. By that time the tide of Western civilization gave more legitimacy to freedom than to slavery. That decided the conflict. **Take colonialism:** Norway and Denmark, in 1933, wanted the same, Eastern Greenland. Norway tried to legitimize the goal by first discovery, Denmark by having "civilized" the place. The Court in the Hague decided in favor of Denmark. But the tide turned in favor of the indigenous, and both goals became illegitimate. Self-determination became legitimate.

That gives us a typology with three types of conflict:

- ① The goals of all parties have (some) legitimacy
- ② The goals of some parties are legitimate, of others not
- ③ The goals of all parties are illegitimate

The first type is by far the most frequent, and is our concern. Not only do the parties have their truths, but these truths are valid truths, Truths. As pointed out above, that is where the legal paradigm fails while it may be very useful in ① and ②.

One answer is, because the law says so. Justice is the commodity produced by the legal system, and justice is served by respecting legitimacy. If the parties agree, after appeals or without, that may bring closure to the conflict as a process. Particularly important is the source of legitimacy found in what de facto is a world constitutional: the International Bill of Human Rights, consisting basically of the Universal Declaration of 10 December 1948 and the two covenants of 16 December 1966.

But the parties may not agree, and both of them may feel their goals are legitimate. How do we proceed when the legal approach has been exhausted and the court system declares that "the case has been dismissed"?

One approach is to build the topic into the dialogue agenda, with a simple question after the party has presented its goal:—*And why do you think you are entitled to that?*—The responses give rise to one more question:—and why should that be relevant?— and so on. In the end there may be references to the ultimate source of legitimacy in their mind, God. Or to basic needs, by statements like "I cannot live without, life loses all meaning". Philosophically trained parties will say things like "because it can be universalized, everybody can have it" (Kant) or "I am also willing to concede it to others" (the Golden Rule). Or refer to basic needs (see below).

The significance of basic needs

But how about the answer:—I don't care, I just want it!— Unless there is a clear case of breaking the law, domestic or international, this should not be dismissed. The problem is whether there is any clash with other goals, and whether that clash can be transcended. The transcendence is forward-looking, legitimacy is based on past experience. We need both.

The basic point about basic human needs is that they are non-negotiable. The needs to survive, with a minimum of well-being, for identity and freedom of choice about how to satisfy the other three, are absolute. Human beings will continue striving for them under almost all circumstances, like water expanding when it freezes to ice, like the seeds growing under asphalt. Enormous forces. Motorists neglect putting anti-freeze to their own considerable regret.

The significance for conflict transformation is obvious: any outcome of a conflict that neglects one or more basic human needs is a non-transformation. They will announce themselves sooner or later. Any slick idea to the effect that the dead no longer have any claim on survival leaves out the reaction of the bereaved, not only revenge/revanche, but struggle for their own survival. Any effort to clinch a deal at the expense of misery somewhere in the system will revert to the dealers. Any lack of respect for the cultural identity of others, their idiom, faith may even strengthen the need to satisfy that need. Limits to freedom may be tolerated for some time, but as options become visible and available the buds will sprout.

Two important reminders

The anti-freeze way out is tempting: change the liquid. Change human beings, engineer away their thirst for meaning and choice, just keep them, feed them like robots. Huxley, Orwell. Two important reminders:

- There is something so obvious about basic human needs that they become unspoken goals, not articulated. The conflict/peace worker had to keep them in mind all the time.
- Conflict "managers" high up do not articulate such goals because they take their satisfaction, **for them**, for granted. The conflict/peace worker should keep this in mind, especially men who often are less sensitive to something that basic.

Articulated goals vs real goals

Parties, people, articulate goals, they issue **texts**. But are those their real goals? The conflict worker will of course keep in mind that there could be something else, underneath, a **sub-text** of which the party is conscious but prefers not to talk; something even deeper down of which the party is not conscious, a **deep text**; something coming from the surroundings but not really the goal of that party, in other words a context; not to mention something coming from above, a **supertext**. Of course, in the last two cases there are also goals, such as conformity and obedience, but they differ from what is being said. These hidden texts, singly or combined, may turn the text into a **pretext**.

No conflict can be successfully transformed without paying attention to hidden texts; including the hidden texts of the conflict worker, known as hidden agendas (there should be none).

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Rule No. 1 | Rule No. 1 remains: take the spoken text seriously, assume it to be genuine, remember that all these texts may coexist. |
| Rule No. 2 | Probe in detail under what circumstances the party would feel the goal has been reached, which, then, could be tested in practice. It could be more than initial statements. But it could also be less, or a reinterpretation. However, do not assume subtexts, use the open text as point of departure. |
| Rule No. 3 | Probe for other parties whose goals matter, and then seek dialogues with them to understand how conformity and obedience may be imposed, say, in family conflicts. |
| Rule No. 4 | Probe for deeper goals of which the party may not be conscious. Interests, often needs-related, deriving from the deep structure and goals embedded in the deep culture may be located here. Do not confuse unawareness with dishonesty. |

The meaning of body language

In-between speech and action is the body language, observable like an act, communicative like speech. Maybe with as many nuances as speech, with grammar and dictionary, syntax and semantics, standard language (like a hand-shake) and vernaculars (like Brazilian communication by touching the elbow of the other party). There are taboos (like touching the head of a Thai) and the equivalents of four-letter words, the obscene gesture. And there are misinterpretations.

Hints for the conflict worker

Keeping that last point in mind, here are some hints for the conflict worker:

- Rule No. 1 Do not lean too much forward, you may look like an animal ready to jump. Rather, lean backward, be, look, relaxed.
- Rule No. 2 Avoid finger-pointing (also remember that when you do finger-pointing, some of your fingers point back at you yourself – –). There are obvious violent parallels. Men often engage in this.
- Rule No. 3 Do not engage in any sudden, brusque and/or rhythmic movement, it may be very disturbing, “what comes next?”
- Rule No. 4 Slow, soft, rounded movements with one or both hands can be soothing, indicative of holism, completion, closure, having arrived. Women often engage in this.
- Rule No. 5 Be sensitive to the body language of uneasiness, like frequent shifting of position (could be the chair, though), whetting of the lips, perspiration. You are not interrogating; the other party should feel well. Take a break.
- Rule No. 6 Do not freeze into non-motion, it may make you look like an observer rather than engaged party to the dialogue.
- Rule No. 7 Remember the non-verbal aspects of speech: not too high or too low pitch, low amplitudes, don’t talk too long.
- Rule No. 8 Make your own list, based on your own experiences.

A case of transcendence : the TRANSCEND method

The TRANSCEND method is about conflict transformation. Let us apply it to a special conflict: the very important conflict over conflict transformation. There are two clear positions:

- ① conflict resolution is the task of/belongs to the parties who have a right to demand and get **conflict autonomy**
- ② conflict resolution is the task of/belongs to the conflict manager (a priest, a judge, a big power, a UN Security Council)

—“you have a dangerous conflict,
I’ll have to solve it for you”—

who gets **conflict monopoly** in exchange for ending the violence.

The ideal outcome is ① : the parties are themselves able to transform the conflict, meaning handling it nonviolently and creatively. Nothing could be better: the road to peace is peace itself; the parties grow by taking on the challenge, and they grow together. The problem with ① : they may not be able, hatred and ignorance stand in the way of creativity, and foster violence, verbal, body language, physical. The problem with ② is that the conflict manager appropriate the challenging process and the title to the outcome and become a **conflict thief**. Hence:

- ③ **withdrawal**: do nothing, let the conflict wounds fester; the cop-out of the conflict coward and obviously not acceptable, or
- ④ **compromise**: the outside facilitates a negotiation process between the parties, sets agenda, discourse, venue, even pays it
- ⑤ **transcendence**: the outside, in one-on-one dialogues, tries to help by building up the parties, stimulating the creativity, together searching for nonviolent ways out, making them "ready for the table", then the time may be ripe for ① above. The conflict worker disappears from the scene, the owners take over.

Parties transforming the conflict themselves is beautiful, but some outside help may be necessary. The friend who talks with wife and husband, one-on-one trying to understand their goals, less "what went wrong", more "what is a good marriage". Together they construct a new project. That is TRANSCEND.

Hearing
the unspoken,
seeing the invisible

The conflict worker will listen very attentively to the goals of the parties, take them seriously, even try to formulate them better than the parties themselves. She will listen to the words spoken, and observe the body language. The deep texts in the subconscious are by definition not articulated but may find their way through the body language and a cry for help: *do you see what I mean* – – But sometimes there is nothing, neither heard, nor seen. The unspoken may be too obvious for the parties to articulate, like the basic needs above. It may also be in the unconscious rather than the subconscious. Many people, nations, states have the habit of seeing themselves as exceptional, above the law of the ordinary folks, but may be unaware of their own assumptions. When two of them meet there is competition, jealousy, hatred: who is more exceptional. But there may also be a tacit search for alliance: how can we be exceptional, above the law together.

A less dramatic example: two neighboring countries quarrel over a zone of coveted territory. Deep down there is a shared assumption, too obvious to be stated: each piece of land on this Planet Earth belongs to one and only one country; hence borders have to be drawn. The problem is not only located in what they say, "I want the border here!"/"No, there!" but in their shared unstated assumption: there has to be a border. Condominium, joint ownership over the zone would be a transcending outcome.

Shared unstated assumptions may be the rock bottom on which an acceptable and sustainable outcome can be built. But they may also block a creative, nonviolent outcome. Conflict workers should not be fooled by "good chemistry"/"mutual understanding". They may understand each other too well. Fresh air is needed.

Conflict transformation

training course: some extra exercises

Exercise 1

Your father is a Japanese-Hawaiian who was interned in a camp during the war. He struggled with the others and got some reparation from the US government. One day you come home with a black boy-friend. Your father tells you: "if you want to be with him, then get out of my house!"

What do you do ?

Exercise 2

Your mother puts on an evening dress which is much too youthful for her age. She comes to you with eyes hungry for compliments and asks, How do I look? You want to be honest, but you also want to be considerate to your mother.

What do you do ?

Exercise 3

You have strong spiritual yearnings and want to meditate, focus on your spiritual journey. But you also like good material things, roller-blades, driving, fishing, books, music not only about spiritual matters. You have two goals.

What do you do ?

Exercise 4

Together with other workers you want better work conditions and higher salaries. The company tells you that they cannot afford it, they will go bankrupt. This time they are right, in fact, companies do collapse.

What do you do ?

Exercise 5

You have built a small summer house for guests, your guests are usually academics and you have put some shelves and tables for computers in the room. Your wife rightly points out, you have forgotten the wardrobe, for clothes, even sometimes dresses. But there is no floor space left. You suggest, How about in a suitcase, under the bed? Not accepted, for good reasons. You do not want to throw out a table. Husband-wife relations start getting strained.

What do you do ?

Exercise 6

One country with only one nation, and (almost) all members of that nation inside, is a nation-state.

- imagine the nation lives in two countries.

What do you do ?

- imagine there are two nations in one country, and they have a long history of bad relations.

What do you do ?

- imagine you have two countries and two nations that live in both countries, with a history of bad relations.

What do you do ?

Exercise 7

According to some predictions there will be more than one billion refugees and displaced persons before 2050, for military, political, economic, cultural reasons. Try DPT, catching the essential features, and

What do you do ?

Exercise 8

A woman comes to you, in tears, in rage: My husband has betrayed me, with my best girl friend, I was the only one who did not know! I want to kill him!!

(Hint: expand the discourse from sexual (in)fidelity to the (in)fidelity also of the mind, the spirit—joint life projects—the social sphere, the economic sphere; check how they both are doing on all five. In addition, bring in children, parents, friends, neighbors, colleagues — get out of the (2,1) approach!)

What do you do ?

Codes for Conflict/Peace Workers: Twelve Do's

1

Try to identify positive elements in any party, something of which that party is proud; encourage further development.

2

Try to identify positive elements in the conflict, Conflict the potential Creator should be kept in mind and be celebrated.

3

Be creative in the way you work, don't be too afraid of not doing things correctly, do not take manuals (like this one) too seriously, follow your intuitions and above all your experience.

4

Find together a short, easily remembered outcome formula, like "common security", "sustainable development", which will not do justice to all complexities, but may facilitate communication.

5

Be honest to yourself and to others, if you think something is wrong say so; if you think a party's proposal is outrageous say so without generalizing to the party as such. Often a good way to be "diplomatic" is to be "undiplomatic".

6

Permit your feelings to show, if you are happy about the turn of the conversation say so; if you are unhappy also say so, but do not break the relation. That cheap luxury is not for you.

7

Permit the inside conflict parties to challenge you. Others may tire of your questions and hit back for symmetry, challenging you, your nation, your country, etc. Use challenges to jointly explore also your conflicts the same way: roots, perspectives etc.

8

Always suggest alternative courses of action, "in this case you can do this, but also that"; never present only one remedy.

9

Your task is to make yourself superfluous, not to make others dependent on you (but be on call for consultations).

10

Remember: Idealism of the heart, and realism of the brain

11

Remember: Pessimism/cynicism is cheap; optimism is for you

12

Remember: Conflict work is the art of the impossible

Codes for Conflict/Peace Workers: Twelve Don'ts

1

Do not manipulate. Put your cards on the table, say openly what you try to achieve, including sharing manuals with them; make clear your willingness to question your own assumptions.

2

Do not distribute blame and guilt. Emphasize shared roots like bad structures and cultures rather than bad actors, and the shared responsibility to find exits. Your task is to help.

3

Do not start playing priest or judge. You are neither authorized nor qualified to sit in judgment over the parties.

4

Do not worry too much about consensus. The task is to arrive at good ideas; if they are good they are probably new, at least to the parties; and if they are new consensus may take some time.

5

Do not demand commitment from the parties, oral or (indeed) written; the ideas will work their way if "their time has come".

6

Do not demand that the parties shall cooperate. If they do not like each other and prefer to travel separate roads so be it; togetherness is not a goal. Maybe later they find each other.

7

Do not break any promise of confidentiality. You should not be a reason why the parties fear expressing themselves freely.

8

Do not seek publicity, but try to enlist the media as helpers in the search for ways out of the conflict/violence.

9

Do not seek expressions of gratitude, your reward lies in the seeds sown coming to fruition; your punishment if they don't.

10

Do not accept detailed instructions from anybody, the inside parties have a right to feel that they talk only with you.

11

Do not try to program people too much, your task is to empower them and enable them to proceed on their own.

12

Do not deform the conflict, removing it from the parties by pushing agendas too far away from their immediate concerns.

Two Tales: About Camels, Numbers and Many Things

Once upon a time a mullah was on his way on camel to Mecca.

Coming to an oasis he saw three men standing there, crying. So he stopped the camel, and asked, My children, what is the matter? And they answered, Our father just passed away, and we loved him so much. But, said the mullah, I am sure he loved you too, and no doubt he has left something behind for you?

The three men answered: Yes, he did indeed, he left behind camels. And in his will it is stated $\frac{1}{2}$ to the eldest son, $\frac{1}{3}$ to the second and $\frac{1}{9}$ to the youngest. We love camels, we agree with the parts to each. But there is a problem: he left behind 17 camels and we have been to school, we know that 17 is a prime number. Loving camels, we cannot divide them.

The mullah thought for a while, and then said, I give you my camel, then you have 18. And they cried, "No, you cannot do that, you are on your way to something important" — —. The mullah interrupted them, My children, take the camel, go ahead.

So they divided 18 by 2 and the eldest son got 9 camels, 18 by 3 and the second son got 6 camels, 18 by 9 and the youngest son got 2 camels: a total of $9 + 6 + 2 = 17$ camels. One camel was standing there, alone: the mullah's camel. The mullah said: Are you happy? Well, then, maybe I can get my camel back?

And the three men, full of gratitude, said, of course, not quite understanding what had happened. The mullah blessed them, mounted his camel, and the last they saw was a tiny cloud of dust, quickly settling in the glowing evening sun.



Once upon a time a lawyer was on his way in a fancy car through the desert. Passing an oasis he saw three men standing there, crying. So he stopped the car, and asked, What's the matter? And they answered, Our father just passed away, and we loved him so much. But, said the lawyer, I am sure he has made a will. Maybe I can help you, for a fee, of course?

The three men answered: Yes, he did indeed, he left behind camels. And in his will it is stated $\frac{1}{2}$ to the eldest son, $\frac{1}{3}$ to the second and $\frac{1}{6}$ to the youngest. We love camels, we agree with the parts to each. But there is a problem: he left behind 17 camels and we have been to school, we know that 17 is a prime number. Loving camels, we cannot divide them.

The lawyer thought for a while and then said: Very simple. You give me 5 camels, then you have 12. You divide by 2, 3 and 6 and you get 6, 4 and 2 camels respectively. And so they did. The lawyer tied the five unhappy camels to the car, and the last they saw was a vast cloud of dust, covering the evening sun.



Two ways of handling conflict. The choice is yours.

A Dialogue Between the Author (JG) and the Devil's Advocate (DA)

This dialogue is based on comments made during training sessions. The answers, as usual, lead to even more questions.

DA: *Give me in not too many words, and no social science jargon, the assumptions underlying this so-called TRANSCEND Method!*

JG: Fair demand. Here are the theses I believe in, at least about 80 percent:

- Thesis 1:** Military/violent conflict solutions do not exist. They are unsustainable because of loser trauma and unacceptability, and because of highly addictive victor glory. Violence breeds more violence; pointing this out serves as a negative anchor.
- Thesis 2:** Violence is used by people in conflict when the blocked goal is important, and they see no alternative exits.
- Thesis 3:** The meta-conflict and "who wins" drive out the root conflict; conflict transformation recedes into the background.
- Thesis 4:** People see no alternatives because conflict illiteracy limits the outcome repertory, and because creativity is blocked.
- Thesis 5:** People are conflict illiterates because "fighting it out, and the winner takes all" has dominated as the approach.
- Thesis 6:** Creativity is blocked by the hatred caused by violence and by big people /big powers monopolizing conflict work.
- Thesis 7:** Big people/big powers monopolize conflict work to increase their power and to benefit from conflict redistribution
- Thesis 8:** To decide over conflicts they see conflicts as between two parties, in need of them as "disinterested third parties".
- Thesis 9:** "Disinterested parties " do not exist; real conflicts have many parties with more or less acceptable conflict goals.
- Thesis 10:** "All parties meeting at the table" makes them even less creative and more easily managed by big people/big powers.
- Thesis 11:** A true "conflict worker" has sustainable and acceptable conflict transformation as goal, and no hidden agenda
- Thesis 12:** One approach to elicit acceptable goals is to engage in empathic dialogues with all parties separately, one-on-one.
- Thesis 13:** One approach to make acceptable goals compatible is to engage in dialogues with all parties, eliciting creativity.
- Thesis 14:** One approach to transform a conflict nonviolently is to dis-embed it from where it was and re-embed it elsewhere.
- Thesis 15:** Looking at the conflict from that new angle serves to develop a new reference point, a positive anchor for dialogues.
- Thesis 16:** "All parties meeting at the table "may be useful to finalize, or unnecessary, because a new, sustainable system has emerged acceptable to all so that the conflict has evaporated.

- DA: *Hold it! I can't take it any more. I disagree with all these theses, in addition you are already deeply into social science bla-bla.*
- JG: OK. Could you accept using the theses as some kind of agenda and critique them one by one, in the order you prefer?
- DA: *As a point of departure, yes, if this is the **TRANSCEND** method. But I also have something to say about that discourse.*
- JG: DA, "discourse" is already a social science word!
- DA: *That word existed before you people co-opted it. Now, let us start with "violence". Your position is negative, abstract, and ideological. Violence is compatible with victim acceptance:*
- (a) he may see his defeat as dictated by higher forces, or*
(b) celebrate his liberation from pursuing an impossible goal.
- JG: I concede some of that; and hasten to admit that my two-liners may be a little simplified! But if those "higher forces" are God, then acceptance would probably depend on the level of faith in both God's infallibility, and in God's use of might to indicate right. I doubt that this double faith is widespread today. One successor to God is the state, and the infallibility currently being constructed, "democratic states cannot be wrong", would serve as an incentive to join that club. That is good, but leads to the successor problem to "Christian countries cannot go to war with each other": "democracies cannot go to war with each other". The there are of either kind, and the more diverse structurally and culturally, the more likely that they still go to war.
- DA: *Maybe. But how about the second point, getting off the hook?*
- JG: I would tend to agree with you. But I could say: why not rather engage in a dialogue ante bellum to give up that goal?
- DA: *I'll give you three examples of military solutions: the US Civil War, the Second World War in Europe, the Pacific war. The slave states, German nazism and Japanese militarism were beaten, they accepted the defeat, and gave up their goals.*
- JG: I could argue that the real victor was war/military itself. Out of the first came a militarized United States making the conquests of 1898-1902; out of the second came United States, Soviet Union and China capable of fighting major wars.
- DA: *And out of the third?*
- JG: A major invisible consequence of defeat is thirst for revenge, returning to the issue. I doubt that we know the consequences of the colossal traumas suffered by Germany and Japan. Such things may show up generations later. However, I could strengthen your point. Sun Tzu type violence, as a potential not used, may work, but not Clausewitzian violence as the famous "continuation of politics with other means", in fact, "with all necessary means". This was used by the US-led coalition in the Gulf War. I doubt there was any acceptance. And for that reason also no sustainability.
- DA: *Maybe Sun Tzu is not quite diabolical enough for me?*
- JG: Clausewitz is certainly diabolical enough. Extrapolating from his assumptions, total elimination of the enemy, the Other, becomes rational. Your own goal will then prevail because there is nobody left as carrier of the goal standing in your way. Holocausts are the logical implications, as were colonialism, nazism, bolshevism. Whereas Sun Tzu for me opens for

UN Charter Chapter 6, peacekeeping, and for defensive defense, Clausewitz opens for Chapter 7, "peace enforcement". Many people today see violence as a last resort. But then, do all those things, and they are numerous, that would fall under the labels of empathy and creativity. I see our world short on those capabilities and long on violence, hence much too inclined to resort to violence.

DA: *What worries me more, however, is not your position on the instrumental aspect of violence, that it does not work, and is counterproductive because of loser revanchism and victor glory of which they may want more. I might agree on that. But that position is too rational. Where is the expressive part of it? Not "continuation of politics", that is already instrumental. My diabolic colleague is not Clausewitz, but untold numbers of human beings, probably mainly men, boys, as you might point out, who simply enjoy violence because of what it does to the victim, harming/hurting, and what it offers them: risk, danger, courage, sacrifice, heroism, dedication, comradeship! Not to mention the simple, pure desire to loot, to rape; you want it, you get it!*

JG: History provides more than enough data to prove you right on this one too. But my point is not that there is no danger of violence, and for even deeper reasons, like enacting archetypes in the collective subconscious. My point is to nip that violence in the bud, to do something about the conflict before it enters a violent phase with the untold suffering, the complications for the future, and the inattention to the root conflict. It is not because I disagree with you on these points, but because I agree that I find this so important. And everybody seems to agree on "preventive diplomacy". The TRANSCEND method is one approach.

DA: *Let's move on. You see violence as response to a blocked goal, a variation on the old frustration—aggression hypothesis. But is that not culture-dependent? How about withdrawal from conflict, simply refusing to take it on?*

JG: Sure. Or out of sheer apathy. My point is that when there is violence it is mainly because major goals are blocked. Other reactions may in the longer run be equally disastrous, however, like giving up, suffering endlessly from structural violence instead of standing up, turning basic needs into basic rights. In other words, the goal is not only absence of direct violence but also the absence of structural violence, social injustice.

DA: *But aren't you then justifying direct violence?*

JG: As a last resort when everything else has been tried, maybe. I am not an absolutist, but I am more interested in exploring that "everything else". And I would like to know how people who become violent themselves justify their violence. I would like to know those reasons, since I think they are among the unstated goals in conflicts, and should be taken seriously.

DA: *Give me examples of meta-conflict driving out root conflict.*

JG: Think back to the Cold War. The original conflict was about interests such as borders and who was master in Eastern Europe; and at a deeper level about ideology, capitalism vs socialism, democracy vs dictatorship of the proletariat, and the underlying world views of liberalism/marxism. However, the basic concern, debate, and conflict, was about the meta-conflict, over the means of violence in general and nuclear weapons and their carriers in particular. Governments as well as the peace movement had this as their central concerns most of the time since 1949. Interestingly, when finally the Helsinki conference 1973–75 started tackling the real issues, the root conflicts, with the famous three baskets of border problems, economic relations and human rights, seemed to evaporate. People started asking, are these differences really worth a major war? The dissident movement in Eastern Europe managed better than the peace movement to make root conflicts the real issue,

insisting on democracy and human rights. And nobody believed in the Cold War getting hot any longer. Transforming the root conflict then drove out the meta-conflict; that is the idea.

