Learning to Live Together

Training for University Students in Kenya Towards Promotion of Peace

by
Sahaya G. Selvam

Tangaza University College, Nairobi
www.sahayaselvam.org

2016
Nairobi

Contact the author for any production related to this manual:
Rev. Prof. Sahaya G. Selvam
(selvamsdb@gmail.com)
www.sahayaselvam.org

We are grateful to the following partners:

Coffey International

N S C

Tangaza University College

Government of Kenya

Training Outline

How to use this Manual?

Who is susceptible to religious or ethnic radicalization? What is the average profile of people who are already radicalized: male; aged between 15 and 35; belonging to a particular religion; unemployed; uneducated; a person with criminal background; traumatized; from broken families? No. There is no profile of such a person. Everyone is susceptible to religious or ethnic radicalization and extremism.

Most of us may not take up violence to express our extreme positions. However, in our judgement, in our expressions, in our daily encounters, we might lack empathy to our neighbor, particularly those who are different from us: in race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, and whatever. This attitude could breed into violent extremism and radicalization!

The sole aim of this training manual is to help the participants reflect on certain dimensions – of knowledge and attitudes - that colour our social interactions that should bring out the best selves in terms of compassion.

Expected Learning Outcomes

At the end of the training the participant should be able to:

1. Recognise stereotypes and the role of narratives in everyday interaction;

2. Acknowledge in-group/out-group dynamics in ethnic and religious interactions;

3. Spell out the dynamics of religion and the role of spirituality in mitigating the institutional dimensions of religion;

4. Appreciate the Golden Rule and its role in protecting the dignity of the human person;

5. Demonstrate some skills in conflict resolution and in dealing with difference of opinions.
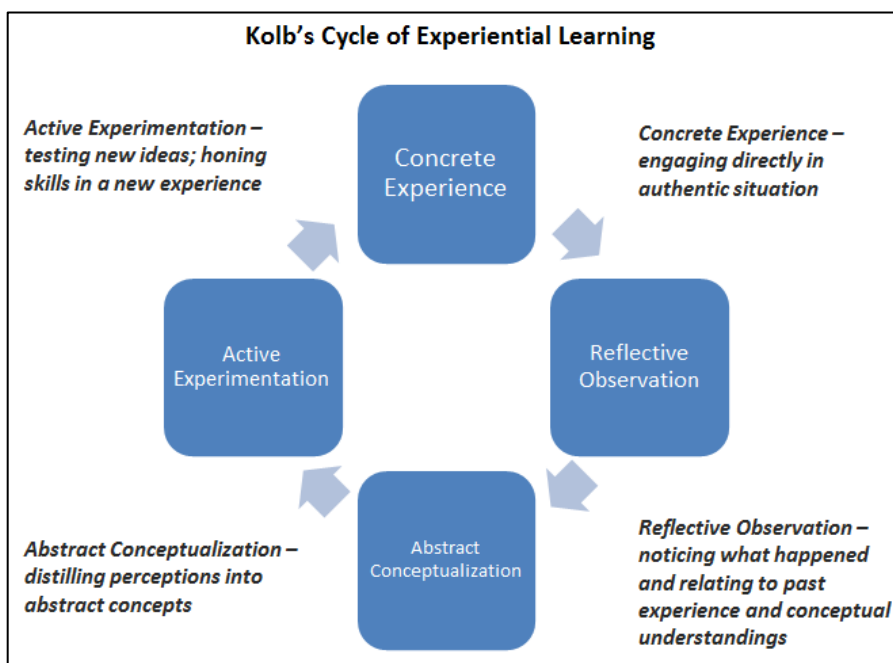
Training Methodology

The underpinning methodology of the training is drawn from Kolb's experiential learning cycle (as illustrated in Figure below). Following this model, the sessions of this training will have four steps based on this theory of learning.

Step 1. Experience-Activity: Every session begins with an experience-activity. It simulates an experience for the participants closely related to the theme that is going to be discussed. It acts also as an ice-breaker: bringing the participants together and energizing them.

Step 2. Reflect: After the activity the facilitator invites the group to reflect on what has happened: "What did you see? What can we learn from this?" Connect their answer to the theme of discussion.

Step 3. Input: In attempting to summarise the answers of the participants, the facilitator now presents three to five points of importance on the theme of the session. The points need to be accessible and exemplified. Allow some clarifications, and possible contributions from the participants. It is important to be aware of the time. The participants should not be bored. All members of the group need to be focused; if there are signs of dissipation just mention the points with some articulation and move on to the next step.

Step 4: Action: Finally the facilitator clearly marking the transition, asks: "So what is the implication of this exercise for our life? How will these insights inform our daily life?" These questions could also be discussed among participants in small groups without moving about too much. Conclude the discussion highlighting three or four practical points. If possible ask individuals to write them down.

Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning

Active Experimentation – testing new ideas; honing skills in a new experience

Concrete Experience – engaging directly in authentic situation

Reflective Observation – noticing what happened and relating to past experience and conceptual understandings

Abstract Conceptualization – distilling perceptions into abstract concepts

The Ripple-Effect

The training is divided into 10 sessions. Training of each session should not exceed 60 to 70 minutes. The training could be completed very well in two days.

This present training is not an end in itself. Every participant is expected to train at least 40 to 50 of their age-mates or peers according to their situation. We desire that this creates a ripple-effect.

Make your training cost-effective. If you have just one day at your disposal or even just a few hours, create a discussion using some of the content of this manual. Read more on the topic. Personalise! We need to learn to live together.

Why are we here?

Experience-Activity: Birds fly game

Ask participants to stand in a circle. Once they are settled, ask them to form groups of three people each. Two people hold both their hands leaving a space in between, in which the third person stands. Now, for the purposes of this game those holding hands are cages. Those standing inside are birds.

When the leader of the game says, "Birds fly," the 'birds' are expected to leave their cages and find another cage. When the leader says, "Cages break," the people who were holding hands break up and form new cages with birds.

Try to balance the number of participants in such a way as to have enough cages and birds. Facilitator starts the game by saying either "Birds fly", or "Cages break", during the movement of people, the facilitator also joins the game. Whoever is found without being a cage or bird, come in the middle and answer the following question, before continuing the game by saying, "Birds fly," or "Cages break":

How, do you think, is this training going to empower you?

