

# Ten Thousand Ripples

Spreading Peace through Chicago Area Neighborhoods



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## **Art, Peace and Civic Engagement**

*A Companion Activity Guide for Group Facilitators*

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# Changing Worlds

## About the Lead Agency



Changing Worlds is proud to be the lead agency for Ten Thousand Ripples, and work in partnership with artist, Indira Johnson and community organizations in 10 Chicago-area neighborhoods.

**Mission and Approach:** Changing Worlds' mission is to foster inclusive communities through oral history, writing and art programs that improve student learning, affirm identity and enhance cross-cultural understanding. Its unique programming approach integrates cultural, family and community histories with writing and the arts to help participants explore their own backgrounds, promote peace and learn about others while strengthening their academic and art learning skills.

### **Vision**

Changing Worlds envisions communities that advance the use of personal stories and the arts as vehicles to build peaceful communities that honor the richness of their diverse cultures and foster a greater appreciation and respect of cultural differences.

### **Values**

Changing Worlds believes in:

- The inclusion and acceptance of the differences and perspectives of others,
- The power of the arts and personal stories to change perceptions, nurture connections and build vibrant, creative and peaceful communities,
- Nonviolent decision-making as an active force essential to a just and equal society, a thriving economy, and inclusive communities,
- The ability to affect social change through teachers and young people.

### **Acknowledgements**

Special thanks to project managers, Eva Silverman and Claire Geall Sutton, web and social media fellow Trupti Rami and lead artist Indira Freitas Johnson.

[www.changingworlds.org](http://www.changingworlds.org)



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# Introduction

Ten Thousand Ripples is a public art, peace and civic engagement initiative that places artists, neighborhood leaders, and residents at the center of a community-driven planning effort. It uses public art as a catalyst to foster dialogue and advance innovative solutions that address contemporary social issues. Ten Thousand Ripples will be implemented in 10 underserved Chicago-area neighborhoods in partnership with more than 30 community and cultural organizations.

Key features of the project include public sculpture, community-based dialogue sessions, arts and cultural residencies, civic-engagement-focused Arts in Action plans and a citywide culminating exhibition.

Ten Thousand Ripples is a partnership between Changing Worlds, the lead arts organization, lead artist Indira Johnson and a consortium of cultural, educational and community development agencies. The visual center of Ten Thousand Ripples are 100 fiberglass emerging Buddha sculptures designed by Johnson as symbols of peace and installed in sites selected by each of the 10 Chicago-area neighborhood partner cohorts. They invite us to think about how we can find peace in our own lives and in our own communities.

At the center of Ten Thousand Ripples will be three to four months of artistic programming catalyzed and inspired by public art as an agent of change. Professional city-wide community artists will actively participate in the planning process with community development and social service organizations – an innovative, cross-sector approach that bridges knowledge areas and engages entire communities in transformational, sustainable change.

**The goal of Ten Thousand Ripples** is to stimulate positive, nonviolent dialogues and actions, and provide community access to unique opportunities for partnership.

1. Develop Inter-Community Dialogue by:
  - expanding participation in civic dialogue by increasing the numbers and diversity of people who typically would engage;
  - increasing use of public space for community engagement;
  - promoting the use of inter-faith dialogue in problem-solving.
2. Provide Community-based Arts and Cultural Programming that focuses on:
  - a variety of different cultural customs and traditions;
  - a range of artistic expressions, methods, and techniques;
  - how communities can use the arts to inspire progress and change.
3. Stimulate Civic Engagement and Community Action by
  - increasing public awareness and understanding of civic issues;
  - increasing attention to vacant or blighted areas in the community and the creation of safe space;
  - expanding future development goals and strategies for achieving them through community Arts in Action plans.



# Why the Buddha? - Artist Statement

For over a decade, I have used the emerging Buddha image as a symbol of my search for peace and self-realization. The image of the Buddha growing out of the earth represents for me the spiritual growth that we all struggle to achieve as we travel life's path. I was deeply moved by the response that I received to my emerging Buddha sculpture installations at the Chicago Cultural Center in downtown Chicago (2008) and the Art Center in Highland Park (2009). People said they felt a sense of calm and peacefulness. This became the genesis for the Ten Thousand Ripples Project.

We at Ten Thousand Ripples have spent the past 18 months talking to community organizations, artists and residents in 10 Chicago-area communities. The Ten Thousand Ripples representation of the Buddha rising out of the ground continues to be a catalyst that generates interactions and conversations about safety, cultural understanding, interfaith dialogue and peace.

The Ten Thousand Ripples image is one of many peace symbols from various cultures and faith traditions. It is based on the historical Buddha whose teachings are followed by millions of people around the world. Although symbols like a dove or an olive branch are equally emblematic of peace neither are as visually compelling as the image of a rising Buddha with its serene countenance in unexpected urban landscapes. It reinforces the fact that peace can be found in the most mundane places.

One can see why this iconic image has appeared in numerous Western public art venues including Berlin, London, Los Angeles and New York. Most recently, Zhang Huan's colossal Buddha "Three Heads, Six Arms" was welcomed in San Francisco's Civic Center Plaza where it stayed for six months and was recently returned to its home in Shanghai. Ten Thousand Ripples is also a temporary project and will culminate in an exhibition at Loyola Museum of Art in July of 2013.

The meaning of an image is contingent upon its context. The context that we are creating for this image is the vibrant life of Chicago's diverse communities. We have actively connected with community organizations in the various neighborhoods where the Ten Thousand Ripples sculptures will be located. Both secular and religiously-based organizations have and will continue to be invited to community dialogues on nonviolent solutions to problems and in developing greater intercommunity cooperation. In such a context the Buddha image is an invitation to reflect on the possibility of an end to violence and the emergence of peace, an invitation to draw upon our own individual and communal resources in addressing this issue.

***Indira Freitas Johnson is an award-winning artist and peace activist whose work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. She is represented in a number of private and public collections and has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards, most recently the prestigious Governor's Award for the Arts.***

