

The Nansen Handbook  
for Trainers in

# Dialogue and Conflict Transformation

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**Nansen Fredssenter**  
Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue

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Fisher, Simon. *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action*. London: Zed Books, 2008.

*A Little More Conversation, a Little More Action – a Manual in Dialogue*. Oslo: Friendship North South, 2005

Activity *The King and the Queen* from Mangfold og Dialog (permission confirmed by Norwegian Red Cross)

Dench, Alison. AVP, Alternatives to Violence Project: Manual, Second Level Course. 1st ed. Houston, TX: Alternatives to Violence Project, 1982.

**Editors:** Norunn Grande and Christiane Seehausen

**Editorial support:** Mari K. Bjerke

**Contributors:** Tatjana Popovic, Christiane Seehausen and Norunn Grande

**Proofreader:** Suna Finbog

**Copyediting:** Barbara Rowen Sivertsen

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Bjørnstjerne Bjørnsons gate 2  
2609 Lillehammer  
Norway  
+47 612 55 500  
post@peace.no  
peace.no

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# Learning about dialogue

The Nansen Handbook for Trainers in Dialogue and Conflict Transformation is the joint merit of the thousands of people from all over the world who over the years have participated in the many trainings and courses held by the Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue.

We have strived to find ways to explore the nature of dialogue, and why dialogue works as well as it does to unpack societal problems in need of intervention. As you may have already discovered through your work, dialogue about dialogue is a difficult exercise, requiring good pedagogical tools and an open mind towards the possibility of learning new things.

It is up to you how you apply the teachings from this handbook, but the possibilities are many. You might use it in a retreat for your team, or with a group of beneficiaries, or with leaders or communities. On my side, the first time I used one of the exercises in this handbook was as a Red Cross delegate in Colombia. I worked in rural communities, in sessions held under a tree or in a school. Everywhere people became warmly engaged on the ethical dilemmas of the exercise. This is the true gift of a good dialogue exercise, and we have collected the most relevant ones, including the one I mentioned, in this manual.

Let us know what you think and how it can be done better. We sincerely welcome your feedback as it will enable us to learn and improve our work on dialogue.

Thank you and good luck with your new handbook!

**Alfredo Zamudio**

Director, Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue

# Introduction

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How do we engage with people in a way that opens for their experiences to be heard and their perspectives to be included? What are the conditions for conflicting parties to meet and listen to each other with respect and recognition? These are basic questions for all who work with social processes to promote peaceful coexistence.

In this handbook we present ideas and tools that we have found useful for initiating dialogue to promote mutual understanding and constructive approaches to conflict. It is first and foremost a tool for trainers in dialogue and conflict transformation, but can be read by, and found useful for teachers, social workers, leaders and anyone concerned with human interaction.

You are invited to join in a creative journey to explore the potential in bringing people together. While reading the handbook, keep in mind that the role of the trainer is dual. On the one hand the trainer transfers knowledge and skills to the participants, on the other hand he/she encourages the sharing of knowledge and experience in the group.

We present methods and practical tools for building trust in relationships and for transforming conflicts. Most of the contents are descriptions of activities and exercises that we use when we conduct trainings, design educational programs and prepare dialogue processes.

The most important task of a trainer and facilitator is to create the safe space needed for sharing ideas, statements

and feelings. By “practicing what you preach”, the participants will feel that dialogue is much more than a tool: it is a way of communicating where all are included on equal terms. Conducted with deep respect, active listening, empathy, openness and curiosity the training will, through the trainer’s own performance, be an example for inspiration to participants to develop each their own style and approach as a trainer.

To become a good trainer or facilitator you need to discover what you master the best. You have to make choices and it is often smart to choose what you are comfortable with. It is like being a musician: some songs you play lousily and some songs you play very well. You learn rather fast what you master. Then you use yourself in that particular way and design seminars and projects accordingly.

This handbook is most useful for those who have participated in a training session and experienced how it works, alternatively observed or worked as a co-facilitator. You will find explanations on how to conduct pre-designed exercises. They can be used as described or as an inspiration to make your

own. Exercises are not a goal in themselves but a catalyst to move the conversation in a certain direction or around a certain topic.

**We have included some examples** from our work in Norway, the Western Balkans and Afghanistan. The examples offer insight into how dialogue can be used to build trust and improve relationships in conflict and post-conflict situations as well as in stable peaceful democracies. Groups that we work with, and from where the examples are drawn, include local communities, youth, teachers, refugees, midwives, local politicians, media, students and UN-agencies representatives.

**You can pick and choose** the activities that you find useful. The composition of a training program should however be carefully designed according to the needs of the participants, the available time and the purpose of the training.

**This is not a recipe book** where you solely follow instructions, include ingredients and have an expected outcome. To be a good cook you need experience from mixing ingredients and adding your own specific touch for the meal to be tasty. To become a good trainer or facilitator experience is not only needed, it is crucial. You deal with human beings and sometimes particularly vulnerable ones, living and coping with challenging situations on a daily basis. This requires responsiveness and responsibility.

**Dialogue work is about reaching deeper levels of understanding.** Bringing people together and providing the safe space needed is a good start.

For every training or dialogue session there are new opportunities for you as a trainer or facilitator to learn and improve your understanding of what is needed to provide the ground for understanding “the other” and learning from each other. Outcomes of training sessions or courses depend to a large extent on how the participants choose to move further, and to what extent new skills and approaches are internalized and applied. As a trainer or facilitator you need to accept a high level of uncertainty. That is also the beauty of human interactions. We never know for certain what will happen next.

### **Background**

From 1995 young people from the wars in Western Balkan were invited to Lillehammer for training in human rights, democracy and peace. It all started with an invitation from one Olympic city to the other, Lillehammer to Sarajevo. From then Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue has engaged with divided communities in the Western Balkans and during these years developed a dialogue methodology based on listening and asking questions.

Peace education programs with various groups evolved as part of, and alongside, the development of Nansen Dialogue Network in the Balkans. Some of the groups we have worked with are multicultural communities, diaspora groups, civil society initiatives and educational institutions.

This handbook is a result of a series of training courses conducted by Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue (NCPD) inspired by more than 25 years of dialogue facilitation and peace education.

In 2014 NCPD conducted a five-day training program for the Barents Peace Education Network (BPEN) called “Conflict Transformation Through Dialogue”. In November 2015 “Dialogue and Conflict Transformation in Multicultural Communities” was held in Lillehammer, Norway and in November 2016 a similar training was held in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Intensive Dialogue Training, a five-day basic course was completed in November 2016 and in May 2017 in Lillehammer. In addition, NCPD has held training programs in Kenya, Iraqi Kurdistan and for several municipalities in Norway, among them Skedsmo, Drammen, Lillehammer and Larvik.

### **What is Dialogue?**

Dialogue is a way of communicating which focuses on understanding “the other”, rather than trying to convince them that you are right. This understanding enables us to build sustainable relationships and can create a solid foundation for successful mediation and negotiations.

When the level of conflict is high and segregation is deeply rooted in society this is undoubtedly a challenge. In divided communities it can be hard to find the space that is needed for all parties to feel safe. Sometimes this will be in another place than where they live.

**In dialogue we invest in creating a supportive and safe space** where the participants can share their experiences, feelings and thoughts.

“The dialogue attitude is based on the understanding that preconceived

judgments have a limited validity. We do not know the answers, which is why the art of questioning is so central.”<sup>1</sup>

**Curiosity and the act of asking questions** are essential to successful dialogue. How can we know if we do not ask? Asking questions on sensitive and controversial issues is an act of humility and courage. Through our questions, we admit a lack of knowledge or a harboring of doubt. This renders us vulnerable. Remaining in a vulnerable situation is only possible if the participants trust they are in a safe spot. The role of the facilitator is to create a safe space, prepare the ground and ease the process.

“If we fail in creating trust, the dialogue will deteriorate. I have experienced that half the group has gotten up and left the room, but that has only happened when I started arguing with the participants.”<sup>2</sup>

Arguing is an aspect of debate. In a debate the goal is winning, whereas in dialogue we want to reach a deeper understanding. A better understanding of “the other” will in the long run contribute to overcoming segregation and creating meaningful coexistence.

“Dialogue is a process of genuine interaction through which the human beings listen to each other deeply enough to be changed by what they learn. Each makes a serious effort to take the other’s concerns into her or his own picture, even when disagreements persist. No participant gives up her or his identity, but each recognizes enough of the other’s human claims that he or she will act, differently toward the other.”<sup>3</sup>



## Methodology

Our pedagogical approach is based on profound respect for people's knowledge, capabilities and abilities. This knowledge is not linked to formal education, it is based on the vast field of personal experiences from life itself.

This approach allows people to feel free to express themselves, to grow with the process and to support the growth of the others. The trainer is there to gently guide this process.

## Basic Principles

- 1: Active Listening
- 2: Asking good questions
- 3: Humility

## Process

The activities and exercises that are presented here are most appropriately applied when they feed into a process that has a direction, but without a specific goal.

**The activities** suggested in this handbook are basically within the following categories: working with concepts, value ranking, tools for conflict analysis, dialogue facilitation through role plays and questions and answers.

## Working with Concepts

Some of the concepts we use are understood differently for every person. Still they tend to be used as if everyone agrees. This can create misunderstanding and frustration. To overcome confusion and to encourage ownership of the terms we invite participants to tell what the concept means to them, for example: What does democracy mean to you? What does peace mean to you? The point is to decompose

concepts to see what the real meaning is for every person involved. The understanding of concepts will expand as you include the perspectives of others.

## Value Ranking

These are activities where participants make their own judgements in specific cases based on stories or concepts. By having to rank individually you become more aware of what values are most important to you. Sharing your ranking in a group and listening to the ranking of others and asking questions to understand more can serve as a good dialogue exercise.

## Tools for Conflict Analysis

Conflicts are often complex and confusing with a number of parties and issues, sometimes with strong emotions. By identifying actors and how they are related to the conflict and each other, and by trying to sort out what the conflict is about, it is easier to find out how to manage the conflict you are involved in. Mapping is a tool that has proved to be effective for this purpose.

## Dialogue facilitation through Role plays

Based on their own experiences of conflict presented in the groups, and analyzed through mapping, participants play out the conflict situation in a role play. One of the participants facilitate the role play. This is a vital part of the training as facilitation can only be learned through practicing. Every session is concluded by constructive feedback to the one who takes the role as dialogue facilitator.

## Questions and Answers

The core of a dialogic approach is communicating through questions and answers. Asking good questions that open

up for further elaboration and reflection rather than defending a position is an art that can be learned through practice.

### **The Structure of the Handbook**

The handbook is structured in eight chapters covering the main contents of our basic trainings in dialogue and conflict transformation; 1) Communication, 2) Dialogue Qualities and Values, 3) Identity and Belonging, 4) Culture and Ethnicity, 5) Understanding Conflict, 6) Conflict Analysis, 7) the Role of the Dialogue Facilitator and 8) Where to go from here.

**Each chapter builds on the previous one**, and the exercises and facilitation techniques are described along the way. The topics reflected in the chapters are chosen based on what we see as the elements necessary to provide a common knowledge base from which one can engage in a dialogue process. To be conscious of how you communicate is essential for dialogue. Activities to improve *communication* skills are therefore included in the first chapter.

The second chapter called *Dialogue* invites for reflection on the concept of dialogue and strengthens awareness of the values a dialogue approach is based on.

*Identity and Belonging* is the title of Chapter Three, where identity is approached through activities where participants are challenged to consider their own identity, and are encouraged to see the diversity and potentials that lie in every human being. In deep societal conflicts there is a strong pressure to be loyal only to one dimension of identity, for example ethnicity. To move beyond a simplistic understanding of identity it is necessary to widen the scope and include other perspectives.

*Culture and Ethnicity* is a natural continuation of identity, and is presented in Chapter Four. Prolonged conflicts are often characterized by political elites mobilizing support based on ethnicity. Awareness of this strong tendency and the risk of manipulation can be the necessary input needed to prevent young people from uncritically joining extreme nationalist movements.

In Chapter Five, *Understanding Conflict*, we move further to look into different types of conflict, preparing the ground for *conflict analysis* in chapter six.

*Conflict Analysis, Chapter Six*, includes tools for mapping conflicts from the participants' own experiences followed by a set up for role play with the main actors in the conflict, an opportunity for practicing dialogue facilitation.

In Chapter Seven, *the Role of the Dialogue Facilitator* is given special attention. After completing the training, the question arises: *Where to move from here?* In the last chapter we share some of our reflections on how to move further in internalizing dialogue as an integrative part of life, and more specifically, to develop educational programs, training programs and dialogue processes.

For every chapter there is a short **introduction** to the topic, **learning objectives** and **activities**. In the introduction there is a suggestion on how to present the topic. The activities that are presented have a clear description as well as suggestions for debriefing and reflections. **Handouts** are included where they are needed. To make copying easier we have included handouts in copy format.

## Sources

Some of the exercises and activities are from other sources. We frequently use *Working with Conflict – Skills and Strategies for Action* from Responding to Conflict in UK. Manuals by *Alternatives to Violence*, initiated by American Quakers, is another valuable resource. We have also used exercises developed by organizations such as Vennskap Nord - Sør, Mangfold og Dialog, The Helsinki Committee and Wolf and Water in addition to those we have developed in our own organization and network. For a complete list see references in the text and literature list.

## Text and Layout

This handbook is compiled and written by Tatjana Popovic, Christiane Seehausen and Norunn Grande who are all experienced trainers in dialogue and conflict transformation. We have drawn on long term

experience and received valuable input from colleagues and members of our advisory council. Special thanks to Barbara Rowen Sivertsen for copyediting, to Suna Finbog for proofreading and Dialecta for layout and design. Norunn Grande and Christiane Seehausen are responsible for the final version.

## Comments and Feedback

We encourage feedback and reflections from readers and users of the handbook. Your experience with applying the tools and methods presented here will be highly appreciated. If you have any comments or suggestions for improvement, please contact us by sending an e-mail to [post@peace.no](mailto:post@peace.no)

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## CHAPTER 1

# Communication

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### Introduction

Communication is an integral part of our social skills, and is developed through our interaction with everyone around us. It may be intentional or unintentional, involve conventional or unconventional signals, take linguistic or non-linguistic forms, and can occur through spoken or other modes. At its core, communication is an act where one person gives or receives information from another person about the person's needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge, or emotions.

Communication is an ongoing process with a continuous flow of information. It can be hard to predict how the receiver interprets these verbal and nonverbal messages. Does she understand the intention behind the messages?

How to foster active listening? Are we aware of our personal communication style? What are the underlying reasons for our reactions? These are important questions that can help us be aware of our own emotions and needs.

Dialogue is a focused way of communicating. The following activities will help participants explore and develop their communication skills, and provide a foundation for dialogue processes.

**To introduce the topic** we suggest that the facilitator presents the Iceberg Model illustrated in Handout 1 with an explanation on the following page.

### Learning objectives

- To become a better communicator
- To learn how to communicate in a conscious way
- To experience and internalize new communication skills

### Activities

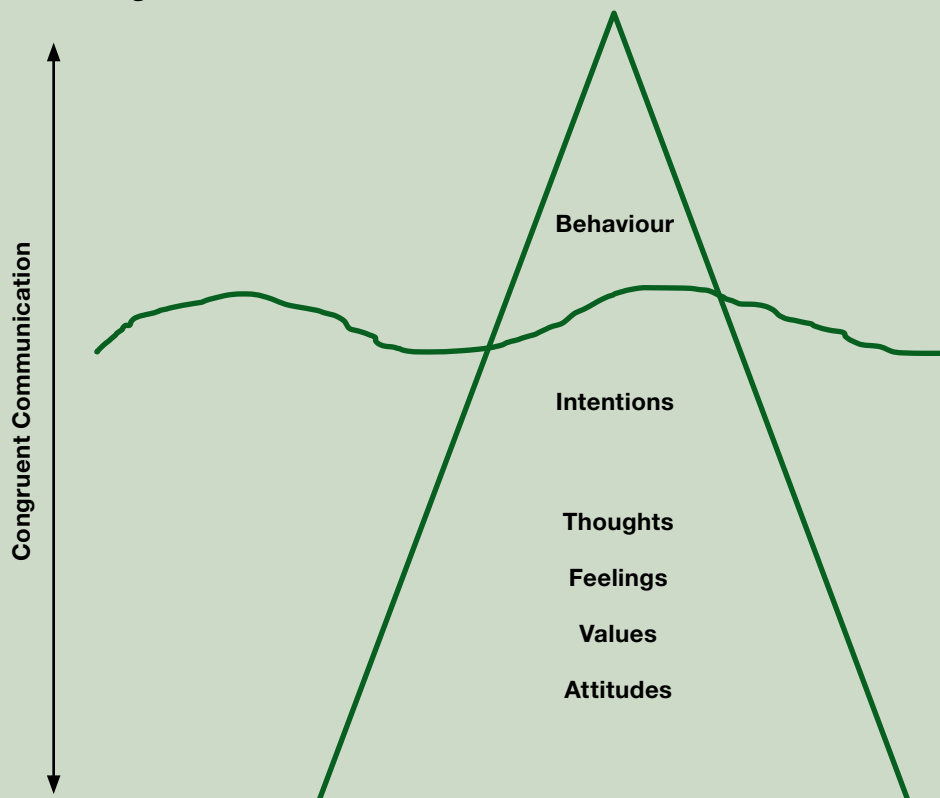
For this chapter we have included three activities;

1. Three levels of listening
2. Active Listening
3. Non-verbal communication.



## HANDOUT 1 – The Iceberg Model

The Iceberg Model of Communication<sup>4</sup>



### Explanation of the model

The biggest part of an iceberg is below the water surface. That means you cannot see it. Imagine the iceberg represents a human being. The part above the water surface is visible – this is our behaviour. Everyone can see what we do, what we say,

how we say it, and everyone interprets it in his/her own way- depending on previous experiences and thoughts.

Below the water surface, not visible for anyone else, we find our intentions.



What we intend to do, the intentions behind our actions. We might express these intentions to people around us, but others will hide them for a variety of reasons, such as maintaining a power position, manipulation or to surprise others. Our intentions may be good or bad, reasoned or spontaneous – the listener never knows. But whatever our intentions, they will have an impact on how we communicate with others.

On the bottom of the iceberg we have our thoughts, feelings, values and attitudes. Values and attitudes is something we develop from childhood. We might change some of them over time, some will be modified, and others will get stronger. This depends on our environment, work, social network and interests. What we feel in different situations depends very much on our

personality, values and attitudes. If one of my important values is justice, I will feel quite uncomfortable, angry or upset when experiencing injustice. What we think and how we think is interlinked with our attitudes and values.

Our messages will be more congruent when all these elements are interrelated. To enable our messages to be consistent we need to be aware of our feelings, values and attitudes. Regardless of our awareness they will be expressed through our body language. Being aware and conscious of how language and body language interact can enable us to express the same message both verbally and non-verbally. By reflecting on our intentions and daring to express them we can avoid misunderstandings and prevent conflicts.

## Communication Activities



### Activity: Three Levels of Listening

Listening on different levels<sup>5</sup>

**TYPE:** Group work

**PURPOSE:** To demonstrate that a good listener must be aware of the different components in a message; facts, feelings and needs.

**TIME:** 30–60 min.

#### **Trainer's presentation and instructions:**

Draw the figure (below) on flip chart or board. Explain why it is important

to be aware of these three important components of listening: Facts, Feelings and Needs.

Ask the participants to think about a conflict situation or another emotional situation they have personally experienced. Tell the participants that it must be a story they can share with the other participants.