Reflection: Expectations

When the participants have sufficiently warmed up, stop the game and ask them to be seated. Once they are settled, ask them the following questions – you might list the answers:

a) Why do birds migrate?
b) What risks do birds face when they migrate?

Birds are ready to face these risks (answers to question b) because they are looking for these benefits (answers to question a).

c) Why have we left our normal daily activities and have "migrated" to this training?

(d) What risks are we facing? What sacrifices are we expected to make?

Conclude by saying: Yes, we are ready to face these risks (answers to question d) because we are looking for these benefits (answers to question c).

Input: Learning to Live Together

A document from the UNESCO ("Learning: The Treasure Within", Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, 1996) spoke of four indispensable pillars for the integral education of the young in the 21st Century, that are also the indispensable pillars to accompanying young people in their growth.

> *Learning to know*, that is to acquire the instruments of comprehension: "The school should impart both the desire for, and pleasure in, learning the ability to learn how to learn, and intellectual curiosity."

> *Learning to do*, so as to be capable to act creatively in one's own environment: "In addition to learning to do a job or work, it should, more generally entail the acquisition of a competence that enables people to deal with a variety of situations, often unforeseeable…"

> *Learning to live together*, in such a way as to participate and collaborate with the others in all human activities: "by developing an understanding of others and their history, traditions and spiritual values and, on this basis, creating a new spirit which, guided by recognition of our growing interdependence… to manage conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way."

> *Learning to be*, that is to reach full maturity: spirit and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic sense, personal responsibility and spiritual values: "everyone will need to exercise greater independence and judgement combined with a stronger sense of personal responsibility for the attainment of common goals."

We are living through one of the best times in human history, yet our times are still torn apart by some unnecessary conflicts. As humanity, we waste a lot of time and resources because we have not learnt to live together. On the one hand, we enjoy the privileges of globalisation: freedom to travel, communicates and be part of a global culture. On the other hand, we close ourselves in our own little cocoons and consider the groups of our own affiliations (such as ethnic group, religion, nation) as being superior to others. We cause harm to others. So shall we reflect about all these dynamics in this training?

Refer to the Introduction section to add more information about the training.

D – Application

Three ways, I think, this training is going to be useful to me:

1.

2.

3.

Where do I draw it from?

Objectives:
By the end of the session the participant should be able to:
1. Describe the different layers of the self;
2. Express awareness that the identity of the self has to be drawn from the inner layers of the self.

A. Experience-Activity: *Who are you x 10?*

The participants stand in pairs facing each other. One asks the other 10 times the question, "Who are you?" And the other person is expected to give meaningful answers each time. For instance, A asks B, Who are you? B answers, I am Wanjiku. Again A asks, Who are you? B answers, I am a girl. They go on this way 10 times. When this is over B asks A, Who are you? And A gives meaningful answers. They go on this way 10 times.

B. Reflection: *Layers of the Self*

After the exercise is complete, ask two or three individuals to share their answers to the question, Who are you? Invite all participants to reflect on the fact that the real self is beyond all these answers. This can be carried out by posing questions like, "If you have another name instead of the one you have, would you still be yourself?" "Instead of you doing this particular job, if you were doing another job would you still be you?" These aspects of the self do influence your definition of the self, yet the true self is beyond all these. In this session we will discuss about the layers of the self.

C. Input: *Where are your roots?*

Where Am I?

How Am I?

Who Am I?

God Image
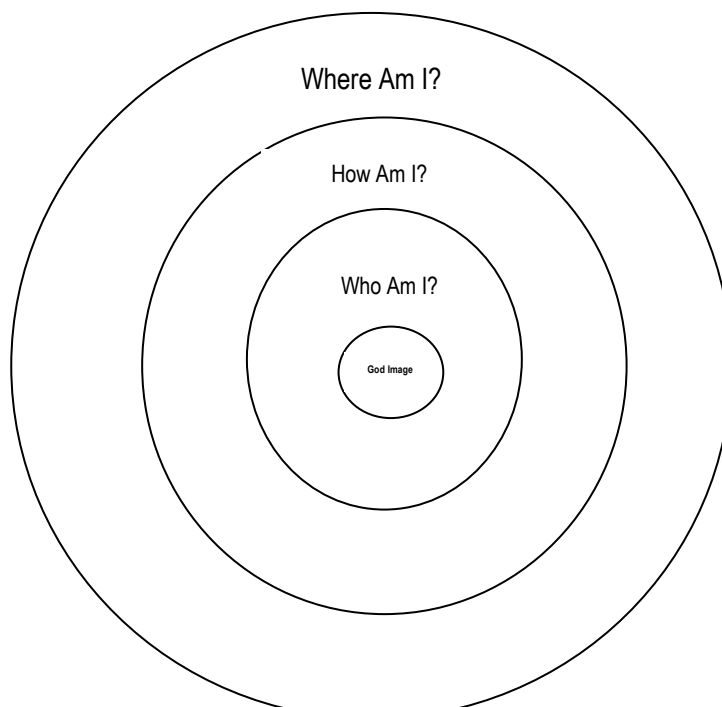
Referring to the diagram[1] explain to the participants meaning of the layers:

Where Am I?
>The given-ness of my self. My ethnicity, family background, physical features, etc. For example, answers that fall under this category could be, I am an Kenyan; I am the daughter of N.N.

How Am I?
>The choices that I have made, that have become part of my attitudes and character. Answers that could be in this category are: I am a person who gets very angry, I am a shy person, etc. This layer also includes one's skills and talents. Yet we know we are more than our skills, talents, our attitudes and characters even if they are important.

Who Am I?
>The aspect of my self that is beyond the given-ness and my character, where I am truly myself. People of faith tend to identify this layer as being the Image of God.

Now, from which layer do you draw your identity from? Where is your self rooted?

Rooted in Layer 1:
For some people the root could be at the level of "Where Am I?" They may draw their self-identity from their family background or their ethnicity, etc. In such a situation, when their ethnicity is threatened they feel that their self is threatened. A plant rooted in the outer layer dries very quickly.