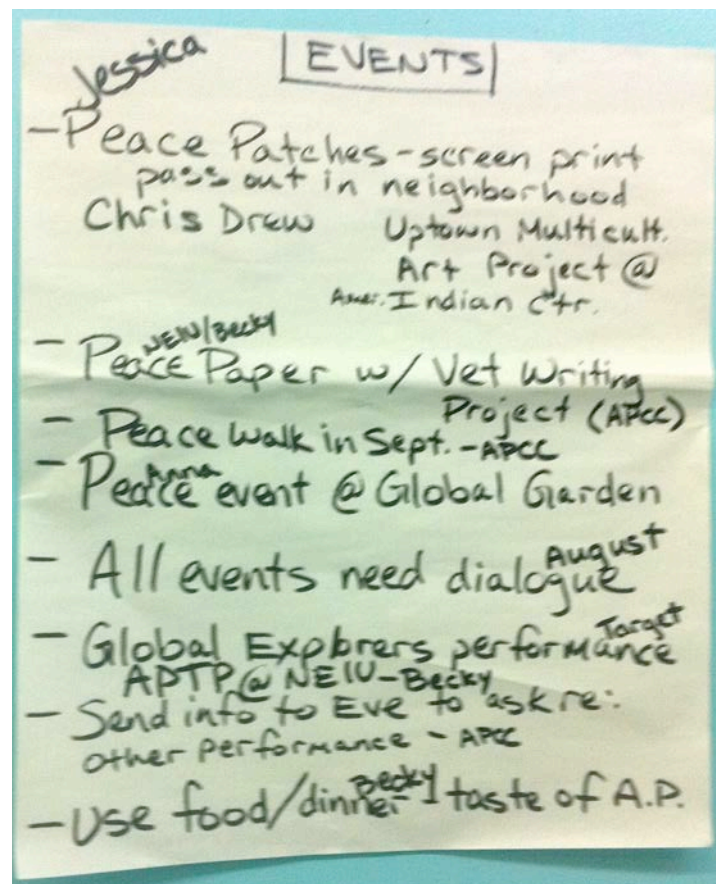
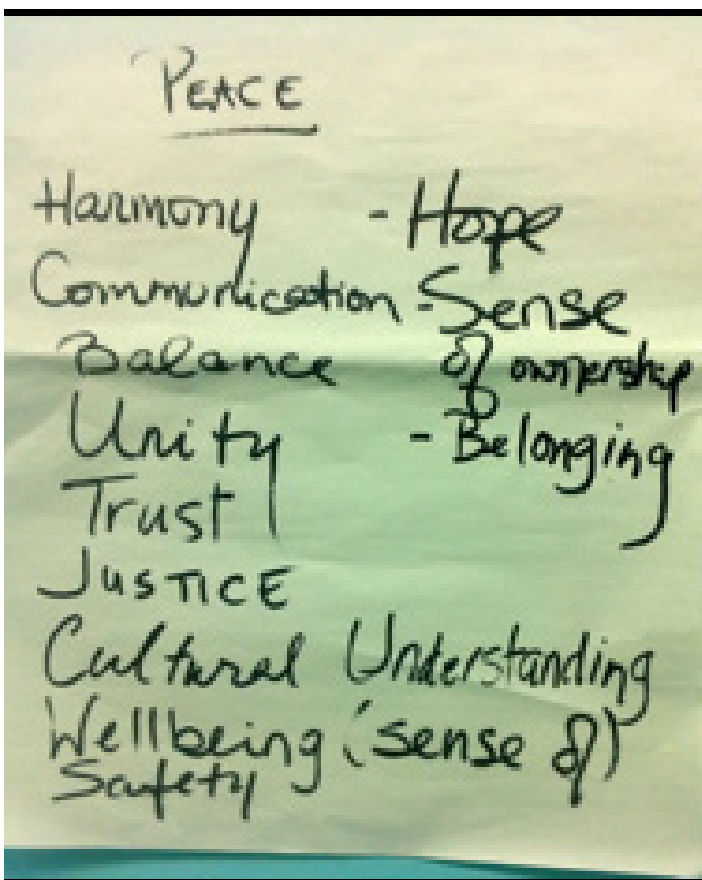


# About This Guide

Over the course of two years, we have had multiple conversations with block clubs, social service, educational, art and community organizations where certain issues have repeatedly come to the forefront. Among these are issues of nonviolence, interfaith dialogue, cultural understanding and safety. This Companion Activity Guide was born from these questions and insights. It is intended to help generate ideas and relationships across lines that divide us. It addresses practical tips of meeting facilitation, peace circles and broad concepts of group cooperation, labeling and stereotypes, conflict-resolution and point of view. In addition, it provides hands-on workshops on symbols, traditions, public art and heroes in the community.

Art-based workshops are designed to use the powerful tools of art and the creative process to break down barriers, identify common issues and draw the community together in a spirit of hope and unity.

Growing a healthy community is a lifelong process – one that requires constant nurturing and persistence. Everyone has a role to play in building a healthier, more vibrant community. How we create the settings and opportunities for dialogue in our communities are what will help bring about positive change.



Worksheets from Albany Park Community Meeting

# **Setting the Stage:**

## **Different Ways to Engage in Conversation**

### **Facilitating a Community Conversation/Meeting**

Bringing together the voices and talents of different members of your community requires a certain amount of planning. In addition, certain steps can help facilitate a meeting and allow for the participation of all.

### **Introduce participants and yourself**

It is essential for meetings to start with an 'Introduction Exercise' or Icebreaker. If you are dealing with a particularly large group and personal introductions will take too much time, at the very least, provide time for people to introduce themselves to the one or two people sitting next to them.

### **Some examples of Introduction Exercises or Icebreakers are:**

- Meet the person next to you and let them introduce you to everyone else.
- Take something out of your wallet, pocket or bag and tell everyone why it is important to you.
- Ask people to share their favorite ice cream flavor, their first pet's name, or anything else light and personal but nonthreatening as they introduce themselves.
- Consider asking them to each limit the introduction to 10 to 20 seconds.

### **Ground Rules**

Create a set of ground rules together. If time is short you could offer a set of ground rules that you have used in the past and ask for agreement, as well as any additions that participants might want to include.

Here are a few suggested ground rules:

1. Everyone participates
2. Start on time, finish on time
3. One person speaks at a time
4. No side-conversation
5. Silence is agreement
6. All opinions are welcome
7. Challenge ideas, not individuals

### **Use open-ended questions.**

Ask questions people can't answer with a simple yes or no response. Questions beginning with when, what or how usually encourage participants to provide detailed answers, which can spark additional ideas from other participants.

### **Divide into small groups.**

Speaking in front of large groups intimidates some participants. When possible, divide everyone into small discussion groups and then have them report to the entire group.



**Consult the group.**

When someone addresses a question to you, prompt participation from other folks by consulting the group. This is also an effective technique for shifting the focus of discussion from one person to the whole group.

**Use visual aids.**

Most people process information better if they see it, so write it on newsprint, an overhead, handout, etc.

**Create a “parking lot” for questions.**

This keeps the meeting flowing more smoothly, allowing participants to have their questions answered at specified times during the meeting.

**If an individual is dominating the discussion, think of ways to redirect his or her energies. You might try some of the following:**

- Encourage them to briefly share one essential point or idea.
- Refer to the ground rule about giving others a chance to participate.





# Art-Based Workshop Ideas

The process of coming together to create art provides a stimulating, non-threatening and equalizing forum for dialogue. People with divergent viewpoints who don't normally talk to each other can come together over an art project. In the process of creating together, people learn about each other, empathy is created, and participants learn that they have more similarities with each other than differences.

## Symbols of Culture, Symbols of Peace

### **Materials:**

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil.
- Name tags for participants and bold markers
- Collage materials: tissue paper, magazines, markers and glue.

**Room set-up:** Tables for group work. Have large sheets of paper and markers on each table for brainstorming doodles.

### **Introduction**

Symbols are pictures that people have used to talk to each other for thousands of years. You could call them "talking pictures." Symbols are pictures of ideas. They are different from signs, which have a specific meaning, such as road signs, no smoking signs, etc.