DA: *What troubles me is that you seem to disregard the violence, and the machinery of violence, in your insistence on the transformation of the conflict so that it becomes manageable for the parties without any violence. If you pay no attention to the meta-conflict and prefer to go around it, heeding Boeygen in Henrik Ibsen's Peer Gynt, your countryman jointly with Brand — I think he said "go around" when there is some major obstacle — won't evil forces be given time to organize and perfect their machineries? Don't you need disarmament, or, failing that, some balance of power, or failing that, their elimination through violence? Moreover, how can you expect parties to negotiate the root conflict if they have the Damocles sword of violence hanging over their heads?*

JG: Any focus on the means of violence strengthens those who control the means of violence by giving them veto power. The end of the Cold War was delayed by too little focus on issues, too much focus on armament/disarmament. The Cold War transformation was not at the arms control conference table. Insisting that IRA/ETA shall decommission, give up their arms as condition for real negotiation gives them veto power, and can also be used by others to block transformation. I would keep a keen eye on the violence potential, and speed up root conflict transformation.

DA: *I find your statement about "conflict illiteracy" arrogant. You will probably not put yourself in that category. By what right do you distribute such certificates to big power/ people?*

JG: The people entering international conflicts are usually statesmen pursuing the interests of their own country/region, or diplomats who are even paid to do so and are controlled by the instructions from the statesmen. Domestically the situation is better, Alternative Dispute Resolution is catching on. But much conflict work is dominated by a religious paradigm locating the roots of conflict inside humans rather than in social realities, and by a legal paradigm that is too dualistic, guilty or not. In addition people feel disempowered, ready to accept a division of labor between conflict managers and conflict managed. That is where the conflict worker enters, in principle.

DA: *But aren't all third parties trying to do that?*

JG: I have seen those who even seem to wait for violence to run its course, waiting for the conflict to "mature", the situation to become "ripe", with the parties begging on their knees for an intervention liberating them from the curse of violence. Then they move in to dictate the peace, sharing the spoils, like vultures circling, waiting for the fight on the ground to cease. A good surgeon is supposed to heal the body of the patient, not to mine it for kidneys, retinas, may be even a heart.

DA: *This sounds to me like "realism", you attribute motives to what you call big people/big powers that you generally belittle.*

JG: I am skeptical of people/powers who became "big" through violence because I am afraid it becomes addictive. "To he who has a hammer the world looks like a nail". Maybe the world would be better served by third parties or "conflict workers" with more peaceful track records?

DA: *Isn't that modest-sounding word "worker" little but a cover for a new profession seeking precisely what you profess to avoid, a status as conflict manager?*

JG: A problem, I agree. Maybe "conflict specialist" is a more adequate term, but "manager" definitely not. Remember that the conflict worker has no power in the sense of carrot or stick. He can neither reward nor punish. He can suggest, but acceptance has to come from

the inner conviction that the "positive anchor" is a better exit than the implications of the "negative anchor".

DA: *Aren't you then just manipulating them with your "anchors"?*

JG: Again a danger. The conflict workers should put his cards openly on the table: the search for a conflict transformation by peaceful means, through empathy and creativity aiming at acceptable and sustainable ways out. Whatever he suggests he is supposed to arrive at through deep dialogues with the parties, not about the parties. Those dialogues have a conscientizing function the sense of my late friend Paulo Freire; if not the conflict worker has been debating, trying to push his own views.

DA: *OK, OK. But you realize, of course, that this may also sound as just that much bla-bla while in the meantime the conflict worker emerges as the dominant force in the conflict?*

JG: I do. S/he should find ways of handling this, also to avoid becoming the common enemy rather than the common friend of the parties. One way is systematically to use question marks rather than exclamation signs. The judge will tell you the outcome as laid down by the law. The arbitrator will tell you the binding outcome as decided by him, having their agreement in advance. The mediator will put forward a non-binding outcome, take it or leave it. The conflict worker does less, and more, than that. He serves as a catalyst for a dialogue, first with the parties separately, then, if desirable, together. He may formulate visions not formulated by them, even suggest things they can do separately or together. But above all he tries to build them up, making them more empathic, nonviolent and creative, capable of moving ahead without any outside assistance.

DA: *And you do not call that an exercise of power?*

JG: Of course this is an exercise in power, but not of power. A bad professor wants to clone himself in students/assistants. A good professor tries to stimulate enough creativity for the students not to become disciples but to relate critically and constructively to their professor. Power-sharing through empowerment, in other words. The power we are talking about is normative/cultural power, not the carrot/remunerative/economic power of a trade treaty nor the stick/punitive/military power with sanctions, boycotts, "peace enforcement" around the corner.

DA: *But the fact remains that the conflict worker accumulates much more experience than the one who has been conflict worked on. And that experience can be converted into power.*

JG: No doubt about it. This is the way of all professions. And worse: he may become scholastic, reducing the conflicts and the parties to cases handled according to formulas he has developed, insensitive to the specificities of each case. Hopefully he will be criticized by colleagues and conflict parties, and be grateful for the warnings, early or even late.

DA: *But this idea of separating the parties, isn't that also a power strategy known as fragmentation? Instead of meeting them jointly, the conflict worker takes them on, one at the time?*

JG: When they come together at the table it is only physically, if the conflict is deep. They are divided by the conflict issues, and even more divided by the trauma meta-conflict and the trauma of inflicting traumas on others. What the conflict worker meets with are people reduced to much less than they could have been. His task is to build them up, to make them realize their own strengths, rethinking the conflict. In that process, eye-to-eye, they may also start criticizing the conflict worker, separately, and later on jointly, when or if they find each other. But it does not have to end that way. My experience is more positive: some kind of gratitude when some possible exits are indicated. New possibilities have emerged, for them to explore or act upon.

- DA: *But if a conflict worker uses empathy—nonviolence—creativity even to the point of disembedding and re-embedding the conflict, aren't you in fact turning their conflict in another direction? By what right do you launch new perspectives as points of reference, "anchors" as you call them?*
- JG: The conflict worker cannot impose any redefinition of the situation. But he can suggest. Anyone is entitled to do so.
- DA: *Nevertheless I have the feeling that you come like a saving angel, descending on the conflict, telling parties what to do!*
- JG: I try never to suggest anything that has not come out of dialogues with the conflict parties, with well-known actors, or with the less well-known. Processes are started in me, and in them. Out of that come proposals, perspectives.
- DA: *But why should you propose anything at all? Why not leave it to them, to the parties together, it is their conflict!*
- JG: You are right, that would be the ideal approach. The two parties seek each other, sit down at that famous table I try to make infamous, have dialogues with each other, and proposals not only flourish but are enacted. That would certainly be my first choice, and reasonable people in soft conflicts behave that way. In the real world, however, not everybody is reasonable, and not all conflicts are soft. They refuse to meet. If they meet, they shout at each other. If they do not shout, they hold back lest they are interpreted as yielding. If they propose anything, it may be to make the other look bad. If they should agree on something it may be a flat compromise satisfying nobody.
- DA: *You portray them as if they were me, in various shapes, all around the table, procrastinating, prevaricating!*
- JG: You are reasonable in comparison. We at least have some kind of dialogue. But let me ask you, what would you do?
- DA: *I am the one who does the questioning here, your task is to answer! And here is my next question: why not wait till they formulate the proposals themselves?*
- JG: I do, but not forever. They are not free to formulate proposals. They have constituencies sitting on their back. Sometimes they try to put ideas into my head with the hope that I will say it. The task of the outsider is to try to switch the discourse, to help them talk about the conflict in another way, like discussing how ex-Yugoslav republics could cooperate, how a recognized Palestinian state would relate to Israel, etc.
- DA: *Well, well. And all that without violence?*
- JG: If at all possible, yes. If reasonable proposals are found all over it is much more difficult to unleash the violence. If the media, and the civil society, people's organizations and local authorities surround the conflict parties with proposals with which, upon some reflection, they can live, even live together, violence and war look not only immoral, but stupid.
- DA: *But isn't this rather naive? There are enormous forces in the world, big people/big powers as you say, not to mention big capital. Aren't you just keeping the system going with a little repair work here and there? Isn't creativity rather small change relative to what big capital can put into armament?*
- JG: Creativity may work small miracles, nonetheless, if people learnt to trust themselves more. Moreover, don't let the big answers stand in the way of the small answers. Somebody badly

wounded in a traffic accident needs help, not brilliant analysis of a traffic engineer not to mention of the capitalist system with too much traffic. I might opt for all three approaches. There is the immediate answer, the medium term and the long term answers. Maybe we know better the immediate answers.

DA: *But aren't you then taking much of the fun away from those boys? Maybe they love a little violence once a while. Who said you are entitled to that? By what right?*

JG: Simply this: the majority wants creation and construction, not destruction. They want more than cease-fire. They want peace.

The 50 Training Units

Participants' Manual

Trainers' Manual

Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means
(the TRANSCEND Method)

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Conflict Workers

Participants' Manual
Trainers' Manual

Module **I** Units 1–5

1 An Emerging Profession

You enter this profession by involving yourself in (or working in) a conflict formation as an outside party to the conflict; invited or not, full time or not. What are your goals in the conflict, and your legitimacy?

- 1** as fellow human being you are party to human suffering anywhere, not because it may one day "escalate" beyond borders and hit you/your country, but because their suffering is yours;
- 2** as fellow human being your agenda is to reduce destruction and enhance the creative aspect of conflict;
- 3** you are independent, yourself; no hidden agenda, no hidden interests, no back-up economic/political power;
- 4** you bring in general conflict knowledge and skills; empathy, nonviolence, creativity; compassion; perseverance; no carrots and sticks, reward/promises, punishment/threats;
- 5** you may be short on local conflict knowledge but willing to learn from dialogues with inside participants, exchanging general for local knowledge, the general aspects for the unique aspects of any conflict, in the search for ways out.

Even if you belong to an organization, (inter)governmental or (inter)-nongovernmental, working in the field, you can be yourself. This has some impact on the term used to describe the work:

Wrong term : Conflict management / manager / executive / consultant.

proposal

Conflict/peace workers, like social workers are not on top of anybody. They should try to help and do an honest job, being good workers; not highly paid consultants. Even "mediator" (being in the middle, aiming at a compromise?), and "facilitator" (enhancing the conflict?) may be too limiting. Conflict and/or peace worker is more neutral. The French "animateur" is a good description.

justification

Given

- the interconnectedness of parties and goals in a globalizing world,
- the hidden intricacy and opportunity in all issues, and
- the means of violence easily available,

the world obviously needs thousands/millions of modest, competent conflict workers, carrying higher conflict/peace culture.

problem

There is the Scylla of not living up to the legitimation indicated above, and the Charybdis of having too much of a hidden agenda, including an agenda hidden to yourself.


1 An Emerging Profession

Maybe it should be pointed out what conflict work is **not**:

- It is not limited to an analysis of the situation.
- It is not limited to warnings shaped as predictions.
- It is not limited to speeches, lectures, articles, books.


Conflict work means entering a conflict, having focused dialogues with the parties, aimed at transforming the conflict together so that the parties can handle it alone, nonviolently and creatively.

By what right do people not directly concerned as inside actors or victims enter a conflict? Five answers are given (all such lists in the manual can be used for overheads).

 Discuss the answers with the participants. Do you agree? Do you live up to this? If not, what should or could be done about it? What other answers may be (more) helpful?

exercise

Obviously, in our shrinking and democratizing world conflicts call on everybody, not only those who have it as their political or professional job to be involved. In other words, there is a challenge to the old division of labor, assuming that conflicts somehow belong to statesmen and diplomats only. The term "conflict worker" expresses that challenge.

 How comfortable do you feel with the term conflict, or peace, worker? Any idea for a better term? Specialist?

exercise

The terms justification and problems appear for each unit in the manual, they could and should be discussed. How about the idea that globalization implies general participation in conflict work? And the idea that global democratization also implies the right and duty to participate actively in conflicts anywhere?

2 A Personal Profile and Self-analysis

You are about to enter a conflict. More likely than not you have only second-(third, fourth) hand knowledge. Ask yourself some personal questions before you enter. A check-list of 10 questions:

- 1 Motivation:** Why do I do this, for their sake, or mainly for my own, my promotion, my possible fame, reputation, experience?
- 2 General knowledge:** Do I really possess general insight into conflicts, or mainly unreflected folklore, "common sense"?
- 3 Specific/local knowledge:** Do I have enough knowledge to ask good questions, or am I unwilling to understand unique aspects?
- 4 Skills:** Do I have sufficient mental, speaking, listening skills (including silence!), or do I intend to impose own views?
- 5 Empathy:** Do I have sufficient personal maturity to feel the inner workings of Others, or do I tend to pre-judge and project?
- 6 Nonviolence:** Am I nonviolent in action, speech and thought, or do I easily lose my temper, becoming verbally violent?
- 7 Creativity:** Am I challenged by Conflict the Creator to come up with ideas, or do I only see Conflict the Destroyer?
- 8 Compassion:** Do I feel the potential or actual suffering of the victims of Conflict the Destroyer, or are they mere objects to me?
- 9 Perseverance:** Do I have the capacity to go on and on against the odds, or do I get hurt when "they" do not follow my advice?
- 10 Process:** Do I have the will and wish to improve, or rather a tendency to consider myself ready, complete, fully prepared?

Count your plus's (the first answer): "under 7" not good; "7-8" work on the minuses; "9-10" (if you are honest) fine, you sound ready as a conflict worker. You can always improve on all dimensions, you will find them rewarding in all human contexts.

justification

You are going to play a potentially important role in the life of others. You have an important task. No need to be super-human, but be prepared, be ready for the job, improve. The experience will also be tough on you.

problems

How do I know the true answer? About most of the 10 points you know, inside yourself. But then, ask others! Invite other conflict parties to tell you, don't be offended; you can take criticism, you can only grow. Moreover, there is a method: meditation. Do not enter any session as conflict worker without that inner dialogue to increase awareness of your strengths and deficits. Create an inside round-table discussion about the pros and cons of yourself, admitting own deficits.


2 A Personal Profile (Relation to Self)

The list of ten points picks up the points mentioned in Unit 1 above. Pay some attention to the idea that the conflict worker does not have to be a specialist on the local conditions, like local culture and structure. There are two reasons:

- 1 Very few people outside the local people are, including people from other parts of the same country, and those who are often know nothing else (the "area specialist"), becoming too narrow to see the context; and may know nothing about conflict;
- 2 You are going to enter a dialogue, which means give and take on both sides. A very good basis for equal exchange is that you bring in general conflict knowledge, and your local dialogue partners bring in specific, local knowledge.

That makes you equal and is a good basis for dialogues where you ask how this or that general idea would work, and they give local reasons for why or why not. If you were fully in command of both general and local knowledge you would be too overwhelming as an outside party!

But this raises a problem. After some time you will no longer be "innocent" on local knowledge, but probably know more than most, including most locals, in matters relating to the conflict. Your dialogue partners have been your informants. You may still ask questions, but they may sound hypocritical; just as likely locals will start asking you about the local situation. The solution may sound brutal, but there is something to it: time is up, you move on to some other conflict, possibly to come back when there is a newness to the situation that would make also you new. Like diplomats, conflict workers may have to be recycled. The goal is not to become a professor of area studies.

 As preparation, what do you think you should catch up on, what is your major deficit? Discuss with somebody who knows you well and wants to help you, not to put you down.

exercise

3 A Social Profile (Relation to Society)

Who are the conflict workers? Everybody, anybody, you and I. However, some seem to be more equal than others, as by these criteria:

- 1 Gender: women rather than men.** Women generally engage less in physical violence, are more sensitive to other human beings and their basic needs, less impressed by material and social structures, more holistic, less inclined to dominate the other party, better listeners. With men dialogues easily degenerate into debates, debates into verbal violence, etc.
- 2 Generation: older and younger rather than middle-aged.** Experience counts, so does idealism; particularly together.
- 3 Race: no difference, except as social relations.** Conflict workers of other races do not mix well with racists.
- 4 Class: middle class rather than upper class.** Upper classes may identify more with state, national and class elites. They may be trans-state/-national, but only in a very elitist way. Well educated people, middle class, middle income, with much interaction with other people might be more promising.
- 5 Nation: soft rather than hard nations.** No religion, no ideology is excluded, except the hard variety which excludes others and is intolerant of anybody with different faith.
- 6 Territory: small rather than big.** People from big states often take on the big stick habits of big powers. People from the capital city take on the habit of seeing peripheries as dangerous or under-administered. People from more modest places are more used to solving problems without armies. People from non-governmental organizations are also used to solving problems without police and money, in addition they are more world-encompassing.

ideal

A not-too-young woman, any race, middle class in status/income and education, inspired by a soft religion/ideology, from a small country, linked to municipalities, and to NGOs all over.


problems

To take this too seriously, and to take it too unseriously.

3 A Social Profile (Relation to Society)

Again, take these points neither too seriously, nor too unseriously. The most basic, hard conflicts in the world are in fact "managed" by people with the opposite profile: middle-aged men, white, upper class in status, income or education, often rooted in a very hard religion or ideology (and often unconsciously), more linked to the state, regional or world level than to the local level and the NGOs. Even if some of the six hypotheses may have to be modified this author's experience the last 40 years argue in favor of bringing in more people with the profile recommended But what really matters are the personal factors in Units 1 & 2.

On the other hand, good NGO experiences and connections are rather crucial. Governments are tied by the rules of the games, and the roles, sometimes deadly, they are playing. Above all, they are supposed to promote the country's self-interest which is not necessarily the same as peace. Exactly because what they do is potentially dangerous they may both overestimate what can be obtained with force, and be afraid of using that force. In fact, governments may leave where volunteers stay on. NGOs are also often more flexible, can allow themselves to draw on the whole world as a source of insight, not only on people and countries with the same political color. They can usually build coalitions more quickly than governments. They can reach beyond conflict borders, building civil societies. This, of course, has led many governments to work through NGOs, which then become ambiguous GNGOs, "governmental non-governmental organizations". But even they may be more flexible and be their government with a human face, maybe particularly when women are involved.

 Is this attitude patronizing to women? Is it essentialist, prejudicial/ discriminatory to men? How about the other dimensions, generation, race, class, nation, country? How about disregarding the social profile completely, focusing only on personality?

exercise

4 Relation to the Other, the Conflict Parties

The basic attitude to the **inside parties** in a conflict should be respect, even when you are unable to feel any sympathy, or to understand their cause intellectually. Consider the following:

They all want some goals very badly, otherwise the conflict would not be that serious in terms of their dedication, and in terms of possible consequences. Other parties are seen as standing in their way, blocking their goals. If that other party is as unwilling as they themselves to give up their goals, fully or partly, then withdrawal or compromise are blocked. If in addition, they are unable to transcend the conflict, "going beyond", exploring new exits, **they are stuck**. Like most humans they will tend to blame others, the parties standing in their way. Destructive attitudes come next, spreading from thoughts/wishes via words to acts, to get the other party out of the way. Violence, in short.

Nobody is immune to this, at home, at school, on the job. You should know it when you see it. But you have an advantage. Being an outsider to the conflict, the goals of the insiders are not that compelling. Hence, you are not stuck at that point, but in principle free to be creative, with them. Your task is to help release their creativity, and your own, through dialogue.

justification

A dialogue, the key instrument in this approach, presupposes mutual respect, as equal partners. Your task is to respect them, and to deserve their respect for you.

problems

Rather than respect, you may be tempted to:

- **psychiatrize**, seeing them as mentally ill, to be treated;
- **criminalize**, seeing them as morally wrong, to be punished;
- **idiotize**, seeing them simply as stupid, to be educated.


Doing this puts you outside the respectful approach recommended. Try to regain that respect for The Other. One day, The Other may be you.

4 Relation to Others, the Conflict Parties

At this point it is worth while remembering the standard attitudes people, all of us, tend to have to parties in a conflict. We see parties and we see their goals. Generally we identify more with one party (or set of parties) than the others, and generally more with one goal than the others. The formula is usually simple: we identify with the parties most similar to ourselves (in age, gender, race, class, nation, country/region) and with goals (religion, ideology) most similar to our own. And from identification wishing for them to win is a very short step.

In short, we dichotomize, divide the conflict formation into two parts because that is the easy thing to do, and treat the goals the same way. The only problem would be when the party(ies) we like tend(s) to have the goals we dislike and vice versa. But our mind usually protects us against such dilemmas by formulas like: this is only what he says, deeper down, what he really means is — —.

The conflict worker is actually asked to put aside all of this in favor of a more symmetric attitude to parties and goals, to listen patiently in the dialogues to their truths, probe, even protest, but not condemn and reject outright. Moreover, s/he is expected to see what happens to parties in a conflict as normal, one test being how s/he would have reacted, or did react, in a similar conflict.

 How does this work for a physician? Imagine s/he divides patients into likeable and not, favoring the former and rejecting the latter for any treatment. Somehow a physician has to take them all on, regardless of generation, gender, race, class, nation, territory. S/he has to try to help all, avoiding ideas like "this is what they deserve", "they have to suffer more before they are ripe for any treatment", "they are not yet mature".

exercise

5 Conflict Workers: And How About Objectivity?

It is often said that a conflict worker has to be objective, neutral. Good, but what does that mean? In selecting jury members, an assumption is that the person enters with no prior stand, but is ready to listen to evidence and arguments. The person must start as a **tabula rasa**, a blank slate, unexposed to the case in the media. But this presupposes a social isolation incompatible with the demanding work in the jury.

The weaker demand, "exposed to the case, but no stand", meaning a person who can be imprinted without being impressed, also defines a strange person. Rather, your task is to listen to all parties, and then be creative, maybe trying to favor them all at least up to some point. The modest term "worker" conveys this, the term "manager" does not.

The conflict worker should be close enough to all parties to have sufficient knowledge of the conflict, yet distant enough not to be too attached to some parties at the expense of others.

But more important is **objectivity in the sense of having explicit standards used to formulate opinions and proposals, such as basic human needs and basic human rights**. Not so good is to be objectivistic and simplistic, seeking an equidistant outcome in the middle ("mediator"). Compromise is usually not a creative outcome, as opposed to transcendence. Better play openly, with explicit standards, and search for something nonviolent, creative and constructive.

justification

The parties have a right to know who the conflict worker is, in the sense of knowing the basis for the stands taken. Such standards can and should be made explicit.

problems

The conflict worker will be judged in terms of background data like nation and state, gender etc. Explicit standards like nonviolence and creativity may be helpful. But they may also become a thought prison, insufficient to carry the burden of complex conflicts.

5 Conflict Workers: And How About Objectivity

The points made here will be taken up again later. There is a certain skepticism about the term "mediator" as it may indicate taking a position in the middle, meaning that compromise — neglecting withdrawal and above all transcendence — usually becomes the preferred outcome.

Mediator may also mean going back and forth between the parties, at the same table or not. This may be useful, but also may be not. It could also well be that the key to transformation of the conflict lies with one party, like when US whites abolished slavery or the Eastern bloc in the Cold War suddenly evaporated, imploded. What happened was not a compromise brought about by mediation; there was no negotiation, no agreement. One role or party disappeared.


Another point is objectivity as explicitness. This is a warning against being manipulative. The conflict worker should state what the basic values are, like "respect basic needs and basic rights", "avoid violence", "be creative". And the method: "dialogue", based on "empathy".

One possible anchoring point for conflict work (and also for development work) is basic human needs. A short list:

SURVIVAL	WELL-BEING	FREEDOM	IDENTITY
Death	Misery	Repression	Alienation

basic need
antonym

There should be no effort to rank them, giving one of them priority over the other as they are all basic, non-negotiable, rock-bottom. The conflict worker will not go much wrong if s/he stands up for all four for all parties in a conflict. This means being more concerned with the parties most in needs deficit, trying to transcend in their favor without creating needs deficits for the others. And any agreement that does not respect the basic need of the parties is a non-starter.

 Imagine you were a conflict worker in the times of slavery.

exercise

- What would objectivity mean?
- Being a "third party"?
- Neutrality?
- Compromise?
- Transcendence?
- What would you propose?

Dialogue

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Module **II** Units 6–10

6 The Conflict Workers' Tool

Dialogos (διαλογος), **through the word**, is the key method of conflict/peace workers. The method relates to harder approaches like psycho-analysis relates to psychiatry. The tool is the **word, logos**; not merely **speaking** the word, but **sharing** the word, together. A "dialogue" is a mutual brain-storming. A good model is the **conversation**: relaxed (watch the body-language!), enjoying the flow of words. Nobody talks more than X (= 60?) seconds at the time, listening, associating, not fighting. Another is the good academic **seminar/colloquium**: you are there to help others, arriving at insights together; insights that are nobody's property or trophy but belong to all—not to put them down, humiliate.