Rooted in Layer 2:
For others, their root may be in their talents and skills, in their qualities and character – in the layer of "How Am I?" Though this layer is deeper than the level of Where Am I, it is not deep enough. Hence, inability to use their talents or the limitations of their personalities may sometimes paralyse these individuals. Religious affiliation, for some people, could lie at this level.

Rooted in Layer 3:
A healthy base for the self is a deep appreciation of the mystery and the uniqueness of the self. It is an awareness that, after all, I am more than all the paraphernalia (decorations) that I put around my self. I am distinct from the roles that I play. When the plant of my self-image is rooted in this deeper layer, I am at peace with myself all the time. It not only becomes easy to accept other people's reaction towards me, but I also keep growing towards becoming my best self.
>This rooted-ness leads us to a deeper appreciation of other people too. We appreciate that they too are created in the image of God.

---

[1] Adapted from Margaret Silf, *Landmarks*.

D – Application

Invite participants to personalise what they have learnt in this session. How will they put into practice what they have learnt? Ask them to mention three things that they will carry home and work on.

They might share this with their immediate neighbours in the hall. Ask a few people to mention aloud some of their resolutions. List them together. And invite the participants to give them some consideration.

Three things that I will carry home and work on:

1.

2.

3.

When the default turns faulty

Experience-Activity: *Mingle-Mingle…*

Ask all participants to be on their feet. When you say, "Mingle, Mingle, Mingle…" They reply: "Ah Mingle, Yeah!" Say it rhythmically. Now they begin to run around and mingle. When you stop saying "Mingle, Mingle, Mingle…" you call out numbers such as 3 or 4 or 5. They form small groups of numbers you call out. When they have settled down standing in groups, you read out a sentence from the table below. They discuss if they think the statement is a truth or myth; do they agree or disagree with it. Read only one sentence at a time.

After they have discussed one statement, continue to say: "Mingle, Mingle, Mingle…" They reply: "Ah Mingle, Yeah!" And they move around and mix. When you stop saying "Mingle, Mingle, Mingle…" and call out numbers again they form small groups of numbers you call out. When they have settled down standing in groups, you read out the next sentence and they discuss. Continue until all the sentences are exhausted.

Say if you agree or disagree with the following statements	Truth	Myth
1. Girls like pink colour.		
2. Modern youth are not interested in religion.		
3. Homosexuals are moral perverts.		
4. Islam encourages violence.		
5. You need to speak slowly to people with disability.		
6. Catholics are conservative when it comes to sexual behaviour.		
7. An uncircumcised man cannot be the president of Kenya.		
8. All Indians are Hindus. They speak Hindu!		
9. Only people from the Rift Valley can be long distance runners.		
10. Add your own…		

Reflection:

When done, ask participants to settle down and ask them what they thought of the exercise. "True, sometimes in such discussions we mix jokes and serious prejudices. Suppose you are a responsible adult and you have to make decisions based on the above statements, how would you react."

Review some of the statements and ask participants to react to the statement.

At the end, challenge them with the following points:
- Don't you think that all these statements are universal statements? Such as, cows eat grass. Even if the word "all" is not used, it implies so. This is the problem with stereotypes: they become defaults! Relative elements are absolutized, particular elements universalised.
- How do these statements affect our relationship with people who belong to such groups?

Lead them to the next section.

Input: Let us talk about Stereotypes

How do we define stereotypes and prejudices?
> **Stereotypes:** thinking all people who belong to a certain group are the same and labelling them, for example all "Arabs" are Muslims!
> **Prejudice:** judging someone without knowing them, on the basis of what they look like or what group they belong to, for example all *Wazungu* are rich, they speak English.

What are the different types of stereotypes:
> Stereotypes could be on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religious affiliation, place of origin, nationality, education, jobs, etc.

Danger of stereotypes:
> Stereotypes prevent us from relating to the other person as they are. Sometimes they lead to hatred and violence.

D – Application

Three things that I will carry home and work on:

1.

2.

3.

In-group & Out-group dynamics

Objectives:
By the end of the session the participant should be able to:
1. describe the social psychology of in-group and out-group dynamics;
2. apply this dynamics in understanding relationship between religions;
3. be conscious of social dynamics might influence their daily interactions and decisions.

Experience-Activity: Make your selection

You are part of a panel that is assigned to hire a team of three new recruits for the Kenya Intelligence Team. There are seven people in the list – all are Kenyan citizens, follow the steps below in selecting the three.

Ask participants to write out the names and strike them out as they drop the candidates, once they are dropped they are not considered again for the next round. There are going to be four rounds of selection all together. In each round you drop one applicant.

Round 1.
Drop one now from the following list just based on your gut feeling.

1.	Ali Hassan				
2.	John Kariuki				
3.	Jane Chepkoetch				
4.	Pradeep Shah				
5.	Mercy Akai				
6.	Shamshia Ali				
7.	Chris Makau				

Share with your neighbour who you dropped and why you did so? After the sharing, the facilitator listens to a few views.

Round 2.
Drop one now from the following list based on their physical and mental condition.

1.	Ali Hassan	physically and mentally fit
2.	John Kariuki	physically fit and experiences high level anxiety
3.	Jane Chepkoetch	two months pregnant and mentally fit
4.	Pradeep Shah	physically and mentally fit
5.	Mercy Akai	wears glasses and mentally fit
6.	Shamshia Ali	physically and mentally fit
7.	Chris Makau	Has albinism and mentally fit

Share with your neighbour who you dropped and why you did so? After the sharing, the facilitator listens to a few views.

Round 3.
Drop one now from the following list based on their previous background.

1.	Ali Hassan	physically and mentally fit	PhD International Relations
2.	John Kariuki	physically fit and experiences high level anxiety	BA in Hotel Management; 10 years in middle management
3.	Jane Chepkoetch	two months pregnant and mentally fit	Masters in Law, specialised in international crime
4.	Pradeep Shah	physically and mentally fit	MBA, Social Entrepreneur
5.	Mercy Akai	wears glasses and mentally fit	MA Criminal psychology; 5 years with Interpol

6.	Shamshia Ali	physically and mentally fit	Started an NGO for maternity health
7.	Chris Makau	Has albinism and mentally fit	PhD in IT Engineering.