Why are some symbols found in every part of the world and others unique and specific to a particular culture? Describe universal symbols and their meanings (see Explanation of Symbols on page 23). Engage participants in discovering where they have seen these symbols in nature.

Divide participants into groups.

Give clear instruction on what you want the group to do and their allotted time frame. (30 min. average)

1. Icebreaker: Each person introduces him or herself and names a place where he or she feels most at peace.
2. Group brainstorms about qualities that are important to each of them regarding peace.
3. What symbols would you choose to represent these qualities? What shapes would express these qualities? What colors? Build on the universal symbols, but don't hesitate to explore widely. Choice of symbols can include personal, faith based, cultural, ethnic and universal.
4. Each group creates one symbol that reflects the ideas of each group member. Use the collage materials provided to complete the artwork.
5. Have each group share with the larger group explaining their group process and why they chose their selected symbols.

### **Large group discussion questions:**

1. How did culture affect your choice of symbols?
2. Was it difficult to reach a consensus when choosing one symbol for the whole group?
3. Can you disagree with someone yet accept his or her point of view?

**Reflection question: Can you name one thing that you learned today?**

# Heroes: Present and Future

## Materials:

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil.
- Name tags for participants and bold markers.
- Drawing paper and markers.
- Large post-its or chalk board

**Room set-up:** Tables for group work. Have large sheets of paper and markers on each table for brainstorming and doodles. Provide for answers to be written during brainstorming session on large post-its or board.

## Introduction

The word “hero” is being used as a designation for both male and female. Who is a hero? What are the essential qualities on the board that are necessary to be a hero?

Write a list of these qualities. Who is a hero? Name some heroes. Write this list on the board.

An important component of this project is the identification, by the participants, of individuals within their communities that can be considered role models. Are sports figures or rock stars heroes? Do you have to do extraordinary acts to be a hero? Include discussion on the broader understanding of heroes in their own lives by examining the contribution of individuals that they know personally and whose actions directly affect them. Ask the group the question, “Can you be a hero?”

## Small group workshop steps:

Explain what you want the group to do and be clear about allotted time. (30 min avg).

1. Icebreaker: Each person introduces themselves and names one person who they admire.
2. Write on the paper provided qualities that you feel a hero should possess.
3. Brainstorm heroic actions and heroes that we might know personally.
4. Each group decides on one person who they consider a hero.
5. Work together on a drawing, dance, poem, etc., that represents the group’s chosen hero.
6. Have each group share with the larger group explaining their group process and why they chose their hero.

## Large group discussion questions:

1. What is the one quality that a hero needs to possess?
2. Does your selected hero possess that one quality?
3. Can a hero use violence to achieve good?
4. If the answer is yes, what are the consequences of violence?
5. If the answer is no, why not?

From the nominations of the smaller groups, can the larger group come to a consensus and agree on one community hero?

**Reflection: Share one insight or understanding that you have gained regarding heroes.**



# Blowing in the Wind: Flags for Unity



## Materials:

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil.
- Name tags for participants and bold markers
- Various fabrics: yellow, red, green, white and blue,
- Magic markers, string or cord, drawing paper.

**Room set-up:** Tables for group work. Have large sheets of paper and markers on each table for brainstorming and doodles. Identify a site where the flags will be hung.

## Introduction

Flags for Peace is based on a Tibetan ritual practice that is meant to bring happiness, long life and prosperity to the creator of the

flag and the surrounding community. Tibetans for centuries have planted these flags outside their homes and temples for the wind to carry their wishes across the countryside. Prayer flags are said to invoke compassion, harmony, peace, wisdom and strength. In keeping with the Tibetan custom, we will hang our flags outside and let the wind carry our hopes and messages for peace throughout the neighborhoods.

The workshop will begin with brainstorming ideas and discovery of what it is that we want for our families, our communities and ourselves. Do we want different things if we come from different cultures? How about if we come from different faith traditions?

## Small group workshop steps:

1. Divide participants into groups.
2. **Instructions:** We will work together to make three flags that express our prayers and wishes. We will then exchange our flags with one another to create a chain of hopes and wishes, inspired by other members of the group. One flag will be yours to keep, one will be to exchange and one is for the community.(Allotted time is 30 minutes.)
3. **Icebreaker:** Each person introduces him or herself and names a place where he or she feels most at peace.
4. Explain how traditional symbolism of different colors represent elements: blue represents space, white represents water, red represents fire, green represents air and yellow represents earth.
5. Group brainstorms and shares ideas about their hopes for themselves and their communities.
6. Each person works on his or her flags, writing their wishes, adding patterns and colors.
7. All return to larger group. Each group presents and shares their process and ideas with the larger community.
8. Folks share flags with each other and strings the flags together for the communal string. Our messages carry through the neighborhood each time the wind blows on our flags.
9. All participate in hanging the flags in the pre-determined area.

**Reflection Question:** Can you name one thing that you learned today?

# Growing Peace; Inside and Out

## Materials:

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil.
- Name tags for participants and bold markers.
- Paper, variety of collage materials including traditional and recycled materials.

**Room set-up:** Tables for group work. Have large sheets of paper and markers on each table for brainstorming doodles.

## Introduction

There is a belief in many faith traditions that the body is the temple of the spirit, providing one's personality with an inward structure. But what does this very abstract concept of 'Spirit' mean? One definition is that Spirit = breath, which is the essence of life. In simple language, the spirit is something that is necessary for our well-being and makes us complete.

In the "Growing Peace" project, we will make a collage of our spirit. But first we have to determine what the various elements are that we want our spirit to possess. How about strength, dreams or aspirations, growth, truth, honesty, love, etc.? What other qualities would you like to see? Using both natural and recycled materials we will create a collage that reflects our spirit.

## Small group workshop steps:

1. Divide participants into groups.
2. **Instructions:** Let's start with identifying our strengths and then together make a simple outline of a figure to represent us. This will become your spirit container. Now think of the different qualities that you want to put in this container. (Allotted time is 30 minutes.)
3. Icebreaker: Each person introduces him or herself and names a quality or strength that is important to him or her.
4. Brainstorm ways to represent abstract qualities like strength and growth through the use of symbols. Symbols are pictures of ideas that people have used to talk to each other for thousands of years. Some symbols are universal because they are derived from natural forces and have been used by people all over the world. (See page 23)
5. Fill the outline of your spirit drawing with symbols that you have made up yourself or use the ones here to represent the different qualities of your spirit. You can choose to use objects, colored paper cutouts or markers.
6. Everyone comes back together into the larger group and each group presents and shares their process, ideas and the qualities they chose with the larger community.

**Strength** - Stones are a symbol of endurance and strength

**Dreams and aspirations** - Stars, clouds

**Growth** - Seeds stand for growth because they blossom and grow into flowers and trees. A spiral is never ending and so is always growing.

**Love** - The heart is an age-old symbol of love.

**Knowledge** - Eye, book, used in many cultures as symbols of knowledge

**Truth and Honesty** - What symbols can you design to represent these two qualities?

As you take your spirit drawing with you, remember the qualities you chose for your spirit. Keep them in your mind and heart so that your spirit will grow and blossom.