The story the parties tell, their truth, may be the most important story of their lives. **Listen**. Ask, probe, help, show respect. If you think you have the answer, and your job is merely to persuade these insane/criminal/ stupid people, then you are on the wrong track. An indicator of being on the right track is the ability to end your statements with question-marks rather than exclamation-signs. Another is your ability to learn. Never promise rewards or threaten with punishment. Your task is to facilitate their process toward conflict transformation, releasing their own insights, empowering them to be creative. Your method is cognitive and emotional, not the power of the stick (military) or the carrot (economic).

justification

Everything cannot be done through words and body-language. There are harder carrot/stick, "muscular" approaches; but not within this framework of soft conflict work, conflict transformation by peaceful means.

problems

There are two major pitfalls. One danger is that you actually promise rewards or punishment, in other words that you abandon the meeting of minds and spirits in search of exits. And another danger is the change from dialogue to debate about "who is right", trying to impose your own "solution". Your task is not to fight verbally with others, but to understand their truths, as deeply as they do themselves, and then search for an acceptable, sustainable outcome.

6 The Conflict Workers' Tool


The body-language is an important part of the dialogue, and that in turn depends on the setting. The chairs should be comfortable so that the bodies relax, not sitting upright, as if expecting tension, ready to run or fight. The chairs should not be facing each other as that indicates position—opposition, but rather be parallel as if they are looking together for, or at, some distant goal, with a slight angle for easy eye-contact.

For a verbal exchange really to be a dialogue neither party should have too definite ideas about any conclusion, their own or what they might hope would be the conclusion of the others. Always remember that the dia in "dialogue" does not stand for "two" so the dialogue is open to any number that can be accommodated, comfortably, in a conversation; probably not more than seven. There might not even be a conclusion, the process being more important than the outcome. But the proof that a real dialogue has taken place lies in the feeling of having been enriched and a shared wish to continue. Try to end the session with some justified optimism.

For an example of a non-dialogue, see any one of Plato's dialogues, not reading all the wisdom that flows from Socrates' mouth, but reading what "the other guy" is saying:

- Yes, Socrates.
- So right, Socrates.
- Now I understand, Socrates.

And so on. The problem is that many people have Socrates as a dialogue model without reflecting on what that means: a smart way of getting your point across, using the form of a dialogue for debating purposes.

 Try, in pairs, to dialogue without debating. Find a topic where neither of you has a strong stand, then try to move on to a more controversial topic. Try again. And then again. Not so easy?

What kind of topic was more, less amenable to dialogue?

exercise

7 Separately, or With All Parties Around the Table?

What is recommended here is not to bring the “parties” together. Sooner or later they may have to meet, but do not yield to the diplomat/politician obsession with “bringing them to the table”. Here are some of the many reasons:

- 1 The table may serve as a continuation of the war with verbal means, passing from physical violence to verbal violence, from shooting to shouting, from root conflict to meta-conflict.
- 2 The parties are under double negotiation pressure, from the other parties, and from their constituencies or superiors over mandates.
- 3 In that setting any speculation, any sign of creativity, may be interpreted as weakness, and hence not be forthcoming.
- 4 A major danger is that this verbal replay of military logic may be used by “third parties”, such as big powers to dominate the stale-mate — and they often “chair” that verbal battle-field.
- 5 The table may also turn participants into hypocrites engaging in a competition of self-blame and extravagant offers.
- 6 The argument that they have to learn to live with each other presupposes living together as an outcome, when separation, or one party doing something that makes the conflict evaporate (like in Eastern Europe fall 1989) may be far better.

Rather, the conflict worker should sit down with one party at a time, probing (Socrates!), imaging futures together, not negotiating. The task is to understand and help liberate the creativity of that party, and the presence of any other party may impede that process. This should be done with all parties, one at the time, preferably at the same time, which would call for a group of conflict workers.

justification

Bringing parties to the table under inspired chairmanship is only one approach among many. The give-and-take aiming at compromise outcomes is silver; creativity to go beyond (“transcend”) is gold. A cooperative/creative atmosphere does not easily emerge among conflict parties afraid of looking weak, or simply hating each other.

problems

Of course any party will ask, “how do the others react to proposals of this kind?” You may serve as go-between, shuttle; you may encourage direct contact; you may say “hold it, let us develop this further”. But you should never reveal the positions of other parties, unless they want you to do so.


7 Separately, or With All Parties Around the Table?

Please note that this is not a general attitude against tables, only against the “tablomania” of bringing the parties to the table much too early. Parties may not be ready for the table. There are good reasons why family therapists tend to talk first with the family members one at the time. The table may give an illusion that something is happening, even offering a concrete photo opportunity, whereas in reality it is a setting for parallel monologues, often violent and uncreative.

On the other hand, the table is a public space with the advantage that whatever happens is visible and audible to everybody. But: exactly in order to escape from that they meet bilaterally, in corridors and elsewhere, and the argument would be that also meeting with an experienced conflict worker might be even more productive.

Many parties around a table may be “managed” by one chairperson, who then appropriately can be called a “conflict-manager” (possibly a major reason for the table format). Many parties in dialogues with conflict workers might call for the same number of conflict workers as parties, with each one specializing in one party according to the empathy levels. One advantage would be the possibility of initiating dialogues with all parties at the same time, not one after the other which may raise the suspicion that the first party sets the agenda to his own advantage.

Another advantage is to be able to specialize in parties. Obviously, the conflict workers would have to operate as a team, sharing insights. And they might have to face some of the root conflict tension, but at a lower level; like when a Castro (envoy) negotiating with the Tupac Amaru has a dialogue with a Pope (envoy) negotiating with the Peruvian government from the example above (p. 13, *The Transcend method at a glance: an example*).

 Try some role-playing, in exactly those four roles. Try to empathize, write it up as a little skit, even perform it.

exercise

8 Reflections on the Setting

Basically the setting can be anywhere, at any time. Ideally, it should be uplifting for the spirit, pleasant to the eye (but not disturbingly beautiful), to the ear (not noisy, not dead silent; good music may be added), to smell and taste. Shared meals with good food and drinks are excellent, so are shared walks. Bringing all conflict parties and "their" conflict workers together **might** also be good, if used with care. But they may not be ready for it; the dialogues may not have come far enough.

Concentration is the rule, listening attentively to the voice of the Other, and to the inner voices in Self. There are ways of judging when a party is "ripe" with ideas, and willing to share them. Time should ideally be open-ended. A clear time limit is no good; it may give a sense of failure if the partners are unable to fill the time allotted productively.

If others are present (like the host, the organizer, people who want to be in on whatever happens, the researcher in search of data for a thesis, for hypotheses, or for teaching material), the dialogue partners have a right to know who they are, why they are there, and to ask them to leave if they are found obtrusive. As the model is a free-flowing conversation, such people generally do not belong. The conversation partners should be free to fantasize, and be liberated from any pressure to posture for outsiders, including for journalists, let alone PhD candidates collecting data. Recording, note-taking should also be avoided as unbecoming in a good conversation.

justification

To facilitate the free flow of ideas and the emergence of new ideas, to discourage degeneration into debates, and posturing for other parties, and for third parties of any kind.

problems


The pressure to come up with something new may be difficult to live with; hence celebrate even small ideas.

8 Reflections on the Setting


Hotels are generally not recommended if there are other guests; they may also have too many features that distract attention. Arguments can be made for retreats, even monasteries of religious orders, also to inspire respect for the occasion. Anything reminiscent of negotiating tables should be avoided in this phase of the transformation. Also, do not make the context too beautiful. This may be spiritually uplifting and create a sense of achievement, but that feeling may be more due to the context than to any text they may produce, and may even evaporate quickly.

Using the brainstorming and the seminar analogies, particularly when there are several parties and conflict workers present, certain simple technical tools are useful. Black/white-boards or paper on the walls, plenty of chalk or felt-pens, in the hands of everybody, not only of the chairperson, would make ideas more visible to all when the conversation starts producing ideas. Remember, it is limited how much any participant can have available for productive use in his/her head at any time.

Relations among ideas can be introduced by numbering them, grouping them, drawing arrows and what not. If the ideas are put on cards the operation can even be done physically, e.g., by a politician and a conflict worker kneeling down on the floor together, sorting cards. Or even using a table!

 Design, with a drawing a good setting for a good dialogue, making it simple, inexpensive, but attractive.

exercise

 Have a dialogue about such designs in order to develop more and better designs, and use blackboard/flip-over and cards to organize the ideas. Better think it through in advance; there may be little time when a conflict gets very hot.

exercise

9 The Deep Social Perspective

The feudal ages are still with us. War is still seen as elite responsibility: if wars originate in the minds of elites then it is in the minds of elites that wars come to an end. All wrong. The passive subjects of those days are today's potentially active citizens, at least as conscious and educated as most diplomats and statesmen, demanding their part of the responsibility for war and peace. The conflict worker works with people, elites and the levels in-between, like level 3–5 from above. S/he would go to the **State** (legislative and executive branches), to **Capital** (key business people are very important), to **Civil Society** (NGOs, academic, religious, ideological institutions), to **Media**; searching everywhere to liberate creative transformation ideas.

justification

The idea that conflict work is the monopoly of leaders/elites is incompatible with democratic ideals of people's participation; with the creative participation of everybody. We are all motivated, as victims or beneficiaries of conflict.

problems

To summarize/anticipate pitfalls and proposals:

proposal

Wrong approach: "get the parties to the table!"

The "table" may come at the end of a process preparing the parties for a new beginning, through empathy—nonviolence—creativity. The conflict worker is a dialogue partner to all; not using sticks and carrots to force upon them a "solution".

proposal

Wrong approach: tables bringing together leaders/elites only.

Let 10,000 dialogues blossom, among elites and people. Let ideas come together as a reservoir for peace, as a Gross National Idea Pool (GNIP).

proposal


Wrong approach: leaders signing negotiated/ratified agreements

Useful as an element in a peace process; but the approach is elitist, even feudal. Better: a negotiated peace process with popular referendum, review and reversibility.

The concrete problem is that the three points mentioned here as "wrong approaches" are so deeply ingrained in our conflict and peace culture that people have difficulties seeing alternatives. Aim at deep dialogues in addition to tables, at people in addition to elites, at structure and culture not only words.

9 The Deep Social Perspective

The conventional approach to conflict is based on a shallow social perspective, bringing in only top elites. An example was/is the conflict in and over Yugoslavia, which in Dayton, Ohio, brought in only three persons (the presidents of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia), managed by a US diplomat. The deep social perspective would bring in many groups from civil society, not only statesmen and national leaders. The result would be many parallel dialogues. Thus, in the case of Yugoslavia the persons selected for the table were mainly "war-lords". Neglected were the "peace ladies" from all parts of Yugoslavia and people in general, who met many places in Yugoslavia having their own dialogues, in villages, in cafes, restaurants. Ideas emerging in such meetings were left unrecorded, uncommunicated and unattended, meaning an enormous waste of human energy, focusing on maybe not-so good ideas by a handful of male top politicians only.

 How would you make the ideas from hundreds, even thousands of dialogues visible and audible informatically? How would you organize an electronic flow of ideas, back to society?

exercise

Here are some proposals for discussion:

- have conflict workers animate/stimulate the dialogues, and record systematically the ideas that are forthcoming;
- arrive at a standard format, like Idea/ Justification/ Problems;
- use soft steering of the dialogues to get at all three;
- let all ideas flow together at some central point;
- many ideas will essentially be identical, arrive at a common formulation that covers them well (but keep the originals);
- other ideas may be not-so-good (but keep them for later?);
- publish the rest, give prizes, and celebrate the gross national idea pool.

10 The Long Time Perspective

Deep conflict work is very labor- and time-intensive, so politicians, military and merchants make short-cuts.

Politicians may tend to dictate "solutions" over the heads of people to survive politically, particularly in democracies, winning the next election.

Military may tend to force military "solutions" quickly to survive militarily, to bring soldiers home for Christmas, etc.

Merchants may tend to buy "solutions" quickly to survive economically, e.g., when shareholders demand profits.

Better than dictating, forcing, or buying "solutions" would be combining deep conflict analysis with the basic human needs and rights of common people in conflict. The goal is to arrive at **acceptable and sustainable outcomes**, not only to leaders/elites, but too many people, so much time may be needed. Like in all politics the problem is not only whether leaders agree, but whether people agree with their leaders.

a gardening
metaphor

- 1 sowing the seeds: developing ideas, offering images, perspectives;
- 2 watering, weeding: watching, nourishing, sifting, and nursing
- 3 harvesting: when ideas have matured sufficiently in sufficiently many people.

justification

Conflict work by the **kshatriya** (military) and the **vaishya** (merchants) is very often by the stick and the carrot, less by reasoning (arguments, and data). Politicians negotiate and reason, but from above. More conflict work has to be done by intellectuals / professionals / religious people (**brahmins**) and by common people (**shudra**) with no particular *déformation professionnelle*.

problems


Obviously, a major problem is that creativity may take too much time; hence the need to nourish an ongoing process, and to build on the optimism emanating from new, transcending ideas. Changing speech, discourse, may already transform the conflict.

10 The Long Time Perspective

There are two arguments for extending the time perspective. Elites are too much in a hurry because of pressing demands for political, military, economic survival. People are also in a hurry, striving for sheer physical survival. But they are more interested in lasting solutions. Violent conflicts will generally bring less benefit to people than to elites who can convert violence into political prestige, military fame or economic profit. People, counting women, the young and the old, prefer nonviolent and creative outcomes. And they take time. Start now! To wait for a conflict to "mature" is the perspective of middle-aged and old males.

On the other hand, conflicts are complex, there are many factors at work as will be clear when the units about conflict and violence; theory and practice, have been considered. Good work takes time; with less time chances are that the work will be sloppy. Moreover, for a deeper transformation to emerge some creativity has to be forthcoming, and the more creative a new idea, the more time will be needed for people to get used to the idea. In short: **quantity of time for quality of conflict work**. The price paid for creativity is that people need time to get used to new ideas, and even more time to implement them.

The question is whether that time is available. If violence has broken out time is in short supply because of the suffering involved. But the argument here is, of course, not to wait for violence to erupt, cutting down on the time horizon and also on the conflict perspective, focusing on the meta-conflict even to the point of forgetting the underlying conflict.

 Find an example of a conflict in the world today where in your mind conflict work should start right away, also to prevent the conflict from entering Phase II, violence.

exercise

Conflict Theory

Participants' Manual
Trainers' Manual

Module **III** Units 11–15

11 Attitude—Behavior—Contradiction Triangle

The centerpiece of conflict work is conflict, a word often used, but poorly understood. Somewhere there is an incompatibility or **Contradiction**: one goal stands in the way of another. Somebody wants a piece of territory, somebody wants to control the state, somebody wants to be right; and then somebody else wants exactly the same. But **Attitude** and **Behavior** are equally basic: **Conflict = A + B + C**.

There will be **hatred/distrust** of Other standing in the way, or of Self as **apathetic/indecisive**. **Violence, physical or verbal**, against that hated Other or despised Self may develop. Violence introduces a **meta-conflict**—like cancer leading to metastasis—over the contradiction between being unmolested and using violence to inflict harm, and over winning. Meta-conflicts take on their own lives, overshadowing the root conflict in the incompatibility, contradiction.

But in any contradiction there are also potentials for new relations to Other (like sharing the territory; using democracy to decide who has the power; agreeing that Truth is a process, developed in a dialogue). There is the danger of Conflict the Destroyer, but also the promise of Conflict the Creator. The ABC-triangle may become a hatred—violence—block/stuck triangle: all parties get stuck; polarization and escalation of violence set in. But it may also become a triangle of challenge, cooperation and openings. The task is to pry this triangle open, encouraging an attitude of openness, a behavior of restraint, and much, much creativity.

problems

Anticipating a little, terminology is important to avoid crucial errors:

proposal

Wrong use of words: conflict=violence.

Never identify conflict with violence, both concepts are much richer. The conflict **may** develop a meta-conflict over direct violence, but before and after structural/cultural violence may be even more insidious as they are less visible. Conflicts also have positive aspects. Such formulas often come from people who fear seeds of change.

proposal

Wrong use of words: truce/cease-fire=peace.

Never identify the truce ending the direct violence, the meta-conflict, with peace; such talk may even conceal the root conflict. "Peace", or "peace process", means reduction of all kinds of violence so that conflicts can be handled more nonviolently and creatively in the future.


11 Attitude—Behavior—Contradiction Triangle

The ABC-triangle can serve as a check-list, always remembering (also see the chapter *Conflict theory and practice: a perspective*) that **Conflict = A + B + C**. Many of the pitfalls in bad conflict work derive from the failure to observe and practice that rule. Thus, to spell out:

A focus on attitudes only leads to the assumption that the Problems derive from hateful or distorted minds badly in need of religious/ideological conversion, psychotherapy and/or peace and conflict education; blind to the circumstance that even the most normal mind can kill or tolerate killing when the contradictions frustrating people just go on and on. Christianity may have made slaves less hateful, but slavery did not disappear for that reason. This is the liberal fallacy, only trying to foster the right mind.

A focus on behavior only is very frequent since this is where the violence is located. Taming people may sweep the violence, the “trouble”, under the carpet, making it less visible, but it may also have no impact on the underlying contradiction. This is the conservative fallacy, focusing on disciplined behavior only.

A focus on contradiction only, based on social engineering, runs the risk of increasing hatred and violence if the approach to contradiction is violent. This is the Marxist fallacy, only trying to overcome the contradiction between labor and capital, regardless of the attitudinal and behavioral consequences, ultimately destroying the fruits of social engineering — like the Soviet Union, for instance.

 Discuss the concepts of peace-making (more attitudinal), peace-keeping (more behavioral) and peace-building (more directed at the underlying contradictions) in this perspective. How can those three fallacies be avoided by combining these three activities?

exercise

12 A Golden Rule — Expand the Number of Parties & Goals

A conflict has parties, and the parties have goals. When goals are incompatible (contradictory), then we have issues, with accompanying patterns of attitudes and behavior. The sum total of all of this is the **conflict**.

The total set of parties with their goals is the conflict formation. Mapping the conflict formation is central to conflict work. By recognizing an expanded number of stakeholders and their goals, one expands the possible number of creative combinations of interests and goals, which can lead toward solutions and transformed relations. Golden Rule: a [2,1] conflict with only two parties and the same goal (like territory, control, victory) exists only in abstract models. Real life conflicts are more complex: there are more parties, more goals. Powerful parties with heavy stakes in the outcome often present themselves as "third parties", being "neutral/objective", hiding their real goals. They may portray conflicts in the periphery as "ethnic conflict" between two violent groups who "hate each other", the center playing the roles as peace-keepers, peace-makers, peace-builders, judges. They project [2,1] on something more complex and more promising.

justification

A map has to be adequate to know with whom to have a dialogue. Leaving out the most powerful, pretending that the conflict is "internal", "intra-state", may be prudent not to incur their wrath. But then better have no illusion of real transformation.

problems

Again, we have to be careful with terminology to avoid pitfalls:

proposal

Wrong term: "Third party".

"Outside parties"; not assuming there are only two insiders, implied by the word "third". Most conflict formations are complex (m actors/parties, n goals; m+n far above 2+1=3). M+1st party assumes only one outside party; there may be more.

proposal

Wrong approach: Identifying the conflict with **where**.

Draw no geographical borders. The conflict may have roots and repercussions anywhere. Never identify the conflict with **where** it shows up as violence, that may even be a well selected conflict arena. Do not fall into the trap of believing that conflict work should only be done where the violence, the meta-conflict, shows up.

proposal

Wrong approach: Identifying the conflict with **when**.


Draw no historical borders. The conflict may have roots and repercussions "anywhen". Never identify the conflict with **when** it shows up as violence; there is always an aftermath, and a "premath" where causes/conditions were taking roots. Conflict work is needed before, during and after the meta-conflict, the violent phase.

12 Parties and Goals; Elementary/Complex

A good way of mapping a conflict **formation** is by asking: "who has a stake in the outcome"? Remember to look high and low, over the mountains and across the ocean, and very near by, right now, in the past and in the future. Do not be confused by where the conflict is enacted, the **arena**, by whether the enactment is violent or not. Important conflict roots may be anywhere.

Then there is the follow-up question: "what **kind** of stake do they have?" Remember to look not only at the political and military goals, but also at the economic (including ecological), cultural, social, personal (ambitions!) etc. goals.

Adequate mapping of a conflict is a highly political exercise, at the same time as an adequate mapping of the conflict formation is essential. Moreover, there is the strong temptation to fall into the trap of the [2,1]-discourse, two parties fighting over one and the same goal, thereby losing not only the analytical handle on the conflict but also important levers for possible transformation. The [2,1] conflict is so naked, there is so little to play on, like in a bitter language conflict in a country with only two language groups. When the conflict is more complex constructive deals can be made, like X yielding to Y on one goal, Y to Z on a second, and Z to X on a third (solution by triangulation, easily extended to quadrangulation).

 Discuss, and try to arrive at consensus about the conflict-formation for the "Gulf conflict", the "Yugoslavia conflict", the "Middle East conflict", the "Guatemala conflict", the "Great Lakes conflict". First list the parties, then make a matrix with all parties vertically and horizontally, identify the issues, and understand the goals in the light of the issues.

exercise

13 Basic Needs, Basic Rights, Basic Conflicts

A **basic conflict** is over basic goals, and one type of basic goals is basic needs. Basic needs are non-negotiable. They vary from place to place, and over time, but as a rule of thumb we can identify these four classes of needs as human requisites:

- 1 Survival**, as opposed to death; individually, collectively;
- 2 Well-being**, essentially meaning food, clothes, shelter, health;
- 3 Identity**, meaning something to live for, not only from;
- 4 Freedom**, meaning having some choices for the other three.

Some of these basic needs are institutionalized as human rights.

Needs/rights are felt, insulted, satisfied in **individuals**; deep insults are deeply felt. Genders and generations, races and classes, nations and states as groups do not feel needs. But they may define interests, like being No.1, **gloire**. Basic interests include basic needs of group members, and they may lead to basic collective conflicts, for instance over scarce water resources. Basic conflicts tend to be more violent, protracted, more resistant to transformation.

justification

Needs catalogues serve double purposes:

- 1** To understand when conflicts become hard: when they are over basic goals like basic needs, such as the need for water, sex, love, recognition.
- 2** As a guide for the transformation of the conflict: basic needs must be preserved, even enhanced, for all parties; they cannot be negotiated away.

problems


Do not assume that some of these classes of needs are lower and some are higher, and that the lower have to be satisfied before higher needs enter the scene. People are known to sacrifice their lives for their religious and cultural identity (e.g., the right to use their own language); and to sacrifice well-being in the struggle for freedom. Rather, listen to **their** definition of **their** needs and their priorities right now. Do not superimpose your own, or some author's, ideas.

13 Basic Needs, Basic Rights; Basic Conflicts


Basic needs serve to explain why some conflicts become so **hard**, so protracted (long-lasting), so basic and intractable. The answer suggested is very simple: because they are basic in the sense of being over basic goals (values and interests).

But what is a basic value? A reasonable definition would probably be something an actor cannot continue to live without, a requisite, a *conditio sine qua non*. Such values are known as **basic human needs** at the **individual** level, and the suggestion made is that they can be divided into four classes that are meaningful within all cultures. At the **collective** level the basic goals are known as **basic interests**. And **one** very legitimate basic interest is suggested: the interest of the collectivity of having the basic needs of its individual members satisfied. Thus, a country may define food for the inhabitants as a basic (national) interest. But they may also define the power of the country the same way, satisfying only those who derive identity from citizenship in a powerful country and membership in a glorious nation.

A good example right now would be water: there is a basic human need for water, hence a basic interest for the state and the nation of which the individuals are members. Thus, Arab countries depend on water from four rivers (the Nile, the Litany/Jordan, the Euphrates and the Tigris) controlled by non-Arab states: Ethiopia, Israel, and Turkey. A very problematic situation arises when the antagonists have the faucets.

 What kind of outcome would you suggest for conflicts over basic needs/interests, like over water?

exercise

 Imagine air becomes as problematic as water, what would you propose as an outcome?

exercise

14 Withdrawal, Compromise & Transcendence

While real life conflicts are complex, inside that complexity elementary conflicts with two parties over one and the same goal can be identified. In elementary conflicts there are, as mentioned, always five outcomes worth identifying, as they may serve as anchoring points for thinking, speaking and acting in conflict. They are:

- 1 Victory for one:** one party prevails, the other gives up;
- 2 Victory for the other:** the other party prevails;
- 3 Withdrawal:** both parties give up their goals (for some time);
- 4 Compromise:** both parties give up something, gain something;
- 5 Transcendence:** the situation is redefined; both gain more than they lose.