Share with your neighbour who you dropped and why you did so? After the sharing, the facilitator listens to a few views.

Round 4.
Drop one now from the following list based on their sexual orientation:

1.	Ali Hassan	physically and mentally fit	PhD International Relations	Heterosexual
2.	John Kariuki	physically fit and experiences high level anxiety	BA in Hotel Management; 10 years in middle management	Gay
3.	Jane Chepkoetch	two months pregnant and mentally fit	Masters in Law, specialised in international crime	Lesbian
4.	Pradeep Shah	physically and mentally fit	MBA, Social Entrepreneur	Heterosexual
5.	Mercy Akai	wears glasses and mentally fit	MA Criminal psychology; 5 years with Interpol	Heterosexual
6.	Shamshia Ali	physically and mentally fit	Started an NGO for maternity health	Heterosexual
7.	Chris Makau	Has albinism and mentally fit	PhD in IT Engineering.	Bisexual

Reflection:

Ask the participants the following questions. Go through them quickly:

1. On what basis did you make the selections?
2. Did gender influence your decision any time? Did the fact that one of the applicants was pregnant influence your decision?
3. What about ethnic background as you perceived from the names?
4. Did their religious background have a say?
5. What about sexual orientation? And does it really matter for this job?
6. IMPORTANT: How much did your own affiliation influence your decisions?
7. Did you regret any of your choices?
8. What do we learn from this exercise?

Input:

Human beings are social and we like to belong to groups. Our relationship to groups have the following characteristics: [2]
   1. Interestingly we belong to groups that are sufficiently small so that we might be recognised inside those groups.

---

[2] Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, pp.33-47.

2. But we are capable of belonging to many groups at the same time: tribe, nation, religion, clubs, etc. Sometimes, there could be groups within groups: you could be a Christian, but belonging to a parish.

3. When we belong to a group, the group has a way of defining its boundaries by means of beliefs and practices so that the in-group (those who belong to the group) and the out-group (those who don't belong to the group) are clearly marked and identified. For example, we Muslims believe in these things and perform these things so that we are different from the Christians. This is called, "social categorisations".

In-group   Out-group
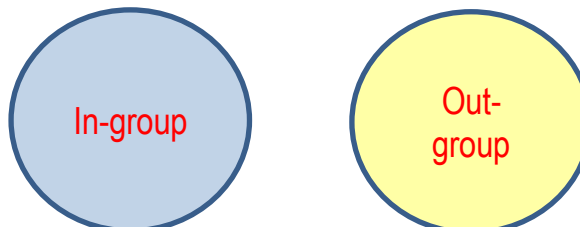
4. Then we start talking about "we" and "they". We are different from them. They are not we. The groups we belong to tell us something about who we are, and we may feel that we have some prestige from being part of the group. This is called, "social identification".

We   They
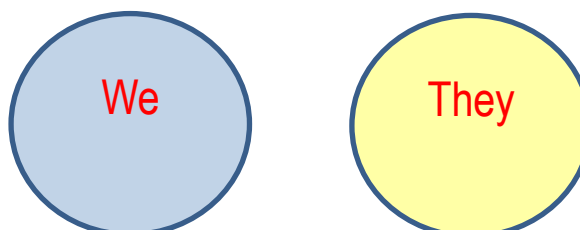
5. Then we begin to compare ourselves against the other group. Surely, we are better than they. We are superior to others. This is called "Social Comparison".

6. This naturally gives rise to two interesting phenomena: (a) In-group favouritism – we begin to like and promote the members of our group, and (b) Out-group bias – we begin to see the members of the group as less capable than us or even as "bad people". Sometimes the out-group bias is expressed violently in an attempt to get rid of them!

In-group Favouritism   Out-group Bias
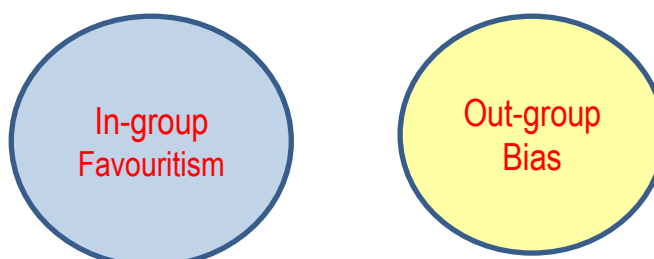
7. Such in-group and out-group feelings and reactions are common on the basis of ethnic, national, language identities, among others. Such feelings are strongest on the basis of religion, because there is even a claim to revelation – that this in-group and what it believes is deigned/given rise to by God Himself. Therefore, what we believe is the truth, and what they believe is only an invention of human imagination; we are saved and they are damned to hell. We call them "pagans"!
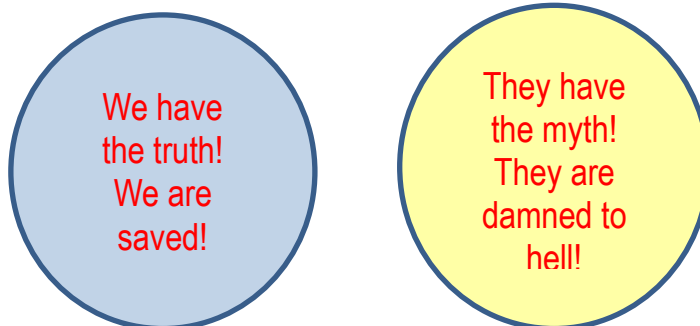
Interestingly almost every religion (particularly monotheistic religions) holds this about other religions. So, is this God's revelation or a mere product of human social psychology?

Here is the summary of the process:

So why do I belong to the religion that I do? It is not because we have the truth and they don't have. It is because what I believe is meaningful to me!

D – Application

How could the insight from this session be useful for a peaceful society? Three things that I will carry home and work on:
1.
2.
3.

Ideologies and Brainwashing

Objectives:
By the end of the session the participant should be able to:
1. recognize the dynamics of narratives in creating identities;
2. use narratives mindful of their power in social cohesion.

Experience-Activity: *Recalling of Narratives*

Narratives include stories, myths, symbols, sayings, a version of history or a happening as you heard it being told in a particular way.