**Reflection Question: Can you name one thing that you learned today?**

# Peace is in Your Hands

## Materials:

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil.
- Name tags for participants and bold markers
- Large post-its, drawing paper
- 11x14 inch cardboard, masonite, or thin Styrofoam sheets precut into a simple jigsaw puzzle

**Preparation:** Participants will work in small groups of 6-8. Each group will have a precut jigsaw puzzle.

**Room set-up:** Tables for group work. Provide for answers to be written on large post its or board during brainstorming session

## Introduction:

What can you do to help bring about peace? Peace in your school, within your family, in the community and peace within the world.

You might think this is way too big a task for one person. You're right. It is overwhelming. However, if we all take one step, one action for peace, how will that add up?

What do you think you can do to make peace happen? Perhaps you have already done something for peace. Write answers on post-its.

## Small group workshop steps:

1. Divide participants into groups.
2. Explain what you want the group to do and be clear about allotted time. (30 min. average).
3. Give each group one of the prepared jigsaw puzzles.
4. Icebreaker: Everyone introduces him or herself and shares one of his or her strengths.
5. Brainstorm actions that would help peace happen. Small actions, large ones.
6. One by one participants outline his or her handprints on the puzzle.
7. Each takes one part of the puzzle and writes their action for peace then decorates that piece with symbols, patterns, etc.
8. Each group shares with the larger group explaining their process.

## Large group discussion questions:

1. Do small individual actions make a difference?
2. Can they add up together to have an impact?

**Reflection; Share one insight or understanding that you have gained about actions of peace.**



# The Raven Foundation

**The Raven Foundation is one of the primary sponsors of this guide.** Their mission is to use the insights of mimetic theory to provide social commentary on scapegoating, violence, and religion in order to build lasting peace. You can find out more information about the foundation and their work at [www.ravenfoundation.org](http://www.ravenfoundation.org)

Here is one of the Raven Foundation workshops.



## Frenemies: What Friends and Enemies Have in Common

### **Materials:**

- White board and dry erase marker for brainstorming session.
- Nametags for participants with markers
- Drawing paper and markers
- Magazines with lots of advertisements
- Scissors

**Preparation:** Space for small groups and larger group

**Room set-up:** Provide for brainstorming answers to be written down on a dry erase board

### **Introduction:**

Let's brainstorm answers to this question: What causes friends to become enemies?

Write the list on a white board. Most likely answers will have to do with conflict being caused by rivalry or differences. The point you want to explore is that friends become enemies because of what they share in common: their desires.

### **Small group workshop steps:**

1. Divide participants into groups of 2-3
2. Hand out paper and markers to each person and ask them to draw a picture of what rivalry looks like to them. On another sheet, have each person draw what friendship looks like to them.
3. Icebreaker: Each member of the group introduces him or herself to the group and explains their drawings
4. When each group has had a chance to share, invite them to work in pairs with one or two of the magazines. Ask them to cut out pictures of things that we are being told we need in order to be happy or successful.
  - a. Items may include wealth, a large house, expensive car, good education, iPad/iPhone, romance, ideal family
5. Invite groups to share their magazine images with one another. Prompt reflection with these

questions:

- a. Have you ever felt jealous of someone who has (name the object in a picture)?
  - b. Have you ever shown off (name the object in a picture) to make someone else jealous?
  - c. Have you ever felt hatred or anger toward someone who was preventing you from getting what you wanted?
6. Conclude this part of the discussion by explaining that desires are contagious; we catch them from one another. And when we trade our desires back and forth, our desires grow more and more intense.
7. Ask: What are the types of things you and your friends share an intense desire for together? For example, do you love a certain kind of music or fashion or sport or game?
8. Summarize: Friends share desires and as they share, their desires deepen and become more intense.

### Large group questions:

1. In the large group ask, “How might our shared desires for any of the objects we’ve mentioned so far lead us into conflict with others?”
  - a. Allow for discussion and then explain: When we share a desire for an object that we cannot or will not share, either there is only one of the thing (like a boyfriend or girlfriend) or we refuse to share it (like being the best at something).
  2. Ask: Have you ever seen people fight in your school over their shared desire for something they cannot or will not share?
  3. Have you ever seen friends become enemies? What were they fighting about?
  4. Explain that even though they seem like they are opposites, friends and enemies are both formed by shared desires with others. Here are some ways we can relate to each other than can prevent shared desires leading to conflict. Let’s talk about how each of these might work to keep the peace between people:
    - a. Honesty (Allow for discussion and then explain: We can be honest that the intensity of our desire depends on the desire of others. Even though they might seem like an enemy or obstacle, they are also the source of our desire in the first place!)
    - b. Humility (Allow for discussion and then explain: Instead of bragging about the things we have, we can be more humble. We need to remember that our bragging may make us feel good, but it is creating the possibility for someone else’s desire and jealousy to grow. They may come to think of us an enemy or obstacle rather than a friend.)
    - c. Kindness (Allow for discussion and then explain: Friends share with one another. They do not keep valuable things to themselves, especially when they see how much their friends desire it. Remembering to be kind and generous towards others is a good way to prevent or solve conflict.)

**Reflection:** Share one thing that you learned about desire.



**IF I could have three wishes,  
World peace would be all three.  
Marlia Moore 8th grader**

# Ten Thousand Ripples Topics for Discussion

Over the past 18 months, during conversations with numerous educational and faith leaders, interfaith dialogue has repeatedly come up as a topic for further investigation. This topic has special significance given the global changes in society that we see today and our own individual closely held beliefs.

We feel that art can bring us together across faith and belief lines. Art-related interactions could help develop greater understanding, respect, comfort and appreciation between each other and our different faith and belief lines

The format of a Peace Circle is a good way to conduct an interfaith dialogue. All of these workshops could start out with a peace circle, break into groups (smaller circles) and then come back to the larger peace circle.

## Peacemaking Circles

### Materials:

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil.
- Name tags for participants and bold markers.

**Room set-up:** Chairs set up in a circle.

### Background

Human beings have been sitting in circles in all cultures from ancient times. Our ancestors sat in circles together, perhaps around a fire... drumming, singing, dancing, telling stories and sharing their lives with each other. In those circles people found solutions to their problems; they laughed and played, celebrated and grieved together. Many modern cultures are once again realizing the power of the circle for healing, community building and peacemaking.





## Structure and tradition

In a circle everyone is equal and power is shared. Participants face each other and focus on the center where objects of significance may be placed to remind all of the shared values of the circle.

Below is an example of ground rules that are commonly used at Peacemaking Circles:

- Listen when others speak. To ensure respect between speakers and listeners, a talking stick or other object is passed from person to person within the circle and only the person holding the object may speak.
- Use words that are respectful and not offensive.
- Everyone is encouraged to speak, though no one is required to speak.
- What is said in the circle should stay in the circle.
- Ask if anyone wants to change or add to these ground rules before beginning.

Part of the circle tradition is to place something in the center of the circle. It could be any object that has meaning for the group. Often a candle is also placed at the center of the circle, and the opening and closing of the circle could include lighting the candle at the beginning and extinguishing it at the end. Another tradition is to ask someone to offer a short invocation or poem of some sort to open the circle. As part of the closing process, each circle participant is invited to comment on what they take away from the circle.

