Dialogue in divided societies.
Skills for working with groups in conflict.

Mari Fitzduff & Sue Williams

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FOREWORD

The better management of societal conflicts of an ethnic, religious, political, cultural and social nature is critical in today's world. International wars and proxy wars are proliferating, and as the diversity of each country increases, almost all countries are having difficulty in balancing the needs of their different communities. In many cases international and societal inequalities are increasing tensions, in others historical losses and gains are fueling aggression and violence. In some cases, political and other leaders are misusing differing identity tensions to further their own political goals. Managing and addressing such conflicts within countries, within regions, and at a global level is critical to sustainable peace. This book is designed as an aid for all who are interested in helping to resolve such conflicts, and the difficult challenges they entail, through the use of dialogues that are tough enough to address group, community, national and international tensions in a productive manner.

The original book on which they are based was 'Community Conflict Skills' which was written in 1988 specifically to help address issues of division in Northern Ireland. The use of the book, however, has multiplied and we know that many of the exercises are being adjusted to address conflict issues in and between a multitude of countries, and in a multitude of languages, around the world. This up-to-date version is being written as a more generic version of the many exercises, so as to make it more easily usable to others working in differing conflict contexts. We are aware that the titles for these many kinds of discussion work will vary from context to context. We have used peacebuilding work as a comprehensive term for work such as conflict resolution/transformation, justice, coexistence, anti-discrimination/anti-sectarian, shared society, mutual understanding, non-violence, reconciliation, transitional justice, non-violence and mediation training, etc. We believe all such work may find ideas for productive ways in which to talk about their situations in the book.

We hope that those of you who are working on a non-profit basis will feel free to translate, adapt, or reprint any or all parts of the book that you think might be helpful to you, and the groups that you work with.

We wish you the very best in the critical work that you are doing to ensure enduring and sustainable peace throughout our societies and our world. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can help in any way with such work.

Mari Fitzduff and Sue Williams

Chapter 1

WORKING IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

Community and societal tensions, and particularly those that are addressed through violence, destructively limit the lives of many millions of people throughout today's world. Such tensions are manifested through individual and structural exclusion and discrimination, through personal, political and institutional bigotry and through distrustful relationships between differing ethno/religio/politico/cultural communities.

While societal changes at the political, constitutional, legal, economic, and social levels are usually necessary to address most societal conflicts, this handbook is based on the belief that such work will benefit if supplemented by the kind of focused dialogue work which is outlined in this book. These exercises are designed to be used with groups who want to have productive dialogues about tough issues of history, their perceptions of 'other' communities, of varying concepts of justice and discrimination, and of differing preferred political options for their future. Through being prepared to discuss together such issues, and above all through devising programmes for action and cooperation based upon such reflections and possible agreements, these kinds of dialogues may help in developing more productive ways to live together in societal and political structures that are just, sustainable and agreed.

The following groups may find it of particular use:

- Community organisations and workers seeking to extend their remit of concern with social issues to include an examination of religious, racist, cultural, ethnocentric and sectarian forms of discrimination and exclusion, their effects on communities, and ways forward in addressing them.

- Development agencies that wish to develop the conflict-sensitive nature of their work

- Public sector groups faced with actively redressing employment practices that exclude and discriminate between differing identity communities

- Businesses who wish to increase their capacity to connect rather than divide communities

- Trade unionists seeking to deal with discriminatory and exclusionary attitudes and practices within their unions

- Political groups wishing to assess the nature of their own and other groups' divisions on social and political issues, and how to address them

- Youth workers concerned to better equip their members to question societal exclusions and take appropriate action where possible

- Education workers wishing to address issues of societal division within their classrooms, including adult education agencies who wish to include group identity discussions as part of their remit

- Reconciliation groups wishing to increase their effectiveness in promoting better understanding, respect and cooperation between differing traditions

- Economic development workers who want to ensure that their work connects rather than divides people

- Faith groups who wish to address issues of divisions within and between their communities

- Single identity groups who wish to open up discussions about differences between their members

DISCUSSIONS ARE NOT ENOUGH.

Lack of respect, injustices, lack of knowledge, intolerance, fear, bigotry, all of these can combine to make it difficult to create a fair and inclusive society. While many of the dialogues noted in the book can address many of these issues, it is also vital to ensure that such discussions lead to policies and activities that change institutions so that exclusion and discrimination of an economic, legal, social, religious, cultural or political nature do not continue to take place in a society. Without such work, the development of a peaceful society will be impossible to sustain.