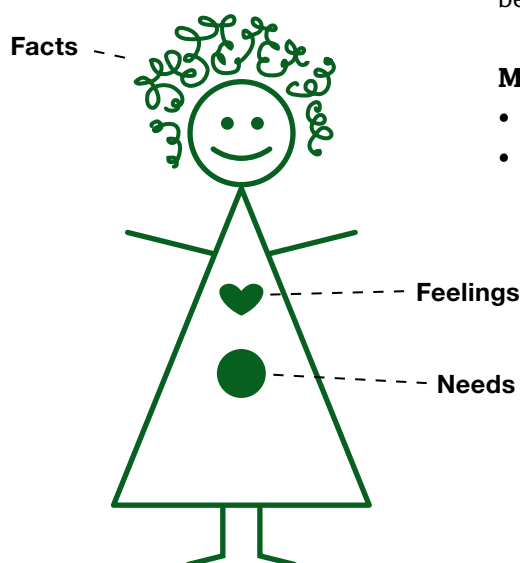


Divide the participants into groups of four. In each group one is selected to share his/her story with the others.

The rest of the group gets the following instructions:

- One member of the group shares a personal experience (maximum 5–8 min.)
- One member of the group pays attention and notes down the main points regarding the facts of the story.
- One member of the group listens and notes down the feelings expressed in the story.
- One member of the group focus and notes down the needs expressed in the story – both the storytellers and the needs of the others involved in the story.

### Three levels of listening



After telling the story the group members are invited to retell the aspect of the story they had listened too. The storyteller responds to the observations presented by the listeners and corrects any misconceptions.

When all groups are finished, gather them in a plenary session.

### Debriefing:

Ask the participants how they experienced the activity. You can start with the people who shared their story. What was it like?

Then ask those who listened to facts, feelings and needs. Let them say something about how listening to only one part of the message felt. Was it challenging, what did they learn? Are facts objective? How was it to listen to needs?

The legs of the girl in the drawing symbolize choice: different directions. Do you see any possible outcomes where all the underlying needs would have been met?

### Materials:

- Flipchart or white board
- White paper sheets for the participants



## Activity: Active Listening

**TYPE:** Work in pairs

**PURPOSE:** To experience the quality of listening.

**TIME:** 25 minutes or more

### Trainers' instructions:

- The trainer pairs up the participants – one named A, the other person B
- The trainer gives the first instructions:
- **First step:** Person A tells person B about an exciting event he/she experienced recently.
- B seems to be listening but his/her attention wanders to his cell phone, looking at it and sending messages.
- After 5 minutes the trainer asks them to stop and asks B to do following:
- **Second step:** Person B tells person A about her/his last holiday.
- A listen for some seconds, but then stops B by telling his/her own holiday story.
- After 5 minutes the trainer asks them to stop. He/she will now explain the third step.
- **Third step:** Person A tells person B about one time he/she failed in something.
- B listens carefully – showing his/her attention through non-verbal activities and questions.
- After five minutes the trainer asks them to wrap up the exercise.

### Debriefing:

The trainer asks for participants' spontaneous reactions to this exercise, focusing on how they felt being in the role of A and/or B and to associate this exercise to similar experiences from their own lives. Reflect on what we can do to become better listeners.

If this is the only listening activity the trainer chooses to do, elaborate on the concept of active listening with the participants. This can be done as an introduction or as a follow-up after the exercise.

### Active listening

Draw a circle on a blackboard, whiteboard or flip chart and add lines forming the sun, with terms describing active listening.

### Active listening (brainstorm)

#### Materials:

Blackboard, whiteboard or flip chart

No interruption

Active listening is:

Good questions





### Activity: Non-Verbal Communication

**TYPE:** Small roleplays and introduction

**PURPOSE:** To increase awareness of the impact of interpretation in non-verbal communication

**TIME:** 30 minutes

#### Trainer's instructions:

Prepare some small cards before the session starts. Write different emotions on each card, one per card. E.g. ANGER, TRUST, FEAR, HAPPINESS.

The participants are sitting in a circle and you put all the cards upside down on the floor in front of them.

Ask one volunteer to take a card and act out the feeling written on it. The rest of the participants must guess which emotion the person is portraying. When the group gets it right, another volunteer takes a card and does the same. Try to get at least four to five volunteers to act for the others.

When finished, talk about how our feelings are reflected through non-verbal actions, and how we might interpret them differently depending on our own situation.

Have a small introduction about non-verbal communication. Use Handout no. 2



### HANDOUT 2 – Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication, or body language, is a vital form of communication. A natural, unconscious language which broadcasts our true feelings and intentions, and clues us in to the feelings and intentions of those around us.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Body movement and posture*

Consider how your perceptions of people are affected by the way they sit, walk, stand up, or hold their head. The way you move and carry yourself broadcasts a wealth of information.

#### *Gestures*

Gestures are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. We wave, point, beckon,

and use our hands when we are arguing or speaking animatedly—expressing ourselves with gestures often without thinking. However, the meaning of gestures can be very different across cultures and regions, so it's important to take care to avoid misinterpretation.

#### *Eye contact*

The messages we can send with our eyes is almost limitless.

#### *Touch*

We communicate a great deal through touch. Think about the messages given by the following: a firm handshake, a timid tap on the shoulder, a warm bear hug.



### *Space*

We all have a need for personal space, although that need differs depending on the culture, the situation, and the closeness of the relation.

### *Voice*

It's not just what you say, it's how you say it. When we speak, other people "read" our voices in addition to listening to our words. Things they pay attention to include your timing and pace, how loud you speak, your tone and inflection, and

sounds that convey understanding, such as "ahh" and "uh-huh." Think about how the tone of voice, for example, can indicate sarcasm, anger, affection, or confidence.

### *Emotional awareness*

To send accurate nonverbal cues, you need to be aware of your emotions and how they influence you. You also need to be able to recognize the emotions of others and the true feelings behind the cues they are sending. This is where emotional awareness comes in.

### **Debriefing:**

Invite participants to reflect on how we interpret body language. Remind them of the iceberg model about congruent communication.

Point out how much non-verbal messages influence our communication. To avoid misunderstandings, we should be aware of our own emotional state, because each verbal and non-verbal message is influenced by it. However, it is worth considering that we also interpret body language individually. Each of us has our own cultural and personal filters. Your interpretation

might not be congruent with the speaker's perception. Asking questions is therefore crucial to give everyone a chance to express both their feelings and their message.

You can also ask the participants to come up with examples where discord between verbal and non-verbal expressions created confusion.

### **Materials:**

- Colored cards
- Handout 2 with important points on non-verbal communication



## CHAPTER 2

# Dialogue

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### Introduction

Dialogue is a specific focused way of communicating. The prerequisite for every dialogue is the will to listen to the other. Without listening there is no dialogue. Besides listening, the ability to ask good questions is crucial – questions that help us to better understand the other. Listening and good questions open the ground for creating respect for differences and the motivation to live with disagreements.

In this chapter the participant will start to work on the Key Qualities of Dialogue. Through an exercise the participants will get acquainted with qualities that are vital to using dialogue as a tool for congruent communication in social processes, as presented in the previous chapter on Communication.

**To introduce the topic** we compare dialogue with debate, emphasizing the different goals and characteristics. The model serves as a good illustration.

**Learning objectives:**

- To understand the difference between debate and dialogue
- To learn about dialogue qualities
- To experience elements of a dialogue process

**Activities** presented in this chapter are:

1. Key Qualities of Dialogue
2. Answer and Question
3. Empathy exercise
4. Factors that stimulate and prevent dialogue

**DEBATE**

**Goal: To win**

- Convince
- Argue
- Look for the weak argument
  
- Hunter
- Moral Judge
- Make opponent insecure
- To change opinion is a sign of weakness
- Confronting language

**DIALOGUE**

**Goal: To understand**

- Explain
- Listen
- Look for the strength in the opponent
- Self-discipline
- Tolerance
- Make opponent feel safe
- To change opinion is a sign of maturity
- Supportive language

*The model is developed by Steinar Bryn, Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue.*

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## Dialogue Activities



### Activity: Key Qualities of Dialogue

**TYPE:** Introduction, individual and group work

**PURPOSE:** To get a deeper insight into the qualities of dialogue

**TIME:** 90 minutes or more

#### Trainer's instructions:

The trainer gives the handout to each participant, and asks the participants to read it carefully and make a numbered list of 6 qualities, in decreasing priority. After listing individually the exercise

can be continued by talking with the neighbor. They compare lists and explain why some qualities are more important than others. In the next step the participants will be divided into two groups and will be asked to make a group list. Their task is to describe the qualities, compare and combine them, and find their own definitions of the qualities. No voting is allowed as the purpose of the exercise is to have a dialogue about dialogue qualities, and to get a deeper understanding of each quality.



### HANDOUT 3 – Key Qualities of Dialogue<sup>7</sup>

#### Integrity

Dialogue is communicating with integrity. Non-verbal aspects of communication, intentions, attitudes, values and thoughts must be consistent with the words used.

#### Challenging

Dialogue does not mean accepting anything or everything from others. It may require that we challenge or oppose the others assertion. When this is the case, this must be done in a way that upholds the humanity of the other and us.

#### Humility

Dialogue involves seeking to know oneself and showing one's strengths and weaknesses to the other.

#### Caring for the other

Dialogue requires accepting responsibility for the other, without expecting that this will be reciprocated.

#### Common language

Dialogue is about striving to achieve a common language.

#### Understanding first

In dialogue, we seek first to understand and then to be understood.

#### Relationships

Dialogue is about understanding and exploring relationships.



**No agreement**

Dialogue is not necessarily about agreeing or becoming like the other.

**Listening**

Dialogue is more about listening than speaking.

**No judgments**

In dialogue, we try not to pass judgment. Judgments, generalizations, blame or diagnoses destroy the dialogue process.

**Nonverbal communication**

Dialogue can take place even in silence. Body language and facial expressions are essential for dialogue.

**Change**

Dialogue means personal and societal change.

**Debriefing:**

Was your individual list very different from your group list?

What was the most challenging aspect of your talks?

Explain why you have chosen these priorities. Elaborate your understanding of the concepts.

This exercise can be continued by having the two groups meet in a plenary session where they sit in two rows against each other. Each group presents their list and explains their priorities. Through dialogue they try to agree upon a common list or at least some of the concepts. This process should be led by the participants themselves. The role of the facilitator is to observe them and take notes. Depending on the quality of the dialogue and the level of energy in the groups the facilitator decides when to conclude this part of the process and invites to reflection.

For further reflection;

When they formed the group list, participants might also discover that they developed a loyalty for “their group understanding”, which again makes it difficult to agree on one final common list. Bring up these difficulties and tie them to dialogue skills.

Why was it difficult to come up with a common list in plenary?

To what extent did you feel loyalty to your group?

What are the dynamics in creating group loyalty?

This activity demonstrates that listening to the opinions of others can be challenging when we disagree, particularly when personal conflicts are addressed. At the same time, it shows that it is possible to transform conflicts through dialogue.

**Materials:**

- Handout 3 “Key Qualities of Dialogue”
- Flip chart



## Activity: Questions and Answers

**TYPE:** Group work

**PURPOSE:** To learn to create good open and investigative questions and to respect the answers of others without defending yourself.

**TIME:** 60 minutes

### Trainer's instructions:

- Divide the group into smaller groups, along conflict lines, national affiliations or opposing opinions around a controversial topic.
- Ask each group to formulate 5–10 open and investigative questions for elaborating the conflict, the topic or to get known more about the background of the others, religion, etc. to understand the other side better.
- When all groups have formulated their questions bring them together for a plenary session.
- Let one of the groups start, by asking their first question of the other group.
- The other group answers the question and afterwards asks their first question.

- You continue this process until all questions are asked and answers given.
- Try to note down some of the questions and the reaction from the responding part for the debriefing session.

### Debriefing:

The debriefing should emphasize the quality of the questions and their impact on the answers. What is a good question? What is an adequate response? What are good follow-up questions. Invite the participants to reflect on how questions can amplify a conflict or lead to defense instead of understanding. The trainer can highlight good questions in the debriefing by using examples from the exercise and emphasize Q and A as a process.

### Materials:

Handout 4, Asking Good Questions can be distributed as part of debriefing.





### Activity: Empathy Exercise<sup>8</sup>

**TYPE:** Group work

**PURPOSE:** To discover what one's problem looks like seen through other people's eyes, and experience how different perspectives can lead to new solutions.

**TIME:** at least 60 minutes.  
Sufficient time should be provided for this exercise as this might be the first time participants have ever shared an important experience with others.

- Every person then reads the card that he/she has received out loud, presenting it as if it were his own problem. He then explains it to the group, perhaps including suggestions on how to solve it. Others then offer their own experiences on solving similar kinds of problems, and suggest solutions.
- Repeat this process until every problem raised in the small group has been dealt with by the group.

#### Trainer's instructions:

- Divide the participants into groups of 5. Provide each person with a file card or index card and a pencil.
- Everybody will write: "The problem I'm working on is..." on his or her card, and then complete the sentence. The cards are not to be signed. Once written, they are collected, shuffled and redistributed at random within the small group. (If a person receives her own card, this is to be exchanged with someone else's, no participants should end up with their own problem.)

#### Debriefing:

Gather the whole group in a circle after finishing the activity. Let the participants express how they feel about the activity and ask if it made any impact on them. Reflect on how empathy influences a dialogue process.

#### Materials:

- Index cards (colored cardboard or thick paper)
- Pens / markers



### HANDOUT 4 – Asking Good Questions

No one says everything you want to hear in the exact order, depth, and detail that you prefer. That's why the chief tool of a good listener is a good question. Well-crafted questions can stimulate, draw out, and guide talks.

You can use these guidelines when developing questions:

- Plan your questions. Before your meeting, outline your information goals and a sequence of related questions to help you follow the conversation and cue your notes.



- Know your purpose. Every question you ask should help you gather either facts or an opinion. Decide what kind of information you need and frame your questions accordingly.
- Open conversation. Unlike simple yes-or-no questions, open-ended questions invite the respondent to talk — and enable you to gather more information.
- Speak your listener's language. Relate questions to the listener's frame of reference and use words and phrases that your listener understands. For example, avoid social workers jargon when you're talking with someone outside your working place. If someone doesn't seem to understand what you're asking, try rephrasing.
- Use neutral wording. Avoid asking leading questions.
- Follow general questions with specific ones. Build a hierarchy of questions that begins with the big picture and gradually drills down into specifics with follow-up questions.
- Focus your questions so they ask one thing at a time. To get more complete answers, craft short questions, each of which covers a single point. If you really want to know two different things, ask two different questions.
- Ask only essential questions. If you don't really care about the information that's likely to come, don't ask the question. Respect the other person's time and attention to avoid appearing resistant to closing the deal.
- Don't interrupt. Listen to the full answer to your question. The art of good questioning lies in truly wanting the information that would be in the answer.
- Make transitions natural. Use something in the answer to frame your next question.
- Questions that are really statements of assumptions put in the form of a question can be aggressive, which often leads to hostility. Instead, break down the question so the other party has an opportunity to provide you with information that can further your understanding.



### Activity: What Stimulates and Prevents Dialogue?<sup>9</sup>

**TYPE:** Group work

**PURPOSE:** To make participants aware of things that can affect dialogue and communication. What is positive and what is negative? Are there neutral elements that can make a difference dependent on situations and settings?

**TIME:** 60 min.

- After brainstorming ask the participants to get together in groups of four or five. Give them approximately 20 to 25 minutes to talk about the question what stimulates and what hinders dialogue?
- Gather them in a plenary for a talk about what they found.

#### Trainer's instructions:

- Write the word *stimulates* on the whiteboard/flip chart and ask the participants to give some examples of what stimulates dialogue. For example: knowledge, openness, respect, focus. All suggestions are welcome and are written on the board.
- Do the same with the word *hinder*. Examples could be: distraction, tiredness, lack of respect, lack of listening.

#### Debriefing:

In the debriefing invite for a reflection on what can be done to increase what stimulates dialogue and how factors that hinder dialogue can be decreased.

#### Materials:

- Flip chart
- Pen

## Chapter Conclusion

Working on the elements of dialogue is an important part of the training. For using dialogue in real life situations, we need to understand the elements of dialogue. By ranking the elements participants are challenged to think through each of them and internalize the meaning and importance of every concept.

Questions are crucial for every dialogue. They are as important as listening. The question and answer round can help to understand the power of questions and the impact they have on a dialogue process.

There is a need for empathy to understand another person properly. Empathy can be learned by becoming aware of one's own need for understanding. Empathic curiosity is at the core of a dialogue process.

## CHAPTER 3

# Identity

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### Introduction

Your identity is an expression of who you are, with all the characteristics that compose a human being. Where we live, where we are from, what we believe in, what we do for a living, the language we speak, gender, age and attachments are all essential for understanding the complexity of identity. Our identity is heavily influenced by our upbringing and our relationships with others. We all have views and opinions about who we are, but we are strongly influenced by other people's opinions as well. This is especially noticeable when we are placed in groups or categories. Categorizing is often inaccurate and misleading, and will always be based on imperfect information and filtered by the others' background and life experiences. The consequences can be extremely dangerous, as we have seen in many conflicts where groups have been associated with identifying traits, which have resulted in exclusion or genocide. (Jews in Germany, Muslims many places in Europe).

*"In the Name of Identity"* by Amin Malouf (1996), written as an attempt to understand why so many people commit crimes in the name of identity, has become a classic and a "must read" for the understanding of identity conflicts. "Malouf contends that many of us would reject our inherited conceptions of identity, to which we cling through habit, if only we examined them more closely." According to Malouf the future of society depends on accepting all identities, while recognizing our individualism.<sup>10</sup>

Most of us will belong to many different groups. We are part of a family, a working place, organization or religious group. All these connections will create a sense of safety and security. Sometimes we might choose to cut our connections, to feel independent and free of expectations and commitments. Other times we struggle to belong to a certain group or community without being accepted, which can result in distancing and withdrawal, or new social compositions.

**To introduce the topic** the trainer can reflect on his/her own identity making use of examples from his/her own life and explain how his/her identity has changed through stages in life and influence from political events, moving from one place to another, making new friends, establishing a family or whatever has made strongest impact on his/her identity. A short introduction about identity and conflict with reference to the work of Amin Malouf can also serve as a good entry point.

**Learning objectives:**

- To explore the formation of our own identity and the identity of others
- To understand the differences between personal and group identity
- To contemplate the best way to change aspects of our personal identity
- To be conscious of human needs and its connection to identity

**Activities** in this chapter are

1. Aspects of Identity
2. Identity Flower and Star

## Identity Activities



### Activity: Aspects of Identity<sup>11</sup>

**TYPE:** Presentation, individual and pair

**PURPOSE:**

To promote individual contemplation on our goals and future activities;

To provoke reflection around one's own identity, which is a prerequisite to understanding others.

**TIME:** 60 minutes

**Trainer's instructions:**

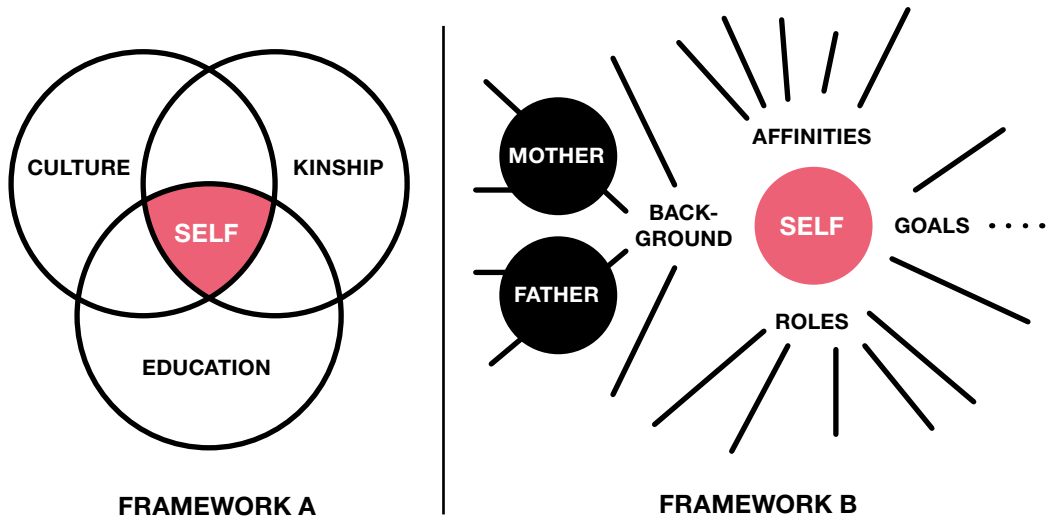
- Put the model "Aspects of Identity" on the flip chart. To demonstrate, you may interview a colleague and write some of the aspects of his or her identity.