The underlying values of Peacemaking Circles include

- The sharing of leadership and power as everyone is equal.
- Participants have direct visual contact with each other.
- Interconnectedness of all participants is encouraged.
- Respect, inclusion and mutual responsibility for the circle are indispensable.



# Interfaith Dialogue

Religion brings us together but also separates us. If we believe that we are “saved” does that mean that those who are not from our faith tradition are not saved? Black Elk, the Native American leader said about one of his visions- “I saw the hoop of my people and it was holy.” “Then,” he added, “I saw the hoop of many religions and I saw that they were holy too.”

By promoting cross-cultural awareness and interaction between people of different faiths we can cultivate a more peaceful society where individuals value and appreciate each other. Thus it is critical that all participants treat each other with respect. We come together to dialogue not debate, to have a conversation that helps us understand that we are enriched by both our similarities and differences.

Below are suggested topics for Interfaith dialogue in your community. Please feel free to adapt, change or modify to suit the different issues of concern in your community.

## Common Values, Shared Symbols

### **Materials:**

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil. Name tags for participants and bold markers.
- Drawing paper, large post-its

**Preparation:** Room for a Peace-making Circle and small-group work.

**Room set-up:** Tables for group work. Provide for answers to be written on large post-its or board during brainstorming session

### **Introduction**

We know how divisive religious beliefs can be especially when our knowledge of that religion or belief is derived from hearsay. Would we feel differently if we actually knew someone from that tradition?

What are the common principles and moral foundations that one sees in all religions? Do we agree that religions from around the world share the same value systems that include love and respect, justice and forgiveness, human rights and peace?

What is the difference between a value and a tradition?

### **Small group workshop steps:**

1. Divide participants into groups.
2. Icebreaker: Each person introduces themselves and names one value of significance to them.
3. Now that we have identified a particular value, how do we manifest that value in our lives?
4. Take a look at the list of universal symbols on page 23. Can we find a symbol that expresses our particular value?
5. Working together, can we design a mural that encompasses the values of our group? You can use universal symbols or create your own symbols.
6. Groups share their symbols and process with larger group.

### **Large group questions:**

1. Were there any shared values?
2. Were there any similarities between the ways in which participants manifested their shared values

**Reflection: Share one thing that you learned about your neighbor or another faith.**

# Faith, Culture and Ethnicity

## Materials:

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil.
- Name tags for participants, bold markers, large sheets of paper

**Room set-up:** Tables for group work. Have large sheets of paper and markers on each table for brainstorming doodles.

## Introduction

Faith is colored by each person's cultural and ethnic background. Religion is an important part of a person's identity. Your dress, the foods you can and cannot eat, whom you can marry may all be determined by your religion.

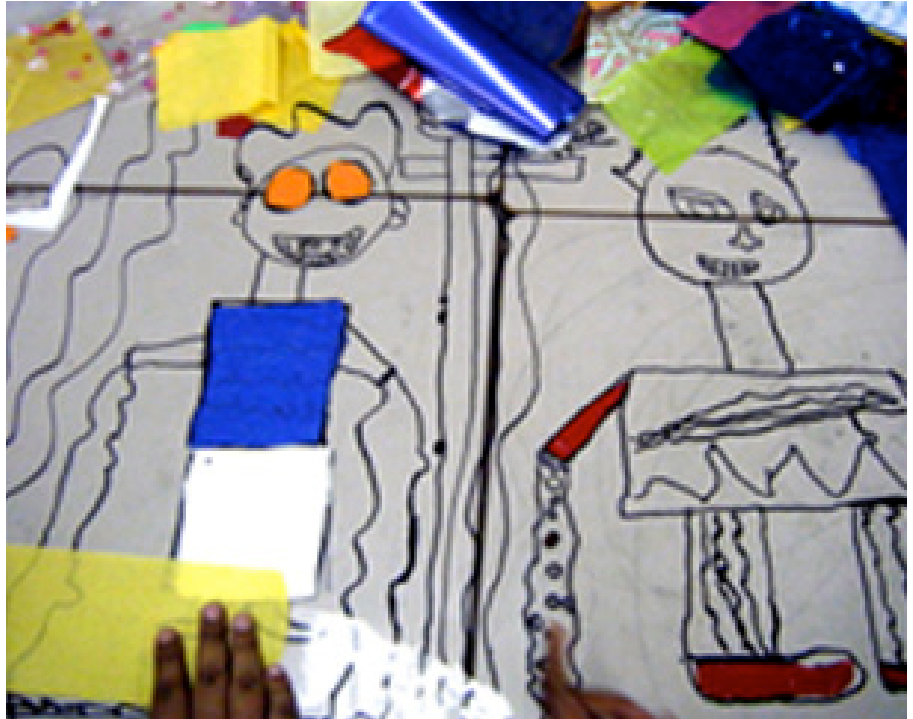
What does cultural competency mean? Consider your own life experiences, recalling times when you gained important knowledge about people who are different from you in race, ethnicity, generation, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or some other aspect of culture. How has learning to navigate across cultural differences enriched your life? In your current situation, how do you apply what you have learned?

Part of being a culturally competent person is to understand one's own cultural identity and to learn how to appreciate the cultural identity of others. With practice, we can learn not to assume that our experience is "normal" or that ours is the point of view against which others' experiences should be measured.

**Four-Word-Build is an excellent conflict-resolution exercise to elicit a shared understanding, or a shared vision of an idea or concept. It also helps us realize that we usually do not have such a shared vision, but that we can create one.**

## Workshop steps:

1. Divide participants into four groups. Ideally groups of 4, 8, 12, 16, etc., but this is not essential. Other numbers work as well.
2. Give each person in the group a sheet of paper and a pen.
3. Each group will work with one of these four words: Faith, God, Prayer and Acceptance.
4. Ask each person to write down four words that come up when they think of the word or concept that they are exploring. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' words, just their own ideas. For example, if the word being explored is 'Faith' someone may have written: belief, tradition, religion, or church.



5. Next, ask the members of the group to form pairs. In the pairs, there will now be two people with eight words between them which represent, for them, the word being explored, in this case 'conflict'.
6. Ask them to agree on four words to keep from the eight original words. This entails eliminating four words. This can lead to a lot of discussion about the words and the reasons why they chose them. Through doing so, they will come to understand each other's reasons for the words they chose and how they perceive the original word or concept. Their decision to keep or eliminate a word will require consensus and the means by which this happens can, in itself, be of interest later in the exercise.
7. Next ask each pair to join with another pair and do exactly the same thing. That is, there will be groups of four people discussing eight words and they will need to reduce the eight words down to four. This further discussion of the original word, this time with each pair bringing their learning and insights from their own discussion, creates even deeper exploration of the word or concept.
8. The outcome of this will be groups of four people with their group's four words to represent the word being explored. This process can obviously continue again and again, but ideally you need to end up with about eight words for the whole group of people you are working with
9. All groups come back together into larger group

### **Large group review and questions:**

Ideally, have each group's four words visible to all, for example on a flip chart or whiteboard, with the original word or concept above the list of four words.