Recall one narrative in any of the following categories:
1. A story or a belief that you heard about another ethnic group being told among your ethnic group.
2. The contemporary narrative of the Arab people in general.
3. The prevalent narrative about Muslim young men in Kenya.
4. A narrative that you think is being used to radicalize recruits.
5. Any other narrative?

Choose only one. Be prepared to share it. In the next part of the exercise you will not only speak of the narrative but also evaluate it: is it justified?

Reflection: *Merry Go around Sharing*
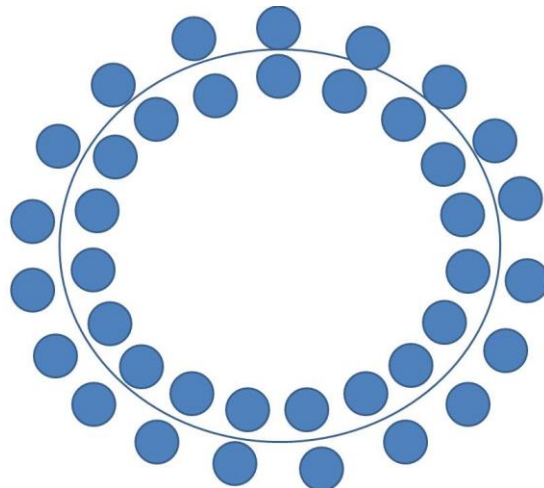
When the participants have finished answering the questions individually invite them to do a sharing with others by means of Merry-Go-Around-Sharing using the following steps.

Step 1: All participants to stand in a circle.
Step 2: The facilitator asks them to call out numbers 1 and 2.   They remember their numbers.

Step 3: Those who said 1 stand wherever they are, and the 2's come in front of 1's on their left. They stand facing each other. 1's are in the outer circle and 2's are in an inner circle.

Step 4: They start sharing with each other in pairs the answer to the two questions regarding their current work.

Step 5: After 1 minute the facilitator gives a signal. When the signal is given, the 1's keep standing where they are, but the 2's move one step to the right to meet a new partner, and share their answers.

The process continues until majority of the people finish sharing.

Input: The Power of Narratives

There are five foundational narratives in our lives:
- **Personal narratives:** These are the stories about you, your family, hobbies, interests, etc.
- **Cultural narratives:** These are the stories of world news, history, art, science, etc. we read and hear every day.
- **Religious narratives:** These are myths and dogmas that are held by religious groups.
- **Political narratives:** These are the stories about which policies are best for society and who should lead these efforts.
- **Economic narratives:** These are the stories of industries, organizations and professions.

Narratives play an important role in group cohesion: in keeping the members of a group together and united.[3] Narratives begin to have a life of their own. Narratives maintain in-group and out-group identities, as discussed in the last session. Here is the problem: sometimes, narratives are used to put down other groups; it creates enmities, and eventually leads to violence.

We all carry narratives. It is good to use them meaningfully without prejudicing the wellbeing of other groups and individuals.

D – Application

What is the relevance of this topic for peace building in our society? Three things that you will carry home and work on:

1.

2.

3.

---

[3] Harari, Y. N. (2014). *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*. Random House.

Interpersonal Conflict Resolution

Objectives:
By the end of the session the participant should be able to:
1. examine one's style of dealing with conflicts.
2. reflect on the concept of dialogue as a human way of dealing with conflicts.
3. deal with conflicts in a humane manner.

Experience: *Choose your Animal*

Either describe the following animals, or photocopy this page and give to the participants. Let the participants choose one animal that best represents their behaviour when faced with conflict situation. The individuals may add any other animal that is not used here.
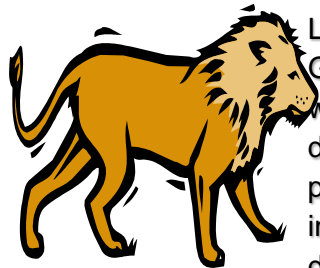
Lion:
Gets in fights whenever others disagree with his plans or interferes with his desires.
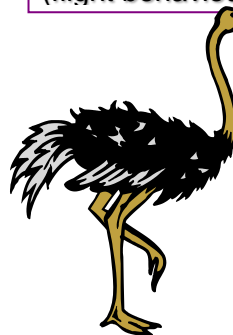
Frog:
Croaks on and on about the same subject in a monotonous voice hoping to be heard.

Rabbit:
Runs away as soon as he senses tension, conflict or an unpleasant job. This may mean quickly changing to another topic (flight behaviour)

Monkey:
Fools around, chatters a lot and prevents the groups from concentrating on any serious business.

Ostrich:
Buries his head in the sand and refuses to face reality or admit there is any problem at all.

Tortoise:
Withdraws expecting the conflict to solve itself

Snake:
Hides in the grass and strikes when cornered.
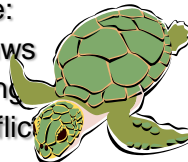
Giraffe:
Looks down on the others and the conflict feeling, "I am above all this childish nonsense".

Owl:
Looks very serious and pretends to be very wise

Reflection: *Which Animal?*

Once the individuals have chosen their animals they go into groups to share the animal that they chose, while answering the following questions.

1. How does this animal resemble your behaviour?
2. Is it an effective means of dealing with a conflict?

Input: *Co-operation*

Ask for spontaneous reactions from the participants on their insight into this exercise. Then share the following idea:

There are three possible behaviours for an animal when faced with danger.

1. Flight – Most often when animals are faced with danger they run away from the enemy. They flee, as does the rabbit.
2. Fight – When an animal is cornered and has no time or capacity to run, and it has something to attack the enemy with, then it fights, it attacks, as does a snake.
3. Freeze – When an animal is not fast enough to run, or does not have an attacking weapon it just freezes. It is there without doing anything. For example, a tortoise pulls its head into the shell.

4. Dialogue: But we humans have a fourth option. We can use reason. We can dialogue. We can appeal to the reason of the other person.

In this session we would propose certain styles in dealing with conflicts. We list below four styles of conflict resolution. The style itself would depend on the circumstances. There may be still other styles. For now let us look at the styles listed here below.