In a **soft conflict** one or both parties is willing to yield, at least for the time being. In a **hard conflict** the goals are non-negotiable, and violence may ensue. The only approach is to try to transcend, to "go beyond", to find something new. Parties get stuck because they have difficulties getting outside the narrow perspective defined by their own goals. Your task is to get them unstuck. In doing so you may discuss with them the possibility of soft approaches. But they may tend to insist that their goal is basic and that the other side will never yield except when forced to do so. Your task is not to persuade them that the conflict "really" is soft (if so, the conflict would probably have evaporated long ago); but to help them explore new approaches, "going beyond" creatively, transform.

justification

To transcend is the most demanding, and at the same time also the most rewarding approach. As a result not only is the destructive aspect of conflict avoided or reduced; the constructive aspect can be realized by breaking new ground.

problems

There is the risk of discarding soft approaches without being able to come up with transcending ideas.

14 Withdrawal, Compromise & Transcendence

The term “outcomes” for conflicts is neutral. But in the description there is an implicit ranking of the outcomes.


At the bottom are [1] and [2], one side prevails, through violence or not, with nothing to the other side. A poor outcome.

Then come [3] and [4], withdrawal and compromise, because they essentially bring in nothing new. Withdrawal means “wait a little” (which may be forever), and compromise essentially means dividing something, assuming that something to be divisible, leaving nobody satisfied.

On top comes [5], transcendence, which means bringing in something new (obviously the origin of the name “TRANSCEND”, and the method); not exactly what the conflict parties had as goals. Ideally this something new changes the situation so that the parties actually get more than they wanted, or get something which makes what they originally fought for less interesting.

They wanted a piece of land, ended up with a condominium, and find themselves not having the land monopoly they wanted, but with full access, and in addition with something else: peace, no threat of external war, and with promising economic cooperation. They wanted to dominate a state as the leading nation, and find themselves short of that, sharing power with all nations, but with inner peace and with new openings because of the relations those other nations have to their nationals in diaspora in other countries.

They wanted to prove themselves right in a debate and find themselves in fascinating dialogues in a joint search that is mind-expanding for all parties. And so on. And so forth.

 Define a conflict, maybe one you know from first hand. What corresponds to the five outcomes mentioned? Could you imagine more than one way of transcending?

exercise

15 Before—During—After Violence/Creativity

Our focus on violence (justifiable, given the destructive consequences, visible as well as invisible) has made us think of conflicts in three stages: **before, during and after violence** (there is a similar way of talking about disease: before, during, after the symptoms). An alternative way of thinking about conflict, in no way excluding the former, would be **before, during and after creativity**. (For diseases: before, during and after taking command over one's own health).

The conflict worker has to be creative all the time, before, during and after violence, at best creative enough to avoid more violence. Of course, the aftermath of violence may well be the "premath" of a new phase of violence. The real world defies simple, linear images. There is important conflict work to be done in all three stages. The mainstream focus is usually relative to the meta-conflict:

- **before violence:** violence prevention; removing/reducing causes of violence/war (collective violence).
- **during violence:** violence reduction, intercession, intervention
- **after violence:** reconstruction, reconciliation and resolution.

This corresponds well to peace-making, -keeping, -building. But all types of conflict work should be done in all stages. More particularly, a very basic thesis of this entire approach to conflict and violence is that **there is no alternative to nonviolent and creative conflict transformation**, or "resolution" as it is often called when a conflict is less acute, less hard. Violence solves nothing, only breeds new violence for revenge/revanche or more "sweet" victory that will show up later — and illusions.

justification

It is useful to have some idea of where we are in the conflict cycles. They flow, like (χρονος) **khronos** time. But there are also cutting points, (καιρος) **kairos** time, when time seems to stand still, like the first and last act of violence. Conflict is drama, and the conflict worker has a role to play.

problems

Do not take the two divisions too absolutely, and be sensitive to other divisions.

15 Before—During—After Violence/Creativity

Let us take up that last point about “maturity”. Very frequently politicians use the term “time is ripe/unripe”, meaning “time has come/not yet come” for intervention of some kind, like offering to mediate, starting negotiation, launching a peace-keeping operation, starting reconciliation.

No doubt there is some reality to this before—during—after: these four types of peace-related activities are easier under some conditions, and more difficult under other. There is the temptation to wait till the conditions are judged to be more propitious.

But what does that mean in practice? Does it mean waiting till one party, the party least favored by potential mediators, shows signs of yielding? Does it mean waiting till there has been so much violence that the parties get disgusted and want an end, any end, to it all? Does it mean that so much time has past that nobody fully remembers the agony, the suffering, and reconciliation comes more easily? In such cases maybe we should not talk about time being ripe or the conflict being mature, but rather about politicians who are not up to their job and try to make the task easier for themselves? How many people have to be killed before they take the conflict seriously? And who are they to judge, not themselves suffering the agony of being in the conflict arena? In short: maturity is any time, now, here. Do not wait.



How do you feel?

Can you bring in some examples?

How do you convince people that the matter is urgent enough at any time, before violence because the conflict diverts social and personal energy from more constructive activity; during the violence because violence hurts, harms, wounds, kills; after the violence because the traumas eat up their hearts (and brains)?

exercise

Conflict Practice

Participants' Manual
Trainers' Manual

Module **IV** Units 16–20

16 Empathy—Nonviolence—Creativity Triangle

To get ahead, dialogue is the tool. **Empathy, nonviolence** and **creativity** are the conflict workers' approach to ABC-triangles. These are the alternative mind-sets s/he should try to convey to the inside parties instead of violent conflict cultures, violent behavior, and the sense of being blocked. This is not done by preaching, but by practice. The work now gets more difficult.

Empathy is the capacity for deep understanding, cognitively and emotionally, of the Other, of the logic driving that party. One model is an **actor** studying a "part" (here: a "party"), to the point of being able to enact it. No sympathy is demanded, but sufficient respect for Other's truth to try to understand to the point of being able to enact it.

Nonviolence is the double capacity of resisting temptations to engage in (or recommend) violence; **and** of proposing concrete nonviolent exits from a hardened conflict, partly taken from reservoirs of experiences from the past, partly generated as new ideas.

Creativity is the capacity to go beyond the mental frameworks of the conflict parties, opening for new ways of conceiving of the social relation in the conflict formation.

justification

The whole idea is to pry open the iron casting around the ABC-triangle as the conflict hardens: hatred, violence and block. The conflict worker enters from the outside with the explicit goal of trying to change the way the conflict is approached. This is not done by preaching or by converting parties, but by practicing the ENC-triangle. Far from easy.

problems


Empathy is easily blocked by too much antipathy; nonviolence by ignorance of what has been done and can be done; and creativity by being the unwitting, consenting prisoner of the thinking of past counter-productive paradigms/discourses. Hence, this is where intensive training has to take place.

16 The Empathy—Nonviolence—Creativity Triangle

Let us take up that point about training. The problem is that this particular combination, empathy-nonviolence-creativity is taught nowhere in the world. As usual, conflict and peace work are the victims of unfortunate divisions in our societies. The people who are best on empathy are probably artists, religious people and psychologists; the people knowledgeable in the field of nonviolence are few and far between; the people who are creative are probably artists, architects, engineers and scientists in a very limited way; in some cases politicians. People are divided, so is the training. None of them has the skill of the other.

If we go by gender, and risk some gross simplifications, women may be better than men on empathy and nonviolence; men better on creativity. Generation, race and class are probably less related to the ENC-triangle. But nation certainly is.

One obvious solution, or at least approach, would be to set up a conflict worker team so that the members complement each other where these particular capabilities are concerned. One difficulty is that they may not necessarily like each other, respect each other or work well together, meaning that much of the energy would go into solving the inner tensions of the conflict worker team. So better train everybody in all three skills.

 If a team is constituted by bringing together E-, N- and C-specialists, should they work together with one conflict party, or should they be brought in one after the other? In parallel, or in series, to use a physical metaphor? (Example of a series: you go for a diagnosis to a hospital and they send you along a track from one specialist to the other; X-ray, blood test, urine, etc. Or: one nurse does it all.)

exercise

17 Empathy to Soften Attitudes

The problem is not to understand how **you**, a conflict worker, would have (re-)acted in the shoes of the conflict party. Your reactions are even uninteresting (except to yourself as a mental experiment). What matters is how **they** (re-)act, and how well you understand why. That process of deep understanding will elicit deep emotions in yourself, both antipathy and sympathy.

Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner (to understand is to forgive) expresses a part of this. But you will probably feel the strong poles of rejecting and accepting the conflict party entirely, including oscillating between the poles. If you give in to such feelings then you react like an inside party. Human, all-too-human, but not your task.

What is recommended is to give in to neither sentiment, but to try to identify goals that are legitimate according to more universal criteria; sometimes not even articulated by the party. Examples of legitimate goals might include Hitler's rejection of the Versailles treaty, Japan's rejection of Western colonialism in Asia, the guerrillero's rejection of blatant exploitation; without accepting anti-Semitism, Japan's colonialism in Asia and guerrilla violence, or system counter-violence. The general thesis would be that **every conflict party has somewhere, underneath violent words and deeds, a valid goal on which to build**, when encouraged to proceed nonviolently and creatively.

justification

There is no way forward if a conflict party feels totally rejected. To deny any humanity to that party is dehumanizing and looks prejudicial. Everybody has the need to be recognized at least at some point, if not fully and totally.

problems

Any approval of a goal has to be accompanied by ideas about how to proceed nonviolently and creatively. Endorsing a goal with no ideas of how to realize it is highly irresponsible.


17 Empathy to Soften Attitudes

How does one develop empathy? Probably by relating deeply to people, to many people and different kinds of people, and by benefiting from the work of the artists among us, authors and poets, and those without names and fame, and they can be found all over. Maybe also by letting people into your own person. Actually, two small Exercises may be quite helpful.

Two friends are sitting at an airport, the plane has been canceled, they will be together for hours with nothing special to do. One of them gets the idea, "why don't we tell each other our life stories, we know each other already quite well, but there is always more to tell?"

As a follow-up: "tell me, or yourself for that matter, what are the inner forces driving you? What are your basic goals? And your basic fears?"

You decide how deep you want to go. The criterion of truth is not that it hurts. This could also be a very liberating exercise. Your life passes review (incidentally, a relaxed car drive is a good setting, with a landscape passing review at the same time). A good friend may ask some probing questions: "at that point, why did you decide that way, and not the other way?" The answer may clarify things about yourself. You will of course reward a friend who treats you so well by reciprocating.

 Turn to your neighbor in this training course. Do the second part, both questions, but not more deeply than the situation permits. You might find it interesting to try to draw a model of yourself on some sheet of paper, have your partner do the same, and then compare. When you are doing conflict work you will ask about the goals in a conflict, and you should have once been on the answering side of that question to understand better how to ask, and how it feels to try to answer.

exercise

18 Nonviolence to Soften Behavior

Nonviolence stands for something most people engage in every day: self-assertion, trying to reach goals without violence, without intending to harm and hurt anybody. But nonviolence is not the same as not being violent since that also includes passivity, doing nothing, resigning to one's fate. Ideally, nonviolence should encompass thought, speech and action:

- 1 Nonviolence in thought:** meditation, the inner dialogue, preparing for conflict work, moments of silence, trying to identify and eradicate one's own destructive impulses;
- 2 Nonviolence in speech:** the outer dialogue with the conflict parties, avoiding issuing guilt-/blame-certificates, searching for common roots and futures and shared responsibility, carefully laying out one's own anxieties, fears, needs not met, trying to image futures all parties could imagine living;
- 3 Nonviolence in action:** demonstrations, using mass media, having meetings for negotiation; in other words soft, ordinary politics. But then there is the extraordinary politics of strong nonviolence, like nonmilitary defense (NMD) against outside direct violence, and nonviolent revolution (NVR) against inside structural violence, (direct violence in frozen form).

justification

A rather solid social science thesis holds that **violence breeds violence**. Hence, violence must be avoided for a conflict not to deteriorate further. However, even if mutual withdrawal from the conflict may sometimes be a good idea, leaving the work to "time", self-assertion, within limits, is a human need. Nonviolence fills this gap, at least in theory.

problems


Obviously, nonviolence balances between a Scylla of passivity and the Charybdis of violence, including provoking the violence of the other party through strong nonviolence.

18 Nonviolence to Soften Behavior

In principle nonviolence is supposed to save a conflict from entering the dangerous Phase II, the violence phase, by refusing to engage in violence, thereby leaving the other side without somebody to respond violently. Of course it does not always work like that, and there is much more to nonviolence.

But let us be concrete. Imagine you are brought directly from the airport of Beograd January 1997 into the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Beograd where the nonviolence campaign against Milosevic's government for stealing 14 local elections by not recognizing the victory of the opposition is coordinated. You are briefed, you are asked to give some advice. Filled with admiration for what the students and professors were doing, creating new, imaginative forms of nonviolence against considerable risks, one set of advice may have been:

- 1 Make it very clear that your goal is to let democracy happen, which means giving the election results back to the people, nothing more, nothing less. Do not expand the goals.
- 2 Do not demonize Milosevic beyond this issue. If you stand for democracy, then confront Milosevic democratically, meaning in the next election.
- 3 Any comparison with Ceausescu is to wish Milosevic dead, meaning total dehumanization. Instead, invite him to dialogue, send a cake to his house. But refuse institutional cooperation as long as he has not reinstated the elections.
- 4 Recognize the city parliament that would have been elected.
- 5 Have that parliament ask citizens to do something to clean up, beautify Beograd; do so as a constructive action. Always try to combine protests with something constructive.
- 6 Mention positive aspects of Milosevic's policies if you can identify any.

 Discuss. Does this make sense? Too soft? Too strong? Too demanding on the nonviolent group? Better just be in the streets, demonstrating, blowing whistles to make official newscasts inaudible?

exercise

19 Creativity to Soften Contradictions

As mentioned above, mediation may identify a position in the middle that actually satisfies nobody. A condominium, "joint sovereignty", with free flow of persons and ideas, factors and products may be more viable than a contested territory divided into two parts. A compromise approach may also be very painful, like Solomon's proposal to cut in half a child claimed by two mothers (he then recognized the real mother as the one willing to give it up to save it, and gave it to her; Kings 3:16–28.) Hence the idea of joining forces to share rather than divide the child/territory, a possible solution for Ecuador/Peru. The difficulty is not only the hatred between the conflict parties, but the novelty of the idea in a world convinced that each km² belongs to one, and only one, state. The price for creativity is the time needed to understand and internalize the idea.

That kind of proposal is extra-paradigmatic, not mainstream, like proposing a "Security Commission for Europe" back in 1967. Sowing the seeds, watering, harvesting will take time, passing through the standard four stages of silence, ridicule, violent opposition, and then acceptance as "self-evident" (last three from Schopenhauer). The conflict worker should accept this as part of the job. Creative conflict work simply takes time; a good reason for starting **now**, not waiting till the conflict is "mature", till time is "ripe".

justification

Creativity, developing new ideas, is indispensable in basic, hard conflicts. Most of the world is in the mainstream; if exits from the conflict were in the mainstream, they would already have been located. However, by swimming upstream conflict workers also come closer to the sources of a conflict and gain strength in the process.

problems


To find a window between something uncreative, and an idea so creative as to seem absurd. Often this is a problem of form of presentation, relating the new to something well known through analogies, metaphors, etc.

19 Creativity to Soften Contradictions

One very clear experience made by the present author is as follows: what leaders entrenched and immersed in conflict want certainly includes compassion with them, and justification of all they have done. But this they already get from the Yes-men around them. What they then want is not so much diagnosis, analysis of the conflict, or prognosis, spelling out what will happen; they are doing this all the time. Nor do they want the No-men of the opposition telling them they are all wrong.

What they want is something they hope for from an outside party: some creative idea about how to exit from the conflict, not just with "honor" or having "saved face", but with something creative that lands them in a new and better situation. They may be willing to sit through some diagnosis—prognosis talk if they can be rewarded at the end. They may not reward you by saying "what a good idea" since that means they never thought of it. They may actually reward you with a telling silence: the idea arrived and the counter-arguments are not obvious. Your task is to help him formulate those arguments, not to mark a victory. Your role is to be a Maybe-man.

This is not easy, and the thesis in this manual is that dialogues between inside and outside parties is a good formula for creative ideas to emerge, but no guarantee that they will. Many of them will be rejected immediately as irrelevant to that special conflict. But some of them may arrive, and one indicator that they may have arrived as something worth considering is, as mentioned, silence on the other side. Work, reflection, is going on. What more can you actually ask for?

 Imagine the dialogue makes you think a creative, new idea. How would you articulate that idea to somebody in a conflict who is frustrated, angry, hostile, suspicious?

exercise

20 On the Roots of Creativity

Under what conditions are people creative? There is literature about scientific, artistic and military creativity, problem creativity, but not about conflict/peace creativity. The task is to find nonviolent outcomes transcending the contradiction. But how does that happen?

The general formula is to introduce a new aspect-dimension-perspective, a new way of looking at the situation that changes the conflict, as a necessary condition to become unblocked. But that creativity does not come automatically. Some points:

Individual creativity

By analogy, "This case reminds me of":

- conflicts of the same type, e.g. another inter-nation conflict;
- conflicts at the same level, e.g. conflicts among classes;
- conflicts at other levels, e.g. inter-/intra-person conflicts;
- other Problems, e.g. medical, engineering, architectural.

Collective creativity

By brain-storming, eliciting potentially more than the sum of the creativity of the individuals present. through "brain-storming". Standard techniques would include pasting paper on the walls, having plenty of felt pens, discussing, putting all ideas that emerge in the flow of consciousness on the wall, having a break, one more round for more ideas, put each one on a card, then draw arrows, organize cards as CCC (conditions—consequences—context).

The birth of a good, new idea comes as a jump from quantity to quality; after accumulation of much individual or collective work of the type described, then some withdrawal (like a good night's sleep). And all of a sudden the idea is there, like in science and arts. Press yourself to the utmost, then relax, then wait. And hope. Pray. Meditate. Remember, really good ideas are usually new ideas, outside the mainstream discourse.

justification

Before—during—after creativity stages may come before—during—after violence. Do not wait for violence to start before looking for ways to handle conflicts creatively, that borders on fascism (using violence as a means for political ends).

problems


There is no guarantee that new ideas emerge, so be a walking reservoir of old ideas that have worked in the past, in similar situations. Plug into collective memory. Anecdotes are essential. And don't give up mainstream completely, there may be unused nuggets in the mud!

20 On the Roots of Creativity


For this particular unit see "*Creativity, Transcendence and Conflict Transformation*" in this Manual. An important point is how creativity is a spin on some very basic dimension like space and time (and in what time order). To that can certainly be added **who?** and **how?** — all of them fruitful questions to ponder. "We always did it that old way, is there some new way around?" Well, there may be, but don't make it too new, as argued in "*Creativity, Transcendence and Conflict Transformation*".

It should preferably be presented as an extension of the conventional, with the conventional as a special case. Ideally, a return to the conventional should be possible, see Unit 50 (and that would be a critique of Columbus, could he restore that cracked egg?). This argument is important in connection with military creativity. No doubt war people are often far more creative than peace people. But their destructive action is usually irreversible; a rather damning critique.


In 1967 the present author suggested to foreign ministries in the Cold War system a UN Security Commission for Europe, in Geneva. The presentation made reference to the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), in Geneva; changing only one word, communicating easily. The idea was to use dialogues rather than pointing at each other with nuclear missiles. The idea arrived.

 You are standing on the South Pole and asked to move on. However, you are not permitted to move North. Answer?


exercise

 Find a similar real life conflict example.

exercise

 You have painted yourself into a corner and want to get out. What do you do?

exercise

 Find a similar real life conflict example.

exercise

Violence Theory

Participants' Manual
Trainers' Manual

Module **V** Units 21–25

21 The Direct—Structural—Cultural Triangle

Violence harms/hurts body, mind and spirit. We can identify at least three types of violence, depending on how it operates:

- 1 direct violence:** intended to harm/hurt, by violent actors;
- 2 structural violence:** unintended, customary; anyone involved;
- 3 cultural violence:** legitimizing the other two as good, right.

Direct violence, visible, destructive, with a will to harm, is the form most feared. Structural violence is invisible, with no will to harm, killing slowly but may be as much or more destructive. Compare the more than 12 million children who die every year of malnutrition with the close to 9 million annual average killed by the mega-violence of the Second World War.

Structural violence may be the frozen direct violence of past conquest and/or repression, like colonialism, slavery, economic exploitation. The consequence may be revolutionary and counter-revolutionary violence. How violent depends on the level of cultural violence: is violence glorified, are nonviolent alternatives made invisible?

Cultural violence is also invisible, but with clear intent to harm, even kill, indirectly, through words and images; in short, symbolically. This is the violence of priests, intellectuals, professionals; the military specialize in direct violence and the economy often builds and is based violent structures. At whose expense? The common people.

justification

In a conflict attitudes are nourished by the cultural violence/peace in the society, behavior by the direct violence/peace, and the contradictions by the general structural violence/peace. In UN parlance, peace-making creates political settlements to bring an end to direct violence and begin to address cultural violence, peace-keeping controls direct violence, and peace-building is an effort to build better structures and sometimes addresses cultural violence.

problems

Any dialogue about conflict will sooner or later touch all these themes. Be prepared to face the complexities of the matter.

21 The Direct—Structural—Cultural Triangle


We are now getting further into the complexities of the matter, and the reader will start seeing violence everywhere.

There are those who focus on direct violence only, and there are sometimes good reasons to give that **kshatriyah** violence, the violence of the warrior caste, top priority.

But the **vaishya**, the merchants, build local, national, regional, global economic structures that create wealth for some and imprison others in misery. The most gifted, some of them crooks, always find a way up and out; but that is a perspective without human compassion and solidarity.

To the economist **brahmin** of words/symbols unemployment is good because employers can be more choosy (would he apply that theory to himself?). Or the literature glorifying violence for national independence, state defense or the class revolution.

These are controversial subjects, indeed. The problem is that whoever wants to move ahead, reducing direct violence, will come up against solid, change-resistant structures that generate violence from below and from above, and solid, change-resistant cultures that seem to justify any kind of violence.

 Take a case like Guatemala. The structure is highly repressive and exploitative, with the Maya **indígenos** (54%) at the bottom and the **ladinos** on top; in addition the culture is also high on **machismo**, glorifying violence as a way for the young boy of obtaining manhood. There is a cease-fire agreement. The thesis of this manual would be that unless something deep is done to the structure and the culture, the direct violence will be reproduced, maybe in another form (e.g., as rampant criminality). If you generally find the thesis reasonable, discuss what to do about violent structures and violent cultures.

exercise

22 Direct Violence; Visible and Invisible Effects

Violence harms and hurts, often irreversibly, much beyond the visible consequences to human bodies and property, the superficial "killed, wounded, displaced, material damage". An overview:

Table 1: Visible and invisible effects of violence

Space	Material, visible effects	Nonmaterial, invisible effects
Environment	depletion and pollution damage to diversity and symbiosis	less respect for non-human nature, reinforcing "man over nature"
Humans	somatic effects: numbers killed, numbers wounded, numbers raped numbers displaced	spiritual effects: bereavement, traumas, hatred, revenge addiction, victory addiction
Society	the material damage to buildings, infrastructure	the damage to social structure, the damage to social culture
World	the material damage, infrastructure	the damage to world structure, the damage to social structure
Time	delayed violence; landmines transmitted violence; genetic	structure transfer culture transfer; <i>kairos</i> points of trauma and glory
Culture	irreversible damage of human cultural heritage	violence culture; of trauma, glory deterioration of conflict- resolving capacity

justification

To put it in very clear words:

proposal

Wrong approach: effects of war/violence are visible effects

Never identify the costs of war/violence only with such visible effects as casualties, displaced persons, material losses. Invisible effects like low violence thresholds, traumas, myths of trauma/glory may be even more important in the longer run. The consequences of violence for present and future generations, like the bereavement/hatred and the addiction to revenge and victory, should be explored as a part of any prognosis exercise, and be used to deter violence. Counteract cynicisms like "they breed like rabbits; "destruction means fat contracts for contractors", or "a little reconciliation, and they will forget".

problems

When you point out how violence works, you may meet reactions like "that is what they deserve", "all they have to do is to give in"; but also a deep silence that may indicate that some arguments have arrived.