Various different questions can then be asked about the exercise.

1. How did you come to the decisions in your pair or group with regard to which words to keep and which ones to drop?
2. How did each person present take part in the process of the decision-making, irrespective of the word?
3. Were they passive in one group and more active in another?
4. Did they try to 'dominate' the discussion and decision reached?
5. Did they take into account the contributions of others?
6. Did they feel that other members of the group listened to them?

### **Reflection**

- Were there any new insights into the original word that they gained through the exercise?
- Ask how they felt about doing the exercise.
- Ask what they learned from doing it.



# BELIEVE IT OR NOT:

## A Workshop on Beliefs; Yours and Mine

### Materials:

- Sign-in sheet and pen or pencil.
- Name tags for participants, bold markers, large sheets of paper

**Room set-up:** Tables for group work. Have large sheets of paper and markers on each table for brainstorming doodles.

### Introduction

Our beliefs dictate our behavior and attitudes. Each of us, no matter who we are, influences and affects others. This is no small power!

Many of our core beliefs are learned from our religious and cultural backgrounds. As the world is growing smaller through the Internet and travel, cultures are colliding. We could learn and benefit from each other, but, more frequently, we judge and discriminate against our differences, whether they are racial, national, cultural or gender-related.

Why is that? Often we are unconscious of our limiting beliefs. Much of our thinking and action is based on childhood and cultural conditioning that prevents us from fully experiencing



the richness of diversity.

In the workshop we will be focusing on and identifying limiting beliefs that we may be holding in the following four areas:

- **Gender** • Men don't cry. • Women are emotional.
- **National origin** • You have heard so many ethnic jokes that you began to believe them.
- **Racial background** • Your neighborhood was (or was not) racially mixed. • How did this affect you? • Did a member of your family put down people of other races?
- **Religion** • What are some dominant separating beliefs you hold in relation to religion?

### Small group workshop steps:

1. Break into four groups,
2. Icebreaker: Name one limiting belief in one of the four areas.
3. Each group chooses one of the four beliefs: gender, racial, national or religious.
4. Groups brainstorm using the following questions:
  - Where have you encountered this belief? Childhood, family, school, friends, media, religious affiliation?
  - Has this belief ever influenced your thinking?
  - Share an experience in your life when this belief was present or played out. How did you feel? How did you act? Have you ever had an experience that has contradicted that belief?
5. Make a list of the negative words that are part of our selected belief. How can we turn these words around and make them positive?
6. Create a group collage:
  - A collage is a picture or design created by adhering such basically flat elements as newspaper, wallpaper, printed text and illustrations, photographs, cloth, string, etc., to a flat surface, when the result becomes three-dimensional, and might also be called a relief sculpture. Most of the elements adhered in producing most collages are "found" materials. Definition quoted from ARTLEX, <http://artlex.com/>
7. Using pictures from the magazines provided along with our word list, create a pattern, or a collage. When everyone in the group is satisfied with the design, use the glue to complete the collage.
8. Smaller groups present to the large group, explaining their process, for example, how they made decisions and chose elements for their collage.

### Large group discussion questions:

1. What do you get from having this belief? (e.g., feel safe, superior?)
2. What might happen if the belief were to change?



# Appendix

## Universal Symbols

We have used symbols frequently in this guide. Below is a basic description of universal symbols that appear in practically all the different areas of the world. This is because these symbols are based on natural elements like the sun, moon, valleys, mountains, etc.; however, the way different people interpret different symbols varies from region to region.

### Let's start with the Circle

We see this circular form all around us, but most prominently in the sky: the sun and moon. Because of this the sky represents heaven, aspirations, dreams, etc. The circle is timeless having no beginning and no end.

The **Square** was made by humans to find order in a chaotic world. It is the symbol for stability, solidity and security. Many cultures believe that the four points of the square stand for the foundations of life. Many churches and temples use the circle and the square to symbolize heaven and earth.

A **Triangle** facing upward represents fire in Egypt and many cultures in Europe. Its shape has been associated with goals, visions and dreams. It is also the symbol of the male. Pointing downwards towards the earth the triangle represents the female and water.

When the two triangles overlap they represent a harmonious duality of opposites. King Solomon used these two overlapping triangles that become a star to exercise demons. It is now called the Star of David and appears on the Israeli flag.

The **Spiral** is an ancient graphic symbol representing a dynamic system moving outward and inward. It is never ending. It has been seen as a process of growth and evolution.

**Hands** are symbols that appear in practically every culture since the dawn of civilization. The hand is the most symbolically expressive part of the human body. In different cultures it means welcome, good wishes, blessings and protection.

The **Foot** has long been an important symbol in cultures from prehistoric times to present day. We stand and walk with our feet, which gives us stability and grounds us to the earth. Energy pathways are said to exist throughout our body beginning and ending at our hands and feet.

**Water** is the primordial fluid from where all life comes. Among Christians, water is a cleansing agent as in the rite of baptism. For the Jews, the waters of the Torah are life giving. In Islam, water is for purification and mercy.

The **Lotus** is an almost universal symbol appearing in the East as the lotus and the West as the lily. In South Asia it is the symbol for spirituality and peace. Because it grows out of really muddy water and blossoms into this beautiful flower it is a symbol of purity, possibilities and peace.



# Helpful Skills for Developing Peace and Cultivating Nonviolence

In order to build a culture of peace, we need to understand that peace is not simply the absence of violence. It involves nurturing the skills that help grow a caring and peaceful community. We can all develop the basic skills and understanding to help resolve the various conflicts that we face in our lives, and we can improve and strengthen the quality of life in our communities by being civically engaged.

The question we need to ask ourselves is “How can I live in a way that contributes toward peace in my family, my community and the world?”

Below are basic peace-making skills that we hope will be helpful in your community interactions and dialogues. Skills include

- Group Cooperation that helps us understand how a group works together,
- Conflict-Resolution and ways to solve conflict,
- Labeling and Stereotypes and
- Point of View.

You can use these topics as workshops by themselves focusing on each skill or as part of the arts-based workshops.





# Group Cooperation

## Introduction

In all of our workshops we have used group work as a strategy to help participants know and understand each other. Engagement increases when participants are actively involved in the process.

However, as the facilitator, it is important for you to make sure that the group is working well, and that participants trust one another and know they are safe to share their ideas and thoughts. Many people find it easier to talk in smaller groups, and a kinship is developed as everyone contributes to the group project.

Three most common group decision-making strategies:

- **Democratic Method**

Different ideas on how to solve the problem are discussed, and then everyone votes. The group agrees to go with the idea that gets the most votes.

- **Compromise Method**

It is not always possible to create solutions that are positive for every member of the group. Compromise solutions consolidate the interests and needs of the group as a whole. Each person in the group gives up a small part of what they want in order to come to a group decision.