- After the presentation is finished pass Handout 5 to the participants.
- Invite the participants to answer the questions individually, taking time to think about all aspects of their identity. They only need to report on the goals they want to achieve in the next five years.
- Ask participants to chat with their neighbors about different aspects of identity. Make it clear that they only share what they are comfortable sharing.
- Gather the group for a short plenary session.
- Ask pairs to present some of their goals.



## Aspects of Identity

Illustration from 'Working with Conflict' published by Responding to Conflict.  
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### HANDOUT 5 Reflective Enquiry Worksheet

Reflective Enquiry Session – Individual  
Reflection on Identity and Values<sup>12</sup>

#### Background

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

What identity have you inherited (German, Zulu, Muslim, Christian, caste, working class)?

#### Roles

What roles do you fill in your family?  
Who are you when you are working (mother, husband, teacher, administrator, human rights worker, chairperson)?

#### Affinities

Who are you when you are relaxing and enjoying recreation in non-working

time (football player, pianist, potter, mountain climber, poet)?

#### Goals

What are you aiming to be, to do, or to achieve in 5 years' time?  
How would you describe yourself in context of your personal goals, and how do you try to put these into practice (as peacemaker, promoter of justice, entrepreneur, spiritual seeker, learner)?  
What is the most important aspect of your identity at present, and why is this?  
What might cause your identity to change in future?

#### Values

Think about people you admire...  
What is it about them that you admire so much?



Think about a situation you later wished you had approached differently. What kept you from doing what you (in retrospect) really would have liked to do?

Recall a time when you stood up for something. What were the values that you were defending? Think about core values and acquired values...

Why are you involved in your present activities? (Motivation/inspiration/intention)

What are you most proud of in your efforts so far?

What lessons have you learned from your mistakes?

How do you expect to change in the next 5 years?

#### **Debriefing:**

How did you experience the exercise?  
What did you learn from it?  
What was it like to think about your values, achievements and goals?

#### **Materials:**

- Handout 5: “Reflective Enquiry Worksheet”
- Flip chart



#### **Activity: Identity Flower and Identity Star<sup>13</sup>**

This exercise is a good way to start reflections on identity and it allows for creativity in expressing your identity.

**TYPE:** Individual exercise to begin with, followed by sharing in small groups, presentation and reflections in plenary.

**TIME:** 1–3 hours

**PURPOSE:** To become aware of your own identity by sharing what is important to you, to see what we have in common and what is unique for every person.

**Step 1:** All participants are invited to draw their **identity flower** or identity chart explaining who they are. The facilitator shows an example of how this can be done by presenting her own flower/ chart as a tool to tell others what

one sees as important elements in one’s identity and how one sees oneself.

**Time:** 5–15 minutes

**Materials:** Sheets of paper, crayons, pens and pencils.

**Step 2:** In groups of 4–5 the participants one by one explain their identity through their own drawing. Before group work they are all reminded of the principles of dialogue, emphasizing active listening and showing respect by allowing the one who talks to speak without interruptions. Questions of interest and clarifications are encouraged. The aim is to understand more, not to judge or come with suggestions.



**Step 3:** In the same groups they are asked to identify what they all have in common and what differs them as individuals. To make an illustration the group is invited to make a **common star** as an expression of the group identity as well as the individualities represented in the group.

**Time** for step 2 and 3; 45–60 minutes

**Materials:** flip chart paper and markers, tape to stick the sheet to the wall.

**Step 4:** Each group presents their star for the whole group, standing up in front and taping the illustration on the flip chart and thereafter on the wall if possible. The stars make a nice decoration for the rest of the seminar reminding the participants of unity and commitment.

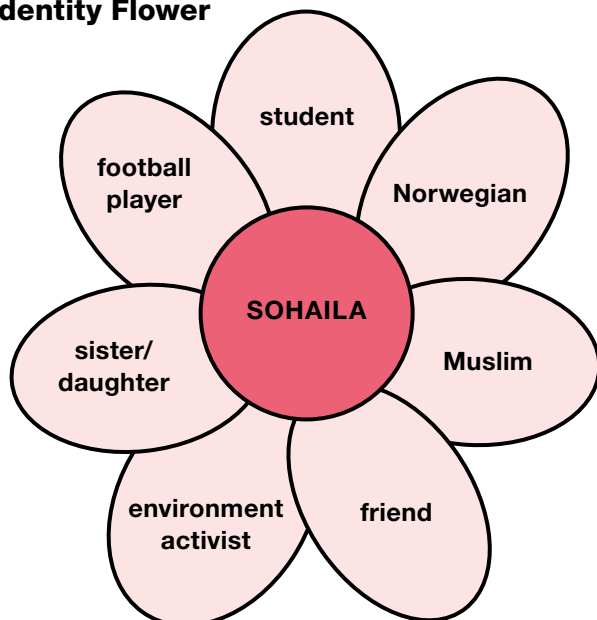
### Debriefing

After presentations the facilitator invites the participants to a common round of reflection, asking what identity means to them. Depending on what comes up, follow-up questions can lead to reflections on the consequences we see in society when identity becomes a conflict issue.

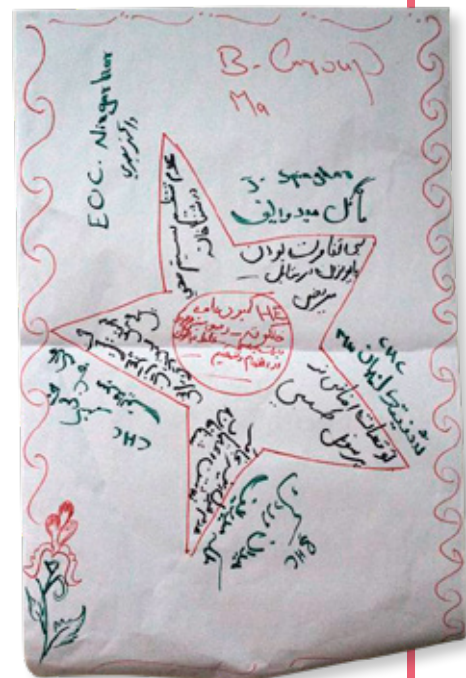
**Time** for step 4 and 5:

45–60 minutes, depending on the number of participants and groups.

### Identity Flower



### Identity Star



*From Midwives for Peace workshop, Kabul 2014.*





## CHAPTER 4

# Culture and Ethnicity

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### Introduction

We often talk about culture as something defining “the others”, something which creates a distance and can be difficult to overcome. Culture can also be the opposite, the reason why we can and will communicate. Because culture is language, it is food and traditions, behavior, values and attitudes. Put simply, culture is our way of living.

There are national, regional and local cultural expressions. Each single person has his or her own cultural roots based on their upbringing and experiences. Consequently, every national culture will consist of a diverse group of people with different cultural roots. Each of them will influence the ongoing change of the national culture and the creation of sub-cultures.

An ethnic group appears through a long term process, where a group of people, who lived in a certain area, have developed a common language, and have developed certain norms, values and beliefs. This coexistence has created a unity, a feeling of belonging to each other and leads to defining themselves as different from the others.

**To introduce the topic**

we recommend the first activity defining the terms culture and ethnicity.

**Learning objectives**

- To become familiar with the terms culture and ethnicity
- To be aware of the dynamic nature of culture and the ways it influences our perception of others

**Activities** in this chapter are;

1. Defining the terms culture and ethnicity
2. Four Corners
3. Human Values
4. The King and the Queen

## Culture and Ethnicity Activities



### Activity: Defining the Terms Culture and Ethnicity

**TYPE:** Plenary session

**PURPOSE:** To define the terms culture and ethnicity based on own experiences

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**Trainer's instructions:**

- Write the word *Culture* on a flip chart and ask the participants to define it with their own words.
- Note down all the definitions offered by the participants and go through them with the group.
- When you are finished, tape the paper to the wall.

- Write the word *Ethnicity* on a flip chart and ask the participants for their definition.
- Note down all definitions and talk them through with the group.

**Debriefing:**

Have a joint conversation about how culture and ethnicity are interrelated. Reflect on the origins of our perceptions of these concepts. What are the main differences between ethnicity and culture? And what are the similarities?

**Materials:**

- Flip chart, markers, tape



## Activity: Four Corners

**TYPE:** Group activity

**PURPOSE:** To challenge perceptions and reach deeper level of understanding.

**TIME:** minimum 40 minutes, depending on the size of the group.

### Trainer's instructions:

- Prepare four small sheets of paper. Write down AGREE, DISAGREE, I DO NOT KNOW, PERHAPS – one term on each sheet.
- Tape/place the sheets on the walls of the room. Make sure they are easily visible, preferably in the corners of the room.
- Ask the participants to stand up, then explain the activity.
- Show them the four sheets and read the words written on them.
- Explain that you will read an assertion. After listening to what is said they must move to the corner which best reflects their reaction.
- Explain that they can move to another corner, whenever they feel for it.
- Start the process by reading the first assertion. When everyone has found a corner, visit them and ask a few members of each corner to explain why they chose that specific reaction. Tell the participants that they are free to change their position, if the arguments of the others convince them to do so.
- Depending on the number of participants in each corner let 2–4 people explain their positions. Give also space for the others to ask questions about their explanations. Make sure that there are no arguments, only questions.

- When you are finished with the first assertion, ask the participants to go back to the middle of the circle and read the second assertion.
- Proceed in the same way until you have worked through three or four assertions.
- Afterwards, gather the group for a debriefing.
- Use time when creating the assertions. They should be general, to the point, short and provoke emotional responses. Below you find some examples for this topic of culture and ethnicity. The same exercise may be applied to other topics as well.

### Examples of assertions

1. People with different cultural backgrounds cannot live together
2. Ethnicity creates differences instead of unity
- 3.
- 4.

### Debriefing:

Invite the participants to sit down in a circle. Ask them how they experienced the exercise and how it affected them. You can also ask about what the assertions have in common, e.g. all of them are general, not specific. Reflect on how assertions can lead to stereotyping and discrimination. A relevant follow-up question can be: What can be done to avoid discrimination?

### Materials:

- Four small sheets of paper
- Tape



### Activity: Human Values<sup>14</sup>

**TIME:** 60 minutes

**PURPOSE:** To increase awareness of how our values influence our thinking and behavior

#### Trainer's instructions:

- Start with a brainstorming on human values;
  - Give each participant a list of 20 values: *solidarity, honesty, respect, equality, love, cooperation, humility, trust, tolerance, responsibility, openness, democracy, justice, moderation, freedom of speech, honor, faith, competition, exclusiveness, inclusion.*
  - Divide the participants into pairs and ask them to list the five most important and the five least important values. Allow 10 minutes.
  - Place the participants in groups of four and let them choose one value from the list, which they will continue working on.
- The groups will work with their chosen value by answering the following questions:
    - a) Why did we choose this value?
    - b) Why is this value important to us?
    - c) What impact does this value have on our lives?
    - d) How is this value expressed in our culture?
    - e) What might limit the compliance of this value?
  - Each group presents their work in the plenary session

#### Debriefing:

The trainer will concentrate on how our values influence our behavior by asking the following questions: Do people with different cultural background understand certain values differently? Explain why this could be. Do our values change over time? Examples? How do I show my values, if they differ from the values of my society/culture?

#### Materials:

- List with 20 values – one copy for each participant



## Activity: The King and the Queen

**TYPE:** Individual ranking, group work and presentation.

**PURPOSE:** Reflect on ethical dilemmas and how perceptions of morality influence our judgements.

**TIME:** 90 minutes

### Trainer's instructions:

- Read the story of the King and the Queen or ask one of the participants to read it.
- Give a copy of “the King and the Queen”- handout to each participant.
- Ask them to read the story again and rank the persons involved as to who is most responsible for the death of the queen. The first part is an individual exercise.
- When they have finished, divide them into groups of four or five and ask them to make a joint ranking without voting. In the groups they start by explaining their individual ranking, followed by creating a consensus on a common ranking. Allow a minimum of 30–45 minutes for this part.

- When all groups have completed the task, gather them in a circle and collect their results on a flip chart table, as shown below.

### Debriefing:

Ask the participants how they found working on this activity: their feelings and thoughts.

Talk about possible reasons for their ranking, such as cultural background, prejudices and values. Ask them to tie this story to situations from their own lives and from contemporary issues such as arranged marriages, honor killing and infidelity.

### Materials:

- Markers
- Copies of the hand out the “The King and the Queen”



## HANDOUT 6 – The King and the Queen<sup>15</sup>

The King loves the Queen, but he has to go for a long journey. He suspects that the Queen has a lover, and therefore he orders the castle guards to kill her if she leaves the castle during his absence. He tells his wife about this before he departs from the castle.

When the King has left, the Queen's lover contacts her and urges her to come to him. She says that she cannot come, since the guards have been ordered to kill her if she does. Her lover says that he desperately needs to see her, and says that it is important that she comes the following night.



The Queen talks to one of the guards, who says that he will protect her and help her get out of the castle and back inside, provided she returns by midnight.



The King



The Queen



The lover



The guard who falls asleep



The guard who kills her

The Queen meets her lover and comes back to the castle on time. The guard who promised to help her has fallen asleep. Another guard sees her as she tries to enter the castle, and kills her.

Order the characters of the story, based on how responsible they are for the Queen's death:

### The King and the Queen for reporting

The trainer draws the lines on the board and fill in the vertical line with the five figures of the story. The horizontal line is for the numbers of the groups. The squares are for the numbers from the groups to be filled in as they report their results. When there is disagreement that is not resolved, numbers can be put in brackets.

- Each group presents and explains their rankings. Mark the table with numbers from their ranking. This

provides an excellent overview, and a solid foundation for the debriefing. Open the floor for questions from the rest of the participants at the end of each group presentation.

- Commence the debriefing when all groups have presented their findings. If a group could not agree, ask each member about their ranking and mark it in the table. This can be done by putting the numbers in brackets.

Group number / Character	1	2	3	4	
The King	1	5	2	3	
The Queen	3	3	5	1 (5)	
The Lover	5	4	3	4	
The guard who falls asleep	2	2	1	2 (3)	
The guard who kills her	4	1	4	5	







## CHAPTER 5

# Understanding Conflict

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### Introduction

We understand conflict as a situation where two or more parties have incompatible goals or they believe their goals are incompatible. This happens all the time in families, in politics and social life. From childhood we learn how to deal with conflicts. For society to develop conflicts are inevitable and represents the drive for social change given that they are handled in a constructive manner.

Prevention of violent behavior is crucial for sustaining good relationships and a healthy society. Once violence occurs between individuals or groups it can be difficult to reverse it. The reconciliation process can be difficult and time-consuming and there is a constant danger of reigniting the conflict. Any attempt to prevent the escalation of conflict is therefore desirable.

Conflicts are often complex, can easily escalate and become violent if they are not handled properly. Understanding how conflicts affect our lives, negatively and positively, can ease tension, clarify opportunities and be of help in finding appropriate conflict behavior. Becoming aware of the behavioral patterns of ourselves and others is a first step in taking a proactive approach in transforming destructive and violent conflicts. The quality of a society can be considered by how conflicts are understood and dealt with.

**To introduce the topic** we recommend the first activity of exploring the concept of conflict with the participants. This is a good opportunity for them to share their knowledge and perspectives.

### Learning objectives

- To understand different types of conflicts, and the causes of conflicts
- To differentiate constructive from destructive conflict
- To clarify the difference between conflict and violence

**Activities** in this chapter are

1. Conflict associations
2. Types of conflict
3. Desert Island
4. Human Needs

## Understanding Conflict Activities



### Activity: Conflict Associations

**TYPE:** Quiet group work, presentation of group work

**PURPOSE:**

To explore conflict as a concept  
To discuss positive and negative aspects of conflict  
To make a distinction between conflict and violence

**TIME:** 20–30 minutes

**Trainer's instructions:**

- Ask each group to sit in a ring, and place the flip chart sheet on the ground in the middle of the ring and have markers in different colors available.
- What do you think of when you hear the word conflict? Write down the first associations you think of. Pass markers to each other if needed. Remain silent in the group.

### Debriefing

How did it feel to work in silence?  
What was the purpose?  
How did the group cooperate?  
Discuss different aspects of conflict situations: What is negative, what is positive and what is neutral?

**Materials:**

- Flip-chart papers with the word *conflict* written in the middle
- Markers



## Activity: Types of Conflict

**TYPE:** Presentation and group work

**PURPOSE:**

To understand the different types of conflicts

To use conflicts presented by the participants to illustrate the different conflict categories

To see how conflicts correlate

**TIME:** 20–60 minutes

**Trainer’s instructions:**

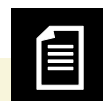
- Create six small groups.
- Give each group a conflict category from Handout 7.
- Ask each group to brainstorm conflicts within the conflict category they were assigned, and make a joint decision on which conflict to briefly analyze.
- The trainer prepares questions for the group work, such as: Conflicts stemming from interest/needs: Is there a perceived or real scarcity in resources such as land, money or other assets? Is there a third-party involvement from outside of the community or country, which influences one or both sides?

Information conflicts: Why is information interpreted differently?  
Who has the power to inform?

Questions for all groups:  
What is the current relationship between the conflicting parties?  
Who are potential supporters on either side?  
What attempts have been made to resolve the conflict?  
Why did they succeed or not succeed?

**Debriefing**

How do the conflicts manifest?  
Who are the involved parties and how do they relate to each other?  
Can you motivate the parties to start the resolution/transformation process?  
Who are your allies? How are these types of conflict connected?  
What are the consequences of the conflicts?  
Let the participants discuss if the examples are country- or origin-specific, or if they are more universal.



## HANDOUT 7 – Sources and Types of Conflict<sup>16</sup>

**Conflicts about information**

Often the parties in a conflict do not have sufficient information, or even the same information, about a situation. Collecting and clarifying facts can go a long way toward easing tensions. Parties

might also interpret the data in differing ways, or assign different levels of importance to the same data. Open discussion and input from trusted outside parts can help in assessing the relevance of available information.



**Conflict about resources**

Conflicts about material resources such as land, money, or objects are normally obvious to identify and often lend themselves well to straightforward bargaining. Sometimes, however, although the parties appear to be squabbling over a resource, the real conflict is about something else, perhaps relationships or psychological needs of one or both parties.

**Conflicts on relationships**

People in familial relationships, business partnerships or community organizations commonly have disagreements over a variety of issues, but sometimes the interdependence created by their relationship introduces a destructive dimension to differences that would otherwise be easily resolved. Past events or years of stereotyping can make people inflexible or unwilling to try even the most fair and obvious solution. Goals, roles, responsibilities, and different perspectives about past experiences may need to be addressed before the other conflicts can be tackled.