1. **Avoidance**
   Some people try to do whatever is possible to escape from conflicts. They believe that to escape from conflict is better than dealing with the conflict. Though this method may be helpful, escaping may show a lack of openness to dialogue. Conflicts may pile up contributing to a flare up. Avoiding the issue for a while with an aim of giving time for tempers to cool down is a good approach. In due course the issue may have to be addressed.

2. **Competition**
   Many people have thoughts of competition. They want to win rather than to be defeated. They consider their positions more important than relationship with people. This style may increase more conflicts. People who have this approach often live in continuous stress.

3. **Adaptation**

   People who are more concerned about relationships may have recourse to this approach. They would accept blame. Act humbly in conflicts. They are ready to adapt their own plans, even to give up if necessary. This approach in itself is not conflict resolution, it could work some times, but otherwise only delays the conflict, and make weaker person more vulnerable.

4. **Co-operation**

   This is the most meaningful approach in conflict resolution. This does not sacrifice the goal, while preserving relationships. In this approach one makes sure that all benefit in the relationship. They believe that conflict can in fact enhance relationships.

   Though sometimes one of the above strategies could be sufficient for dealing with conflict, other times more than one method may be necessary.

D – Application

What is the relevance of this topic for peace building in our society? Three things that you will carry home and work on:

1.

2.

3.

Religiosity and Spirituality

Towards Religious Spiritulity

Experience- Activity: *Truth or Myth?*

What do you think of religion and faith? Express your opinion on the following statements.

If individuals have access to the worksheet give them some time to answer the items personally. If not, the facilitator reads the statements one by one and individuals may answer it immediately.

Ask individuals to raise hands to express their opinion: if they agree their hands are raised with open fingers; if they don't agree they raise clenched fists. Then ask two or three persons with different positions to express themselves.

Say if you agree or disagree with the following statements	Truth	Myth
1. Modern youth are not interested in religion.		
2. Most often we belong to a particular religion, by chance, and not by choice.		
3. Religion is not about dogmas and rituals but about an experience of the Divine.		
4. No religion has access to the absolute truth, they all have truth-claims!		
5. All religious violence is fuelled by politics.		
6. Religious beliefs are not about truth, but we hold on to them because they are meaningful to us.		
7. At the core of every religion is compassion to humanity.		
8. People who have had a deep experience of God are often not legalistic.		
9. Praying and killing someone do not go together.		
10. Institutionalised Religion is a force of evil in the society.		

Reflection:

First listen to participants' reaction to the above exercise. Then tell them that the following section could provide meaning to most of the controversial points that might have emerged in the opening exercise.

Look at the following quadrant – Figure 8.1:[4] (The facilitator draws on a flipchart and keeps it ready for this, and shows it at this point. Let the chart be large enough according to the size of the group).

High Spirituality	**3** **Spiritual-but-not-religious** • *Spirituality of Quest* • Sacred or secular search for significance/meaning. • Often this could be some individualistic search for a transcendental experience.		**4** **Religious Spirituality** • *Intrinsic Religion* • Sacred and secular search for significance/meaning. • Religious "dogmas" are considered only as truth-claims.
Low Spirituality	**2** **Neither religious nor spiritual** • *'Secular' worldview* • Searching or no search for significance; • Loss of sense of mystery and symbols. • Materialistic view of world and humans.		**1** **'Empty' Religion** • *Extrinsic Religion* • No serious search for significance; • Sticking on to some tenets of religion as the truth. • No salvation outside our religion!
	Low Religiosity		High Religiosity

Figure 8.1: Multidimensional Matrix of Religion & Spirituality

The quadrant makes a distinction between religion and spirituality:

Religiosity is made up of four C's:
- **Creed** is a set of possible explanations for the mysteries of the origin, nature, meaning of the world, human life, and the transcendent.
- **Code** refers to the set of rules and guidelines flowing from the creed that regulate the community of believers and their functioning in the larger society.
- **Cult** is the way humans express their relationship with the transcendent through rituals and celebrations.
- **Community** is the group of people who hold on to a set of creed, code and cult.

---

[4] Selvam, S. G. (2013). Towards religious-spirituality: A multidimensional matrix of religion and spirituality. *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, *12*(36), 129-152.

Spirituality is marked by a search for significance or meaning of life and existence in terms of the sacred or divine. spirituality is related to "a search for meaning, for unity, for connectedness, for transcendence, and for the highest of human potential."[5]

What the quadrant illustrates is the four possible combinations of the above two realities: religion and spirituality. The combination is created by the degree of religion and spirituality in the individual.

1. Is it possible that there are these four ways that people relate to matters of religion and spirituality? Matters of faith?
2. What do you think is the difference between religion and spirituality?
3. To which part of the quadrant do you fall?
4. What is the ideal way of living your religious faith?

Input: *Towards a Religious Spirituality*

What is mature religious faith about? Let us take some ideas from two famous psychologists: Gordon Allport[6] and James Fowler[7]. They attribute the following characteristics to mature faith or what we have called here: religious-spirituality.

1. **Comprehensive and universal:** mature religious sentiment is ordered and coherent, embracing gracefully the paradoxes of the mysteries of life. Since mature faith just knows 'God is' and does not narrowly insist 'God is precisely what I say He is', it is tolerant and inclusive.
2. **Dynamism:** the mature religious sentiment is willing to constantly renew itself. It can easily adapt itself, seeking meaning. It is willingness to break out of the comfort zone of magical thinking and self-justification. It is not rigid fearing change.
3. **Heuristic (Searching):** Mature faith is constantly searching. It does not say, "I know it all." Or "Our faith has it all." "An heuristic belief is one that is held tentatively until it can be confirmed or until it helps us discover a more valid belief."
4. **Integral:** related to being comprehensive, mature religious sentiment expresses harmony that produces inner freedom. It is free from inner contradictions.
5. **Consistent morality:** mature faith is exhibited in a consistent morality that is based on compassion and universal brotherhood.

---

[5] Emmons, R.A. (1999). *The Psychology of Ultimate Concerns: Motivation and Spirituality in Personality*. New York: Guilford Press. p.5.
[6] Allport, G. W. (1950). *The Individual and His Religion: A Psychological Interpretation*. New York: Macmillan Publishing.
[7] Fowler, J. W.(1981). *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

D – Application

What is the relevance of this topic for peace building in our society? Mention three elements that were meaningful to you here and that you will carry forward in your life:

1.