- **Consensus Method**

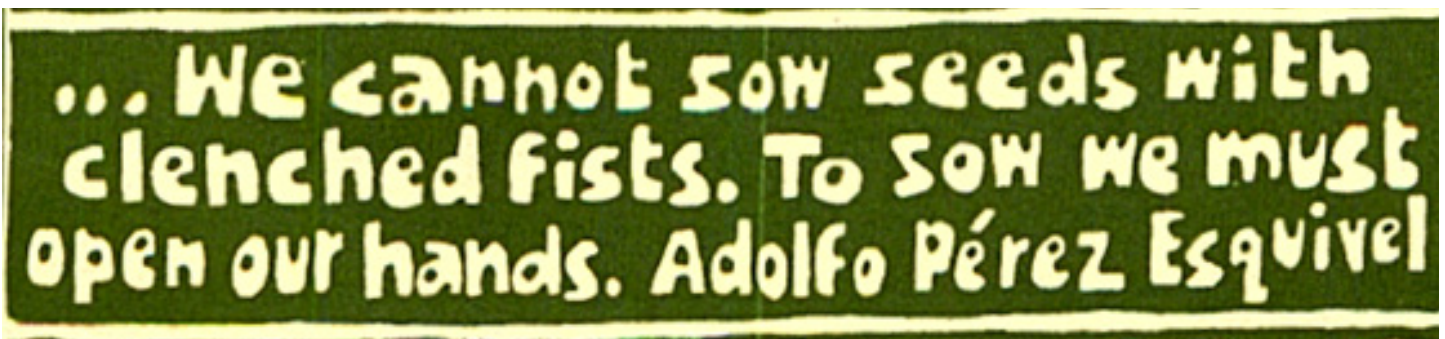
This is related to the compromise method. Everyone listens to each other's concerns and ideas and collaborates on a creative solution that all group members can support. Consensus does not mean unanimity of opinion, interest or benefit but rather that the solution reached is the best for the group as a whole.

## Activity:

Break participants into groups of four or five and give them one minute to decide upon a group name. After they do, talk through what method they chose to make their decision. Reflect on whether all members felt they were heard, and talk about what worked and what didn't.

## Discussion Questions (To use after group-work):

1. Did any problems arise in your group today?
2. How did you work them out?
3. Do you think all the group members were satisfied with the solution?
4. Is there anything you would do different next time?
5. What is one thing that you personally can do to be a proactive group member?



# Conflict-Resolution

## Introduction

Conflict is a fact of life, neither good nor bad. However, our response to conflict can be positive or destructive. The outcome of conflict is dependent upon the choices that we make. Thus it is important to understand conflict and the different ways we can use to solve it.

Conflict needs to be seen as a timeline. There is always a history – what happened before. The actual conflict is the point of power when one's subsequent actions can escalate or de-escalate the conflict. Different solutions bring different outcomes.

Conflict is usually defined as opposing interests. There are two possible contexts for conflict: cooperation and competition. In competition, people believe that their goals are in opposition, so one person's success necessarily means the other person's failure. People acting cooperatively, on the other hand, believe that their goals relate positively.

## Conflict Resolution Techniques:

**Accommodating:** Maintaining the relationship at any cost by concealing one's needs and feelings.

**Compromising:** Finding a quick fix. A compromiser reveals surface needs, but glosses over their underlying needs.

**Avoiding:** Minimizing any distress or discomfort. An avoider conceals all needs, perceptions and feelings.

**Competing:** Winning is the most important. Competitors disclose only their own desires. The feelings, needs and interests of others are irrelevant and meaningless.

**Collaborating:** Solving the problem by meeting as many needs as possible. Collaborators share appropriately any ideas or feelings that might help. They separate the person from the problem and treat all parties respectfully regardless of their behavior.

**Agreeing to disagree:** Understanding and respecting others' behavior and values. In some conflicts, people may disagree about complex social, political, moral or religious



issues but they can respect the other's point of view.

For example, if there is only one small piece of pie left, and we both want it, here are the solutions we can choose.

**COMPETITION:** I eat the pie, and you get nothing.

**ACCOMODATION:** You eat the pie. Don't worry about me.

**AVOIDANCE:** Neither of us gets anything.

**COMPROMISE:** We divide the pie, and each gets half.

**COLLABORATION:** We redefine our goal as each of us wanting something sweet to eat. We get some ice cream, and each of us has pie a la mode.



### How can I resolve a conflict peacefully?

Start by analyzing the conflict.

1. Define the issue.
2. Find the underlying reason for the conflict.
3. Investigate the relationship and emotions between the people involved. The nature of the association between people affects their perceptions and the dynamics of the conflict.
4. Brainstorm solutions.
5. Choose a solution and act on it.

#### **Activity:**

Look for examples of conflict in books that the students are reading. Assign students roles from the story. Attempt to create different endings for the story by choosing different conflict resolution techniques. Follow the steps. Is there any other way of trying to resolve the conflict? Make it worse? What style of problem solving would create a solution that would be acceptable to all? Which would be the easiest to follow? The hardest? What gets in the way of resolving the conflict? Do the characters of the story listen to the others and try to understand different points of view? Is that necessary? Why does the story turn out the way that it does?



#### **Discussion questions**

1. What are some conflict situations you have experienced? Was there something you said or did that escalated or de-escalated the conflict? What words can you say to make the conflict better? Worse? What body language could you use to escalate or de-escalate a conflict?
2. Can you think of a global conflict? What were the reasons for this conflict? How does each side justify their needs and demands? How different are their positions? Are they cooperative or competitive?

# Labeling and Stereotypes

## Introduction

Stereotypes and prejudice are imperfect human reactions to help us comprehend infinite forms of diversity. Today, the world has become smaller. With our ability to gain information from so many different sources, we don't need to stereotype. However, with diversity may come conflict, which presents its own challenges.



### What is a stereotype?

A stereotype is an oversimplified perception or mental picture about people of a social group that associates, defines and categorizes a perceived type of people, without regard to individual differences. Positive or negative, accurate or inaccurate, stereotypes consist of people's beliefs about groups.

### What is prejudice?

A prejudice is an opinion formed without taking the time to judge or consider all the facts. People hold them, unfavorable or favorable, without regard to the evidence available. Biased people tend to twist, distort, misinterpret and even ignore facts that conflict with their predetermined opinions.

### What is Discrimination?

Prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination are closely related. Discrimination is the result of learned fears and prejudices and causes us to create enemies. They are created partially to help define ourselves against a backdrop of others who are perceived as being lesser than us in some aspect or another.

### How can we deal with stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination?

We can positively affect our world by taking a proactive approach to celebrating diversity. We can find ways to explore and learn from our differences. For example, Kendra, a third grade student, talked about her different friends and how they enrich her life in various ways. "Priya shares her samosas with me at lunch. D'Andre and I like to share stories about his turtle and my fish. I love my friend Maria's accent, and she's teaching me Spanish. I like going to Sam's house because he has so many computer games. My friend Chelsea is fun. Last week she showed me how to play jump-rope games."

### Discussion questions:

- What are some common stereotypes about certain occupations? Doctors, nurses, garbage collectors, teachers, lawyers, auto mechanics. What do you picture in your mind when you think about them? Are they tall or short, man or woman, fat or thin? What is their ethnicity? How do they dress?
- What are some of the common stereotypes about certain groups of people? Asians, African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Japanese, Caucasians, teenagers, etc.
- What kind of information supports these stereotypes?
- How different were the facts from the stereotypes? How much are true?