**Conflicts of interest or needs**

Important and powerful human needs for things such as identity, respect, or participation are often the at the heart of conflicts which present themselves as contests for material things. Constructive opportunities for individuals and communities to express their needs and feel that they have been heard are critical to addressing these needs. Often long-term resolution of

a resource conflict depends as much on meeting the interests or needs of the people involved as on dividing the resources.

**Conflicts about structures**

Social and organizational structures determine who has access to power or resources, who is afforded respect, and who has the authority to make decisions. Conflicts about or within structures often involve justice issues and competing goals. Such conflicts often require years of effort to effect constructive change.

**Conflicts involving values**

Values and beliefs are formed by life experiences and faith perspectives. A challenge to someone's values are often perceived as a threat to his identity, and this makes conflicts involving values the hardest to resolve. Most people react defensively to the threat and withdraw from any negotiation, assuming that a resolution of the conflict will require them to change their values. But being able to clarify their values and feel that they have been heard and understood allows parties to move away from defensiveness, and might even result in the parties learning to live together in mutual acknowledgment of their differences.



### Activity: Desert Island

**TYPE:** Purpose: brainstorming and reflections on human needs

**TIME:** 15–20 minutes

#### Trainer's instructions

Make groups of 5–6. Ask the participants to imagine that they are stranded on an island in the middle of the ocean. Let them describe the scenario. The next step

is to envision what will be the situation after 3 days and then what are the needs after 3 weeks?

#### Debriefing:

The groups come up with their points and the trainer writes them on flip chart / blackboard. The exercise can be concluded by a short common reflection on human needs at different stages.



### Activity: Human Needs

**PURPOSE:** To get acquainted with different theories of human needs

**INTRODUCTION:** present the Maslow triangle and Max Neef's Human Scale Development.

**TIME:** 1–2 hrs.

#### Trainer's instructions:

Compare the theories of Maslow and Max Neef. What are the similarities? What are the differences?

Reflect on the implications of each model.

- How would you rank human needs?
- What is most important, what is less important?

#### Debriefing:

Max Neef's theory indicates that except for subsistence, human needs are all equally important. Maslow on the other hand ranges needs as hierarchical in a triangle. Reflect on the implications of the two alternative theories of human needs.

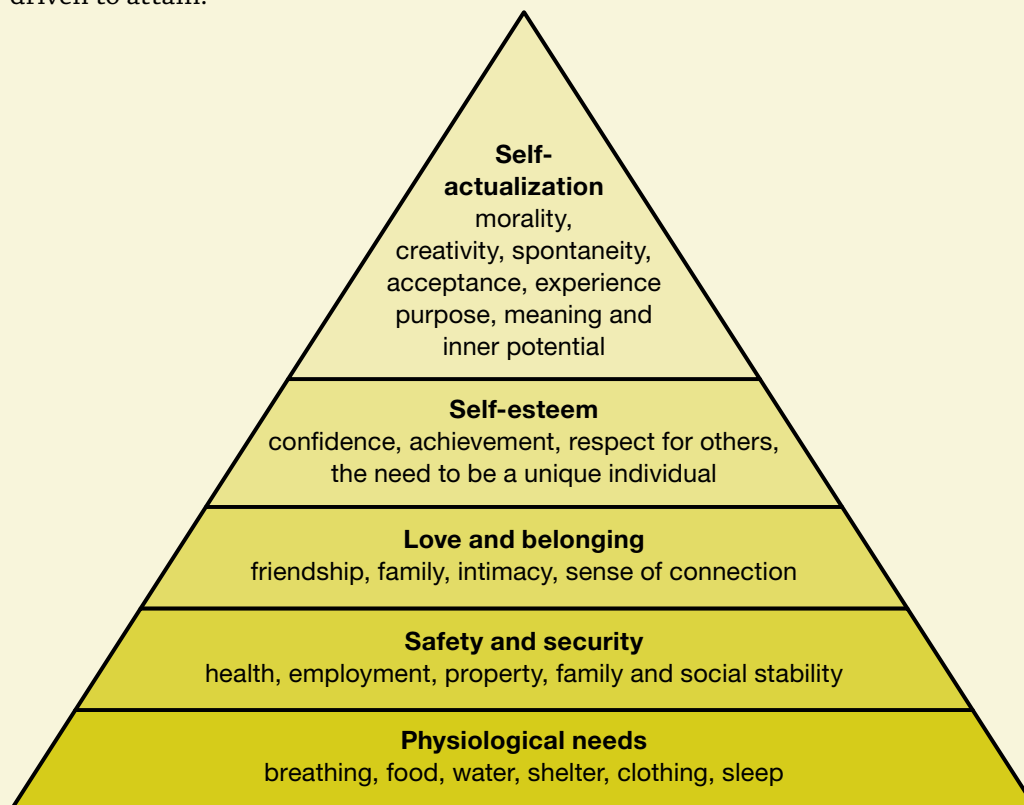




### HANDOUT 8 – Human Needs<sup>17</sup>

Humans need several essentials to survive. Per the renowned psychologist Abraham Maslow and the conflict scholar John Burton, these essentials go beyond just food, water, and shelter. They include both physical and non-physical elements for human growth and development, as well as all those things humans are innately driven to attain.

For Maslow, needs are hierarchical in nature. That is, each need has a specific ranking. Maslow's needs pyramid starts with food, water, and shelter, followed by safety and security, then belonging or love, self-esteem, and finally, personal fulfilment.



### **Max Neef 's Model of Human Scale Development<sup>18</sup>**

Manfred Max-Neef is a Chilean Economist. He defines the model as a taxonomy of human needs and a process by which communities can identify their “wealths” and “poverties” according to how these needs are satisfied. He describes needs as being constant through all cultures and across historical time periods. The thing that changes with time and across cultures is the way that these needs are satisfied. According to the model human needs are to be understood as a system i.e. they are interrelated and interactive.

According to Max Neef the fundamental needs of humans are

- Subsistence
- Protection
- Affection
- Understanding
- Participation
- Leisure
- Creation
- Identity
- Freedom

### **Chapter Conclusion**

Human needs are what we need to fulfil our lives. If our needs are not met over time our identity and self-esteem will be affected. Unmet needs can lead to a defensive and sometimes aggressive attitude towards others. This can be highly destructive and push people into a locked position. Unmet needs are often the root causes of conflicts. The expression of needs is what we want to achieve through dialogue. When needs are expressed and acknowledged it is more likely that people will see alternatives and ultimately make changes in their lives.

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## CHAPTER 6

# Conflict Analysis

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### Introduction

Conflicts are complex with a variety of actors and factors influencing directly and indirectly. Tools for conflict analysis make it possible to see clearer what is going on and make visible possible entry points. This chapter presents three such tools. Each tool could be used separately, but as they provide a better overview of the context, history and dynamics of the situation when used together, we recommend applying them all. This process will clarify the background of the situation, the root causes of the conflict and the relationships between actors, and pave the way for transformation and change.

The tools can be used in workshops as field work preparation. It is possible to construct scenarios or use conflict situations from other parts of the world when circumstances require it, but we recommend using their own life examples rather than imaginary scenarios as this leads to better learning and ownership.

**To introduce the topic** the trainer can have a short lecture on the complexity of conflicts involving many parties with different positions. The focus could be on the necessity to analyse different aspects of the conflict before trying to resolve the issues. Use examples from life experience or a conflict you know very well.

### Learning objectives

- To identify all actors involved in the conflict
- To clarify the root causes of the conflict
- To improve understanding of the perspectives and behavior of all actors
- To find potential allies and stakeholders for peace

**Activities** in this chapter are

1. Conflict mapping
2. The Onion
3. ABC triangle and
4. Styles of behavior

## Conflict Analysis Activities



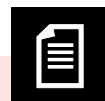
### Activity: Conflict Mapping

**TYPE:** Presentation and group work

**PURPOSE:** Learn how to use conflict mapping to identify actors and relationships between actors

Understand the power balance in a situation and to suggest intervention points

**TIME:** 2 hours












### HANDOUT 9 – Conflict Mapping

Mapping is an approach to analysing a conflict situation. This tool enables us to get a clear overview of the conflict by placing the parties around the problem, and visually identify the relationship between them. We use maps for a variety of purposes; to understand the situation better, to see more clearly from

one party's viewpoint, to identify power, to look for openings or new strategies, to see where our allies or potential allies are placed, and to find our own role. If people with different stands in the conflict map their situation together, they may learn about each other's experiences and perceptions.



### The symbols for the mapping

	<b>Good relationship</b>
	<b>Weak relationship</b>
	<b>Broken relationship</b>
	<b>Alliance</b>
	<b>Predominant influence</b>
	<b>Conflict</b>
	<b>Topic</b>
	<b>Actors</b>
	<b>Shadows</b>

### Trainer's instructions:

Form groups of 5–6 participants.

**Step 1:** The facilitator presents the tool using examples from his/hers work. Convey the importance of clarifying and defining the conflict issue, of identifying all sides to the conflict, potential allies and spoilers (visible and in the shadow) as well as who are actively promoting peace.

### Step 2: Presentation

of self-experienced conflicts

Invite all participants to present a conflict from their own experience, from work or from their personal life. Ask them to write the story, maximum one page, making it as simple and clear as possible, with a view to presenting it to their group.

### Step 3: Instructions to the group

The trainer explains the activity and how it will progress, asking each group to choose its own facilitator, recorder and presenter. The participants take turns to present their conflicts. The others in the group listen and are reminded to avoid giving advice. The group chooses one (or two) of the conflicts for conflict mapping. The facilitator of the small group will make sure all group members contribute to the process. The recorder and presenter will take down inputs and results, and present it back to the big group in the plenary session.



**Step 4: Conflict mapping**

- Define the parties to the conflict
- Explore the relationships between the parties
- Identify people promoting peace as well as potential spoilers

Let the participants ask the presenters questions as needed. They can also give suggestion on points of intervention.

**Step 5: Debriefing**

Who are the main parties to the conflict?

What are the relationships between them?

Are there any parties who at first are not visible, but have a strong influence on the conflict?

What is the conflict about?

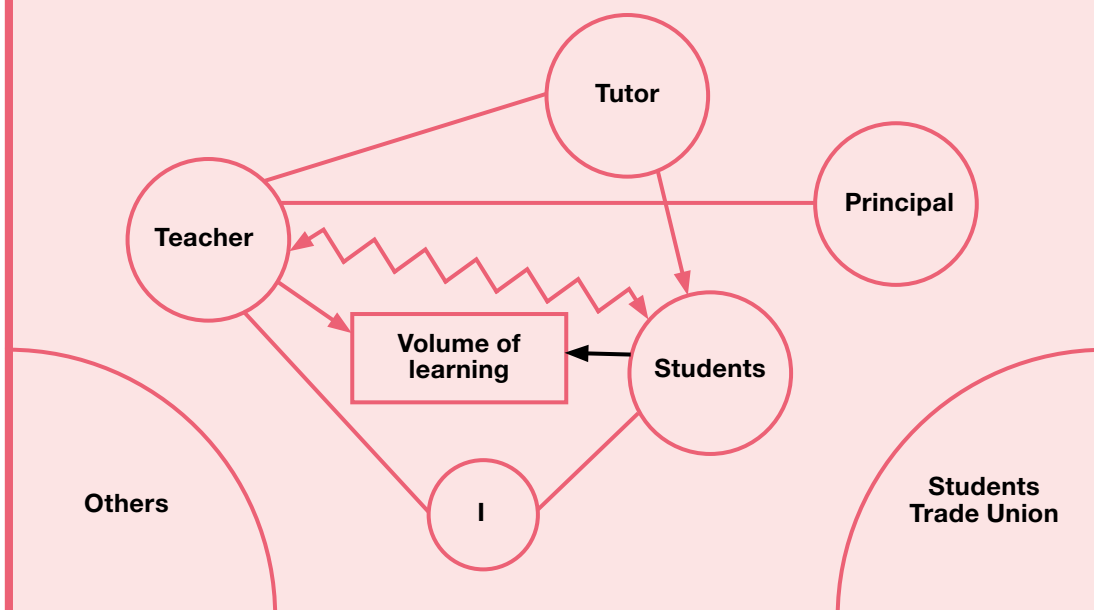
Define the issue.

**Materials:**

- Handout 9 which explains the conflict mapping tool

**Conflict mapping – illustration**

This conflict mapping example presents a conflict between a teacher and students at the university. The problem is defined as: the volume of learning. The teacher was an excellent expert in her field, she followed new developments and wanted students to be up to date with recent publications. At first, students liked the explorative learning, but as time progressed the volume of literature they needed to read and analyze became unbearable. Through analysis, the group identified the head course tutor and the principal as actors that could influence the teacher. The colleague teacher (the participant who suggested the case) was the one in whom the students confided and she initiated the talks between the principal and the teacher. This example showed why it is necessary to put oneself on the map, and how to use the map to discover potential allies.





## Activity: The Onion: Positions, Interests, Needs

**TYPE:** Presentation by facilitator and small group work.

**PURPOSE:**

To clearly understand interests and needs of all sides to the conflict

To be able to connect interests with needs, and formulate them clearly

To identify the joint interests of the parties in conflict

**TIME:** 60 minutes

**Trainer's instructions:**

**Step 1:** The facilitator presents the tool, drawing the onion as shown on Handout 10, using examples from work. She tells the basic facts of the conflict, then asks these questions:

- What is the position of the actor?
- Why does the actor take this position?
- What is his underlying interest?
- What need does this interest come from?
- In this case, are we talking about an interest or a need or a position?

**Step 2:** Participants re-join their groups from the *Conflict Mapping* exercise. They discuss and identify the positions, interest and needs of the actors from the conflict mapping exercise. They then draw up the diagram and present it in the plenary session.

**Step 3:** Debriefing: The joint debriefing is very important. During the debriefing participants will clearly define the interests and needs of the parties. This leads to a deeper understanding of the conflict and makes it easier to find a solution.

### About the Onion<sup>19</sup>

The Onion is an eye opener at individual and group level. It is usually easier to understand if applied to a personal conflict or conflicts from the participants' immediate environment. People were often truly convinced that by taking certain positions they were protecting their interests, while in the reality they were diminishing their possibilities for fulfilling them.

Why are we not aware of our own needs? It is human nature to get caught up by the fire of the conflict, to try to prove that we are right, and to want to win. The exercise offers each of us the opportunity to ask ourselves: What do we really need from this situation? Are there any other unfulfilled needs? The definition of a need: "What we must have.", may seem strong at the beginning. It sounds as a demand of our wishes to be fulfilled, but when we think about it the formulation asks us to sincerely say what we must have to be able to function, but also to realize what we do not need.



**Debriefing:**

This exercise seeks to distinguish between the positions, interest and needs of the main parties to the conflict. It can be hard to comprehend the difference between needs and interests, as people tend to mix them. To overcome this and help participants reach a deeper understanding, the trainer asks:

- What do the parties need in this situation?
- Is it important to them?
- Is it essential to fulfil it? Why?
- What will happen if the need is not fulfilled?
- How will fulfilling the needs affect the position and behavior of the conflicting sides?

A thorough grasp of the difference between interests and needs can make us change our minds about previous decisions. This new knowledge makes

us interpret things differently, and understand the reaction of others and ourselves better. And consequently, the next time conflict or disagreement happens we learn to pause and ask ourselves:

What do I need, what does the other person need?

Are our interests different or are they just presented that way? Could we balance our interests and needs?

Participants will be able to discover that our needs are universal. How needs are satisfied will however vary from one culture to another. Recognizing the universality of needs is a good way of connecting with each other.

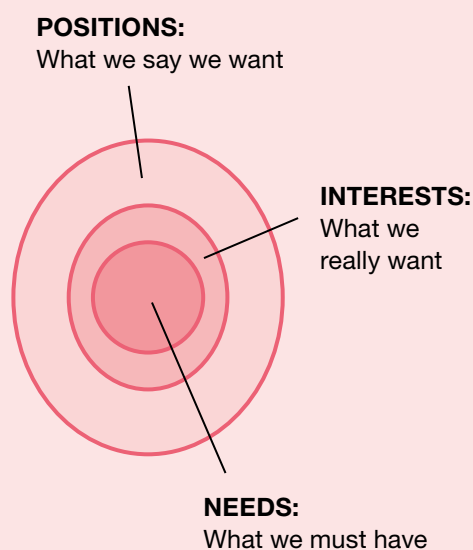
**Material:**

- Handout 10 “The Onion”
- Flip chart
- Markers



### **HANDOUT 10 – The Onion<sup>20</sup>** **The Onion**

The onion model is based upon the idea that the layers of a conflict are much like that of an onion: there are many dynamics to be considered, but only those on the surface are visible, until we start to peel of the layers to see what lies at the core. It allows a better understanding of the conflicting parties' positions, and their real interests and needs. It helps us to distinguish between what the different parties say they want, and what they really want and need.



In peaceful situations people relate and act on the basis of their actual needs. In conflict situations, the lack of access to basic needs, together with the mistrust that often characterises relationships in conflict, alters the basis on which people relate to one another.

It is important to be aware about the distinction between positions and interests:

- Positions are what people say they want in a conflict.
- Interests refer to what people really want, and what motivates them.

The outer layer of the onion represents the positions we allow everyone to see and hear (what we say we want). Underlying these are our interests (what we want), which represent what we wish to achieve in a conflict situation. At the core of the onion are our needs (what we must have), which must be fulfilled in order for the conflicting parties to be truly satisfied with the outcome. While interests can often be negotiated, needs are non-negotiable. Although it may be difficult to set other dynamics aside, it is critical that conflicting parties understand their own and each other's core needs, so that constructive and satisfying outcomes can be achieved.

When analysing interests we should bear in mind that:

- All parties have interests and needs that are important and valid to them.
- A solution to the problem should meet the maximum number of interests of the maximum number of parties possible.

- There is always more than one acceptable solution to a problem.
- Any conflict involves compatible interests, as well as conflicting ones

### **When to use it?**

The Onion model can be used as part of an analysis to understand the dynamics of a conflict situation, but also in preparation for facilitating dialogue between groups in a conflict, or as part of a negotiation or mediation process itself – even during the post-conflict reconstruction process.

It can be helpful for those engaged in dialogue, as in order to have a successful negotiation, it is essential to make sure that the needs of each party are fully understood. It is also useful before entering into a negotiation, as a means to better understand the other(s) interests, positions and needs, but also to clarify our own ones and keep them in mind throughout the process. The idea is to carry out the onion analysis for each of the parties involved, including your own.

The Onion model can also bring insight into prolonged conflicts; even raising new hopes for them, as these kinds of conflicts are often seen to result from hiding or distorting actual needs, making the conflict intractable. These needs can be identified by further peeling off the layers of conflict!





### Activity: ABC Triangle

**TYPE:** Presentation and group work

**PURPOSE:**

To analyze the context of the situation

To see the interlinkages between actors, behavior and context

To increase awareness of how attitudes influence the behavior of the actors and parties to the conflict

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**Trainer's instructions:**

The trainer explains the ABC Triangle in Handout 11 using an example from her own work. The ABC triangle helps participants to clarify, understand and define the attitudes and behavior of actors within a conflict context or in the background of a conflict situation:

- The participants re-join their conflict mapping groups, and draw the ABC triangle for each of the main conflict parties (two to three parties).

- The participants describe the attitudes and behaviors of each party, and how they see the context of the conflict situation.
- In the plenary session each group presents their triangles and compares them to each other.

**Debriefing:**

In the debriefing the trainer should focus on the attitudes and behavior of the parties.

- Are the attitudes of the parties similar or different?
- How did the attitudes impact the behavior of the parties?
- What can we learn from this connection?
- Would it be possible to change attitudes for the better?