22 Direct Violence; Visible and Invisible Effects


The basic point is, of course, that if only a fraction of the total effect of violence is made visible, for instance in military/political communiqués and in war reporting (by the “war correspondent”), then war (and violence in general) becomes less unacceptable, even more acceptable. A presentation of the total bill may have a sobering effect, like showing not only the costs of armament but also the opportunity costs (how could the gun money have been used for butter and investment). Another example is externalities (side-effects) of economic action: if they were fully known people might be more cautious; of course a major reason why they are not known but remain “externalities”, outside the mainstream discourse.

But the basic point made here is not only to increase the resistance against war in Phase I, but also to have an overview that can serve as a checklist, partly to observe what happens during Phase II and try to prevent it from happening, partly to have a realistic assessment of the tremendous tasks for Phase III.


In other words: war is like an epidemic, even a pandemic.

- Before it comes: maximum **prevention**.
- When it happens: maximum **therapy**.
- After it has happened: maximum **healing**.

In general this is more than humans are able to do. Conflict transformation at an early stage is much better, cheaper, easier. But the condition is not only early warning, but early action.

 Compare the Second World War and the Cold War, the war that did not get hot. Try to get some idea of the effects, visible and invisible, had the Cold War become hot, including nuclear.

exercise

 That conflict was transformed, and we were saved from that hot war. Suddenly, fall 1989, the Cold War evaporated, the Soviet Union imploded. Why did that happen, in your judgment? What can we learn from this rather major transformation?

exercise

23 Structural Violence; Bad Structures Molest Slowly

There is nothing mysterious about structure: it is a pattern of interaction whereby people are enacting roles without reflecting on what they do because "everybody does it" (in social space), and "we always did it that way" (over time). Any interaction, like customer-cashier, repeated one zillion times—a structure—becomes so solid that even a tiny variation, like giving money on the back of the hand and raising one leg while doing so, is likely to raise eyebrows (if you doubt this, try it in a shop).

A violent structure harms some people, possibly even all of them (a very good argument for changing the structure); harming in the sense of insulting basic needs. Two types of structural violence can be identified as some kind of frozen power:

vertical structural violence: repression (political power), exploitation (economic power), and alienation (cultural power);

horizontal structural violence: keeping people who want to live together apart; keeping people who want to live apart together.

In the vertical case the needs insulted are freedom, well-being and identity (when the fourth need, survival, is insulted by the military class, then the violence is direct).

In the horizontal case the insulted need is identity: the Korean nation wants a togetherness denied them by governments, and two of the nations in Bosnia do not want imposed togetherness.

justification

This explains how violence is possible without any intent to harm; it just is like that; or became like that because "everybody does it", "we always did it that way".

problems

This shifts the attention from bad actor to bad structure—like from colonizer to colonialism—and lets the topdog off the moral hook. But the bad acts of omission, the topdogs failing to remedy the situation, remain as a social fact.


23 Structural Violence; Bad Structures Molest Slowly

Structures look solid. Take courage from bad structures that have been overcome, such as **colonialism** and **slavery** — not denying that other problems may have followed in their wake. Moreover, it would be hard to deny that something is happening today to a third bad structure, **patriarchy**. There is liberation of women under way, due to concrete action by concrete people. There is also a philosophical problem. The structure makes people look small, anonymous, inconsequential, thereby taking any burden of personal responsibility off their shoulders.

Take an example: the “masses” in some political jargon. Upon closer scrutiny the “masses” become less anonymous and may take the shape of a powerful party leader who has made some decision or initiated some action in the name of the “masses”.

Another example: the “market”, another anonymous structure. The “market” decides prices. Upon closer scrutiny the “market” becomes less anonymous and takes the shape of powerful CEOs in transnational corporations deciding prices, labor wages, returns to shareholders, etc., all of that in the name of the “market”.

In short, the structures start getting faces, names, home pages. But that does not invalidate the concept. Very many very small people and sellers-buyers make up “masses” and “markets” as the sum of zillions of very many and very small acts. Reality is a mix of strong actors and anonymous people. Engage those strong people in dialogue, increase the level of consciousness of the smaller people. Potentially they are all strong.

 Discuss what happens when the conflict workers themselves benefit from the structures that may produce, and reproduce, the conflicts? Will they work against themselves? Do they get a vested interest in continued conflict?

exercise

24 Cultural Violence; Bad Cultures Justify

There is nothing mysterious about culture: it is a set of rules we learn early in life about good-bad, right-wrong, true-false, sacred-profane, beautiful-ugly, etc. Culture expresses itself in a number of ways, in speech and action, in structures and laws, in science and arts. We then apply these standards to see if the products measure up to them. The problem is that there are aspects of cultures that define violence/war as **good**, some types of killing as **right**, even **sacred** (holy war) and **beautiful** (esthetics of violence/war). And statements like "unfortunately we need some unjust structures" are often seen as **true**.

Evidently, such "cultural violence" can then be used to justify direct or structural violence. What is needed would be "cultural peace", a peace culture defining **peace** as good, right, sacred and beautiful, **violence** as bad, wrong, profane and ugly; and statements to that effect as true.

Today we have both, in a schizophrenic culture defining individual violence as bad, but some of the violence on behalf of gender-generation-race-class, and indeed on behalf of the nation and the state, even as glorious.

justification

This explains how violence becomes more acceptable, because people have been taught to conceive of some types of violence as good and right, even as sacred and beautiful. Crucial right now is how nations, states, and the state system, the international community, justify violence.

problems

This gives the conflict worker the advantage of shifting the attention from bad actors and bad structures to bad cultures, analyzing, even debunking, "patterns of legitimation" (as it is called in political science). However, that does not mean that bad actors, and even more so bad structures, should get off the hook. The structure may be violent in its own right, like a dictatorship, and the actor might be hiding behind that bad culture, like the culture of machismo. All three should be in focus with a view to improve them.

24 Cultural Violence; Bad Cultures Justify


Cultural violence is even more problematic than structural violence because it is inside us all, not only inside some "bad" actors. Structural violence benefit those on top, but most of us are not on top. We can read about "neo-colonialism" and "exploitation of the Third World" and celebrate that we are not on top (which may be an illusion, but that is another matter). Structures are seen as something external. But cultures are internal, nourishing our hearts with religion/ideology, language, unexamined culture that make up our identity. Anything wrong with that is wrong with us, as men challenged by feminism have had to admit. Cultural analysis hurts more than structural analysis, except for those at the top of the structures.

All over the world boys are raised in cultures preparing them to defend their family, at the risk of their own lives, and ultimately, if needed, to "die as a man", not weeping or crying for mercy. And girls are raised in cultures preparing them to be defended, seeing their men as sources of security, preparing them to "die as a man" if necessary.

Without debunking such ideas, let us rather focus on the point that neither of them is raised in a culture of peace, filled with imaginative ideas about how to handle conflicts in a nonviolent and creative manner. And this is where the orange example enters, in two ways.

First, in the introduction to conflict theory and practice 16 qualitatively different outcomes are indicated. One aspect of creativity is to be able to imagine many outcomes.

Second, another aspect is the ability to translate between conflicts. Dividing the orange in Northern Ireland might mean the three Protestant counties to the Protestants and the three mixed counties to the Catholics, inviting all others to leave. There seems to be general agreement that this is a poor outcome. Other orange models are far better!

 Find translations of the transcendence outcomes to Northern Ireland.

exercise

25 Diagnosis—Prognosis—Therapy Triangle

(If you do not like these medical sounding terms use “analysis—prediction—remedies” instead).

One more triad of words (and letters, DPT) to keep some ideas apart while at the same time keeping them together to remember always to consider all three.

The **diagnosis** of violence refers to the past, since only the past can produce the data needed for a **descriptive** analysis.

The **prognosis** is also descriptive, but of future violence, in other words, **predictive**.

And that also applies to the **therapy**. The focus is on the future. But it is **prescriptive**: we should do this, not that.

This means that one category is missing: **the therapy of the past**. Well, is it?

1 It makes great sense to ask: “when did something go wrong, and what could have been done at that critical juncture?” The general idea would be to explore the past in prescriptive terms, as “counterfactual history”, “history in the subjunctive mode”, “history as if”, getting more on top of history, not permitting history to get on top of you.

2 After that some prognosis might be advisable: “given the situation as it is today, what do you think will happen?”

3 This could be followed by a diagnosis: “why is that so?”

4 And finally: “well, how can we get out of this mess at all?”; or more sophisticated ways of eliciting therapy suggestions.

justification

To go straight to diagnosis or therapy is often futile. The parties have their stories too well packaged. The routing via the therapy of the past, and via the prognosis, may serve to unpack some of those stories. Listening is essential.

problems

Don't do this too quickly, nor only once. We are at the very root of the whole dialogue process. This has to be done with utmost care, back and forth, and as many times as necessary, interspersed with other items on the dialogue agenda.


25 Diagnosis—Prognosis—Therapy Triangle

Here are the four modes of talking about a conflict in tabular form:

MODES OF TALKING	Descriptive	Normative
Past-oriented	[A] DIAGNOSIS	[D] PAST THERAPY
Future-oriented	[B] PROGNOSIS	[C] THERAPY

To proceed with the sequence [A]—[B]—[C] is seductively logical. But be careful. The diagnosis would have to include the conflict-formation, in other words a listing of the parties with a stake in the conflict and their goals. The prognosis and the therapy depend very much on the diagnosis, consequently, consensus on this tricky issue is unlikely. Better go around it, exploring some concrete events in the past ("when did something go wrong?"). There is often a high level of consensus at this point, which may serve as a point of departure.

The follow-up question, "what could have been done at that critical point?" serves the purpose of trying to get out of the mind-set that what happened was unavoidable. Something could have been done, and then that something might also work in the future. Get on top of the events, rather than vice versa. In the text the sequence [D]—[B]—[A]—[C] is recommended, maybe even doing [D]—[B]—[A] a couple of times, exploring the past and future, description and prescription before the jump is made to the difficult task of combining them in a prescription for the future, also known as therapy. This is done in the dialogue between inside party and outside party, together, not as a *fait accompli* presented to the inside parties.

 Try to design some other routing through the fourfold-table, with some justification.

exercise

Violence Practice

Participants' Manual
Trainers' Manual

Module **VI** Units 26–30

26 Diagnosis; Roots of Direct Violence

The approach taken here is not that violence is in "human nature". Had that been the case there would have been less variations in the incidence of violence in space and time, more like the general human tendency to eat, sleep and have sex.

Rather, the roots of violence are seen as located in two human constructions, bad structures and bad cultures. But there are also humans and countries that can best be characterized as thugs, bullies, as bad actors, violent far beyond self-defense or any just cause. No doubt there are more distant structural and cultural roots of their violence. But that diagnosis may not be helpful; such individual and collective actors may be police problems.

The fourth root of direct violence is unattended conflict, particularly basic, hard conflict left to fester, like a wound.

That begs the question, what is the root of basic and hard conflict? Three obvious answers: bad structures that generate new insults to basic needs, bad cultures that justify violence, and bad actors instrumentalizing the conflict for violence. Hence, there is no alternative to nonviolent and creative conflict transformation, unless we accept violence at the personal, social and world levels as alternatives. Consequently, we badly need dialogues with the actors about how to change bad structures and cultures, to escape from these vicious circles.

justification

If you are missing your favorite violence factor in the above, please remember that structure and culture are broad concepts. Chances are you find your factor there!

problems

These are controversial perspectives and your task is not to engage in seminars on violence. However, you will find that people want to discuss such matters and you should be prepared for that discussion; asking many questions.


26 Diagnosis; Roots of Direct Violence

We are now coming more deeply into the practice and counter-practice of violence, with more details on what to look out for. The reader will have discovered that the manual is written in a spiral, that the same points are taken up again, but presumably "at a higher level", with the benefit of broader horizons. The dangerous mix producing violence looks like this:

More general, long-lasting	[a] BAD STRUCTURES	[b] BAD CULTURES
More specific temporary	[c] BAD ACTORS	[d] BAD CONFLICTS

Democratic structures and human rights cultures may also be problematic because people in non-Western cultures may feel uncomfortable, but they help considerably. The method used by authoritarian regimes (and not all of them are dictatorships, there are democracies among them, with democracy only on election days) is to apprehend the suspected bad actors before violence, in Phase I, preventively, proactively, not touching the other factors. Experience seems to indicate that this does not work, it only postpones the violence and the transformations. Bad conditions produce new "bad actors".

Unfortunately, much of the same is also done retroactively, in Phase III after the violence, apprehending the bad actors, arraigning them into courts for an often well deserved sentence and punishment. But this focuses only on actors. Doing nothing or very little about the other three factors will only reproduce the situation, creating new, bad actors.

 Ideally all four factors in the table should be attended to at the same time. But if, for lack of resources, you have to start focusing on one, where would you start, in general terms? Why?

exercise

27 Direct; Bad Actors, Thugs and Bullies

Of actors there are many kinds, and a major distinction is between **individuals** and **collectivities**. Of collectivities there are many, and a major distinction is between territorial municipalities and **states** with governments acting on their behalf, non-territorial non-governments, **NGOs**, and national and transnational corporations. Like warrior castes in earlier social formations, governments have monopoly on ultimate arms. And, like warriors, they are easily offended and may not see conflicts as something to be peacefully transformed, but to be violently used to gain honor and status. Hence, states may be problematic, and so are groups aspiring to become the owners of states, such as nations and territories, and to some extent races and classes. Genders and generations are usually less problematic; they obviously need each other.

Actors can be assessed in terms of **intentions** (violent—nonviolent), **capability** (strong—weak) and **mode** (active—passive).

The task of the conflict worker would be to do the opposite of the media and the country. The focus should be less on the active—strong—violent, the Tarzans-Rambos among individuals and states/nations, and more on the nonviolent; strengthening the (so far) passive and weaker among them. This often means empowering women, children, youth and the older generation, enabling them to stand up against what may be a very small minority, pointing out visible **and** invisible effects of violence, searching for, and voicing, alternatives.

justification

Even the best structural and cultural analysis calls for concrete actors (like school teachers) to change them; their conflict transformation and violence reduction tasks must be defined.

problems

It may be good tactic not to spend too much time on the Tarzans-Rambos. But some of them may be longing to be liberated from that role, and others may become even more intractable if they are defined as "extremist" and excluded from a peace process (Israel/Palestine). That of course also applies to excluded "moderates" (for a long time a major problem in N. Ireland).


27 Direct; Bad Actors, Thugs and Bullies

Again focusing on Phase I, what is the best approach to the bad actors, the thugs, the bullies? They have not (yet) committed the criminal act, meaning they cannot be arrested and arraigned into court. But it is fairly well known in the community who they are, even if such information can always be improved. Presumably (secret) police would know.

An important point about the bad actors today identified as "extremists", "fundamentalists" is that they often are carriers of the most explicit and simplistic articulation of what the conflict is about. They may often be hated not because of what they do, but because of what they say, assuming that what they think is even worse. To remove them will not remove the conflict. Others may feel and think the same but are not honest or courageous enough to say so. To let them act out their violence exacerbates the conflict.

The idea pursued here would be to mobilize other citizens with the opposite profiles and have them work on the bad actors, challenging them to come forward in dialogues, pointing to the consequences of the action they may engage in. To wait for some German thugs to burn Turkish women alive, and then act, cannot be the only response. There must be ways in which citizens can organize inter-group councils to come out ahead of the events.

Terrorists (not state terrorists) have been converted to fighting for their goals through nonviolence, for instance in Northern Ireland. The process passes through dialogue to identify acceptable goals, rejecting unacceptable means, working through the consequences of either.

 Design a "conflict worker"—"bad actor" dialogue, working in pairs, acting it out in front of others.

exercise

28 Structural; The PSFM Syndrome

Structures are violent to body, mind and spirit by being repressive, exploitative and alienating. Some structures are worse than others; they are rigid, super-resistant to change, like slavery, colonialism, patriarchy. This is important in diagnosing violence. Could the violence be due to a structure, rigid like a strait-jacket, so that the repressed, exploited and/or alienated see no alternative to fighting their way out?

The vicious PSFM syndrome uses four such aspects of social structures among persons, and of world structures among countries:

- 1 Penetration:** the extent to which those above are able to condition psychologically those below so that they accept the structure, maybe as something natural ("like a mountain the society has a peak, and a base") or God-given ("this is punishment for being lazy/sinful; but in heaven the last may be the first");
- 2 Segmentation:** the extent to which only the political or economic rulers know what is going on, and those below see only small segments of reality, unable to form more complete images;
- 3 Fragmentation:** the extent to which those above interact with each other in all kinds of ways whereas those below are kept separate, like women/children inside their families;
- 4 Marginalization:** the extent to which those below (often of another race) are (almost) cut off from interaction with the top of society, excluded from social or world interaction.

The combination of these four mechanisms explains how so few, persons or countries, can dominate so many persons or countries; combining repression / exploitation / alienation, with low levels of direct violence. Empowerment of the people below would have to fight the PSFM syndrome by strengthening their own identity, their own images of society, their own solidarity, and by demanding full participation; all essential in a vibrant democracy.

justification
problems


Within the PSFM syndrome a tiny elite can also control the outcome of elections and subvert democratic ideals.

And that may be exactly what that tiny elite prefers; meaning that dialogues about these issues will be controversial.

28 Structural; The PSFM Syndrome

It is worth remembering that feudal times were not that long ago, and that feudalism still prevails in vast parts of the world. The concept is deeper than patterns of land tenure and nobility titles. The deep structure of feudalism is exactly the conditioning from above, putting people in small niches where they see very little, keeping people apart from each other and making it very clear who is in and who is not; in short PSFM. These are perennial themes, finding new forms of expression, new arenas.

The basic point here is their relation to democracy. How can a democratic order be built without people being reasonably free to make up their own mind? Without making society reasonably transparent to all citizens? Without making people develop their solidarity with others in distress? Without demanding full participation, including, we might say, in how conflicts are handled in society? Empowerment is the key, and the PSFM syndrome is the lock that has to be unlocked through empowerment. **Internet** could be a major instrument here, building networks across all kinds of PSFM borders — but then excluding those with no access.

 How did penetration, segmentation, fragmentation and marginalization work for colonialism, slavery, and patriarchy?

For slavery the penetration was obviously the effort to make black regard themselves as inferior; segmentation was the very limited vision they had of society from the huts and the cotton fields; fragmentation was how they were prevented from coming together as a joint force; marginalization was in the white/black divide. Powerful factors, try to identify the corresponding elements for colonialism and patriarchy. How could one work on such factors, thereby reducing the structural violence in all three cases?

exercise

key

29 Cultural; The CGT and DMA Syndromes

Within cultural violence there are two particularly vicious syndromes, CGT and DMA, the former more appealing to emotions, the latter to cognitions, images. CGT is found in the culture of genders, generations, races, classes and nations. DMA is a part of Western, and other, civilizations:

- 1 Chosenness:** our group is exceptional, chosen by higher forces (God, History); we have a mission in the world, others should pay attention, if not at their own (considerable) risk;
- 2 Glory:** divided into myths of a golden (sometimes very distant) past, and a glorious future when the mission has been accomplished according to the prescription of those higher forces;
- 3 Trauma:** to be chosen evokes the envy of others, so the glory is mixed with the bitterness of heavy traumas suffered in the struggle to accomplish the mission, living up to the commands from above.
- 4 Dichotomy:** the tendency to divide the world sharply in two parts, the simplest subdivision (like Christians versus pagans, The West and The Rest);
- 5 Manicheism:** conceiving of one of the two parts as only good and the other as only bad, struggling to subvert us;
- 6 Armageddon:** that struggle is irreconcilable, ending with the triumph of good or bad; so better strengthen us (the good) and weaken them (the bad).

justification

When combined these myths justify direct violence to obtain that future glory, at the same time exiting from (and avenging) the traumas of the past; counting on the support of higher forces, with a priesthood ensuring that commands are followed. For Marx' chosen class, the proletariat, the priesthood was the Party functionaries headed by the Politburo; God was History and Marx History's prophet.

If the world is already divided into Self and Other, then the repression/projection mechanisms of psychology operate with extra ease, projecting our own bad inclinations on Other, and all the good inclinations on Self. **DMA prepares the ground for CGT** and vice versa.

A possible antidote: a school textbook with 50 good stories suggesting how to handle conflicts creatively and nonviolently!

problems

All of this somehow has to surface in dialogues, and that will never be unproblematic since it touches deep identities of people. How to proceed will be developed in the next units.

29 Cultural; The CGT and DMA Syndromes


Imagine an upper class man from the dominant nation in a dominant country; four times chosen. Modesty and identification with the down-trodden would not come easily, his consciousness being clouded by the heavy subconscious baggage of the CGT/DMA type.

At the level of country/class the sum, C+G+T+D+M+A, adds up to a pathology, as exemplified by Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Militarist Japan, Stalinist Soviet Union and Cultural Revolution China. Those six points may serve to make psychograms for certain groups.


Of all the problems discussed in this manual this is probably the toughest, also because we all have a touch of those syndromes. Our capacity to work against ourselves is limited. The antidote indicated is so modest as to read like a bad joke.

However, it should be pointed out that it is also possible to feel **chosen for peace**, like the Quakers, the Mennonites and others, among them Buddhist groups. The glory might be a Kingdom of Peace, inspired by the past, to be recreated in the future. The trauma would be the sufferings of some of those who dedicate themselves to peace; a Martin Luther King Jr., a Yitzhak Rabin.

But DMA is more complicated to accommodate. It might lead to too sharp distinctions between the peaceful and the violence-prone (the present manual comes dangerously close in Unit 3!), with visions of irreconcilable fight instead of recognizing the violence in the peaceful, the peace in the violence-prone, and the need to come together in dialogues.

 Imagine you believe in violence, how would you try to convince a "*peacenik*"? And, vice versa?

exercise

 What would an alternative to CGT look like?

exercise

 What would an alternative to DMA look like?

exercise

30 Prognosis; Early Warning, Early Action

We are talking about early warning of violence, not of conflict. Conflicts are ubiquitous; direct violence less so. Bacteria are ubiquitous, like in the ear-nose-throat complex; disease less so. The exposure to many bacteria is insufficient as early warning of disease, except for very virulent species; but combined with low resistance (e.g., damaged immune system) they may suffice. In the same vein high levels of structural **and** cultural violence serve as early warning indicators for direct violence, not one alone.

But this also works vice versa: direct violence serves as (too) late warning of structural and cultural violence.

People may deplore laboring under the yoke of bad structures, yet do nothing violent since "violence is not in their culture". People may absorb cultural violence from violent media, but have no major cause, except individual quarrels. Exposed to bad actors, and with basic conflicts left untransformed, however, we get the perfect recipe for violence. To wait for direct violence before changing the social (= structural + cultural) style is like waiting for the first heart attack before changing life style.

justification

Early warning based on structural and cultural violence may serve to predict direct violence, particularly if the structural analysis includes the PSFM, and the cultural analysis the CGT and DMA indicators.

problems

The major problem is perceiving structural and cultural violence only as warnings of direct violence, not as bad in and by themselves. Structural violence may reduce the livelihood of those at the bottom as much as, or more than direct violence, if at a slower speed. And the argument may also be that cultural violence, like crime and porno, impoverish people's mind and make them less than they could be.

In short:

Early warning means don't wait, act! People are suffering.

30 Prognosis; Early Warning, Early Action


This is the perennial Phase I *problématique*: are we supposed to sit and wait for violence to happen, or to act? Obviously the latter. But then the next problem: are we supposed to act in order to forestall that possible violence, or because of the problems of Phase I as such? Preferably both, otherwise we may not solve the Phase I problems, nor forestall the violence of Phase II because we did not do a good job.

And then comes the verdict: **direct violence as (too) late warning of structural/cultural violence**, as epitaph over work badly done by statesmen, diplomats, politicians or others. Unfortunately, we find both of these tendencies in much (amateurish) conflict work today;

- to do nothing about structural violence till the first signs of violence are taken as indication that this can be serious;
- to do nothing about violence, let them fight, till the first signs of fatigue indicate a situation "ripe for the table".

Both can be seen as arm-chair positions, far away from the closeness to the situation that makes one act here and now simply out of human compassion. They may also, as mentioned, be seen as male more than female positions on when to act in crises.

Of course there are arguments in favor of either position. To act presupposes some political consensus, which in turn would be based on some compelling information. The first shot in anger is a fact, so is reported readiness to come to the table. But the first shot may be insignificant relative to the suffering of thousands living in maldevelopment, and the table may be the wrong place to find a solution. In either case it is very late. A good reason for civil society to take the initiative, not waiting for governments to "do something".