# Point of View: Emotions and Perspectives

## Introduction

Everyone has a point of view that is based in part on past experiences and in part on our particular needs. Many people go through their whole lives never realizing that their point of view affects the way they see things. It takes specific skills to be able to understand and respect other perspectives than our own. What are those skills?

It is important to understand our own point of view, so that we can identify and respect other ideas. When we know what we believe, and we are aware of what is important to us, we can more easily react positively to other points of view.

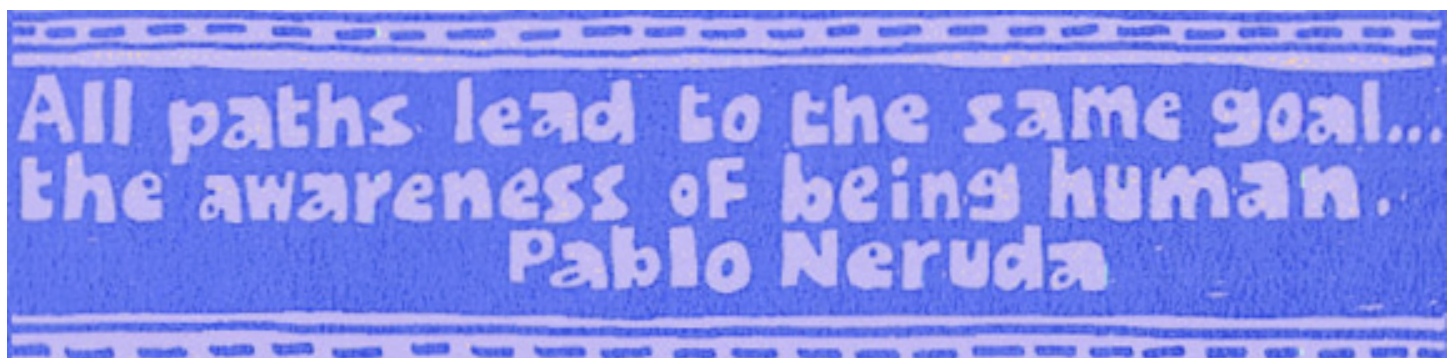
As we become aware of our own reactions when our point of view is challenged, we realize that others have similar reactions when their point of view is challenged. Often we can learn something new by looking at a situation from a different point of view. When we develop respect, we are allowing ourselves the opportunity to learn from the diversity of multiple ideas.

## Activities

1. Take a story or incident from a novel or newspaper that students have recently read. Let them each take a different point of view and rewrite the incident- as the heroine, villain, neutral bystander, etc.
2. Draw or collage different emotions, using symbols and metaphor. What color is frustration or delight? What images make you think of anger, happiness, or fear? Allow students to share why they connected these images with particular emotions. Can they identify particular actions that relate to these emotions? In groups, see if they can act out some of the images they have produced.
3. Explore different points of view by having students write essays both from a parent of a victim and a parent of a perpetrator in an act of violence. What are the similarities between these points of view, and what are the differences?

## Discussion Questions

1. What does perspective mean and why is it important to look at other perspectives besides one's own?
2. Could prejudice or stereotyping (preconceived ideas) effect your point of view?
3. Do different points of view mean one is right and one is wrong? Or is one more right than the other?
4. How does point of view influence a conflict? If you were able to see the other person's point of view, would that change yours?



# Reading List

The following book list is a work in progress. It includes books for children about active nonviolence and social justice, as well as reference about art education and nonviolence work. Many are available at the library, and most can be bought at local bookstores, amazon.com, or from the Chinaberry Catalogue (800-776-2242 or Chinaberry.com). Please feel free to contact us with other books that you feel should be added to this list.

## **For children 3-8 years old:**

Brumbeau, Jeff, (2000) Quilt Maker's Gift, New York: Scholastic Press  
Cooney, Barbara, (1982) Miss Rumphius, New York: Viking Press  
Dengler, Marianna, (1996) The Worry Stone, Flagstaff, AZ: Rising Moon  
Keats, Ezra Jack, (1998) Peter's Chair, New York: Puffin  
Kellogg, Steven, (1993) Island of the Skog, New York: Dial Books for Young Readers  
Spinelli, Eileen, (1996) Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch, New York: Aladdin  
Turkle, Brinton, (1982) Thy Friend, Obadiah, New York: Viking Press  
Zolotow, Charlotte, (1982) The Quarreling Book, New York: Harper Trophy

## **For children 8-12 years old:**

Cann, Helen, (2000) The Barefoot Book of Heroic Children, Cambridge, MA: Barefoot Books  
DeJong, Meindert, (1989) The Wheel on the School, New York: Harper Trophy  
Huynh, Nhoung, (1986) The Land I Lost: Adventures of a boy in Vietnam, New York: Harper Trophy  
Price, Joan, (2001) Truth is a Bright Star, Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press

## **For middle and high school students:**

Greene, Bette, (1999) Summer of My German Soldier, New York: Puffin  
Hunt, Irene, (1987) Across Five Aprils, Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Publishing Group  
L'Engle, Madeleine, (1981) A Swiftly Tilting Planet, New York: Yearling Books  
Lowry, Lois, (1994) The Giver, New York: Laurel Leaf  
Reeder, Carolyn, (1999) Shades of Gray, New York: Aladdin Paperbacks

## **On Nonviolence:**

Beane, A., (1999) The Bully Free Classroom. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.  
Drew, Naomi, (1987) Learning the Skills of Peacemaking. Rolling Hills Estates, California: Jalmar Press  
Kriedler, W., (1990) Elementary Perspectives. Cambridge, MA: Educators for Social Responsibility.  
Lantieri, L. and Patti, J., (1996) Waging Peace in our Schools. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.  
Paley, V., (1992) You Can't Say You Can't Play. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.  
Pirtle, S., (1998) Linking Up! Cambridge, MA: Educators for Social Responsibility.

# Conclusion

We hope communities will find this guide of arts activities, peacemaking skills, and concepts to be helpful and deeply rewarding. Creating a culture of peace is a journey, and we all need to participate at the individual, community and global level.

1. The activity I participated in today was successful in encouraging peaceful behavior
- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly Agree           | Agree                    | Neutral                  | Disagree                 | Strongly Disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
2. I want to participate in more activities like this
- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly Agree           | Agree                    | Neutral                  | Disagree                 | Strongly Disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
3. I want to see more public art in my community
- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly Agree           | Agree                    | Neutral                  | Disagree                 | Strongly Disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
4. As a result of this activity I interacted with people I otherwise would not have
- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly Agree           | Agree                    | Neutral                  | Disagree                 | Strongly Disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
5. How did you hear about the Ten Thousand Ripples project?





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**Thanks to all our community partners, activists, leaders and volunteers for their ongoing support of Ten Thousand Ripples.**

**[www.tenthousandripples.com](http://www.tenthousandripples.com)**



**Ten Thousand Ripples**  
Spreading Peace through Chicago Area Neighborhoods