**Materials:**

- Handout 11, ABC Triangle
- Flip chart and markers

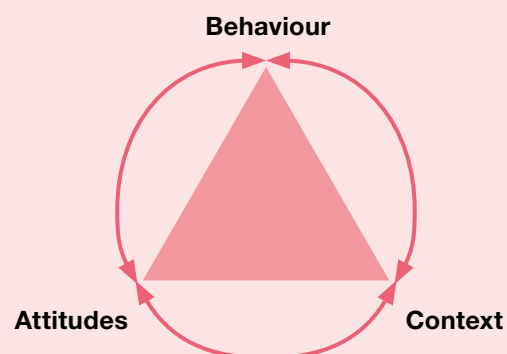


### HANDOUT 11 - ABC Triangle

*Illustration from 'Working with Conflict' published by Responding to Conflict.*

*Copyright, Peace Direct.*

This analysis is based on the premise that conflicts have three major components: the **context** of situation, the **behaviour** of those involved and their **attitudes**. These three factors represent these graphically as the corners of a triangle. These three factors influence each other, hence the arrows leading from one to another.



*SOURCE: C.R. Mitchell, The Structure of International Conflict, Macmillan 1981*



## Activity: Behavioral styles in conflict situations<sup>21</sup>

**TYPE:** Presentation and group work

**PURPOSE:**

To become aware of positive and negative aspects of each style

To recognize our own styles, and see which styles are most commonly used by the people we interact with on daily basis

**TIME:** 30 minutes

Point out the connection between concern for relationships and concern for goals.

Put participants into small groups, and tell them to create a short roleplay based on one style of behavior. Each group presents their roleplay while the audience guesses which style they are presenting.

**Debriefing**

What are your personal styles? Do they depend on the situation?  
How could this knowledge change how you interact with other people?

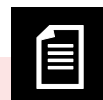
**Materials:**

- Handout 12, 2 pages
- Flip charts

**Trainer's instructions:**

Draw the graph from Handout 11 on the flip chart before starting the exercise.

Explain each style in detail by using examples from reality. Connect them with current situations in the world or in the community.



## HANDOUT 12 – Styles of Behaviour in Conflict Situations<sup>22</sup>

**Controlling – My way**

Seeing conflicts and problems as contests to be won or lost – and it's important to be the winner. This approach is often the result of an unconscious wish to protect oneself from the pain of being wrong.

It is sometimes necessary if there is imminent danger, but often gives rise to more conflict later as the hurt of the loser is translated into aggression.

**Compromising – Give and take**

Everyone gains something and loses something. It is a common way of dealing with conflict, but tends to lead to rather short-term solutions. It may

leave everyone feeling they have lost something important, and closes off the possibility of a better solution (for example, increasing the amount of resources available).

**Problem-solving – Our way**

Otherwise known as the “win-win” approach, in which conflicts are viewed as “problems to solve between us”. In many situations, everyone involved in a conflict situation can win significant gains. It puts equal priority on the relationship with the other parties and on a mutually satisfying outcome. While in many situations this is the



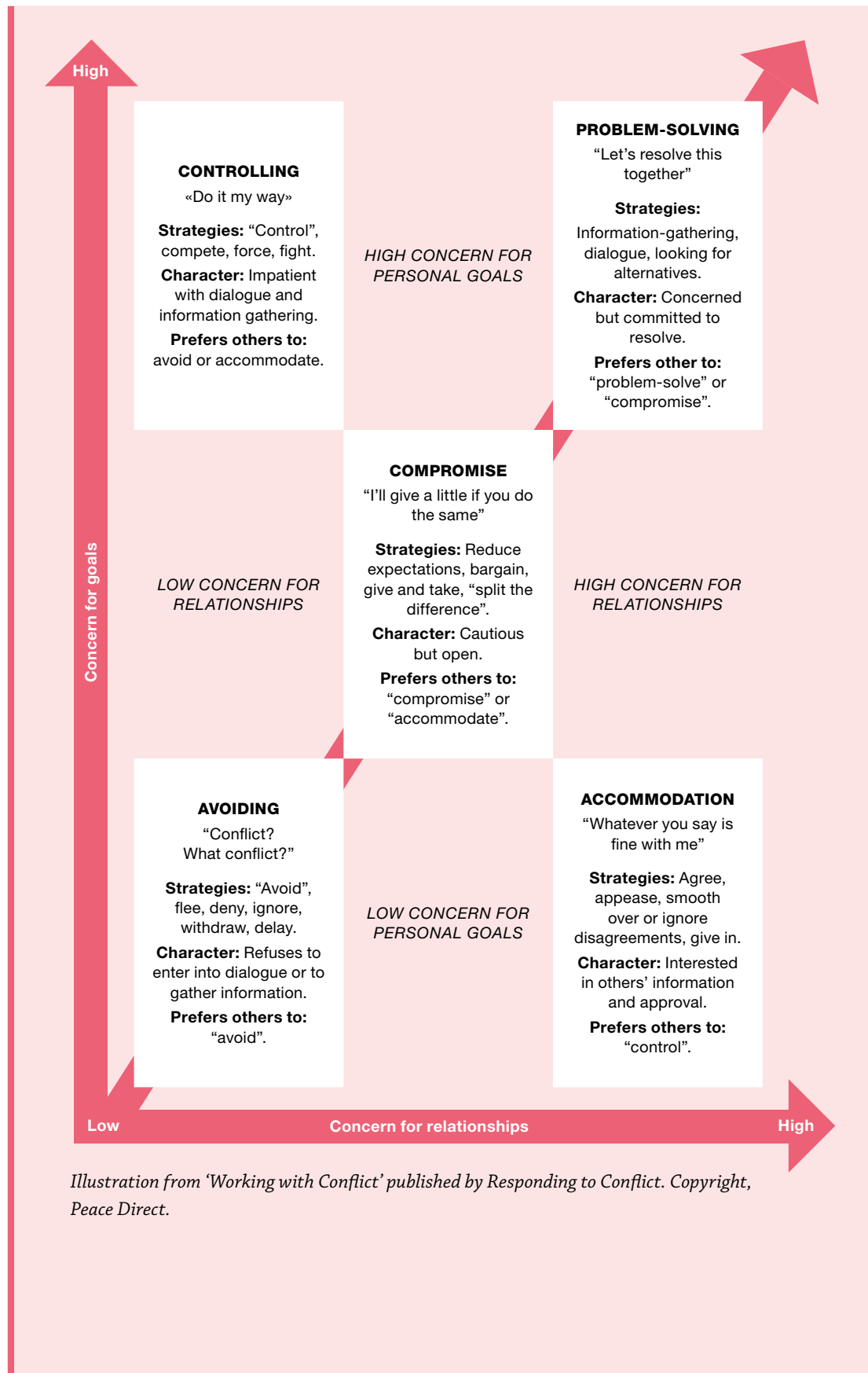


Illustration from ‘Working with Conflict’ published by Responding to Conflict. Copyright, Peace Direct.



most effective way to get fair and lasting solutions, it is far from an easy option.

**Accommodating – Your way**

Peace at any cost is the reason behind this approach. You emphasize areas of agreement and smooth over, or ignore, disagreements. If you don't say what you are thinking others cannot know, and therefore they are powerless to deal with the conflict. This approach can be useful if a conflict would put too much pressure on a relationship, and sometimes things improve because you remain good friends.

**Avoiding – No way**

Withdrawing, either physically or emotionally, from a conflict gives you no say in what happens, but might be wise when the issue in question is not your business. It poses the danger of allowing problems to grow unchecked, and if used unscrupulously avoidance can punish others. People often use this approach to make others change their mind. But, like other forms of coercion, this has its costs.

**Chapter Conclusion**

No contexts are identical, even if we compare two local communities within the same country. Experience showed us that everybody has their own interpretation of reality and must be given the opportunity to express it by telling their own stories, experiences, and perceptions of the conflict. The situation must be understood from the point of view of the inhabitants of the local community.

The ABC triangle analysis demonstrated this clearly. Participants all shared concerns for their families. They all want to live in a stable, peaceful society where progress is possible. We as trainers motivate the participants to trust their capacity and ability to achieve and implement the desired changes. Our experience is that participants are empowered by working with these tools and helps them to implement strategies for change.

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## CHAPTER 7

# The Role of the Dialogue Facilitator and Trainer

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### Introduction

The noun *facilitator* originates from Latin verb *facilitare* – to ease the process, implying that a facilitator is a person who creates the space for an open respectful group process. This is accomplished by a humble and supportive approach which empowers the participants to contribute with their knowledge and experiences. The *facilitator* is impartial and does not have decision-making responsibility; however, he/she must ensure that the contributions of all participants are taken into account. He/she makes sure that everyone feels free and safe to participate in talks, resolve problems or conflicts, and to make decisions themselves. This will be done through *active listening*, *good questions*, *paraphrasing* and *summarizing*.

There is a responsibility involved when you engage with people and start a process where you have no guarantee that your intervention will lead to an improvement of the situation for those involved. Most people do however appreciate the potential in sharing, in being heard and in listening to the story of others. This is an empowering and enlightening process.

A dialogue *trainer* has a similar role as the *facilitator*, but besides easing the process the trainer has additional responsibilities: to transfer knowledge, instruct exercises, give advice, lead talks and supervise participants in their struggle to create good dialogue processes.

**Learning objectives:**

- To understand the role of the dialogue facilitator and trainer
- To learn the skills needed to be a good dialogue facilitator and trainer
- To understand elicitive methodology
- To learn to organize and structure the dialogue workshop

## Structuring and Leading a Dialogue Workshop

***What does it mean to be a trainer?***

A trainer is experienced in preparing and leading seminars, courses, and training sessions. Training topics might be conflict resolution, multicultural communication, inter-religious dialogue or similar.

A trainer should be able to read the group and extract knowledge from its members. With the aid of the participants' input he/she will create a motivational atmosphere and dynamic process.

The participatory approach involves giving people the time, space and attention to become aware of their needs, concerns and opinions on the themes important to them. Through creating an active participatory process, the trainer will facilitate mutual learning and willingness to understand each other.

The trainer provides the theory or instructions needed for activities, and then creates the space to carry them out. Participants learn through plenary discussions, role-plays and group work. By tailoring exercises and methods to the needs of the group the process develop naturally.

The trainer summarizes learning points and conclusions during debriefing sessions. This strategy provides time and space for thought processes and getting accustomed to the group, and will create a trusting environment.

***Planning and preparation***

The trainer plans and tailors the program to fit the context and aims of the training. We recommend trainers to work in pairs, for the benefit of the trainers and the participants alike. The trainers support each other, distribute roles (one presents, the other deals with participant inputs), while participants absorb knowledge from people with different areas of expertise. In preparation for a training program, the following steps are recommended:

- Gather information about the participants' work and personal background, and the processes or issues that need to be addressed; experiences, positions, age and language skills. Trainers are often active in recruitment and will select participants with relevant background and organizational affiliation.
- If needed, organize initial meetings with representatives or key persons from the local community, school, university, organization or authorities to get the necessary permissions and recruit participants.
- Organize logistics: the venue, space, safety measures, equipment and materials.
- Tailor group activities.

Creating and providing a safe space is the fundament for quality dialogue training. Sitting in a circle is preferable as this shows we are all at the same level.

### ***The basic structure of the workshop***

- **At the beginning of each day** we dedicate time for reflection about the previous day, where we welcome questions, insights and comments from participants. One of the trainers reminds the participants about the previous day's program, underlining the most important lessons and learning points. Participants share their insights and thoughts on the previous day.
- **Planned time for all sessions is tentative**, as progression depends on group dynamics. Some groups will need additional time or inputs on some of the themes, and teaching methods is adjusted to suit the participants' needs, experiences, professional goals and the pace of learning. The trainers follow the group's responses and decide if any changes are needed.
- **During the dialogue workshops** relevant theory, method and examples are presented to boost understanding. These are not traditional lectures. Clear, concise deliveries with visual teaching aids are recommended. In order to keep participants' attention on the topics they are invited to share opinions and experiences. When the subject is completely new to most participants, clarifying concepts and definitions eases the learning process for the group.
- **For group work** we recommend organizing the participants into groups and have each group choose a facilitator and someone to keep record.
  - 1) The trainer gives clear instructions (written on the flip-chart in advance) to all, and then repeats them to each group.
  - 2) When participants start working in groups, the trainer visits each group, observes the process, and clarifies things as needed. This must be done in a sensitive manner to ensure that the process is still guided by the group facilitator. The participants will give options and generate solutions. The time frame for group work will vary according to the task.
  - 3) In the plenary, reporters from all groups present their findings. Depending on the objectives of a session, they will either talk about the entire process or about certain aspects of the process only. The trainer asks for comments, summarizes and shares reflections.
- **The final session** is dedicated to summing up the day's activities and capturing learning points from all sessions.



### Elicitive methodologies

#### Elicitive and Participative methodologies

“The *elicitive model* understands training as a process that emerges from already-existing, local knowledge about managing conflict. It views training as a process aimed at discovery and creation of models that emerge from resources within that setting. Culture is regarded as the seedbed for the development of a training model that can respond to local needs. In addition, the trainer sees himself/herself primarily as a catalyst and a facilitator rather than as an expert in a model of conflict resolution. His/her central role is to provide a *highly participatory educational process* in which participants gain a better understanding of conflict. Finally, the design and goals of the training process are formulated by the participants, rather than dictated beforehand by the trainer. The aim is to foster an indigenous, self-sustaining peace process. Participants are encouraged to participate in the creation of the training model and to articulate their own understandings of how to approach conflict.”<sup>23</sup>

## Dialogue Facilitation Activities



### Activity: Facilitation of a Dialogue

**TYPE:** Roleplay in groups

**PURPOSE:**

To experience the role of a dialogue facilitator working on real-life cases

To facilitate a dialogue process ensuring the conflict parties move away from their positions, and become aware of their interests based on their needs

**TIME:** 3–6 hours depending on the number of participants

**Trainer’s instructions:**

In the plenary ask all reporters from the small groups to bring the examples they worked on in Conflict Mapping, the Onion and the ABC triangle.

Usually, there will be 5–6 small groups out of a total number of 20–25 participants. Instruct them to remember

the interests and needs of the main parties in the conflict, and in general to keep their analysis in mind.

If you are a team of trainers, you can manage 3 groups each and work in two separate rooms.

Next, the participants take on the role of facilitator. One participant from each group acts out the facilitators’ role for 15 min, and the others in the group take the roles of conflicting parties. Afterwards they take turns in being the facilitator.

The other groups and the trainer observe the facilitator. When one session of the roleplay ends, they evaluate the facilitation style of each participant and offers suggestions for improvement.



Questions for the small group:

- Did the facilitator create a trusting atmosphere?
- Did he/she provide enough space to all parties, and follow up the process with open questions?
- Did he/she create an even power balance between parties?
- Was the facilitator leading or being led by the conflict parties?

**Debriefing:**

- How did you feel in the role as facilitator?
- Would you do anything differently?
- Were there moments when you could lead the process in a different direction?
- Did you take all important suggestions given by the parties into consideration?

**Materials:**

- Written instructions on leading the workshop
- Flip-chart papers with the examples of the maps and onions from the small group work.

**Qualities of dialogue facilitators**

During a dialogue, we strive at achieving understanding among participants, improving and developing relationships, planning joint activities and initiatives.

Dialogue facilitators should have following qualities or strive for them:

- |                |               |   |
|----------------|---------------|---|
| • Show empathy | • Discipline  | • Decisiveness                                  |
| • Impartiality | • Curiosity   | • Ability to alter the process as it progresses |
| • Patience     | • Flexibility |   |

## Chapter Conclusion

A dialogue facilitator and trainer has a special role. He or she must be non-authoritarian, but at the same time have enough authority to facilitate a session. The most important personal characteristics are attentiveness, listening, the ability to pose good questions and integrity. For the facilitator this is not a once-and-for-all learning process. It is about having an ongoing awareness and willingness to work with oneself.

The open space created by the facilitator gives participants freedom to share their experiences and knowledge. This might be scary for the facilitator, especially if the participants obviously know more about certain issues. In these situations, remind yourself that you are there to create a



CHAPTER 8

# Where to Go from Here?

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**After intensive training participants tend to be highly motivated** to make use of what they have learned. The key question for most participants is: How can I integrate what I have learned into my work? It can be voluntary, activist or professional work. The completion of a training program may be the start of a process in taking the role as a trainer or dialogue facilitator or it can be an inspiration for those who already have this experience. The next step is to internalize newly acquired skills and competencies and to further develop your own style as a trainer or facilitator.

**Basically it is up to each participant** as to how they want to make use of what they learn. As a learning experience every training session has an intrinsic value and should be regarded as a step in lifelong learning. Strengthened motivation and new ideas is often an immediate effect. Participants have widened their knowledge and perspectives and can make changes in their approach to work and life in general.

To what extent training sessions generate activities and new ways of handling and transforming conflicts depends on many factors. A supportive work environment is helpful to fully utilize potentials for reaching out to others. The environment you work in, your organization or social setting and available resources are all vital and can be mobilized. If there is more than one from the same organization or institution at the same training it is always easier to integrate new ideas and develop activities. For inspiration it can be useful to keep in touch with fellow participants, since linking up with others who have similar ideas can give the necessary strength and courage to proceed.

We who conduct the training sessions are always curious to see what happens next. Sometimes we get an indication at the end of the training through reflections and initiatives from participants. Some participants we keep in touch with, others we might never see again.

**There are several options** for following up training programs at Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue (NCPD) depending on our relationship with participants and their organizations. Our cooperation with the municipality of Skedsmo is an example of how training programs are part of a long-term cooperation in promoting dialogue in a multicultural community.

Some training programs are followed up by a period of *practice* where participants choose their own projects implemented in an arena they have access to. This may be to conduct an interactive teaching session at a school, to plan and facilitate an open public meeting or it may be something totally different, initiated by the participant. The point is to *practice what you have learned* as soon as possible after the training. This practice can be supervised by NCPD and you will have feedback on your performance in a real life setting.

Another possibility for follow-up is *co-facilitation*. Together with NCPD staff you plan and conduct a training session or a workshop. To work as a team is always a good idea when facilitating and a great learning opportunity as well. Public meetings in the form of public dialogue space is an appropriate setting for co-facilitation. You might have a good idea for a topic that you want to raise in a public meeting. The

planning and facilitation can be done in cooperation with NCPD when this will be of mutual benefit.

**Mentoring and supervision** by phone or Skype or through personal meetings is another option. You have an idea, develop your plans and want to discuss and need input and advice. NCPD-trainers are available for follow-up contact. Sometimes this can even lead to further institutional cooperation.

**Follow-up trainings** with the same participants is another option for NCPD. Starting from the basic course in Dialogue and Conflict Transformation, we are in the process of developing a course in Dialogue Facilitation. Following up in the form of exchanging experiences after training programs can be useful and give opportunities for reflection and feedback on how to include new methodologies and perspectives in work and organizational life.

In this handbook we have included exercises and activities that are tested and found useful to promote dialogue and understanding. They can be applied in different contexts and with various groups. Most important is that the trainer is conscious of the context he/she works in, the needs of the participants and the

purpose of the training. Every time you work with a group you learn something new. The exercises and activities presented are entry points for conversations and means for new perspectives and alternative analytical frameworks. They are not and should never be regarded as means in themselves.

A good exercise or a good question can open up, release tension and move a situation from stalemate positions to curiosity and movement. They can help to address controversial and sensitive issues in a way that is acceptable and manageable. All depends on the way it is received and reflections that are made – by the participants themselves. Trainers and facilitators are not magicians. They can initiate processes, but without feedback and participation nothing will happen.

The clue is to reveal knowledge, perspectives and understanding already present in the group and to challenge them in other ways than they are used to. This may very well be outside their comfort zone. In a group where trust has been built this discomfort can be handled, and it may be precisely this situation that leads to the most important learning and recognition.