2.

3.

Do to no one what you would want…

Objectives:
By the end of the session the participant should be able to:
1. appreciate the commonality in the Golden Rule
2. translate the Golden Rule in terms of Win-Win relationships;
3. share this conviction with others.

Experience-Activity: *Collecting Autographs/Signatures*

Let the participants be ready with pen and paper. Ask them to collect as many signatures as possible from their peers in the hall within a duration of three minutes. (Reduce the time if the participants are few.)

Give the signal to begin the exercise.

When the time is over let them all hold up their pen and paper. When they have all sat down ask them to count the number of signatures that they have received. Let the one who has received the maximum number of signature be congratulated with a clap.

Reflection:

Evaluate the exercise.
- What did we see in this exercise?
- What were the dynamics that contributed to one's success or failure?

Ask the participants the following questions:
1. Can human beings live alone?
2. What do you see? Is it easy to live in your society?
3. What is the meaning of this saying, "I am because we are"? Or
4. "Do to others what you would want them to do to you."

Give a brief opinion on the above questions, especially pointing out to the "Golden Rule" – "Do to others what you would want them to do to you." Or "Do not to others what you would not want done to you." Ask: if they have a version of the Golden Rule in their own faith.

Make use of the different versions of the Golden Rule in different World Religions.

The Golden Rule in World's Religions

Bahá'í Faith: "Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou doest not." - Baha'u'llah.

Buddhism: Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." Udana-Varga 5:18
"One should seek for others the happiness one desires for oneself."

Christianity: "Treat others as you would like people to treat you." Luke 6:31, NJB.

Confucianism: "What I do not wish men to do to me, I also wish not to do to men." Analects 15:23

Hinduism: "This is the sum of Dharma [duty]: Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done to you". - *Mahabharata*, 5:1517.

Islam: "None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself." Number 13 of Imam "Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadiths."

Jainism: A man should wander about treating all creatures as he himself would be treated. "Sutrakritanga 1.11.33

Input: A Modern Version of the Golden Rule.

Time permitting conclude with the following input on Win-Win Relationship, which could be considered a modern interpretation of the Golden Rule.

Give the following input using the diagram[8]:

1. WIN-LOSE	**2.** WIN-WIN
3. LOSE - LOSE	**4.** LOSE-WIN

---

[8] Adapted from Stephen Covey, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*.

In the above table which is the best stand?

1. **Win- Lose**
   This type of relationship believes that I must win and the other must lose. This leads to pride and selfishness. This position flows from the belief that if others win I may not win, so it is better to defeat others.

2. **Win-Win.**
   I must win; and the other must win. Winning can mean different for both the parties, but at the end every one is happy. This is true meaning of love. Everyone has the right to be here!

3. **Lose-Lose**
   I am not bothered about my winning; but the other should not win. Crab mentality. If you had crabs in a bucket, you don't need to close it because they will pull each other down. This is a very mean and naïve way of looking at life.

4. **Lose- Win**
   This is false humility and sacrifice. It is okay even if I lose, but the other should win. This is a door-mat mentality. Let yourself be made a victim. A human being deserves much more than this. One needs to be assertive.

   The best way of relating is the 2nd way – Win-win! Do you think, it could be the contemporary version of the Golden-Rule.

D – Application

What is the relevance of this topic for peace building in our society? Three things that you will carry home and work on:

1.

2.

3.

The Core of All Religions

Experience-Activity: *Handshake Welcome*

Invite participants to welcome each other to this session. But announce to them that there is one special person in the group, whoever will be the 20th person (change according the number of participants – should be half of the total number of participants) who will shake hands with them will be the winner of a special prize. (Make sure that you have told one of the participants to count… and announce the person only when asked.)

After the participants have mixed up enough to greet each other ask them to get seated. Then ask the "special person" to mention the one who was the 20th person to greet him/her. You may give a prize or a clap!

Evaluate the exercise: were we genuinely greeting each other? Each one was greeting with their own intention.

The purpose of this session is to become aware that the ideal way of relating to others is in compassion. This is at the heart of every religion.

Reflection: Empathy Questionnaire[9]

Say to participants: I am going to read out eight statements. For each of the statements mark in a scale of 1 to 5 – explain using the information below.

So how far are the following statements applicable to you?

1.	I find it easy to put myself in somebody else's shoes.	1 Very unlike me	2 unlike me	3 neutral	4 like me	5 very much like me
2.	I am good at predicting how someone will feel.	1 Very unlike me	2 unlike me	3 neutral	4 like me	5 very much like me
3.	I am quick to spot when someone in a group is feeling awkward or uncomfortable.	1 Very unlike me	2 unlike me	3 neutral	4 like me	5 very much like me
4.	Other people tell me I am good at understanding how they are feeling and what they are thinking.	1 Very unlike me	2 unlike me	3 neutral	4 like me	5 very much like me

[9] Adapted from Loewen, P. J., Lyle, G., & Nachshen, J. S. (2009). An eight-item form of the Empathy Quotient (EQ) and an application to charitable giving. *Retrieved from crcee. umontreal. ca/pdf/Eight% 20Question% 20ES_final. pdf*.

5.	I find it easy to know what to do in a social situation.	1 Very unlike me	2 unlike me	3 neutral	4 like me	5 very much like me
6.	I often find it easy to judge if someone is rude or polite.	1 Very unlike me	2 unlike me	3 neutral	4 like me	5 very much like me
7.	It is easy for me to see why some things upset people so much.	1 Very unlike me	2 unlike me	3 neutral	4 like me	5 very much like me
8.	Other people often say that I am sensitive to others.	1 Very unlike me	2 unlike me	3 neutral	4 like me	5 very much like me

Scoring: Ask people to add up their scores. The total possible score is 40. Anything above 30 out of 40 could indicate that my level of compassion is good.

Input: Compassion!

