

The Inner Work of Conflict Transformation *with Dan Snyder*

However skillful we might be in the theories and practices of conflict transformation, unless we are engaged in the ongoing work of inward transformation, we risk bringing our reactivity and unconscious enactments to our outward work. This week we will explore practices that can help us become conscious of and work with our own shadow elements, the inner critic, the vulnerable child, and the Sacred Center of our own personalities. Increasing our self-awareness in our relations with others enhances our effectiveness in engaging and transforming conflicts.

Compassionate Listening *with Yael Petretti*

How do we engage those who differ from us so we can find our shared humanity? Developed by Quaker Gene Knudsen-Hoffman, the Compassionate Listening Project evolved in grassroots peacebuilding efforts in the Middle East and elsewhere. The heart-based practices of Compassionate Listening are applicable in our families, meetings and congregations, and community-based organizations — wherever the possibility of conflict transformation arises. We will practice

- Suspending judgment
- Maintaining balance in the heat of conflict
- Shifting from reactivity to compassion
- Speaking from the heart with language that reflects a healing intent
- Nurturing compassion for oneself and others.

Mediating Difficult Conversations *with Jenny Beer*

Mediation is part of the practical side of peace-making—helping people talk through their interpersonal conflicts and make decisions. This course presents a basic process plus an array of skills that you can use in many settings -- workplaces, communities, organizations, politics, families. Participants will primarily learn through exercises and role-play practice. Our text, *The Mediator's Handbook*, is based on decades of Quaker work and experimentation. For those who wish to pursue mediation work, this course will cover 24 hour mediation basic training requirements in preparation for hands-on apprenticeship opportunities in your local community.

What's going on here? Assessing conflict situations *with Jenny Beer*

Learn how to guide a group experiencing conflicts to develop a wider, shared understanding of what's happening in order to address the conflict's underlying issues. This initial gathering of information and perspectives may lead into conflict "resolution," should the group want to work together better. Or, conflict assessment may deliberately aim to stoke respectful conflict in the case of advocacy and political action. Either way, background analysis and participant involvement in that preparation is key. Seminar leader Jenny Beer draws on her background as

a mediator, consultant and cultural anthropologist, to present topics and hands-on activities that will include observation skills, conflict mapping, interviewing, surveying, different ways to interpret conflicts, and ways to collectively analyze and decide how to take action on that information. This may sound “heavy,” but it is more fun than you might think!

Compassionate Nonviolent Communication with *Pamela Freeman and Jane Connor*

Drawing on the work of the late psychologist Marshall B. Rosenberg, and universal scriptural precepts, learn and practice interpersonal skills to help you:

- Create and sustain fulfilling relationships
- Remain open to others in response to painful judgments and criticism;
- Express yourself clearly so that you are most likely to be heard and understood;
- Listen more attentively to others to understand their underlying needs;
- Meet with compassion people whose actions seem unjust or oppressive; and
- Empathize with others and not judge yourself.

Alternatives to Violence Project (Basic, Advanced, and Training for Facilitators) with *Carolyn Schodt, Rubye Braye, and others to be announced*

This sequence of Basic, Advanced, and Training for Facilitators consolidates and makes available in one week the three AVP workshops necessary for someone desiring to become a facilitator to move to the next level of preparation, which is serving as an apprentice with others in facilitation teams presenting Basic and Advanced workshops. Each person completing this series will receive a certificate of completion from AVP. We will work with participants to connect them with AVP organizations in their area if they choose to become full-fledged facilitators.

Originally developed 40 years ago by Quakers and incarcerated people at Greenhaven Prison in New York to help reduce recidivism and violence among imprisoned people, the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) is a program for everybody. Still widely used in prisons, it is also used in schools, the workplace, community, with young people, and internationally among those who have suffered war, genocide, and trauma. Based on the premise that although conflict is inevitable, violent responses to it are not, AVP works to strengthen our confidence to engage conflict creatively and to make room for a non-violent outcome. It fosters interpersonal conflict resolution skills through a sequence of experiential learning exercises in small groups and one-on-one interactions. Exercises build self-esteem and trust, improve listening skills and assertive methods of expression, develop cooperative attitudes for problem-solving, and practice creative resolution of conflicts that arise in our own lives.

In the Advanced workshop, we undertake a more thorough examination of the underlying causes of violence in ourselves and in our world. We set individual and group goals around a focus theme chosen by the group. Examples of themes are fear (what are the hidden fears that usually underlie anger, jealousy, prejudice), anger (what triggers anger in us and others), power and powerlessness (helps us understand power structures and to get in touch with our inner power), among many possibilities.

The Training for Facilitators workshop focuses on developing team building, leadership methods, and group process skills. Each participant will work in a small group, actually functioning as a facilitator. You will receive guidance and practice in facilitating all parts of a Basic Workshop:

- Team Building & Team Contract;
- Agendas;
- Exercises, brainstorming, and discussions;
- Transforming Power Talk (key AVP philosophy);
- Light & Livelies (Change-of-pace & mood games/activities); and
- Role Plays.

Constructive Conflict *with Lee Smithey*

Conflict is uncomfortable and polarizing, so we often try to avoid it, but conflict is crucial for pursuing justice and building healthy organizations. Is there such a thing as “constructive conflict”? What is it? How do we achieve it? How can we transform destructive conflicts into constructive ones? What is required in situations of asymmetrical power dynamics, when one party seems to be better prepared to prevail in conflict? Lee Smithey, of the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at Swarthmore College, will lead a discussion exploring opportunities and challenges of engaging in constructive conflict.