 Why is it that direct violence seems to be taken more seriously than the other forms? What can be done about it?

exercise

Transformation

Participants' Manual
Trainers' Manual

Module **VII** Units 31–35

31 There Is No Alternative to Transformation

Conflicts are generally not solved, resolved or dissolved. Parties, goals and incompatibilities (issues) are usually still there. To think we have the conflict completely behind us may be a major error.

However, through conflict transformation the conflict as it was, with hatred, (threats of) violence, and a sense of being blocked/stuck, recedes into the background. Conflict transformation is like leaving the hospital; not the same as a clean bill of health. The prognosis is that real health will come about as the result of Self acting as his/her own health worker, including relying on the body's self-healing capacity (immune system), with body, mind and spirit pulling in the same direction. And occasional assistance from health workers who are on call.

The parallel between disease/health and violence/peace is obvious. **Peace can be defined as the capacity to handle conflict autonomously, nonviolently, creatively**, with participation of everybody, just as health can be defined as "the capacity to handle disease oneself, without doing violence to the body" (like surgery, chemotherapy, radio-therapy). Sometimes we may have to use a minimum of violence for the greater good of health/peace. But we should not idealize those means; they are stop-gap measures, and nonviolent means should always be tried first.

The goal of conflict transformation is peace; the capacity to handle conflict creatively and nonviolently. Visions of a sustainable outcome acceptable to all parties may transform the conflict long before any agreement. The discourse for the conflict has changed because the vision serves as a reference point, an anchor. People start talking about something new; old conflict issues evaporate or recede into the background. Outsiders withdraw, the parties start building their own conflict transformation capacity.

justification

The goal is not any final solution, but to transform the conflict and build the capacity for the parties themselves to handle conflicts nonviolently and creatively.

problems

To leave the parties off too early. Or too late.

31 There Is No Alternative to Transformation


We are now entering the transformative stage, and the unit spells out, in rather general terms, some visions about what is to be done. To be more specific, take the case of Yugoslavia.

The conflict between, say, Croats and Serbs is not going to disappear in the coming generation. century or even millennium for that matter. But it can be handled less violently (avoid "primitive", "uncivilized"; comparisons with 20th century Europe are insults to so-called primitive, uncivilized peoples).

Imagine that Croatia had accepted that self-determination for Croatia also implies self-determination for the Serbs in Croatia, say in Krajina. They might have voted for secession, possibly with some redrawing of the Urajina borders.

But why should Croatia accept that with no counter-offer? Serbia might extend the same offer of self-determination to the Albanians in Kosovo/a, again with the possibility of negotiating and redrawing borders. But to help the Croats the Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina would also have to get their right of self-determination, including the possibility of integration with the Croat state.

Missing now is the fourth side of the quadrangle: Albanian Muslims giving something to Slavic Muslims. Port facilities in Albania, combined with some kind of corridor? With a little bit of good will this quadrangular deal might work. But it is also vulnerable. However, imagine it worked. This would unblock a lot of blocked goals and possibly reduce the perception that violence is the only way out. From hard conflict over basic interests to soft conflict over smaller, almost administrative details, in short.

 Discuss the scenario, positive and negative points. How could it be improved? Who could bring it/have brought it about?

exercise

32 Empathy to Change Attitudes

Applying the DPT approach to A (attitudes) the conflict worker has at some point to use empathy to explore the deeper goals of the parties; impossible when other parties are listening. The purpose is **diagnosis**: to identify valid goals on which to build. They may be related to basic needs and basic rights, meaning something "universal" that other actors also celebrate as goals. This is important: any party needs support on some point. As argued above, "revision of the Versailles Treaty" and "Asia for Asians" were such goals, even if Germany and Japan justified them in CGT terms. The linkage between goals and their justification becomes an important topic on the dialogue agenda.

A second, **prognosis**-oriented topic would be the emotions regarding the Other. A dialogue about what is more important, attachment to a valid goal, or hatred of the Other, is about the priority of the root conflict over goals, versus the meta-conflict over violent means, with escalating spirals of revenge and counter-revenge. "Are you really sure the Other stands in the way? Imagine you went at your goal another way? Could it be that your attitude stands in the way? What do you think is the consequence of believing the way you do? What are you actually afraid of in the Other? Do you see something positive in the Other? Does the Other see something good in you?"

A third, **therapy**-oriented topic is the joint effort to change attitudes. A basic point is to celebrate conflict as a challenge and for that reason to hold on to a goal, but perhaps not to all goals. The attitude toward conflict has to change, as a potential opening for a better, not a worse, relation to the Other.

justification

A relaxed, less hate-oriented attitude is a condition for progress, assuming that some goal is accepted.

problems

Images of Self and Other anchored in CGT—DMA.

32 Empathy to Change Attitudes

How far can we come with empathy? The answer will have to be negative: **without** empathy we are lost in this difficult field. The Quaker search for "that of God" in everybody, and the Buddhist search for "the hidden Buddha" translates into conflict jargon as the search for the acceptable goal, in anybody.

But that goal has to be recognized by the party, and that recognition might come by celebrating the goal: "Look, here you said something that people in general would understand and even agree with, why not make that the basic plank in your platform." One way of getting to that point is hidden in the word goal, but more particularly in the negative goals, the anxieties, the fears than in the positive goals.


Example (Northern Ireland)

Q: What would you say that you Unionists are afraid of?

A: We are Protestants, we are afraid of losing some of that in a Catholic majority Ireland. But there is also the fear of losing the multi-culturalism of Great Britain to mono-cultural Ireland. I love that diversity. And, of course, we are afraid for the lives of our children, afraid of their violence. So we need protection.

Q: What would you say you Republicans are afraid of?

A: We are Catholics, we feel squeezed, in a corner, in Protestant majority Northern Ireland. And we are not too impressed by all the trends coming out of England these days, Ireland provides some protection against that. Above all, we are afraid for the lives of our children, afraid of their violence. So we need protection.

 Imagine the person with whom you have had the hardest conflict in your life so far. What was his/her valid goal? His/Her fears? Yours?

Could nonviolent outcomes be accommodated in his attitudes?

What do you think he felt was your valid goal, if anything at all?

How nonviolent were your acts, your speech, your thoughts and feelings?

Did you mainly have those angry inner dialogues with that party, or did you manage to relate to each other?

Did you relate to that person's fears, not only to your own?

exercise

33 Nonviolence to Change Behavior

Moving to the B (behavior) corner of the real world of action, we leave the virtual inner world of emotions/images behind.

The **diagnosis** topic would be why the party is violent, and one answer may be "because violence is the only way out in this matter". Or, "because the other party is violent, so violence is the only language they understand". Or, more promising, "because we are all violent, humans are like that, and we are human". Promising, because it is easily shown to be wrong.

The **prognosis** topic would explore topics like reciprocity and violence spirals: "If you proceed with your violence and he with his, how will this develop further?" If victory emerges as "the only way of bringing this conflict to an end" the problem of revenge can be brought up, together with other invisible effects. The conflict worker may also ask for each party's estimate of the other parties' prognosis. If the prognoses coincide there is good reason to stop any violence since they agree how it will all end anyhow. All of this to explore the futility of violence.

The **therapy** topic might center on the valid goal that was identified and the nonviolent action needed to promote that goal (the dialogues, with Hitler, and with Hirohito that never happened). In practice this means working against prevailing structures and cultures; building identity, images of society, solidarity and participation; in practice. One million persons presenting such demands, nonviolently, to the powers that be, and to the world, is a compelling argument if in addition they are practiced locally. One thousand schools teaching a culture of peace is another. One hundred major media practicing peace journalism a third. To achieve this is not easy.

justification

Easily argued as a basis for democracy.

problems


Many people prefer formal democracy, with the structure/culture favoring a status quo outcome in advance.

33 Nonviolence to Change Behavior

Imagine at some stage in the early 1980s that you wanted to do something to end the Cold War. Your diagnosis is in terms of two basic problems: nuclearism in West and East, particularly in the West since the East is more imitative; and stalinism, or post-stalinism, in the East, insulting human rights.

Your intuition is that the (post-) stalinism is actually quite vulnerable, like a house of cards. Significant advances have been made in Poland, but there seems to be some kind of stalemate. A country with a high level of *courage civil* is East Germany. They are studying with interest the nonviolence of the West German peace movement, also noting that the medium range US missiles are nevertheless coming. Would it be so unreasonable to see a transformation of the Cold War in terms of nonviolent action by civic groups in the DDR, as in fact it happened? The odds against are enormous, especially if one believes in the monolithic model of the socialist countries, in their unlimited readiness to use violence, and that the only means available to the people would be violent resistance, like Hungary fall 1956. And this was more or less the mainstream Western view of how the Cold War could come to an end, squeezing the Soviet Union with the arms race till the revolt comes.

The nonviolence came. And the wall fell, one month later. And the arguments were less in terms of lack of goods on the shelves, those consumerist people left for the West, but in terms of human rights and the search for democratic socialism. Or did something else happen? Anyhow, the houses of cards collapsed, like a chain of dominoes.

 Try to imagine yet other endings to the Cold War, including continuing with cycles of tension and distension. Compare with what actually happened. Any conclusion?

exercise

34 Creativity to Change Contradictions

The contradiction, C in the ABC, is the centerpiece of a conflict. But a one-sided C-oriented approach, facile about hatred and violence (a key Marxist fallacy) is no better than a one-sided A-oriented (changing attitudes, a key liberal fallacy) or B-oriented approach (controlling violence, a key conservative fallacy). All three have to come together.

Conflict = A + B + C. A conflict has to be transformed from all three corners.

The **diagnosis** topic in the dialogue would probe the hard nucleus of the contradiction, routing dialogues via **therapy of the past** and **prognosis to diagnosis** and **future therapy**. Examples of possible outcomes:

1 For two states, one disputed territory: Condominium, joint rule. Make the territory a zone of peace, celebrate and globalize with inter-governmental and non-governmental bodies, in addition to an economic zone with some privileges for TNCs, a camping place for youth, an airport, a radio/TV/Internet communication center for peace, peace conferences, a bi-national natural reserve.

2 For two nations, one disputed state:

■ For a majority deprived of power, independence from outside powers, and/or majority rule is a formula.

■ For a minority in search of autonomy, secession or federalism may be an option if border lines can be drawn. If not:

2a Non-territorial federalism, each person registers as member of some nation (including mixed?); each nation elects its own parliament with high autonomy in matters of sacred time and space, religion and language (the Sami Parliament in Norway);

2b Functional independence, a list is established of the, say, 25 matters usually controlled by a state, and there is a dialogue probing the gray zone between autonomy (within a state) and independence (from that state). Is own army needed? No, but own police and courts. Own currency? No, but own stamps. Teaching national language, yes; teaching in national language, yes; national language as the only administrative language, no. And so on, and so forth. In the end a mutually acceptable independence treaty, like an insurance contract, may emerge, to be renegotiated periodically.

justification

The objective is not only to avoid violence but to move humanity forward, creating new, cohesive realities. And all three formulas favor democratic negotiation/dialogues.

problems

The inside parties might resist any transcendence of the contradiction as that will undermine the justification of violence, "and violence is the only way out in this matter".

34 Creativity to Change Contradictions

The example of Yugoslavia, used above to illustrate agendas for a DPT dialogue focusing on attitudes, showed clearly that behavior and contradiction also enter. In the same vein, any dialogue about behavior brings in attitudes and contradiction. They all belong together. But the level of creativity in dealing with the contradiction, the centerpiece, is crucial.

"Non-territorial federalism" and "functional independence" are examples of possible answers to the problems of 2,000 nations striving for autonomy or independence in a world of 200 countries, but with only 20 nation-states. Drawing borders may lead to very painful movements of masses of people, and in the worst case to ethnic cleansing, even if there has been a plebiscite.

The two softer approaches should give high levels of autonomy and independence. But there are two major problems:

- geographical separation of nations is imprinted on the maps in the minds; even if the problems of classes are handled in a non-territorial way, as negotiations between unions of employers and employees, with lock-outs and strikes as ultimate weapons.
- people may be willing to pay a violence price for autonomy and independence, producing not only identity but a basis for survival, well-being and freedom (or so they believe).

Creativity is fine, but may run against attitudes and behavior.

The three proposals, condominium, non-territorial federalism and functional independence can certainly be argued as possible outcomes. If accepted, they will transform the conflict. And it stands to reason that there will still be conflict, but they can be managed within the new settings, through negotiation etc.



How would you argue condominium?

exercise



How would you argue non-territorial autonomy?

exercise



How would you argue functional independence?

exercise

35 Exchanging One Conflict for Another?

Think of a hospital. You enter the hospital with a disease, hopefully you exit cured. However, the cure may also introduce new diseases known as "side-effects" (often a euphemism) such as to those induced by the physicians (iatrogenic diseases) and the hospital (hospitalitis). The optimist assumes the deal to be positive: you exit with softer diseases than you entered. The pessimist denies that this is the case, assuming the cure to be worse than the disease in the longer run. Only the naive assume that you leave all your diseases behind and get nothing in return.

As pointed out in the introductions on conflict and on creativity the idea underlying transformation is to "disembed" ("uproot") the conflict from where the parties have put it and "embed" ("root") it somewhere else—like moving the patient from the home bed to the hospital bed (and vice versa). The metaphor reminds us that it is not obvious that the new problems can be handled better. But look at the 3 formulas in Unit 34: the problems have now become technical.

The costs should be anticipated, and carried more by the strong than by the weak. To create a new situation that minimizes the costs and maximizes the benefits to all is a basic aspect of good transformation, requiring deep transcendence.

justification

No generation has the right to push the burdens of bad ecological work, mismanagement, etc. on future generations. The same can be said about bad conflict transformation: if the burden is placed on future generations, then the job has been badly done.

problems


Too little openness to consequences in terms of generating new conflicts is unjust to future generations. But too much awareness of such consequences, to the point of action paralysis, inaction, is equally unjust to the present generation. In-between positions are called for, and they tend to be complex.

35 Exchanging One Conflict for Another

We must keep in mind the whole purpose of conflict transformation: to create a new situation that can be handled nonviolently and creatively because the conflicts have become softer. If the conflict situation in fact is worse, then the transformation has worked downwards, not upwards; it has been negative transformation, not positive. Many people feel that this was the case after the Cold War: there was high tension but little violence, now there is much violence and much tension spread around. In this kind of calculation one has to throw in the enormous costs of the Cold War, for instance the warfare in the Third World, and the horrifying risks of a nuclear war, so far avoided.

But the question can still be posed: was the transformation a good deal? It was certainly not planned by anybody, it caught the world unprepared. There was some naive talk about "peace dividend" and even "end of history" by people too mesmerized by the Cold War to imagine other conflicts. But it looks as if all nations took out their old agendas, suppressed by the Cold War, national self-determination, by referendum or by violence.

At this point empathy is called for. Usually the question is: "how would you feel in his shoes?" Transformation language suggests: "how would the parties feel in that new conflict setting?", having been disembedded and embedded? They do not know, but switching conflict discourse, discussing as if condominium, non-territorial federalism and/or functional independence had been realized, makes mental and verbal exploration possible.

 Discuss that for the three proposals, using Ecuador/Peru (condominium), and Northern Ireland/Basque Country (nonterritorial federalism and functional independence) as examples.

exercise

Peace Dialogues

Participants' Manual
Trainers' Manual

Module **VIII** Units 36–40

36 The Mainstream/Vertical Approach

Let us now return to the process of conflict transformation. A frequently found model of "successful" negotiation runs as follows:

- 1** the parties, usually conceived of as two, are seen as irreconcilable; violence is imminent, has broken out, or has gone on so far that they are fatigued, "mature", "ripe" for a settlement;
- 2** a third party, a big power, an organization, or the UN is asked/ offers to mediate, bringing the parties "to the table";
- 3** the parties meet, under the auspices of the "third party", the first handshake being the first photo opportunity;
- 4** the talks take place "at the table" with the third party presiding; the meetings are secret, closed to the public;
- 5** spokesmen emit uninformative messages, like "no progress", "good atmosphere/chemistry", "break-down", "break-through";
- 6** final session through the night, agreement announced early morning, signing, hand-shakes, and second photo opportunity.

justification

Authority is needed to unblock the conflict; promises/threats, carrots/sticks are indispensable. The parties have to get acquainted with each other and each other's views, working together to learn to live together later, through the good offices of a "third" party. Politicians and diplomats are experienced in "delicate" negotiations; the public is a nuisance.

problems

All wrong. The approach is undemocratic in ignoring conflict skills of people in general. The process gambles on (often violent) elites, and one table, when many parallel groups, levels and tables may be needed. Participants are usually leaders articulating extreme views, not the "silent, moderate majority" wanting any outcome that does not reproduce violence. Violence is rewarded by giving access to the table. The hypothesis that fruitful ideas can emerge only around that table is dubious; so is the hypothesis that agreements binding on millions can be achieved by a handful of elite negotiators. This may have worked when Kings who derived their authority presumably from God, (*rex gratia dei*) were signing. Today's statesmen rarely have that quality.

People in negotiations and/or dialogue need undisturbed work. But secrecy goes far beyond this. It symbolizes elite monopoly, "none of your (the rest of the world's) business". And it also serves to conceal lack of method, bad methods, amateurishness, powers engaged in self-serving and arm-twisting. And worse still: secrecy may conceal that they have no real secrets, except how badly they are "managing" the conflict.

36 The Mainstream/Vertical Approach

It may be objected that this presentation of mainstream conflict resolution is a worst case analysis. The Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (1972-75, with preparation) may serve as a contrast, even with model character. Why, how?

There was no polarizing reduction to two parties, East and West; there were also the neutral/nonaligned making the conflict negotiations more complex and flexible. A lull in the Cold War was used, after the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia, and before the invasion of Afghanistan and the NATO decision to station medium range missiles. Negotiation under crisis conditions usually lead to bad agreements.


No big power had **brought** (or bombed) them to the table, a small power (Finland) had **invited** them to the table.

Nobody pretended to be a third party, outside or above the conflict; they all met as Europeans, together with the USA and Canada.

Negotiations were closed to the public; press reports were frequent and ample. It would have been better, however, had the Finns learnt from the United Nations environment conference in Stockholm the same year (1972) and organized a large-scale nongovernmental forum.

The conference took the time needed to divide issues into "baskets" and negotiate a deal (the Soviet Union got "permanence of borders" in basket 1, yielded on "human rights" in basket 3, and there was a compromise on "economic cooperation" in basket 2).

In short: all the issues **on** the table, all the parties **at** the table, a friendly, helpful environment, and **time**.

 Take a major problem right now (Yugoslavia, the Gulf) and design a multilateral conference "in the Helsinki spirit". What would prevent such a conference from happening?

exercise

37 The Alternative/Horizontal Approach

An alternative image, promoted by this manual, looks as follows:

- 1** There are never only two parties; parties are blocked, stuck rather than irreconcilable; violence is deeply deplored and should be avoided, but the basic problem is the root conflict;
- 2** There is no objective, "third party"; and most useful for the parties, before meeting "at the table" would be deep dialogues, one at a time, with skilled conflict workers. There is no prior assumption that the parties have to live together, nor that they have to live apart;
- 3** Such dialogue encounters should better take place under simple circumstances, and without the limelight of the media;
- 4** As an encounter is a conversation, nobody presides; people are encouraged to organize such encounters themselves;
- 5** The public should also be involved by being informed about the problems and encouraged to contribute ideas (peace education), and the media to cooperate with columns, round-tables, call-in programs, information (peace journalism);
- 6** There is no dramatic ending, no build-up to celebrate anybody for "giving us peace", maybe not even a signed agreement

This is conflict transformation by hard conflict evaporation. Good ideas are enacted, something gets unblocked. No "holding somebody to his word", as there may not even be any word. "Only" a process; like the way the Cold War evaporated.

justification

Real transformation comes from inside the parties; the conflict worker is a catalyst, helping, not pressing from above. Only that way can the transformation process be not only acceptable, but self-sustaining.

problems

Big powers, and not only they, tend to prefer the mainstream approach to symbolize and increase their power; often more important to them than real conflict transformation. A conference that does not lead to an agreement may also serve as a pretext for interventions. However, mainstream and alternative approaches can also be combined in double- or multi-track processes; gambling on two or more approaches.


37 The Alternative/Horizontal Approach

The mainstream negotiation approach suffers from another major problem: the parties may simply refuse to meet, or walk out on each other if they meet. This gives the dialogue approach an immediate advantage: "Why do you refuse to come/want to stay?" as opening question. Chances are they will be eager to answer.

However, as pointed out, these approaches are complementary. The argument is that more is needed of the alternative, horizontal approach. Ideally, as mentioned, in a place like Yugoslavia there should be hundreds, thousands of conflict workers setting up peace dialogues all over. Each UN peace-keeper, down to the level of the rank and file soldier, should have some training enabling him/her to do that.

The net result, as has been argued, would be a reservoir of ideas coming from the people in the conflict, and, hopefully, a number of local "peaces", a village here, an NGO there, a citizen's group, maybe a whole province, as "zone of peace". All pieces that can be fitted into a larger picture, possibly with local initiatives inspiring the national/regional/global in addition to vice versa.

Needless to say, there is a contradiction here because some people in Track I want to monopolize the whole conflict process, referring to the old doctrine of states wielding the ultimate power. The mirror image of this mentality can also be found among Track II people. But recent work has transcended that conflict quite well into patterns of "double-track diplomacy", working together. Moreover, the method, or style, suggested here can also be used by people working on Track I. The problem is that Track I often becomes Track minus I because of the arrogance of the state system?

 Discuss patterns of cooperation, including in the form of division of labor, between Track I and Track II. And how about a Track III for business people?

exercise

38 Socio-Analysis

Let us now go more deeply into the content of dialogues, and imagine that we accept **social** = **structural** + **cultural**. The human actors, individual and collective, live in the structure; and the culture lives in them. To live in a peace structure it has to be relatively solid, "institutionalized" as sociologists would say, and the peace culture has to be "internalized", accepted.

The perennial problem with conflicts is that contradictions often are embedded in rigid structures and will reappear, and that violence is often embedded in rigid cultures and will also reappear. To "do something about structure and culture" is more easily said than done since they are the pillars of society.

One condition is that people are aware of the social forces impinging upon them, and inside them. To arrive at this the conflict worker has to explore local/national/regional structure and culture **together with the parties**, searching for the factors reproducing hard conflicts and violence, hoisting them up, into the daylight. If some aspects are found harmful, then search for alternatives that can be built into structure and culture. Verbalize them, transform them through the words, **dialogos**.

This process is **socio-analysis**. If limited to one person socio=psycho; the process is known as psycho-analysis, stressing that psychoanalyst/therapist works **together** with the "patient". That process should also be a dialogical, joint exploration. Verbalization makes what is private, even subconscious, public, shared.

The basic agenda for a socio-analysis dialogue is already given above: in Units 28 and 29, dealing with frequent forms of structural and cultural violence — the PSFM and CGT/DMA syndromes. Questions can be asked: is P, S, F, M, C, G, T, D, M, A prevalent? Are they problematic? What can we do about it? But be sure you have understood these categories well enough to develop your own understanding.

justification

Structure and culture are strong, capable of reproducing conflict and violence. Human individuals are weak; so this theory may sound deterministic. But those forces can only work unopposed as long as people fail to understand them. Understanding is already half of the liberation from fate.

problems

The other half, action, is often neglected.

38 Socio-Analysis

General ideas about psychoanalysis, including prejudices, should not interfere with efforts to see socio-analysis in the same light. There is no need to be a Freudian to agree that there are subconscious forces steering much of our behavior, that one condition for changing these forces is to be conscious of them, that one way of becoming conscious is to verbalize them, that to verbalize we may need the help of somebody more experienced in a focused dialogue, that once we have become conscious we are no longer determined by those forces but in a position to change our situation, our personality, our conflicts.


This does not mean that socio-analysis is a copy of psycho-analysis. They develop on separate tracks, and have much to learn from each other. Socio-analysis may have more in common with group therapy, marriage counseling and family therapy, and like all these efforts (and unlike classical psycho-analysis) oscillate between individual and group approaches.

In both cases the word pair blocked/unblocked (used very often in this manual) is more indicative of what a conflict worker tries to do than illness/treatment. The conflict is perhaps more like a curse than like a disease; the problem is how to lift that curse. But the curse can also affect the parties so deeply that psycho-analytical metaphors are appropriate.

The typical dialogue would explore the potentials for negating structural and cultural violence:

- not penetration — but autonomy
- not segmentation — but integration
- not fragmentation — but solidarity
- not marginalization — but participation
- not chosenness — but we are all valuable!
- not glory of violence — but glory of peace
- not trauma — but healing, closure
- not dualism — but holism, see the variety
- not manicheism — but good and bad in all
- not Armageddon — but conflict transformation.