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# Examples from field work

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*Midwives at workshop, Kabul 2014. Photo: Norwegian Afghanistan Committee.*

## Afghanistan: Midwives for Peace

After nearly forty years of war and protracted international military interventions, Afghanistan is still facing severe security problems affecting people all over the country, and limiting their possibilities to live ordinary lives and to move around. The Taliban and armed opposition groups are gaining ground in several parts of the country. In this situation we can see how civil actors take responsibility in different ways, depending on their roles and opportunities. Among them are midwives who have proved to play a role as bridge-builders in local communities. In a situation where security is not sufficiently provided by responsible governmental agencies they find ways to cope with security on a day to day basis. This gives them a role and responsibilities that go beyond their medical profession. Sometimes they are

not even aware of their vital contribution to human security. (Fuhrmann 2009) Their efforts are made out of necessity to enable them to do their daily work.

In 2014 Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue (NCPD) in collaboration with Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) invited midwives for two subsequent Midwives for Peace workshops in Kabul. For these workshops we identified a specific group with unique access to all parts in local conflicts and with the potential to take an even more vital role in building peace from the grassroots level. The Midwives for Peace workshops gathered midwives working in some of the most insecure districts of Afghanistan to explore their achievements, challenges and potentials for contributing to peace.

## **Workshop Objectives**

**The aims** of the Midwife for Peace workshops were twofold; to deepen our insight into the role of the midwife in local communities, and to strengthen skills among midwives for peaceful conflict resolution.

Recognizing the specific role and possibilities of midwives we wanted to contribute to the strengthening of peaceful conflict resolution skills as part of midwife education. For the workshop we emphasized the importance of communication skills by introducing a dialogue approach that was applied as workshop methodology.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Midwife for Peace workshop, held in Kabul in March 2014, was organized to learn about the daily life of midwives in conflict affected rural Afghanistan: to deepen our insight into how midwives work in different regions and to get a better understanding of their achievements and challenges. Our assumption was that midwives perform roles that go beyond their strictly medical profession, utilizing their unique position as a group respected by both men and women in a deeply gender divided society and offering services to the entire community irrespective of ethnic and political divides. A dialogue workshop was thus designed to encourage the sharing of experiences from daily life as midwives in Afghan communities. Based on recommendations for follow-up by the participants a second workshop was held six months later, both for experienced and new participants.

**Methods** applied were chosen to enhance learning among participants on dialogue, communication and ways of resolving conflicts peacefully. Through

exercises, questions and conversations the participants were invited to tell their story personally and professionally. All participants were given the opportunity of sharing their experiences from working as a midwife in their local community. They shared stories about daily life and challenges they have in doing their job, and listened attentively to the stories of midwives from other districts. Some of the stories were selected to present in a public meeting. Keeping such a workshop intimate and exclusive for participants during the first days is necessary to provide a trusting environment. Allowing public exposure for their main achievements and challenges is equally important, in order for their voices to be heard by responsible authorities.

**Participants** were recruited by the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) from five different districts; Wardak, Kunar, Laghman, Jalalabad and Nuristan. There were participants from Kabul, from the NAC and from the Afghan Midwife Association (AMA). Most of them were experienced midwives working in hospitals and clinics. There were also midwife educators, a medical doctor and recent graduates that were still not employed. Altogether 23 participants (including 3 co-facilitators) as well as 2 facilitators from Norway. For the second workshop fourteen of the same participants from the first one attended together with eleven new from Helmand, Jaghori, Khost and Kapisa.

The **facilitation team** was composed of Norunn Grande, trainer in peace education and dialogue facilitation from Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue (NCPD) and Deeva Biabani, born in Afghanistan, educated as midwife in Norway and trained in dialogue and peace

education through long-term cooperation with NCPD, assisted by Khadija Safi, Shakila and Khatol from the NAC staff in Kabul, with extensive experience from educating midwives in Afghanistan. The most important role for the facilitation team was to provide the safe space needed to allow stories to be told and challenges and achievements to be shared.

### **Achievements**

Through the Midwives for Peace workshops we realized that by focusing on the role of midwives as peacebuilders we introduced a new dimension to peace and dialogue work. In this case a group with specific access and potentials was identified with the purpose of exploring their role and strengthening their skills. Midwives are respected for their work and for their neutrality. They have access to all groups and play a vital role in building peaceful communities. At the same time they are vulnerable and subject to threats and accusations. To combine these roles and commitments requires courage and an advanced form of balancing.

The main achievements for the workshops were the stories told by the midwives and the empowering impact of being listened to. Their unique stories were presented in an open seminar on the fourth day with guests from health authorities, educational institutions and organizations working on health and development, giving new insights from a group that is not often listened to.

### **Learning points**

- Untold stories give new insights.
- By listening to the stories of other midwives and exchanging experiences they become more conscious on their own potentials and were empowered to continue the work.

- Talking about war as a health problem makes it more human and less politicized.
- Midwifery as a profession is a good entry point to promote peace in local communities.
- Training in dialogue and communication is motivating and useful for this group.

## **Workshop program**

### **Opening**

Initially the programme started with recitation of Quran, speeches and words of welcome. A formal setting within accepted cultural frames confirms the importance and seriousness of the event. The workshop itself was introduced with a presentation about the experience of peace education for midwives and an introduction on principles for dialogue. Presentations were translated to relevant languages.

### **Building trust**

The interactive workshop programme started with exercises for getting to know each other and for building trust among the participants in the group.

### **Identity exercises**

The identity flower is an individual task where one explains aspects of one's own identity by drawing a flower as explained in this handbook. In groups of 4–5, the identity flowers were shared and together they formed a common star.

### **Response**

One response to this exercise was that it was challenging to present oneself individually, as Afghan women very much see themselves as part of an extended family. Their individual needs and priorities are rarely recognized. There was an appreciation of the opportunity that was given to talk about themselves and have

others listen attentively. During reflection the midwives expressed a strong sense of community and commitment after talking through what they had in common.

### **My own experience with conflict**

This exercise was given as homework from day 1 to day 2. It was emphasized that their story could stem from experiences at work, in the family or in the local community. They were asked to write their story and present it to their group (the same group as on Day 1) on the second day. When the stories had been presented, the groups were asked to select one story to make a role play where everyone in the group has a role. The benefit of writing the story undisturbed from others is that the story comes from the writer herself without being influenced by how the other members of the group tell their stories.

### **Role Play**

Based on the selected story the midwives played out local conflicts through role play. Some of the cases were serious issues where vulnerable women are neglected basic rights in their family and in the community. Corruption in the health system, as well as threats to midwives, were among the issues that were clearly demonstrated. Midwives are sometimes blamed for death during childbirth, infertility of couples and other serious issues. After role play there was a dialogue session where ideas came up for who should be made responsible and how to approach them.

**Dialogue circle** is a method where participants are placed in a circle, preferably without tables, and the group is invited to come with spontaneous reflections. An item, in this case a small yellow ball, was

passed around, indicating that the one that holds the ball is the one who has the right to talk. When one participant had finished talking, the ball was sent to the next person. If the participant wants to say something this was her chance, if she preferred to remain silent she sent the ball to the next person. In this way the order of talking was organised and predictable. With this method, there can always be another round to ensure that everyone that wants to speak has the opportunity. Holding on to something physical can be comforting when talking about sensitive issues.

The first question that was raised in the circle was; **What do I need to feel safe?** Everyone had their own priorities on what is most important to them, and one of the midwives was a bit shy when she told us that the burkha was most important for her. - With a burkha you are anonymous and you avoid harassment from men. Having a safe means of transport and a maharam (woman's husband or male relative that accompanies her on her travels) were other important contributions to feeling safe.

### **Stories of coping with conflict**

From the sharing of stories on coping with conflict, three were chosen to be presented in the public meeting on the fourth day. Here is one that was presented by an experienced midwife named Shirin Gul. The story was written down by one of the participants, Noorullah Navayee, an experienced peace educator from Kabul University, at the Open meeting. After the story you can see his assessment.

### **It was Friday**

*"It was Friday and I did not have much to do until I saw a woman with a five or six year old child walk into our clinic. She was wobbling and seemed to be in pain. She was pregnant and it was time for her to give birth. I examined and talked to her. I asked her about her male companion to help her and care for her, as it is normal in that area that no woman comes to the clinic alone. She was very weak, and I saw she needed blood. She said that her male companion was on the way and would arrive soon. Her situation was critical and she was about to give birth, so we tested her blood to make sure that there was some blood in our laboratory, in case her condition got more serious and her companion did not arrive. She gave birth to a baby girl and we gave her a blood transfusion to avoid her losing consciousness. I cared for her and her baby, giving her all the necessary assistance. She and her baby, after some initial problems, became stable and began to recover. Her male companion arrived after many hours in the late afternoon. He was the woman's husband's brother and secretly said that he was a Talib and that his brother was out fighting. That was why he had brought his brother's wife to the clinic. He had dropped her by the clinic and then taken four other women who had other medical conditions to the city for check-ups and treatment. He said that it was a holiday and a good opportunity for them to get out of their village without much checking and disturbance by security forces.*

*I had a chance to discuss with the woman who had just given birth, about herself and her life situation. She was very grateful for the assistance she had received, but very dissatisfied with her husband's fighting. She said that she wanted to tell her husband to stay home and do his normal work on their family*

*farm instead of shooting and fighting. She said it was much better to have clinics and doctors nearby instead of destroying everything.*

*The male companion of the women asked me about the security situation in our town, I shared my fears of Taliban's rocket, one of which had landed a week ago in our neighbor's yard leaving some physical destruction. He said that he would ask his fellows not to fire any rocket on that town any more. We have not seen any rockets since then."*

This was one of the stories of a midwife who works in a local basic health clinic. She and other midwives had similar stories, where their midwifery services were a tool to connect humanity to the militants, and discuss with them some resolutions necessary for their service provisions. Having access to families in the most conservative areas in a very critical moment of life, besides providing health services, some of these midwives apply communication and dialogue skills to help women and families resolve their conflicts, and also they dialogue with men, listening to them and helping them to see things differently. (Noorullah Navayee)

*Norunn Grande,  
Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue*



*Skedsmo Dialog 2012. Photo: Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue.*

## Norway: Dialogue – a Tool for Overcoming Segregation

### Background

Norway has always been a multicultural society with national minorities like the Sami people, and foreigners, who have been recruited as experts in different fields. Beside these expert immigrants, there is labor immigration from neighboring countries like Sweden and Finland, and later from Pakistan, the former Yugoslavia and Turkey. In addition to labor immigrants Norway has since the 1970s, received numbers of refugees from various conflict or post- conflict areas like Somalia, Sudan, former Yugoslavia, Eritrea and Palestine, to mention a few of them.

Skedsmo municipality is one of the places, where many immigrants were settled. This means the municipality has a great potential for innovative development, but it also has the challenging task of creating an inclusive society based on equality and respect.

Analyzing the multicultural Norwegian society, our center found that we are facing many of the same problems as those in the post-conflict areas we have been engaged in. Stereotyping, racial discrimination and, to some degree, segregated living areas are also common in the biggest cities in Norway. The conflict level is still low, but many minority groups are suffering in silence, in their struggle to be accepted as equal citizens.

Debates on immigration, integration and inclusion are often based on a presumption of “us” (Norwegians) and “them” (all newcomers, immigrants) especially those coming from areas outside the western hemisphere. This “us” indicates a set of values, norms and actions, which are assumed not to be part of “their culture” – an assumption, which might create the idea of superior and inferior cultural

backgrounds. Linked to that, there is also an unclear perception of what it means to be Norwegian.

A well-functioning democratic society needs to be built on the equality and respect of all citizens, regardless of their religious and ethnical background. The feeling of being treated with equality and respect is subjective. Laws and regulations might give the impression of safeguarding the equality of all citizens, but daily life interactions often give a more nuanced picture.

Creating respect and equality in a community demands long-term processes, where all parties are included and listened to. In this process dialogue can be one of the tools.

In Skedsmo, as in other Norwegian municipalities, there are many volunteer organizations. Some of them organize sports activities for children and youth, others come together for handicraft activities or gather their national groups for cultural activities.

These organizations are important for creating social activities and could be excellent meeting place for the diverse population. But unfortunately this is not the case. Most voluntary organizations are ethnically homogenous, using their gatherings for activities for their own national or religious group. For some of the organizations this kind of separation has not been intentional, while others – particularly the immigrant organizations – are, understandably enough, using their gatherings for maintaining their language, culture and religion.

The dialogue process in Skedsmo started through contact with an adviser from the cultural section in the administration. She had for many years followed up volunteer organizations in Skedsmo and observed that there is little interaction between immigrant organizations and the traditional Norwegian organizations. Her concern was that this situation strengthens the segregational tendencies in the municipality and she was looking for a tool to prevent this development. Through funding from the Directorate of Integration and Diversity, Skedsmo municipality, in cooperation with the Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue, started Skedsmo Dialogue, a forum for 30 women representing different volunteer organizations. Around 65 % of the participants had another ethnical background than Norwegian and their ages were between 30 and 68 years.

### **The dialogue process**

**The first step** in this process was gathering 30 women with different backgrounds, beliefs, experiences and positions. This was only possible because of our key person, the adviser from the cultural sector mentioned above. Having a key person, who is trusted by the local community, is an important start for a dialogue process. Our key person had been working for the municipality for many years. She is, as mentioned, part of the cultural sector in Skedsmo, and one of her main tasks in all these years had been to follow up the voluntary sector in the municipality. Her work brought her into contact with each newly established organization in Skedsmo. Many of the immigrant organizations especially were in frequent contact with her, because of her knowledge of Norwegian rules and laws needed for organizational life. Such service

creates trust, although the cooperation was not always without conflicts. Through this cooperation she has become the center of an important network, which enables her to identify motivated and interested participants to the dialogue forum. The participants came because they felt safe in interaction with the key person.

**The second step** was to find a safe and neutral space for the dialogue sessions. In our case we selected a room in the Town Hall. The Town Hall is an open place for all inhabitants and we therefore considered it as the most neutral space in the municipality. In addition to the physical space, it is important to prepare an environment which encourages people to talk and to interact with each other. In our case we invited the group to a meal, an action that became a tradition upheld through two years. Food is a universal need and it creates an atmosphere of wellbeing and kindness. Gradually the women began to prepare the food themselves. The acknowledgment of their effort strengthened their self-esteem. Besides that we used time to get known with each other, through a process where each participant got time to present themselves and their organization. For that process alone we used several meetings.

Dialogue is a joint project and cannot contain any hidden agenda. Everyone involved must be invited to participate in deciding the goal, topics, working methods and schedules. This creates a sense of security and gives ownership to the project. Attempts at manipulation undermine all trust and are destructive to any dialogue. The participants in the Skedsmo dialogue process used time to get to know each other, and discussed and negotiated how they wanted to develop the process. For

example they had to agree on the topics they were interested in talking about. Several participants wanted to have experts to give introductions to them, but through a joint process they decided to base the dialogues on presentations of their own knowledge and experience. This decision was quite important for the development of the group process, because each participant had to choose a partner they had never worked with before, for preparation of the presentations.

For several participants this was a totally new experience. Especially for some minority representatives who had previously been sitting in a group with people from the majority population.

**The third step** in the dialogue was to ensure that all participants were *equal*. In the event of major differences between the participants' education, level of knowledge and status, one has to establish human equality through addressing each of the participants with openness and interest. Giving this attention, regardless of status, position or educational background creates a feeling of being treated with equality. Interaction based on equality is a perfect foundation for trust building. Trust and equality are interrelated. Trust is also something which can be spread through a group. The facilitators trusted the participants and recognized them by being attentive and listening and this behavior influenced the rest of the group. When trust first was established through attention and listening, the participants discovered similarities in each other's lives, such as daily struggles with teenage children or the difficulties in combining work and family responsibilities. This opened up the "door" for seeing the other from a different perspective – not only as someone who is different, but more



as someone who is equal, with a universal set of emotions and needs, among others the need of being treated with equality. Understanding that our basic needs and emotions are universal was the step which encouraged the participants to treat the others with equality.

**The fourth step** was to establish the will and ability to listen. If nobody listens, nothing that is said will be of any use. Being ignored always feels painful and degrading. Dialogue requires empathetic listening in order to understand the others. Listening does not only mean hearing the words the others are saying, but also recognizing the tentative, the uncertain or the unfinished. Active listening was challenging for the participants in the Skedsmo dialogue. A good listener has to battle inattention, impatience and self-centeredness – a difficult task in a world where such behavior is the most common. Active listening includes asking good questions. Good questions put us on the track of something we do not know, but would like to know and should know. An honest question such as “How is life for a foreigner in Norway?” can be the starting point for a new and changed understanding. Talking is important, but doing things together strengthens the relationships even more. The participants in the Skedsmo dialogue had to prepare joint lectures and presentations; they planned and arranged events like the celebration of the 8th of March and other cultural activities. Minority and majority participants alike were working together for common goals. For some this was a bright new experience.

**The fifth step** in that dialogue process was to ensure sustainability. Starting up such a process is a binding commitment. Organizers and facilitators have to prepare

the ground for a continuation of the process. This was done by involving the participants from the first moment so that they felt responsibility for the group, and responsible for the impact the work will have on the community. Sustainability processes also need to be anchored into legal bodies or organizations. In our case both the administration and the political level in the municipality secured the funds and the organizational structure for further processes.

### **Achievements**

A sustainable change process depends on an interaction between the grassroots level and the structural level. Those two levels are interdependent. The Skedsmo dialogue process started as an initiative from one adviser from the cultural sector in the municipality. She included participants from different grassroots organizations. The funding for this activity was given from a higher structural level in the Norwegian government. Their intention was to support a process which could also be of interest to other municipalities. The Nansen Center delivered the professional knowhow for the process. Through the process the local administration and people from the political level got interested in the method and decided to continue the development of the dialogue forum, independent of the first funding. The forum influenced the structural planning, through being part of the municipality’s action plan for an inclusive society. This means that the dialogue forum promoted changes and motivated the administration and the Mayor of Skedsmo to use the method as one of the tools for developing a diverse municipality based on equality and respect.

## Conclusion

Dialogue is a tool for overcoming segregation. This example describes the process from a three year project in one of the multicultural municipalities in Norway. The ethnical segregation in some Norwegian municipalities is not from the goal of any national or regional political leading institution, but rather an unconscious and incidental structural development, pushed forward by a housing market controlled by financial interest. The result of this is living areas with cheap or rented apartments with a high percentage of immigrants and others more expensive areas where the main group is ethnical Norwegians. These living patterns limit the daily life interaction between minorities and majority and thereby hinder important interactions for developing a better understanding of each other's differences.

Engagement in a voluntary organization could help to overcome this situation, but unfortunately many of these organizations are quite homogenous. Each organization has their own program and workspace and in a democratic society it is impossible to force people, who choose to be engaged in their leisure time, to take part in something they are not interested in. The only way, as a wise adviser in the cultural sector discovered, is to motivate members of different organizations to come together in order to develop common activities and learn from each other.

Dialogue was chosen as the method, because it is based on equality and respect for each other. In a dialogue status, position, ethnical or educational background is irrelevant. What matters is the willingness and openness to listen and enough curiosity to ask good questions.

The best conversation happens when both parts develop a new understanding for each other. The Skedsmo dialogue has shown that dialogue is a tool for overcoming segregational tendencies. In the Skedsmo dialogue the most talkative started to listen; those who thought that they were in a better position because of their background or knowledge of the Norwegian society received insight in life stories, which made them more humble and less locked in their positions; the most vulnerable and silent started to talk, and all of them achieved a safer approach to their differences. These are the first steps for overcoming segregation.