In conclusion, make the following comments:
1. "Compassion" literally means "suffering with". Compassion implies more involvement in terms of prosocial action towards the other person than in empathy – which is "feeling one with".
2. Compassion is an expression of altruism – going beyond the self. Often it implies doing something another person, just because that person is human, and not because I am expecting something in return.
3. Compassion is a product of true faith that is based on self-discovery and the experience of God.
   4.   The religious-spirituality that we spoke about in a previous session is expressed best in a three-dimensional spirituality: marked by an inward journey towards oneself, an upward journey towards whatever one might consider God, and an outward journey towards others in genuine compassion!
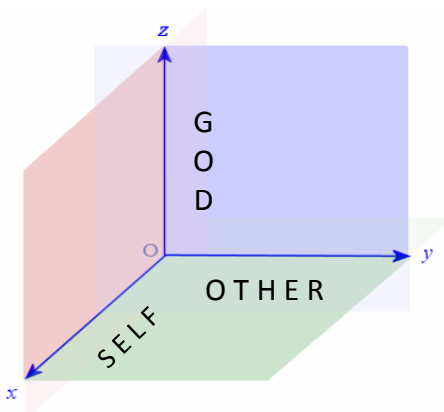
D – Application

What is the relevance of this topic for peace building in our society? Three things that you will carry home and work on:

1.

2.

3.

From Here Where to?

A Personal Mission Statement

Objectives:
By the end of the session the participant should be able to:
1. express the importance of having a personal mission statement;
2. formulate one's mission statement in line with the contents of this training.

Experience: *I am my dream*

Let every participant think of one of the greatest dreams that they have – one that goes with their career, something that is deep within their hearts.

Ask participants to stand in a circle. Each one introduces themselves attaching an adjective to their name. The adjective is drawn from their dream. Let the adjective and the name combine in a rhyme. For example, one can introduce himself as "Doctor David", or she can introduce herself as "Nurse Nancy"! Both the name and adjective should be real and true, not just for the sake of rhyme. Other examples: Artist Alfa, Manager Manfred, Banker Balbina, Educator Erick, Open Morgan, Trainer Prosper. (If you have a large group of participants, you might just invite a few volunteers, even though all should have written their dreams and a name to go with it.)

After one has introduced him/herself everyone else applauds repeating the same name and adjective saying, "Congratulations Nurse Nancy!" or "Congratulations Doctor David." Each one introduces themselves in turn, followed by the applause of the group.

Reflection: *Daring to Dream*
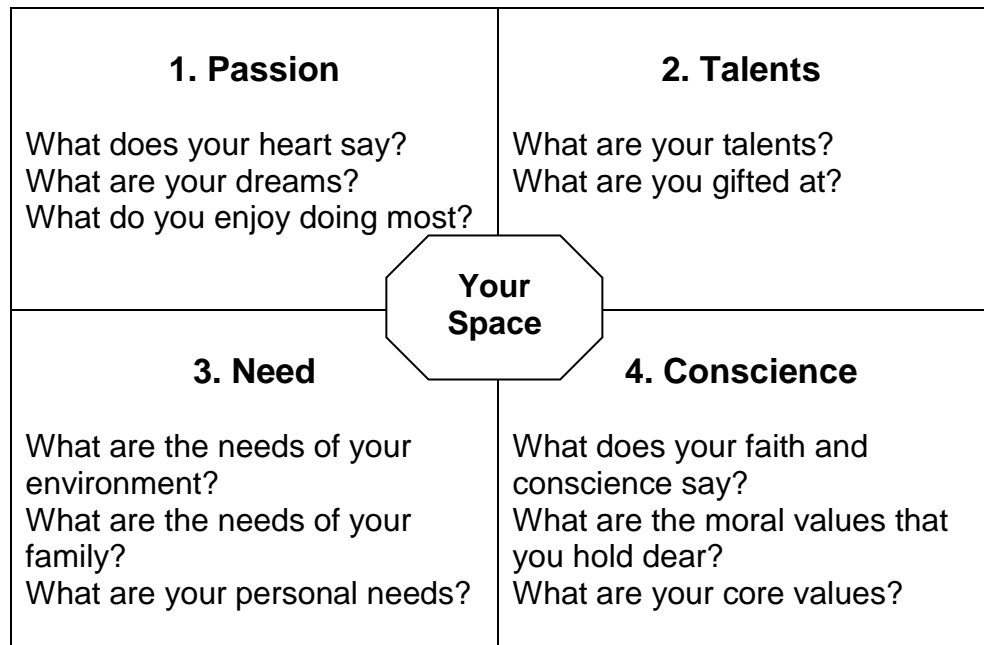
After the above game, ask the participants:

How do you feel?
Are our dreams real and achievable?

Input: *Finding your Space in the Universe*

We were created for a specific purpose. No one else can fill that space that is yours. We need to find our space in the universe.

To find our space in the universe we need to take into consideration the following four aspects. We need answer the following questions:[10]

---

[10] Adapted from Sean Covey, *Six Major Decisions of Life*

1. Passion What does your heart say? What are your dreams? What do you enjoy doing most?	**2. Talents** What are your talents? What are you gifted at?
3. Need What are the needs of your environment? What are the needs of your family? What are your personal needs?	**4. Conscience** What does your faith and conscience say? What are the moral values that you hold dear? What are your core values?

Your Space (center)

Application: *My Mission Statement*

Let participants be given the following instruction and the time to come up with their personal mission statement.

1. Spend a few minutes going through the things that have touched you in the training: insights, motivations and desires.
2. As you remain quiet, what is your heart calling you to do with your life? How do you want to live your life in the society, particularly in relation to the theme of the training?
3. Write down a statement (in 5-7 sentences) in the box below, which will become your mission statement for your life or for a period that you like to specify.
4. Your mission statement may contain the following:
    a. Something about how you see your situation.
    b. Something about your own gifts and talents.
    c. Something about your attitude towards life.

5. The personal mission statement simply captures what type of person you want to be and what you want to do with your life.

6. The personal mission statement should have the following characteristics:
    a. It should be personal (use the pronoun `I').
    b. It should be in the present rather than in the future. (It is better to say, "I wish to be good" rather than "I will be good".)
    c. Use a proactive language ("I wish to be good" rather than "I will try to be good")
    d. It should not be too specific, that it becomes out-dated very soon; it should not be too generic that it remains impractical.

7. You may use a famous quotation as part of "my mission statement" that can become the dictum of your life.

<u>**My Mission Statement**</u>