Demanding? Yes. Peace is demanding.

 Try to apply some of the ideas in this manual about how to handle conflict on one of your own conflicts, inside yourself, or with somebody close to you. Work through all units and all points in the many lists and try to translate these general formulations into your own situation. Who has more to learn from this comparison, you or the manual? Or both?

exercise

39 Conflict Outcomes or Conflict Process?

Take the conflict in Yugoslavia. It has roots in the 1054 Schism between Catholic and Orthodox Christians (with roots in the 395 division of the Roman Empire); the 1095 declaration of Holy War against Muslims (the First Crusade); the 1389 Ottoman defeat of the Kingdom of Serbia; the Habsburg invasion, the Nazi invasion. The ABC-triangle is a full-blown hatred-violence-block triangle. The conflict was violent in Yugoslavia I (1918-1941), not in Yugoslavia II (1945-1991), and then exploded in violence 1991-1995-2000.

Was that all resolved in Dayton December 1995 and with the NATO bombing 1999? Only if conflict = violence, cease-fire = peace, and conflict = meta-conflict. But one may of course hope for a process transforming the conflict to a higher level: less hatred, less or no violence, contradictions gradually being resolved or receding into the background.

How? By applying empathy, nonviolence and creativity; using democratic institutions at the local, national, regional and world levels; using human rights as a guideline; through peace-making, -keeping and -building. Outcome **and** process together. **Good peace work will produce outcome and process, for elites and people to carry them out; including reconstruction and reconciliation.**

The conflict worker enters at any social level in person-to-person dialogues to help develop creative ideas. The **outcome** lies not only in the number of ideas put into practice, but also in the **process** inside parties, including inside the conflict workers. If they all come out more empathic, nonviolent and creative, then they have also been transformed. And this will show up as improved conflict skills at personal, social and world levels in future conflicts as higher gross national conflict resolving capacity (GNCRC).

justification

To overcome conflict illiteracy, and apathy an everlasting conflict transforming process, not a single-shot outcome, is needed.

problems

The jealousies of those who believe in monopoly and those who feel left out of the process.

39 Conflict Outcomes or Conflict Process?


The question is, of course, rhetorical: the answer is an obvious both-and. But the point cannot be made often enough that how you are shapes how you act in a conflict, and how you act in a conflict shapes how you become. A conflict positively transformed (like the Korean peninsula after the June 15, 2000 historical meeting of the two Kims) is a gift to the world, the society, to the inside and outside conflict parties. A tame expression is "experience", as some kind of valuable luggage. More important is the ability to convey a sense of compassion, optimism, creativity to others, and that goes far beyond being drilled in negotiation games.

"Good peace work will produce outcome **and** process, for elites **and** people to carry out; including reconstruction **and** reconciliation." This is quite some bill to meet. But it is worth keeping in mind that conflict work is supposed to produce.

- 1 an image of an acceptable and sustainable **conflict outcome**;
- 2 an acceptable and sustainable **conflict process**;
- 3 a process involving **both elites and people in general**;
- 4 a process that also includes **reconciliation and reconstruction**.

The conflict worker, ideally, is the catalyst setting all this in motion, with the aim of making the processes self-sustaining.

As no single person can do this for a complex conflict several conflict workers are needed, as argued above, at elite and people levels. If this could be a snow-balling process, with each conflict producing conflict workers who can do good work in other conflicts, like experienced conflict workers from Northern Ireland and from Southern Africa have been doing, the world capacity for handling conflict might improve.

 Permit yourself to be egocentric: how would you like to emerge from conflict work as a person? What kind of person would you like to become? How is that compatible with good conflict work?

exercise

40 Handling Stress and Tension

Invariably, when issues that are both intellectually very tricky and emotionally very touchy are discussed—hours, days, weeks—stress will arise inside the parties, and tension will emerge among them. The conflict is projected inward, from the context out there in society where people are suffering and/or trapped in basic and hard conflicts, onto that little group, two persons, in search of answers, and further on, inside those persons themselves.

There are somatic expressions like changes in voice level and breathing, blood pressure and adrenaline. Feelings of being choked, of not thinking straight, intense dislikes for the other person who is seen as insane, criminal and/or stupid, emerge and find expressions in body and verbal language. And a desire to quit, get out. Time for classics:

- 1 **control yourself**, talk less, breathe slowly, wait;
- 2 **the well-placed anecdote or joke**, with tact, no irony or sarcasm; if anybody is to be made fun of, then yourself;
- 3 **change the topic**, with a smile, "we seem not to get much further on this one, how about —"
- 4 **take a break**, not necessarily declaring that it is stress-related as that may increase the stress even further, a meal, a drink, a walk, some music;
- 5 **sleep on it**, but better is, of course, to end the day with a sense of achievement and a nice party; starting next day with less difficult points, building up as a dialogue develops;
- 6 **adjourn**, simply admit that "we also got stuck", but never admit total and final capitulation relative to the issues.

justification
problems

To keep dialogues for peace peaceful: we are all human, there are certain limits to what we can take.


Stress/tension must be seen as another meta-conflict within the persons participating and between them. It is not the real, root conflict, but it demands serious attention. To handle them well should not be confused with solving the root conflict.

40 Handling Stress and Tension

A basic point is to recognize when stress and tension become counter-productive. Up to a certain point they can work positively. As argued repeatedly in these manuals, conflict builds up some energy based on stress (the frustration of the goals that are blocked) and tension (with the party perceived as standing in the way). The problem is how to use that energy creatively. It is like a natural resource that should not be wasted, but also not be exploited beyond the carrying capacity of nature.

One break-off point suggested is how the conflict worker sees the other party: when tendencies to psychiatrize, criminalize and idiotize emerge, change the course of action. Or ask somebody else to take over.

However, a spontaneous burst of anger may also clear the air. This author once said to two high ranking Koreans, North and South, "take your fucking conflict and go to hell!" After that the dialogue became very productive, partly because of the joint fear of the two Koreas of losing their grip on the world if people no longer are deeply concerned with their concerns (and mainly because deep down they agreed). But any anger has to be controlled. And do not walk out. The parties may walk out on you, but you should not walk out on them.

 How would you react when the inside conflict party is angry with you, and says, for instance:

- don't you know anything about this conflict at all?
- who the hell do you think you are, pretending to give advice?
- is this some new form of colonialism, trying to dominate us?
- given the country you come from, watch your own conflicts!
- take your fucking conflict work and go to hell!

Are you able to take it? Do you have sufficient inner strength to take verbal abuse and avoid escalation of verbal violence?

exercise

Conflict Transformation

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Module **IX** Units 41–45

41 Power & Social Fault-line Conflicts

Let us then move on to some major types of conflict. Society is a community of humans, and most social conflicts are across well-known fault-lines in that community. Here is a list of 8:

- 1 Environment: Humans vs. Nature**, speciesism;
- 2 Gender: Male vs. Female**, sexism;
- 3 Generation: Old vs. Middle-Aged vs. Young**, ageism;
- 4 Race: Light vs. Dark**, racism;
- 5 Class: Powerful vs. Powerless**, classism
 - a Political Power**, who decides over/represses whom
 - b Military Power**, who forces/kills whom
 - c Economic Power**, who exploits whom
 - d Cultural Power**, who penetrates/conditions/alienates whom;
- 6 "Normal" vs. "Deviants"**, stigmatism, as sick criminal/dumb;
- 7 Nation/Culture: Dominant vs. Dominated**, nationalism;
- 8 Geography: Center vs. Periphery**; centralism.

diagnosis

The fault-lines serve to organize structural violence, often complete with PSFM. Even more vicious are structures with fault-lines coinciding, e.g., all powerful are men (patriarchy), all powerful are old (gerontocracy), or all powerful belong to the same race and/or nation and live in the center. Or, all dominant states are ruled by dominant nations.

Sparks of direct violence may fly across fault-lines. And as if that were not enough, cultural violence, with CGT and DMA, may be used to justify inquisition, witch-burning, genocide, whatever.

prognosis

Such structures are resilient, resisting change and tend to reinforce each other.

therapy

Nonviolence, producing alternative structures and cultures with parity/equity/equality across all fault-lines; and maximum criss-cross of those lines. The quality of a society can be measured by the extent to which this is done.

justification

This "therapy" is nothing more, nothing less than the structural and cultural basis for domestic democracy.

problems

The whole reality of social power, nothing less.

41 Power & Social Fault-line Conflicts

This unit may contain more social science than you want to digest. However, you will find those eight fault-lines popping up one way or the other in all social conflicts as deep structure and deep culture. Moreover, the list is also a check-list to identify aspects you have left out. Take Yugoslavia as an example. Everybody sees the conflict in terms of nations, and their territorial claims in terms of more independent states in the world.


How about gender, seeing the conflict as men against women, using the female body as a battle-field, and the male body as a weapon?

How about generation, tying them to the scourge of violence to produce more glory, and to avenge the traumas?

How about class, the revolt against the upper layer of "Yugoslavs" created by Titoism, mostly in Beograd, benefiting from a federation that was much less meaningful locally in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in Chetnik and Ustashe territory and in Kosovo/Kosova?

And how about the stigma, the way not only those national groups, but all of Yugoslavia, the Balkans have been stigmatized as criminal, sick and dumb, (as the dark shadow the West does not want to recognize in themselves ("OK, if that is how you think we are we shall show you! We have nothing to lose anyhow, you will continue talking like that regardless of what we do").

A good conflict worker would bring in all of this; patiently promoting parity and equity across fault-lines. Any reading of the conflict in and over Yugoslavia will give some image of how far away we are from this more holistic approach, using one dimension only, nation, as if it contained the whole truth of the conflict — nothing about gender, generation, class.

 Take any other conflict you know and check whether the list of fault-lines sensitizes you to more aspects.

exercise

42 Power & World Fault-line Conflicts

This fault-line analysis can now be repeated for the world as a community of societies (territorial, meaning countries, and non-territorial, the NGOs, TNCs, etc.). Once again, the list of 8:

- 1 Environment: Countries vs. Nature**
- 2 Gender: Male vs. Female Countries** (violator/"protector" vs. violated/"protected").
- 3 Generation: Old vs. Middle-aged vs. Young Countries**
- 4 Race: Light vs. Dark Countries** (majorities)
- 5 Class: Powerful vs. Powerless**, among countries
 - a Political power**, who decides over/represses whom
 - b Military power**, who invades/occupies whom
 - c Economic power**, who exploits whom
 - d Cultural power**, who penetrates/conditions/alienates whom
- 6 "Normal vs. "Pariah" Countries** (stigma, rogue/terrorist)
- 7 Nation/Culture/Civilization: Dominant–Dominated Countries**
- 8 Geography: Center vs. Periphery Countries**, centralism.

diagnosis

Country gender can be discussed. Structural violence, with PSFM, flow; and sparks of direct violence fly. In the wake follow wars, terrorism and torturism, all with cultural violence blessing, through CGT/DMA. And world and social fault-lines multiply, creating the gap across fault-lines at the world and the social levels, between the high-ups in high-up countries and the low-down in low-down countries, like from the peaks of the Himalayas to the Philippine depression.

prognosis

Such structures are resilient, resisting change, and tend to reinforce each other.

therapy

Nonviolence, producing alternative structures and cultures with parity/equity/equality across the former "fault" lines; and maximum criss-cross of those lines. The quality of the world can be measured by the extent to which this is done.

justification

This "therapy" is nothing more, nothing less than the structural and cultural basis for global democracy.

problems

The whole reality of world power, nothing less.

42 Power & World Fault-line Conflicts

This unit may contain more world studies than you want to digest. However, you will find those eight fault-lines popping up one way or the other in all world conflicts. Moreover, the list is also a check-list to identify aspects you have left out.

Again, take Yugoslavia as an example. Many see that conflict as internal to Yugoslavia only. Bring in the world. There are other countries seeing the Yugoslav peoples and the Balkan countries in general as a group of talkative whining women badly in need of some strong men to sort them out. Yugoslavia is also seen as a young, inexperienced neophyte in the world of states. Racially they are considered dark, olive, Mediterranean, mixed, mixed-up, again in need of being sorted out by some tall, fair, blue-eyed people from the North. Who does the sorting, and who is sorted out, is already decided by the world class, position, another word for world power. And who needs most sorting is decided by the nation/culture: the Orthodox, and the Muslims, of course — not the Catholics/Protestants.

That way the conflict becomes territorially structured, the rest of the world against Yugoslavia in general and against Serbs and Muslims in particular, the Serbs by being ostracized and isolated, and the Muslims by not being permitted to have a state of their own. In short, all the fault-lines are activated, aggravating the conflict considerably.

The parts of Yugoslavia are then playing on this, trying to pick up supporters in the Catholic/Protestant, the Orthodox and the Muslim world, respectively. And suddenly these three parts of Europe and beyond are pitted against each other, as they were doing during the Crusades. Ominous; much conflict work needed lest even more large-scale violence should erupt.



Try something similar for the Gulf conflict.

exercise

43 Intra-Personal Conflicts

Let us now translate this approach to intra-personal conflict, in the sense of struggle between inner inclinations or voices, like Freud's Id, Ego, and Superego, separated by inner fault-lines.

The conflict worker is now his/her own psycho-therapist, doing psycho-analysis rather than socio-analysis. The method is careful probing, in an **inner dialogue**, together, to identify the inner forces driving the person, how the relation among Id, Ego and Superego is structured, and the code, the deep personal culture underlying that structure. Inner dialogue is listening to the inner voices of Id, Ego and Superego, probing carefully, tactfully, like a good chairperson. Only one voice at the time, to give it a fair and clear hearing. Another word for this process is **meditation**.

Inner dialogue is saying, "Yes Id, there you have a point, develop that further. You can reach that goal without doing violence to other selves and your Self." All the time watch for signs of violence; one of them may repress, crush the other(s) who will then be hiding in the deeper recesses of the mind, trying to find some way of coming back, and with a vengeance.

Here is a metaphor for psycho-analysis/socio-analysis: the mind-scape, or the socio-scape, is like a landscape, a garden. The conflict worker is the landscaper, the gardener. Not everybody is a gardener so it is perfectly OK to ask for specialist advice. And s/he comes up with some ideas for a dialogue: here are some weeds, how can we get rid of them; here some poisoned soil where nothing can grow; here some beautiful flowers, let us water them; more sun, even better soil; here is a fence, a hedge, closing out others, let us lower them, tear them down. The choice is yours. You, like any party, are conditioned. But not pre-determined.


In short, exactly as for conflict transformation in general.

43 Intra-Personal Conflicts

This unit serves a double role in the manual.


First, like the unit on socio-analysis, to point to some similarities that may serve some useful pedagogical purpose. A contradiction or incompatibility may show up at all kinds of places. A conflict manual would be very incomplete without some mention of intra-personal conflict.

Second, doing conflict work you should be able to handle some of your own inner conflicts. You should be capable of being your own conflict worker, conducting your own inner dialogue, being creative, transcend and transform — at least a little. Thus, to what extent do you try to display how clever you (think you) are, in order to dominate others, supposedly a very male habit? And to what extent do you display your kindness to control others through kind deeds, supposedly more female?

 Well, to what extent do you?

Actually, there are much worse things one can do in this world, but consciousness about such matters may be useful.

A very difficult dimension to handle in conflict work is the difference between dialogue and debate. Dialogue, being questioning and searching, is easy in the initial phase when the level of specific knowledge is low. But then that changes, knowledge accumulates, the conflict finds its place, inevitably, in some typology. The conflict becomes a case, and brings forth a catalogue of remedies. They are then, proposed, initially with question marks. But when the counter-arguments come the question marks disappear and exclamation signs come in their place. You are trying to convince the inside party of the validity of your outside party idea.

 Exercise: How do you avoid this, keeping the question marks?

exercise

exercise

44 Inter-Personal Conflicts

Inter-personal conflict is located at the interface between intra-personal and social/world conflicts. Persons enter, with more or less transformed inner conflicts; and meet, often across social fault-lines, even world fault-lines. Any family is by definition cut through by two fault-lines; gender and generation; any school by one, teacher-pupil; and any work place also by one, employer-employee (economic/political class). The neighborhood, like friends, may have no fault-lines, a reason why they react so strongly if another race/class/nation enters, "to preserve peace".

People can, and do, leave friends, neighborhoods and work-places; pupils are supposed to leave schools; children leave families, sometimes with the bang of puberty revolts. A tremendous pressure falls on the marital bond across the gender fault-line; a possible reason for same sex marriages today. Five goals, protected by strong norms of faithfulness, serve to protect the marital bond against marriages going wrong and spouses leaving each other, but more easily said than done:

- 1 the faithfulness of the body — against extra-marital sex;
- 2 the faithfulness of the mind — against extra-marital love;
- 3 the faithfulness of the spirit — spiritual union with spouse;
- 4 social faithfulness — support in all social contexts;
- 5 economic faithfulness — support in all economic contexts.


The conflict worker would have to combine social fault-line DPT, inter-personal/intra-marital DPT and intra-personal DPT. S/he would recommend parity/equity/equality structurally, to get rid of cultural violence, to make marriages so cooperative that all five types of faithfulness come automatically. No inner voice should be so dominant that it runs away with the whole person, the family, the marriage, and what not. Add children who will sooner or later reach puberty, meaning separating from parents, and the family/marriage therapist is certainly dealing with a social/world micro-cosm. To reduce that conflict formation to two persons and sexual monogamy is obviously misleading. It has to be filled with something positive, constructive like **a joint life project** —beyond raising children.

44 Inter-Personal Conflicts


If the preceding unit is about stress, then this unit is about tension. And one point made has very much to do with post-modern society: people, meaning individuals, move. They leave relations when they become complicated; one reason why in conflicts there are enormous amounts of displaced persons who leave instead of trying to do something about the conflict. Groups that used to be solid (the work place, neighborhoods, kinship groups, friendship groups) disintegrate or at least have a very high turn-over. Ultimately the pressure is on the marital bond, which then also breaks—like in 50% of the cases.

One point for the conflict worker is to stay with the conflict even when the going is tough, using survival strategies like those indicated in Unit 40. But even here there is a turning point: you may decide that you are as counter-productive to the conflict as the conflict is to you. You may simply have nothing more to offer, being spent for that conflict.

Possibly time has come to move on. Moreover, there is no argument in these pages that conflict work is only for those who see it as a life time commitment. Everybody is called upon to help, but not to help without a minimum of preparation. And some of that preparation has to do with how you yourself handle relations to your colleagues, neighbors, relatives and friends.

 Well, to what extent do you?

This is a place where the Golden Rule can be used. Imagine you are blocked in a hard conflict. How would you like outside conflict workers to approach you? Friendly, helpful, skillful, no doubt. Do you also want him to tell you that you are right? And the other party wrong?

 Well, do you? How will the other party react?

exercise

exercise

45 Some TRANSCEND Proposals

Here are ten one-line DPT formulations from conflict work over 40 years, in 40 conflicts, using dialogues at all levels (the year is when the organization TRANSCEND entered, searching for a conflict perspective on process and outcome):

"East-West" Conflict, 1953

- D : Reductionism to [2,1] conflict; stalinism, nuclearism
- P : Protraction, Third world warfare, nuclear war/mutual genocide
- T : CSCE, GRIT/defensive defense, people's diplomacy, nonviolence

"North-South" Conflict, 1962–

- D : Imperialism, economism, asymmetric externalities
- P : Massive misery, violence, migration South; unemployment North
- T : Alternative economics, self-reliance I, self-reliance II

Israel-Palestine, 1964–

- D : Settler colonialism, traumatized chosen people vs. indigenous
- P : Protracted structural and direct violence, escalation
- T : Nonviolence (intifada), autonomy/two states/confederation

Northern Ireland, 1970–

- D : Institutionalization of 300+ years of historical conquest
- P : Mutual alienation, polarization, protracted violence
- T : Anglo-Irish condominium, high Ulster autonomy/independence

Korea, 1972–

- D : Separation of a nation, division of a state, by outsiders
- P : Korean War 1950–53 repeated with some modifications
- T : Korean insertion in East Asian Community, opening rail/road connection

Yugoslavia I (Northwest), 1991–

- D : Reductionism to [2,1] formula, God vs. Satan, Armageddon; CGT
- P : Massive genocide, also through sanctions, major escalation
- T : Equal right to self-determination, confederation; CSCSEE

Crusades: Christian-Muslim Relations, 1995–

- D : 1095 declaration of holy war, with no peace declaration
- P : Protracted micro/macro-violence, God vs. Satan, Armageddon
- T : Christian-Muslim dialogue and concrete local cooperation

Ecuador-Peru, 1995–

- D : Classical territorial dispute; military seeking legitimacy
- P : Setting a pattern of inter-state warfare for Latin America
- T : Joint ownership, use of disputed area as binational peace zone

Euskal Herria (Basque Country), 1997–

- D : Two countries separating one nation
- P : Protracted endless violence, terrorism and killing
- T : Functional independence & French-Spanish condominium

Yugoslavia II (Southeast), 1998–

- D : Albanian independence movement on Serb sacred and rich land
- P : Occupation and third party governance; like BiH
- T : Kosovo Third FRY Republic, South Balkan confederation.

45 Some TRANSCEND Conflict Proposals

This page looks cryptic but should be easy to decipher for a person who has come this far in the manuals. DPT and CGT you know from units 25 and 29, and some conflicts have been used as examples in the preceding pages. Here are ten of them, and for each one three one-liners: one for diagnosis, one for prognosis and one for therapy. Behind those lines are countless dialogues at "high, middle and low levels". Some expressions should be clarified:

[2,1]: Polarized conflict with two parties over the same goal

CSCE: Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe


CSCEE: the same for South-East Europe

GRIT: Gradual Reduction of International Tension


SELF-RELIANCE I: Self-production for satisfaction of basic needs

SELF-RELIANCE II: Trade with others at the same level

The East-West conflict 1949–89 ended on such notes, the North-South conflict has again aggravated. The agreement for N. Ireland of Good Friday 1998 was perhaps in that direction, the Oslo agreement of 1993 for Israel–Palestine was not a symmetric two-state agreement, here seen as the only way out. There has been no equal self-determination in Yugoslavia, and all the others are also waiting for some steps forward. For more details, consult the home page of TRANSCEND, www.transcend.org

 If you find the proposals unreasonable, what could be done to improve them?

exercise

 If you find the proposals reasonable, what could be done to implement them?

exercise

Peace Transformation

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Module **X** Units 46–50

46 Peace Education; People As Partners

Most people would agree that wanting health is not enough, some knowledge and skills are also needed. The same applies to peace. Peace education should fill the gap between wanting and acting if it is defined as conflict transformation competence.

The field is controversial. There is controversy over the means to obtain peace (only peaceful, or not?), over the end (peace = security = absence of direct violence, or peace = something more?). Moreover, not everybody wants peace, or wants it badly enough. This controversy, also found in the health field, is healthy if we assume that "a controversy a day keeps dogmatism away".