*Christiane Seehausen,  
Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue*



*Lillehammer-Bujanovac School Cooperation with Tatjana Popovic and Lumnije Mustafi, NDC Serbia.*

## South Serbia: Interethnic dialogue as a long-term process

### Introduction

Interethnic dialogue is a long-term process of re-establishing relationships and cooperation between different ethnic groups in local divided communities. Nansen Dialogue Centers have facilitated a series of such processes after the conflicts in the Western Balkans region. It includes dialogue sessions, training programs and joint activities that provide opportunity for people to interact and make an effort to understand each other. The goal is to rebuild broken links, gradually establish cooperation and jointly work on improving conditions in the local community, so that all ethnic groups can live together instead of living next to and separated from each other. The process is, in its essence, a step by step reconciliation and conscious investment into continuous peacebuilding.

Building bridges in the divided communities is a step by step dialogue process towards reconciliation. The first step includes understanding the concerns, interests and needs of each other; the next step is about building trust and agreeing on joint interests; then follows a period of opening up the channels for cooperation leading to defining concrete ways of creating the dialogue process. These are aimed at achieving the needed social change by working patiently on the implementation of the long-term processes. This requires dedication and persistence.

In post-conflict societies in former Yugoslavia, there was the need to foster citizen participation in important social processes. Citizens living in the societies divided along the ethnic lines were highly

mistrustful both towards each other and towards decision-makers, both local and national. The prevailing feeling was that a few nationalist leaders had led them into the war, and that for a decade someone else had been deciding on all important aspects of their lives. The culture of democratic participation and cooperation was non-existent. Based on the field assessments, Nansen Dialogue Network facilitators defined the basic strategy for working in local communities consisting of goals and initial activities.

**Goals:**

- Rebuilding relationships, overcoming the divisions;
- Moving things from the status quo of negative peace or frozen conflict to the process of conflict transformation;
- Step by step reconciliation and establishment of cooperation, building bridges together (new activities at local level, strategies for change);
- Peacebuilding activities aimed at achieving sustainable peace in the society.

**Activities and events in the field:**

- Organizing trust-building meetings with each ethnic group separately;
- Organizing dialogue sessions: joint, interethnic meetings and seminars - giving opportunity to people to meet and talk openly;
- Capacity-building trainings for local populations on dialogue, conflict analysis tools, negotiation and mediation;
- Advocacy work at different levels of society.

During the course of fifteen years, this approach resulted in the formation of a network of associates and allies aimed at overcoming the ethnic divides.

Here follows an example from South Serbia, where the Nansen Dialogue Center Serbia worked for 7 years with representatives from local authorities, teachers and students on 2 parallel processes:

- 1) Improving the organizational capacities and functioning of the local self-government in such a way that all ethnic groups are equally represented and participate in the decision-making process and
- 2) Professional training for teachers with the aims of establishing school mediation clubs and fostering inter-ethnic cooperation between Serbian and Albanian schools. Both were done with the active support of Lillehammer municipality, by involving experts for both fields in the creation of programs, facilitating seminars and following the developments.

In 2003 when NDC Serbia started working in the town of Bujanovac, the divisions in the community after the conflict were still strong. Schools attended by Serbian students and schools attended by Serbian and Roma students were in different parts of town. Dialogue seminars for teachers were held with the purpose of laying the ground for interethnic cooperation and as an introduction to professional training for school mediators. At first, teachers were isolated in their respective ethnic groups, did not feel safe enough to share opinions and had only polite social interaction with their colleagues from other schools. The group of facilitators was comprised of local representatives and Norwegian colleagues and it played an important role in the process of building trust and improving relationships. Impartiality, empathy, openness and flexibility were some of the values participants observed

through concrete activities in the form of meetings, visits to schools and training. Also, the fact that they could follow professional training in their own mother tongues added to the quality of the learning process and was seen as a sign of mutual respect by all participants. During the process of establishing school mediation in six schools, facilitators and coordinators were continuously consulting with school principals, local government officials and representatives of the school departments of the ministry of education.

Through these measures, they fostered cross-sectoral cooperation, brought decision-makers closer to people and showed how to practice participative democracy in order to work jointly on rebuilding institutions and improving life conditions.

Teams of teacher mediators trained students and formed peer mediation teams, and established the mediators' clubs where serious conflicts are resolved. Teams from different schools have been organizing joint trainings for Albanian, Serbian and Roma students. This process resulted in a joint event during which teams presented mediation cases from their schools. This was held in 2012 and represents the crown of the long-term investment of local actors, carefully guided by facilitators. Patience, persistence and dedication are necessary for the process of positive changes in the form of concrete achievements.

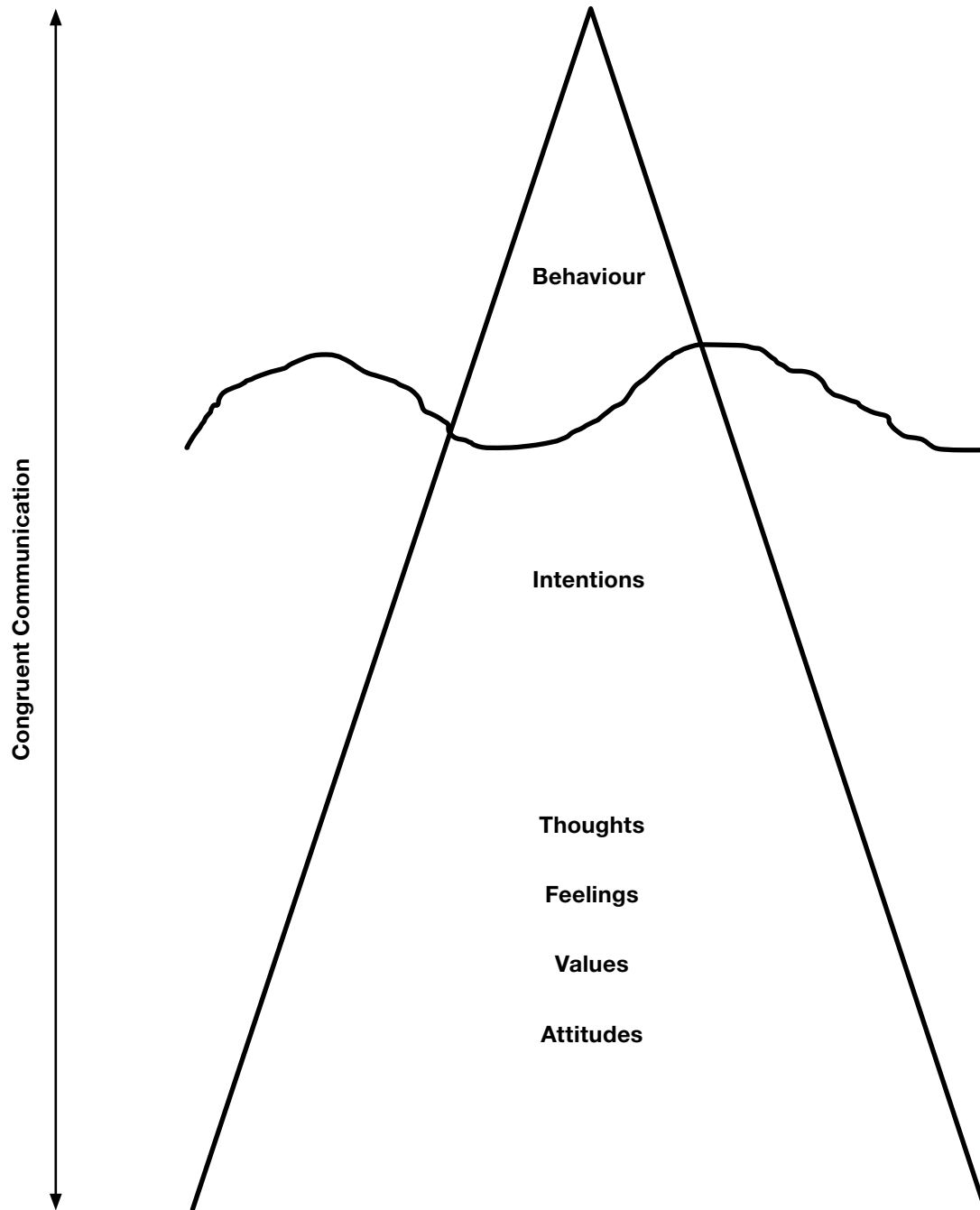
*Tatjana Popović,  
Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia*

# HANDOUTS

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- 1) The Iceberg Model** (2 pages, model on one page, text on the other)  
*Ch. 1 Communication*
- 2) Nonverbal Communication**  
*Ch. 1 Communication*
- 3) Key Qualities of Dialogue**  
*Ch. 2 Dialogue*
- 4) Asking Good Questions**  
*Ch. 2 Dialogue*
- 5) Reflective Enquiry Worksheet**  
*Ch. 3 Identity*
- 6) King and the Queen**  
*Ch. 4 Culture*
- 7) Sources and Types of Conflict**  
*Ch. 5 Understanding Conflict*
- 8) Human Needs** (2 pages, Maslow on one side, Max Neef on the other)  
*Ch. 5 Understanding Conflict*
- 9) Conflict Mapping**  
*Ch. 6 Conflict Analysis*
- 10) The Onion** (2 pages)  
*Ch. 6 Conflict Analysis*
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- 12) Styles of Behavior in Conflict Situations** (2 pages)  
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# HANDOUT 1 – The Iceberg Model



## **Explanation of the model**

The biggest part of an iceberg is below the water surface. That means you cannot see it. Imagine the iceberg represents a human being. The part above the water surface is visible – this is our behaviour. Everyone can see what we do, what we say, how we say it, and everyone interprets it in his/her own way- depending on previous experiences and thoughts.

Below the water surface, not visible for anyone else, we find our intentions. What we intend to do, the intentions behind our actions. We might express these intentions to people around us, but others will hide them for a variety of reasons, such as maintaining a power position, manipulation or to surprise others. Our intentions may be good or bad, reasoned or spontaneous – the listener never knows. But whatever our intentions, they will have an impact on how we communicate with others.

On the bottom of the iceberg we have our thoughts, feelings, values and attitudes. Values and attitudes is something we develop from childhood. We might change some of them over time, some will be modified, and others will get stronger. This depends on our environment, work, social network and interests. What we feel in different situations depends very much on our personality, values and attitudes. If one of my important values is justice, I will feel quite uncomfortable, angry or upset when experiencing injustice. What we think and how we think is interlinked with our attitudes and values.

Our messages will be more congruent when all these elements are interrelated. To enable our messages to persist congruent we need to be aware of our feelings, values and attitudes. Regardless of our awareness they will be expressed through our body language. Being aware and conscious of how language and body language interact can enable us to express the same message both verbally and non-verbally. By reflecting on our intentions and daring to express them we can avoid misunderstandings and prevent conflicts.



## HANDOUT 2 – Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication, or body language, is a vital form of communication. A natural, unconscious language which broadcasts our true feelings and intentions, and clues us in to the feelings and intentions of those around us.

### *Body movement and posture*

Consider how your perceptions of people are affected by the way they sit, walk, stand up, or hold their head. The way you move and carry yourself broadcasts a wealth of information.

### *Gestures*

Gestures are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. We wave, point, beckon, and use our hands when we are arguing or speaking animatedly – expressing ourselves with gestures often without thinking. However, the meaning of gestures can be very different across cultures and regions, so it's important to take care to avoid misinterpretation.

### *Eye contact*

The messages we can send with our eyes is almost limitless.

### *Touch*

We communicate a great deal through touch. Think about the messages given by the following: a firm handshake, a timid tap on the shoulder, a warm bear hug.

### *Space*

We all have a need for personal space, although that need differs depending on the culture, the situation, and the closeness of the relation.

### *Voice*

It's not just what you say, it's how you say it. When we speak, other people "read" our voices in addition to listening to our words. Things they pay attention to include your timing and pace, how loud you speak, your tone and inflection, and sounds that convey understanding, such as "ahh" and "uh-huh." Think about how the tone of voice, for example, can indicate sarcasm, anger, affection, or confidence.

### *Emotional awareness*

To send accurate nonverbal cues, you need to be aware of your emotions and how they influence you. You also need to be able to recognize the emotions of others and the true feelings behind the cues they are sending. This is where emotional awareness comes in.

## HANDOUT 3 – Key Qualities of Dialogue

### **Integrity**

Dialogue is communicating with integrity. Non-verbal aspects of communication, intentions, attitudes, values and thoughts must be consistent with the words used.

### **Challenging**

Dialogue does not mean accepting anything or everything from others. It may require that we challenge or oppose the others assertion. When this is the case, this must be done in a way that upholds the humanity of the other and us.

### **Humility**

Dialogue involves seeking to know oneself and showing one's strengths and weaknesses to the other.

### **Caring for the other**

Dialogue requires accepting responsibility for the other, without expecting that this will be reciprocated.

### **Common language**

Dialogue is about striving to achieve a common language.

### **Understanding first**

In dialogue, we seek first to understand and then to be understood.

### **Relationships**

Dialogue is about understanding and exploring relationships.

### **No agreement**

Dialogue is not necessarily about agreeing or becoming like the other.

### **Listening**

Dialogue is more about listening than speaking.

### **No judgments**

In dialogue, we try not to pass judgment. Judgments, generalizations, blame or diagnoses destroy the dialogue process.

### **Nonverbal communication**

Dialogue can take place even in silence. Body language and facial expressions are essential for dialogue.

### **Change**

Dialogue means personal and societal change.

## HANDOUT 4 – Asking Good Questions

No one says everything you want to hear in the exact order, depth, and detail that you prefer. That's why the chief tool of a good listener is a good question. Well-crafted questions can stimulate, draw out, and guide talks.

You can use these guidelines when developing questions:

- Plan your questions. Before your meeting, outline your information goals and a sequence of related questions to help you follow the conversation and cue your notes.
- Know your purpose. Every question you ask should help you gather either facts or an opinion. Decide what kind of information you need and frame your questions accordingly.
- Open conversation. Unlike simple yes-or-no questions, open-ended questions invite the respondent to talk – and enable you to gather more information.
- Speak your listener's language. Relate questions to the listener's frame of reference and use words and phrases that your listener understands. For example, avoid social workers jargon when you're talking with someone outside your working place. If someone doesn't seem to understand what you're asking, try rephrasing.
- Use neutral wording. Avoid asking leading questions.
- Follow general questions with specific ones. Build a hierarchy of questions that begins with the big picture and gradually drills down into specifics with follow-up questions.
- Focus your questions so they ask one thing at a time. To get more complete answers, craft short questions, each of which covers a single point. If you really want to know two different things, ask two different questions.
- Ask only essential questions. If you don't really care about the information that's likely to come, don't ask the question. Respect the other person's time and attention to avoid appearing resistant to closing the deal.
- Don't interrupt. Listen to the full answer to your question. The art of good questioning lies in truly wanting the information that would be in the answer.
- Make transitions natural. Use something in the answer to frame your next question.
- Questions that are really statements of assumptions put in the form of a question can be aggressive, which often leads to hostility. Instead, break down the question so the other party has an opportunity to provide you with information that can further your understanding.

## HANDOUT 5 – Reflective Enquiry Worksheet

### Reflective Enquiry Session – Individual Reflection on Identity and Values

#### Background

Where were you born and where did you grow up?  
What identity have you inherited (German, Zulu, Muslim, Christian, caste, working class)?

#### Roles

What roles do you fill in your family?  
Who are you when you are working (mother, husband, teacher, administrator, human rights worker, chairperson)?

#### Affinities

Who are you when you are relaxing and enjoying recreation in non-working time (football player, pianist, potter, mountain climber, poet)?

#### Goals

What are you aiming to be, to do, or to achieve in 5 years' time?  
How would you describe yourself in context of your personal goals, and how do you try to put these into practice (as peacemaker, promoter of justice, entrepreneur, spiritual seeker, learner)?  
What is the most important aspect of your identity at present, and why is this?  
What might cause your identity to change in future?

#### Values

Think about people you admire...  
What is it about them that you admire so much?

Think about a situation you later wished you had approached differently. What kept you from doing what you (in retrospect) really would have liked to do?

Recall a time when you stood up for something. What were the values that you were defending? Think about core values and acquired values...  
Why are you involved in your present activities? (Motivation/ inspiration/intention)  
What are you most proud of in your efforts so far?  
What lessons have you learned from your mistakes?  
How do you expect to change in the next 5 years?

## HANDOUT 6 – The King and the Queen

The King loves the Queen, but he has to go for a long journey. He suspects that the Queen has a lover, and therefore he orders the castle guards to kill her if she leaves the castle during his absence. He tells his wife about this before he departs from the castle.

When the King has left, the Queen's lover contacts her and urges her to come to him. She says that she cannot come, since the guards have been ordered to kill her if she does. Her lover says that he desperately needs to see her, and says that it is important that she comes the following night.

The Queen talks to one of the guards, who says that he will protect her and help her get out of the castle and back inside, provided she returns by midnight.

The Queen meets her lover and comes back to the castle on time. The guard who promised to help her has fallen asleep. Another guard sees her as she tries to enter the castle, and kills her.

Order the characters of the story with numbers 1–5, based on how responsible they are for the Queen's death:



The King



The Queen



The lover



The guard who falls asleep



The guard who kills her

## HANDOUT 7 – Sources and Types of Conflict

### **Conflicts about information**

Often the parties in a conflict do not have sufficient information, or even the same information, about a situation. Collecting and clarifying facts can go a long way toward easing tensions. Parties might also interpret the data in differing ways, or assign different levels of importance to the same data. Open discussion and input from trusted outside parts can help in assessing the relevance of available information.

### **Conflict about resources**

Conflicts about material resources such as land, money, or objects are normally obvious to identify and often lend themselves well to straightforward bargaining. Sometimes, however, although the parties appear to be squabbling over a resource, the real conflict is about something else, perhaps relationships or psychological needs of one or both parties.

### **Conflicts on relationships**

People in familial relationships, business partnerships or community organizations commonly have disagreements over a variety of issues, but sometimes the interdependence created by their relationship introduces a destructive dimension to differences that would otherwise be easily resolved. Past events or years of stereotyping can make people inflexible or unwilling to try even the most fair and obvious solution. Goals, roles, responsibilities, and different perspectives about past experiences may need to be addressed before the other conflicts can be tackled.

### **Conflicts of interest or needs**

Important and powerful human needs for things such as identity, respect, or participation are often the at the heart of conflicts which present themselves as contests for material things. Constructive opportunities for individuals and communities to express their needs and feel that they have been heard are critical to addressing these needs. Often long-term resolution of a resource conflict depends as much on meeting the interests or needs of the people involved as on dividing the resources.

### **Conflicts about structures**

Social and organizational structures determine who has access to power or resources, who is afforded respect, and who has the authority to make decisions. Conflicts about or within structures often involve justice issues and competing goals. Such conflicts often require years of effort to effect constructive change.