The conflict worker should support peace educators at all levels from kindergarten to university (the earlier the better, for internalization), into higher offices of local, national and regional government; eradicating conflict/peace illiteracy. The conflict worker may even also have to be a peace educator. This manual may serve for others to add, subtract or reject. And there are other texts available. Here is a list of the TRANSCEND training/education programs.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>[I] PEACEFUL CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION, to develop perspectives, through dialogues with the parties, on peaceful transformation toward acceptable / sustainable / autonomous / participatory outcomes.</p> <p>[II] PEACE ACTOR EMPOWERMENT, to explore, through dialogues, how actors and parties can be empowered for peace action, building a transnational civil society.</p> <p>[III] PEACE PEDAGOGY, to design and launch dialogical peace education programs at kindergarten, elementary, secondary, university and adult levels of education, also by means of peace museums.</p> <p>[IV] PEACE JOURNALISM, to contribute to a change in the reporting about conflict from the current focus on violence and war (the "meta-conflict") to a focus on peaceful conflict transformation.</p> <p>[V] PEACE ZONES, to help start and develop further zones of peace around the world with decrease of violence and expansion of cooperative, peace-building within and without.</p> <p>[VI] PEACE KEEPING, with the aim of decreasing violence through the presence of peace-keepers trained in defensive military and police methods, nonviolence, mediation and peace building.</p> <p>[VII] PEACEFUL RECONCILIATION, to explore, initiate and develop activities to reconcile parties traumatized by violence and war.</p> <p>[VIII] PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS, to explore, initiate and develop business activities that would be clearly peace building.</p> | <p>[IX] DEVELOPMENT SUBSISTENCE, EQUITY AND SUSTAINABILITY, to explore, initiate and develop further local initiatives to meet the minimum basic needs of everybody with local currencies, local organization and appropriate technologies.</p> <p>[X] PEACE CULTURE AND THE DIALOGUE OF CIVILIZATIONS, to explore how to transform deep-rooted cultural patterns that impede peace and development and may cause genocide.</p> <p>[XI] NONVIOLENT APPROACHES TO SECURITY, to explore the various ways in which societies can protect their citizens against violence from the inside and the outside by peaceful means, with a view to the abolition of war.</p> <p>[XII] HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRATIZATION AND SELF-DETERMINATION, to explore how the International Bill of Human Rights, universal and indivisible, can be implemented democratically for all nations all over the world and improved.</p> <p>[XIII] GLOBAL GOVERNANCE, to explore the rise of democratic and global institutions, including UN reform.</p> <p>[XIV] PEACE AND WOMEN, to explore the special contribution of women to all peace programs.</p> <p>[XV] PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS, to explore the special demands on our analytical skills.</p> |
|--|---|

justification

Even if the emphasis in this manual is on dialogue to find short-term ways out of emergencies, there are also the medium and long-term perspectives. Good ideas may emerge quickly; for seeds to take roots the medium term may be needed, and much peace education to prepare the soil. In the longer term, peace education may even have considerable preventive effect by increasing everybody's conflict transforming capacity; through knowledge and skills; empathy, nonviolence, creativity.

problems

In spite of excellent UNESCO resolutions on peace education there is not much progress, except in nongovernmental circles. Conflict work is still seen in a feudal/patriarchic perspective as management from above, as a monopoly for states and their elites.


46 Peace Education; People As Partners

In this final block, conflict/peace work is lifted out of the concrete conflict and the parties engaged in the dialogue, bringing in the "context" of other people and other aspects of conflict and peace, dealing with the medium and longer term.


Think of the people who discovered some of the keys to health: for them health education was one basic approach. People had to know the essentials, take their precautions with food, clothes and shelter, practice personal hygiene, try not to be contaminated nor contaminate others, and learn to handle stress.

The argument is not that all of that was an unmitigated success. Mistakes have also been made in the name of modern medicine, in fact so many that it is to be hoped that conflict workers will not imitate the arrogance of some physicians, but rather the helpfulness and humility of good nurses.

Repeatedly in the manuals the potential usefulness of, say, 50 good stories about positive transformation of conflict has been mentioned, particularly in countries very high on cultural violence (one example being Guatemala). The idea is actually taken from the Bible and other fundamental religious texts, from those inspiring stories about the good deeds of Jesus, Buddha and others like Gandhi. Such stories live on in a person throughout life, regardless of religious orientation. Imagine such stories widely disseminated, challenged, changed, reviewed, and revised. What a reservoir to draw upon in concrete conflicts!

 Could you contribute one such story? Remember, the story should preferably be about "common people" with whom the reader can identify, Yes, I could also have done that! The light of the great founders of religions may be too strong.

exercise

 A distinction can be made between training for skills, and education for knowledge. Look at the 15 programs for peace education suggested above and formulate one example for each of what you would like to be able to do — and would like to know. Needless to say, we in TRANSCEND are most interested in the answers.

exercise

47 Peace Journalism; Media As Partners

In modern societies, resting on the three pillars of State, Capital and Civil Society, encompassing millions, even well above one billion individuals (China), Media are the fourth pillar. Media have the right and duty to make what goes on in one pillar transparent to the other two. The goal is social transparency.

This makes it even more deplorable that media tend to focus on the meta-conflict of war and violence (the "war correspondent"), and even so only on visible consequences. Peace is conceived of as cease-fire. Any focus on the root conflict tends to be simplistic, with two parties only, favoring one side, reporting mainly fighting, victory and defeat.

Reporting is actor- and elite-oriented, a cultural violence of seeing violence/war as due to bad actors, and peace as a gift from elites in elite countries. If the **sudden**, the **negative**, the **elitist** makes news, then wars are ideal.

We need peace journalists reporting the invisible effects of wars, the underlying conflict formation, the roots of conflicts, the many people of good will in and outside the arena struggling for an end to violence and transformation of the conflict, searching for alternatives to violence, outcomes and processes, reporting ideas that emerge. Conflict workers have to make journalists and media their partners for peace; the conflict worker may even also have to be a peace journalist (for manuals, see <www.transcend.org>).

We need much less war journalism that reports only highly visible violence — often in a pornographic manner — with a simplistic soccer game image of the conflict, with little or no understanding of the roots of conflicts, with neglect, even contempt of common people and their struggle for peace and dignity, mainly concerned with who is winning and how "our peace" can be imposed, with a very limited view of possible peace outcomes and processes.

justification

Given media power it matters whether they favor cultural violence or cultural peace. They could continue favoring "our side", yet not see wars as sports games (who wins!) and report killed and wounded as if they were scores. And they could do much more to understand what the conflict is about, exploring the conflict formation, not only reporting from the conflict arena — and join in the search for ways out.

problems


Peace journalism could lead to under-reporting of war and violence, and optimistic over-reporting of efforts to counteract violence and transform conflict. Balance is basic. Some war journalism is also needed.

47 Peace Journalism; Media As Partners

Peace journalism is not only about getting at the truth, but about getting at peace. Questions that could be asked for any peace plan:

- 1 What was the method behind the plan? Dialogue with parties, and in that case with all the parties? Some trial negotiation? Analogy with other conflicts? Intuition?
- 2 To what extent is the plan acceptable to all parties? If not, what can be done about it?
- 3 To what extent is the plan, if realized, self-sustainable? If not, what can be done about it?
- 4 Is the plan based on autonomous action by the conflict parties, or does it depend on outsiders?
- 5 To what extent is there a process in the plan, about who shall do what, how, when and where, or is it only about outcome?
- 6 To what extent is the plan based on what only elites can do, what only people can do, or on what both can do?
- 7 Does the plan foresee an ongoing conflict resolution or is the idea a single-shot agreement?
- 8 Is peace/conflict transformation education for people, for elites or for both, built into the plan?
- 9 If there has been violence, to what extent does the plan contain elements of reconciliation?
- 10 If there has been violence, to what extent does the plan contain elements of rehabilitation/reconstruction?
- 11 If the plan doesn't work, is the plan reversible?
- 12 Even if the plan does work for this conflict, does it create new conflicts or problems? In that case, is it a good deal?

The conflict has to be mapped, the roots have to be better understood and in a globalizing world the roots of conflict are also globalizing. And peace has to include human rights and democracy. One problem is incompatibility between news as dramatic, negative, elitist, and peace as something soothing, positive, for everybody; peace as the right to live life without violence and unnecessary interference. The way out for journalists would be to focus on the struggle for peace as dramatic, but positive, engaged in by many people, the heroes and heroines of daily life. Feel their agony in coming nowhere, portray their pain, make them visible, and lift them up. What else is democracy about than about people struggling for a better life?

 Write a short story, real or fiction, about struggle for peace. Would the media accept it? Why? Why not?

exercise

48 Reconstruction After Violence

Violence destroys, often irreversibly, like killing. But some damage can be undone, and this is a very important aspect of conflict work.

Given the broad spectrum of visible/invisible consequences of violence there will be considerable reconstruction to do; much of it demanding the skills of experts. The task of the conflict worker will be to sensitize people to the range of the work, and engage them in a general dialogue about how to proceed with:

Rehabilitation of humans:

wounded, raped, displaced, bereaved, deformed

Rebuilding of society:

the development approach

Restructuration:

the peace structure approach — building peaceful structures

Reculturation:

the peace culture approach — building peaceful cultures

Physio- and psychotherapists (and other healers), refugee agencies, can do excellent jobs. A distinction should be made between **restoration** to what was, and **development**, going beyond. Basic problem: a society shaken by destruction may be used to justify violence to bring about social change (Russia 1917).

Another problem: to give meaning to "Restructuration" and "Reculturation"; the former certainly including democratic, participatory structures and the latter certainly including human rights cultures. Both are essential for conflict competence. The task should not wait for cease-fire. School primers would be most useful, like a book with 50 anecdotes about successful conflict transformation.

justification

A task is better done when the total range is clear so that the pieces can fit better together. Moreover, **reconstructing together** has enormous potential as a way of reconciling the parties to the conflict, "OK, we did something stupid, let us now try to undo as much as possible together". Each outsider contracted is one opportunity lost for reconciliation through reconstruction.

problems

People may become overwhelmed by the immensity of the task, brushing everything but concrete reconstruction aside. Local and foreign entrepreneurs hope for good business contracts, and quick reconstruction is preferred to its use for reconciliation, having former belligerents cooperate in reconstructing what they destroyed.

48 Reconstruction After Violence


Of course, nobody would say that the task of Phase III is to go back to Phase I, but they often act as if that is the whole "philosophy". There can be some agreement about rehabilitation, but when it comes to the other three the problems pile up.

In the introduction the point has been made that there are so many things that can be done in Phase I to get on top of that fateful curve moving into violence. If one of the roots of the conflict, and the violence that follows, is in the structure, then for heaven's sake change the structure! Democracy is fine as a formula, but it works better for majorities, and even for majorities (Guatemala again) the problem would be how many resources they can throw into the democratic process.

Another problem is what happens if the marginalized should simply win the elections and demand some more basic change. Human rights enter as a protection, but the very important part known as of economic, social and cultural rights is not really operational.

Restructuration would include such key tasks as building a civil society based on voluntary organizations, and above all across conflict borders, present conflicts and possible future conflicts. Conflicts polarize, restructuring would depolarize.

Reculturation would include such key tasks as denouncing war-cultures glorifying violence, linking heroism to violent acts in general and machismo in particular. If campaigns can be organized against drugs, then why not also against violence?

 What can be done to expand the horizon in the phase when the society is really war-torn? In other words, to go beyond rehabilitation and rebuilding, into the factors that reproduce the violence and can make Phase III = Phase I?

exercise

49 Reconciliation After Violence

When conflict party A does violence to party B both are traumatized; the latter by the harm done, the former by the guilt of having caused that harm. Emotions are deep. The goal of reconciliation is **healing** of the wounds and **closure** of the conflict so that less traumatized parties can live together; a major part of conflict work after a Phase II violent, meta-conflict. South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission is breaking new ground. Twelve general approaches (for a manual, see <www.transcend.org>):

- 1** The exculpatory factor approach (A&B-oriented)
- 2** The reparation/restitution approach (A&B-oriented)
- 3** The apology/forgiveness approach (A&B-oriented)
- 4** The theological/penitence approach (A-oriented, B indirect)
- 5** The juridical/punishment approach (A-oriented, B indirect)
- 6** The codependent origination/karma approach (A&B-oriented)
- 7** The historical/truth commission approach (A&B-oriented)
- 8** The theatrical/reliving approach (A&B-oriented)
- 9** The joint sorrow/healing approach (A&B-oriented)
- 10** The joint reconstruction approach (A&B-oriented)
- 11** The joint conflict resolution approach (A&B-oriented)
- 12** The **ho'o pono pono** approach (A&B-oriented)

To carry out these very time- and labor-intensive tasks expertise is needed; like the priest for [3] and the judge for [4]. Unfortunately, these approaches do not involve both A and B directly, and consequently are not very promising.

There will be pressure on the conflict worker to play these roles, receiving confession and bestowing forgiveness, telling who is right and who is guilty. While resisting that pressure s/he can facilitate a discussion of the approaches. No approach is perfectly good or bad; the best approach may be to combine (some of) them, depending on local culture. The present author's experience is that **in the course of discussing the approaches to reconciliation some reconciliation may take place.**

justification

Only through processes of reconciliation can the violent phase come to some closure; if not the traumas will contribute to a lasting and negative karma between the parties.

problems

There is no fool-proof process of reconciliation when deep harm has been done, and time does not heal all wounds.


49 Reconciliation After Violence

Looking through the list of approaches to reconciliation we recognize immediately the temptation to see the conflict in terms of one cause only, bad actors, and the reconciliation in terms of one approach only: the juridical/punishment approach. In fact, international tribunals are about the only approach used today by the international community to obtain what the Germans call *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, processing of the past.


The point is not to argue against that approach, but against using *only* that approach. It is punitive, meaning it will add to the violence. The victims certainly have a right to have their case receive maximum publicity, and that may have some healing effect. But it is doubtful that the victims receive any deep gratification from knowing, even witnessing that the perpetrators are punished.

A much more effective form of reconciliation is probably to have the fighting parties disarm, and then engage in joint reconstruction of what they have destroyed. That would stand in the way of business opportunities for outside parties, but who is in a position to say that those opportunities are more important than lost opportunities for reconciliation?

Another form is joint conflict resolution, discussing together the calamity that hit them all, designing ways to prevent a repetition in the future. If engaged in both at the elite and the popular levels this should be very powerful. But the best is, of course, for victor and vanquished to come together to work out a real transformation of the root conflict.

 Take a conflict from the list in Unit 45. Try to construct a reconciliation mix from the twelve approaches.

exercise

 You are a judge facing a very violent criminal. Design a sentence that includes all twelve approaches, not only [4].

exercise

50 Making Transformations Reversible

Reversibility is broader than nonviolence, based on the idea of **doing only what can be undone**. Lethal violence is irreversible: we humans can create life, but not recreate a life. So is violence to nature: the three species that disappear every hour are lost. Any irreversible act is violence against future generations, limiting future options. And non-lethal violence is also to a large extent irreversible given the traumas to spirit, mind and body.

Consequently, not only should the acts be reversible in their consequences, but the decision process leading to that act should also be reversible. No treaty/convention should ever be signed without a review clause, reopening negotiations after X (=5?) years. We humans are fallible, nobody is infallible, even our best products and ideas may prove less than perfect after some time. The most solid construction, like the unitary state or the federation, easily becomes violent, inward, outward; a strong argument for the flexibility of the confederation and the looser, associative, cooperative system.

Decision-makers whose decisions carry some infallibility (the Pope, the Emperor/King, Big Powers, and the Security Council) are problematic; later generations may have to pay heavily. Hence, recommend only what can be undone after a review process.

justification

Decisions embodied in treaties may lead to institutions that become structures that over time may be felt like violent straitjackets (the Versailles Treaty again). As this may happen, formulas for peaceful deconstruction should be a part of the construction.

problems


Solutions may be too solid (= brittle); but they may also be too weak. People may ignore them, knowing that they will probably be "undone", "deconstructed", after some time. There are also good arguments for solidity, but not for eternity. Eternity is rather long term and not very helpful, for instance in the Balkans, on the British Isles.

50 Making Transformations Reversible


Diplomats made a great step forward when they made "review conference" a standard feature of their protocols, no doubt partly inspired (negatively) by the Versailles Treaty.

What is argued here is simply to make soft approaches to peace have a soft landing. To etch the treaty in steel presupposes an infallibility, which is not human; and that tradition came from those who saw themselves as God's representatives on earth. Incidentally, it should also be remembered that reopening the protocol does not necessarily mean as often deal for one of the parties. Thus, there was a peace treaty between the Republic of Korea and Japan in 1965. But the issue of the "comfort women" was neglected, not being an open issue at the time, at least not to the men drafting that treaty. There was no review clause in the treaty, hence no recourse within that framework.

The empirical world tends to come up with knotty problems that nobody or only a few really foresaw. Hence, better be modest, even our most favorite formulas (including those in the present manuals may on closer inspection be found wanting).

 Reversibility may sound attractive. Can you mobilize some arguments against that position?

exercise

 Look at the proposals in Unit 45. There are common features, like condominium/joint sovereignty, two states sharing responsibility for a territory, and confederations of state centering a community with the others as the closest partners. Reversibility is underlying such proposals. How can a condominium and a confederation be reversed if found wanting? What would be fall-back positions? What other proposals would be difficult to reverse (one answer: a federation).

exercise

Appendix 1 — Further Readings

Some Recent Literature

- Bondurant, Joan V., *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971, 271pp. This book presents an analysis and overview of the central ideas of Gandhi's political thought and the challenge they present to Western political philosophy. An excellent companion volume to Gandhi's *An Autobiography, or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*.
- Burrowes, R. J., *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense, A Gandhian Approach* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 367 pp. The book discusses de-escalating violence in a conflict: by one of the parties using nonviolence rather than violence. The point is not "does nonviolence always work?" — nothing ever does — but to know how it works when it does work. A more interesting point might actually be whether violence ever works if it leaves behind, as argued in the manual, at least two traumatized parties and dreams of more glory and revenge.
- Büttner, C. W., *Friedensbrigaden: Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung mit gewaltfreien Methoden* (Peace Brigades: Civilian Conflict Processing By Nonviolent Means) (Münster: LIT Verlag, 1995), 147 pp. No doubt this concept, civilian peace service in peace brigades, will play a considerable role in the future, bringing together empathy, nonviolence and creativity. A number of concrete cases are analyzed.
- Camplisson, Joe and Hall, Michael, *Hidden Frontiers. Addressing deep-rooted violent conflict in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Moldova*, Newtownabbey, Co Antrim BT36 7JQ, Northern Ireland: Island Publications, 1996), Island Pamphlets No. 16, 44 pp. The pamphlet is a fascinating account about how becoming a conflict worker in one conflict prepared Joe Camplisson for significant conflict work in another setting, Republic of Moldova. The approach is very compatible with the present manual.
- Chetkow-Yanoov, Benyamin, *Social Work Approaches to Conflict Resolution: Making Fighting Obsolete* (Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, 1996), 174 pp. An easily readable book filled with common sense based on a wealth of personal experience. Good as an introduction to the field.
- Curle, Adam, *Another Way: Positive Response to Contemporary Violence* (Oxford: Jon Carpenter, 1995). A veteran conflict worker with experience from India and Pakistan, Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ireland, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia to mention some. The book deals more with meta-conflict than conflict, and particularly with the "New Violence", "sheer bloody-minded", with no cause, nor rationality — and what can be done about it. Equally recommended is his *Tools for Transformation: A Personal Study* (Hawthorn Press, 1990) and his classic, *Making Peace* (Tavistock, 1971), 301 pp.
- European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation, *Prevention and Management of Violent Conflicts: An International Directory, 1998 Edition*, Amsterdam, 1998, 466p. Descriptions and contact information for 475 organizations involved in conflict work globally. (see contact information in the organizations section below.)
- Fischer, Dietrich, *Nonmilitary Aspects of Security: A Systems Approach* (Dartmouth, for UNIDIR, Geneva, 1993), 222 pp. The book contains a wealth of ideas for peace-building; it would be hard to imagine a conflict where some ideas could not be applied.
- Galtung, Johan, *Peace By Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization* (London, New Delhi, Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 1996), 280pp. The book, organized in four parts that roughly correspond to direct violence, conflict transformation, structural violence and cultural violence, contains the theoretical background for this manual. Not recommended for beginners unless you feel particularly motivated.
- Galtung, Johan and Carl G. Jacobson, with contributions by Kai Frithjof Brand-Jacobson and Finn Tschudi, *Searching for Peace, The Road to TRANSCEND* (Pluto Press, London-Sterling, Virginia, in association with TRANSCEND).

- Lederach, John Paul, *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures* (Syracuse, NJ: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 100+pp. This book is based on the author's extensive experience in Latin America, Asia and Africa, and his "elicitive" approach to understand the goals of the parties. Close to this manual.
- Lumsden, Malvern, *Peacebuilding in Macedonia*, Oslo: PRIO, 1997, 76 pp. An account of the search to make Macedonia less vulnerable to violence through community-level projects.
- Mahony, Liam and Eguren, Luis Enrique, *Unarmed Bodyguards: International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights* (West Harford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1997), 275 pp. This book deals with "international accompaniment" in zones of violence, accompanying human rights activists and others. The "unarmed bodyguards" incur considerable risks, but their nonviolence, as practiced by *Peace Brigades International* seems to work.
- Mindell, Arnold, *The Leader as Martial Artist: Techniques and Strategies for Resolving Conflict and Creating Community, An Introduction to Deep democracy* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 168 pp. This book focuses on the psychology of the conflict worker (not necessarily only a "leader"), and the deep problems that person is likely to encounter. Very imaginative Exercises.
- Mitchell, Christopher and Banks, Michael, *Handbook of Conflict Resolution: The Analytical Problem-Solving Approach* (London: Pinter, 1996), 187 pp. The approach described in this excellent handbook differs from the present manual in bringing the parties together for a joint workshop, solving problems together, then solving the problem of re-entry.
- Mörland, Liv, *Megling i konfliktråd; Hva skjer?* (Mediation in Conflict Councils; What happens?) (Kristiansand S.: HöyskoleForlaget, 1995), 176 pp. The book contains an analysis of what happens in the Norwegian institution "konfliktråd" (also known from New Zealand) for voluntary mediation by lay mediators to prevent criminality and as a substitute for civil process. One conclusion is that the mediation is most successful when the parties formulate the conflict from their own perspectives in their own language, and the mediators (team, with high empathy) are not too different from the conflict parties. Informality is preferred over bureaucratization.
- Ortega, Zoilamérica, *Desmovilizados de guerra en la construcción de la paz en Nicaragua* (Demobilized soldiers constructing peace in Nicaragua) (Managua: Centro de Estudios Internacionales, 1996), 91 pp. The book reports an experiment filled with promise for the future: soldiers on both sides of the bitter civil war in Nicaragua demobilizing and then joining in reconstructing what they destroyed during the war, in the process both reconciling and contributing to the resolution of the conflict. Also see her *The Nicaraguan Experience*.
- Patfoort, Pat, *Uprooting Violence, Building Nonviolence* (Freeport, ME: Cobblesmith, 1995), 128 pp. An excellent primer in what nonviolence means at the intra- and interpersonal level, in communication as verbal nonviolence, and as peace culture.
- Ross, Marc Howard, *The Management of Conflict: Interpretations and Interests in Comparative Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 226 pp. The psychoculture of conflict transformation, the kind of assumptions, conscious and subconscious, participants and mediators have about conflicts, and the conditions for a constructive conflict society.
- Sandole, D. & van der Merwe, H., eds., *Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 298 pp. A very useful introduction to different US approaches in the field of conflict resolution.
- Stutzman, J. & Schrock-Shenk, C., eds., *Mediation and Facilitation Training Manual* (Mennonite Conciliation Service, PO Box 500 Akron, PA 17501-0500; Third Printing, 1996), 310 pp. An excellent manual, very rich in content, with examples from daily life.
- Thompson, W. S. & Jensen, K. M. eds., *Approaches to Peace: An Intellectual Map* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1992), 414 pp. A very useful collection of 16 chapters, essentially outlining mainstream approaches to peace.
- Unit for Justice, Peace and Creation, Christian Council of Sweden, *Empowerment for Peace Service* (Stockholm, Box 1764, 11187 Stockholm, 1996), 109 pp. An excellent overview of training of conflict/peace workers, indicating how to get more material.

- Volkan, Vamik D., et.al., editors, *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships: Vol. I, Concepts and Theories* and *Vol. II, Unofficial Diplomacy at Work*, Lexington Books, Lexington, Massachusetts, 1990. This two volume set presents perspectives from a range of disciplines — including psychoanalysis, psychiatry, psychology, political science, public policy, diplomacy and anthropology — which probe the roots of human behavior, drawing lessons for peacemaking. Groundbreaking in this field.
- Wehr, Paul, Burgess, Heidi & Burgess, Guy ed., *Justice Without Violence* (Boulder & London: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 300 pp. Thirteen articles about nonviolent action against direct and structural violence, in general, in Nicaragua, Eastern Europe, ex-Soviet Union, China, Africa, the Middle East and India.

Other examples of useful literature:

- Avruch, K., Black, P., Scimecca, J., *Conflict Resolution: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*
- Edward de Bono, *Conflicts. A Better Way to Resolve Them*. London: Penguin, 1991 (first published 1985).
- John W. Burton and Frank Dukes, *Conflict: Practices in Management, Settlement & Resolution*. New York: St Martin's, Press, 1990
- John W. Burton and Frank Dukes, eds., *Conflict: Readings in Management & Resolution*. London: Macmillan, 1990
- John W. Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*
- John W. Burton, *Conflict: Human Needs Theory*
- Mary Fitzduff, *Community Conflict Skills*, 3rd Edition, 1998
- C. R. Mitchell, *The Structure of International Conflict*, London: Macmillan, 1981
- Dennis J. D. Sandole and Ingrid Sandole-Staroste, eds., *Conflict Management and Problem Solving*. New York: New York University Press, 1987
- Deborah Tannen, *The Argument Culture*, New York, Random House

Appendix 2 — Organizations in the field— Addresses

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