### **Conflicts involving values**

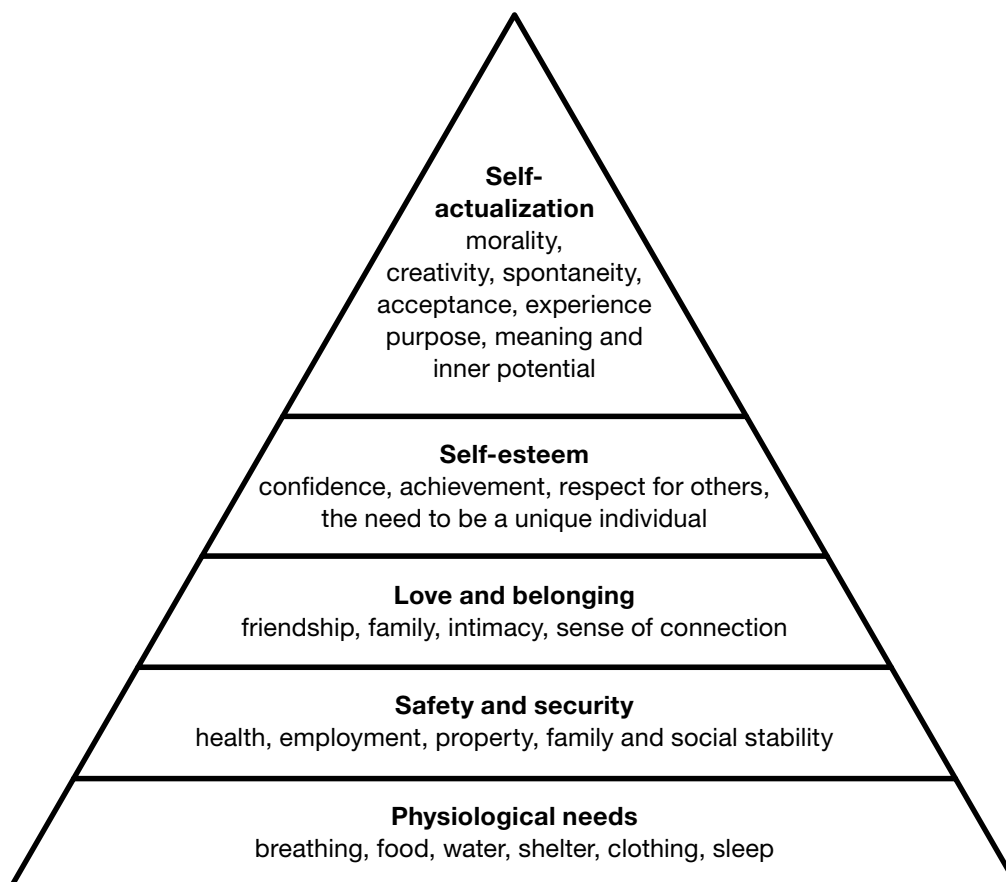
Values and beliefs are formed by life experiences and faith perspectives. A challenge to someone's values are often perceived as a threat to his identity, and this makes conflicts involving values the hardest to resolve. Most people react defensively to the threat and withdraw from any negotiation, assuming that a resolution of the conflict will require them to change their values. But being able to clarify their values and feel that they have been heard and understood allows parties to move away from defensiveness, and might even result in the parties learning to live together in mutual acknowledgment of their differences.

## HANDOUT 8 – Human Needs<sup>24</sup>

Humans need several essentials to survive. Per the renowned psychologist Abraham Maslow and the conflict scholar John Burton, these essentials go beyond just food, water, and shelter. They include both physical and non-physical elements for human growth and development, as well as all those things humans are innately driven to attain.

For Maslow, needs are hierarchical in nature. That is, each need has a specific ranking. Maslow's needs pyramid starts with food, water, and shelter, followed by safety and security, then belonging or love, self-esteem, and finally, personal fulfilment.

### Maslow's Needs Pyramid



## Max Neef 's Model of Human Scale Development<sup>25</sup>

Manfred Max- Neef is a Chilean Economist. He defines the model as a taxonomy of human needs and a process by which communities can identify their “wealths” and “poverties” according to how these needs are satisfied. He describes needs as being constant through all cultures and across historical time periods. The thing that changes with time and across cultures is the way that these needs are satisfied. According to the model human needs are to be understood as a system i.e. they are interrelated and interactive.

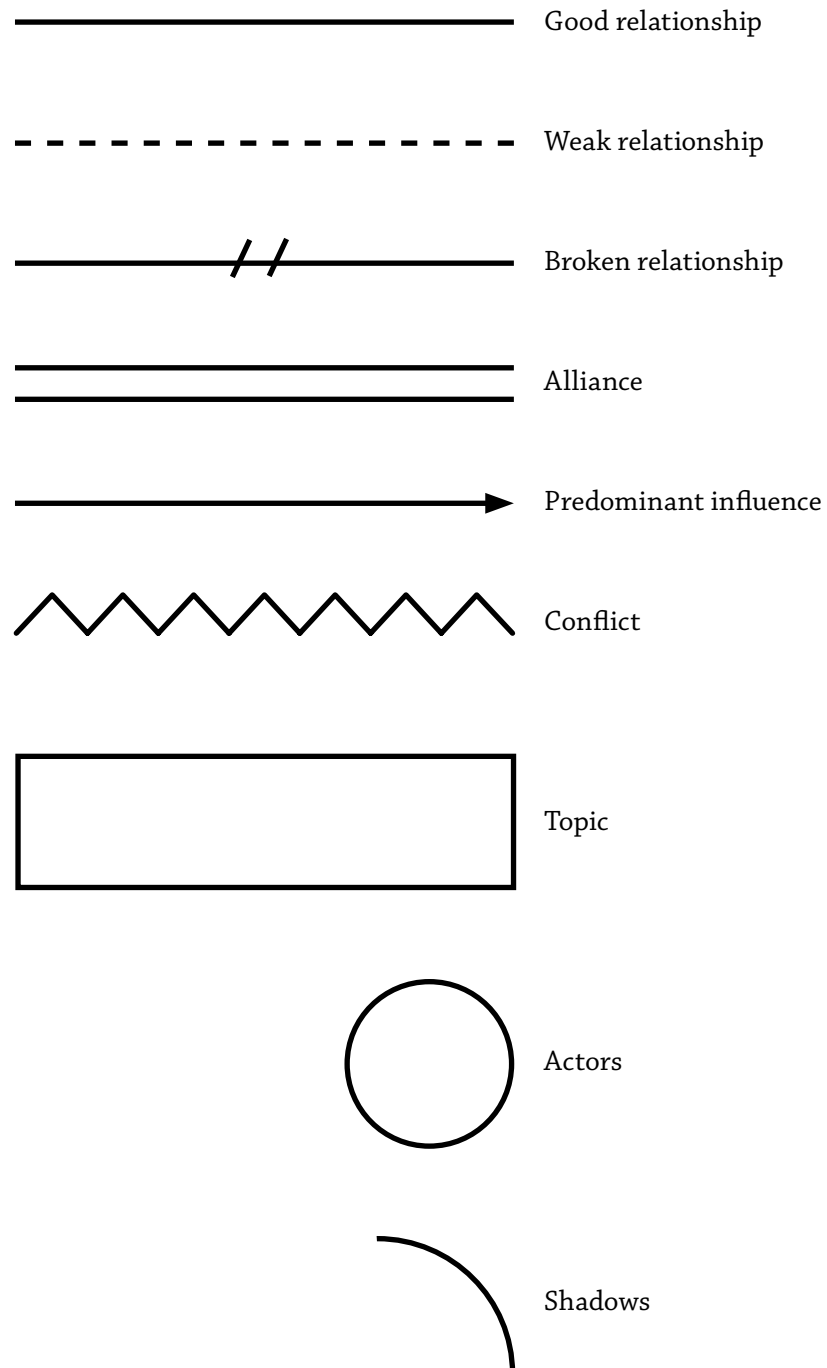
According to Max Neef the fundamental needs of humans are

- Subsistence
- Protection
- Affection
- Understanding
- Participation
- Leisure
- Creation
- Identity
- Freedom

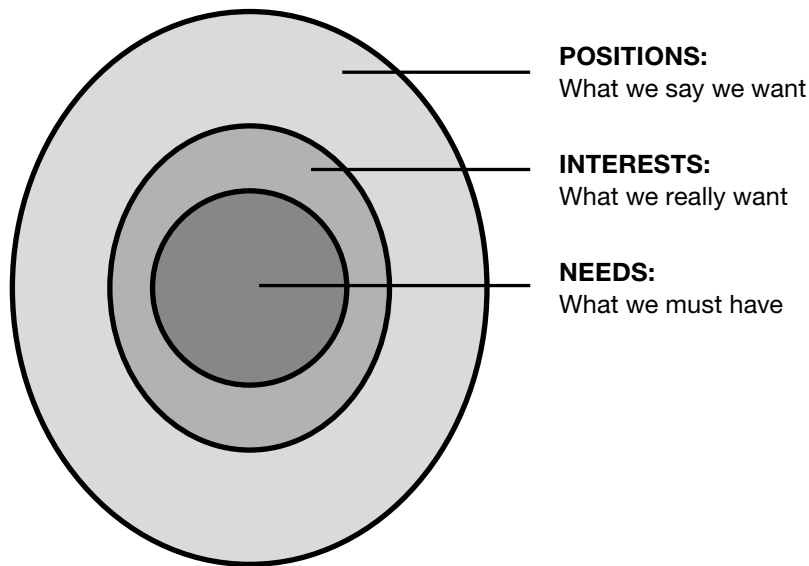


## HANDOUT 9 – Conflict Mapping

The symbols for the mapping



## HANDOUT 10 – The Onion<sup>26</sup>



### The Onion

The onion model is based upon the idea that the layers of a conflict are much like that of an onion: there are many dynamics to be considered, but only those on the surface are visible, until we start to peel of the layers to see what lies at the core. It allows a better understanding of the conflicting parties' positions, and their real interests and needs. It helps us to distinguish between what the different parties say they want, and what they really want and need.

In peaceful situations people relate and act on the basis of their actual needs. In conflict situations, the lack of access to basic needs, together with the mistrust that often characterises relationships in conflict, alters the basis on which people relate to one another.

It is important to be aware about the distinction between positions and interests:

- Positions are what people say they want in a conflict.
- Interests refer to what people really want, and what motivates them.

The outer layer of the onion represents the positions we allow everyone to see and hear (what we say we want). Underlying these are our interests (what we want), which represent what we wish to achieve in a conflict situation. At the core of the onion are our needs (what we must have),

which must be fulfilled in order for the conflicting parties to be truly satisfied with the outcome. While interests can often be negotiated, needs are non-negotiable. Although it may be difficult to set other dynamics aside, it is critical that conflicting parties understand their own and each other's core needs, so that constructive and satisfying outcomes can be achieved.

When analysing interests we should bear in mind that:

- All parties have interests and needs that are important and valid to them.
- A solution to the problem should meet the maximum number of interests of the maximum number of parties possible.
- There is always more than one acceptable solution to a problem.
- Any conflict involves compatible interests, as well as conflicting ones

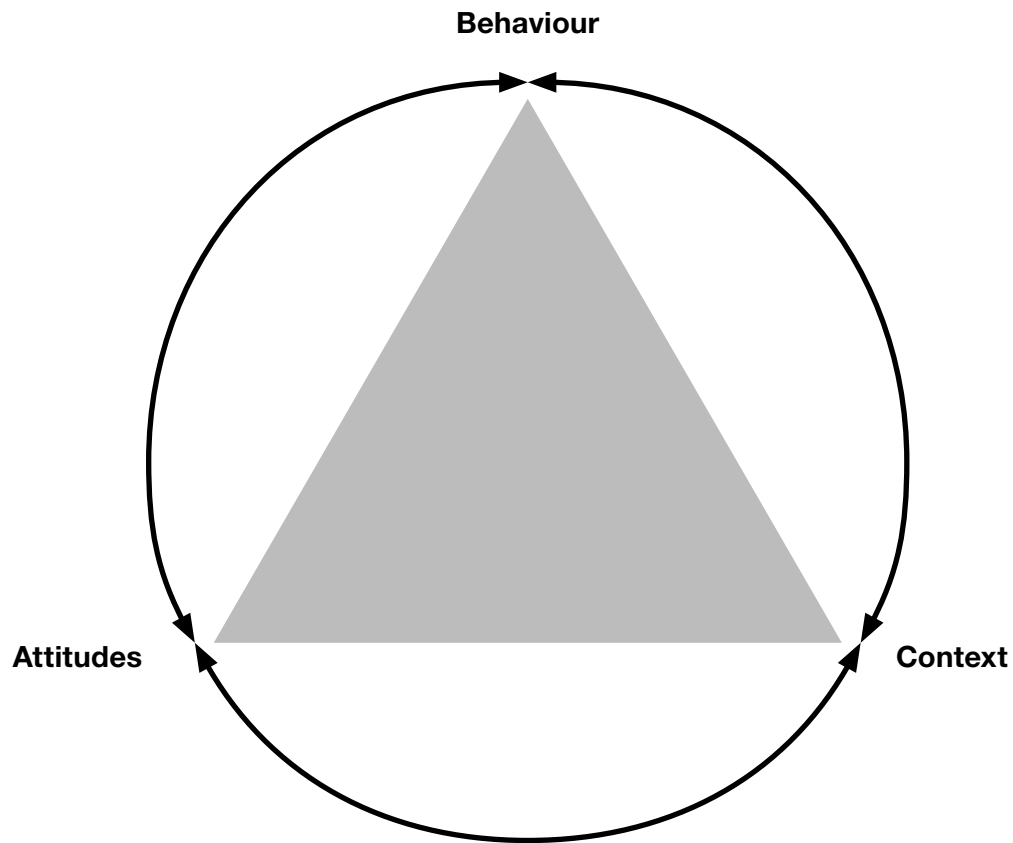
### **When to use it?**

The Onion model can be used as part of an analysis to understand the dynamics of a conflict situation, but also in preparation for facilitating dialogue between groups in a conflict, or as part of a negotiation or mediation process itself – even during the post-conflict reconstruction process.

It can be helpful for those engaged in dialogue, as in order to have a successful negotiation, it is essential to make sure that the needs of each party are fully understood. It is also useful before entering into a negotiation, as a means to better understand the other(s) interests, positions and needs, but also to clarify our own ones and keep them in mind throughout the process. The idea is to carry out the onion analysis for each of the parties involved, including your own.

The Onion model can also bring insight into prolonged conflicts; even raising new hopes for them, as these kinds of conflicts are often seen to result from hiding or distorting actual needs, making the conflict intractable. These needs can be identified by further peeling off the layers of conflict!

## HANDOUT 11 – ABC Triangle



*SOURCE: C.R. Mitchell, The Structure of International Conflict, Macmillan 1981*

This analysis is based on the premise that conflicts have three major components: the **context** of situation, the **behaviour** of those involved and their **attitudes**. These three factors represent these graphically as the corners of a triangle. These three factors influence each other, hence the arrows leading from one to another.

## HANDOUT 12 – Styles of Behaviour in Conflict Situations

### **Controlling – My way**

Seeing conflicts and problems as contests to be won or lost – and it's important to be the winner. This approach is often the result of an unconscious wish to protect oneself from the pain of being wrong. It is sometimes necessary if there is imminent danger, but often gives rise to more conflict later as the hurt of the loser is translated into aggression.

### **Compromising – Give and take**

Everyone gains something and loses something. It is a common way of dealing with conflict, but tends to lead to rather short-term solutions. It may leave everyone feeling they have lost something important, and closes off the possibility of a better solution (for example, increasing the amount of resources available).

### **Problem-solving – Our way**

Otherwise known as the “win-win” approach, in which conflicts are viewed as “problems to solve between us”. In many situations, everyone involved in a conflict situation can win significant gains. It puts equal priority on the relationship with the other parties and on a mutually satisfying outcome. While in many situations this is the most effective way to get fair and lasting solutions, it is far from an easy option.

### **Accommodating – Your way**

Peace at any cost is the reason behind this approach. You emphasize areas of agreement and smooth over, or ignore, disagreements. If you don't say what you are thinking others cannot know, and therefore they are powerless to deal with the conflict. This approach can be useful if a conflict would put too much pressure on a relationship, and sometimes things improve because you remain good friends.

### **Avoiding – No way**

Withdrawing, either physically or emotionally, from a conflict gives you no say in what happens, but might be wise when the issue in question is not your business. It poses the danger of allowing problems to grow unchecked, and if used unscrupulously avoidance can punish others. People often use this approach to make others change their mind. But, like other forms of coercion, this has its costs.

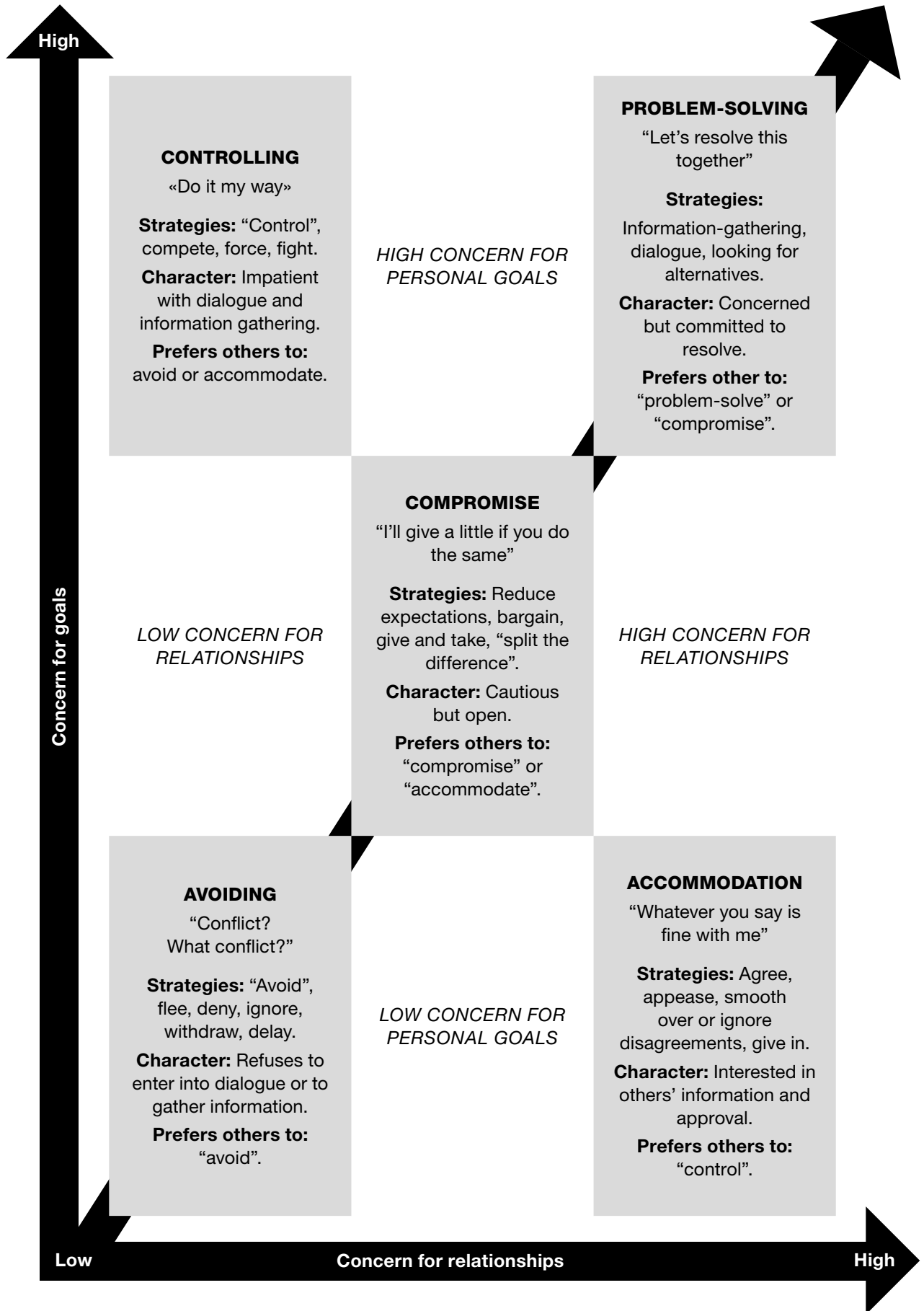


Illustration from ‘Working with Conflict’ published by Responding to Conflict. Copyright, Peace Direct.

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<http://avp.international/literature/>  
<http://www.dialogguiden.se/> (in Swedish)  
<http://dembra.no/> (in Norwegian)



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