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

The book contains a series of exercises designed to address group conflict work from a variety of perspectives. For groups just starting such work, mutual understanding work that is designed to address ignorance and prejudice about each other's beliefs may be appropriate. Other groups may wish to address issues of justice or political differences, while others may wish to look at and learn about differing approaches to solving conflict. Where you start with the work will be based very much on your perception of the needs and capacity of the group, and of the context within which the group finds itself. It may be that just one of the modules outlined here will by itself provide you with enough material for a few days, as you may prefer to provide a loose structure in which agendas can be drawn from the concerns of the participants as they arise, are recognised, and are formulated. It is also important to adjust the materials to make them more particular to the concerns of your groups or to the time in which they are taking place, e.g., if recent crises are uppermost in people's minds, those will provide useful material for reflection.

While the exercises may be located within particular chapters, many of them are interchangeable and should be used as such. The timings given for the exercises are approximations only and can be adjusted to take into account the time available and the number of people working in the group. If a facilitator has any doubts about the literacy level of any member of the group, many of the exercises can be adjusted to include only oral participation.

THEORY AND INPUTS

At the beginning of each chapter the book contains a very brief synthesis of some theoretical material which may be useful for the facilitator to read or to use as part of the programmes. The numbers in the theory sections refer to the exercises dealing with the particular issues under discussion. There are also inputs accompanying some of the exercises and these are provided for the use of the facilitator. However, it is useful to remember that it is usually a more effective learning process for groups to develop ideas through discussion than to offer ideas to the group in a well developed form, or a form that implies easy answers.

WORK WITHIN COMMUNITIES

Many of the modules outlined can be very profitably used with either single identity groups, i.e., groups who come from a similar ethnic, religious or cultural background. It can often prove more productive to promote intra-community dialogue on many of the matters outlined in the book before one attempts inter-community dialogue.

Frequently it is the tensions within single identity groups that are the major problem in furthering peacebuilding. Without addressing these tensions, groups will often exaggerate their hostile attitudes towards each other if work is not first done on both developing their confidence to speak as a group and on providing them with time to sort out their own internal differences.

PRESUMPTIONS AND CAUTIONS

The book has concentrated mainly on group work designed to address issues of inter-communal conflict. It is presumed that facilitators using the book will bring to the work certain basic skills for group work. These skills include the ability to facilitate an equal hearing for all participants, to hold the participants to work objectives, to be sensitive to group feelings and able to assist participants to feel safe in expressing them. It is also presumed that facilitators will have some familiarity with a range of introductory and trust and communication exercises which will help a group to work together more effectively, as well as a variety of self and group affirming exercises, and some experience of role plays.

It is important to remember that the work proposed in this book is not work of an individual, therapeutic nature. It is geared towards a collective learning process. In this sense, individual contributions of insights or feelings can be used by the group to help them understand their collective dilemmas, but should not be focused upon as personal problems.

It is also presumed that the confidential nature of the individual participants' contributions to the programme will be established at the beginning of each session, and agreement obtained from all about how the work can be reported upon, e.g., only in a generalized fashion unless permission has been obtained from individual participants to do otherwise, or not reported at all.

Facilitators may also need to be careful about whether individuals reveal information about themselves (e.g., of past or present illegal militia activities) unless they have previously thought through the consequences of such disclosures and unless dealing with such revelations is part of the group's agenda. This is both to protect the individuals themselves and to prevent members of the group from facing dilemmas during the group work or in future about whether to pass this information on to others.

Where a facilitator is conscious that strong feelings have surfaced in an individual, perhaps because of a recent experience of bereavement directly related to the conflict under discussion, it may be important for the facilitator or other concerned members of the group to take 'time out' with that individual to help them to cope. While it is possible at times for groups to collectively offer sympathy and assistance to such an individual, there are also times when such assistance may prove problematic for the whole group to offer, or for the individual to receive. If not handled carefully, grief can, unfortunately, be quickly followed by destructive recriminations.

If facilitators have strong opinions themselves - and it is a realistic assumption that many will - it is presumed that they will be able to leave aside such personal opinions, at least temporarily, in order to engage freely in their task as facilitators, and avoid any attempts to convert individuals or groups to agree with their particular view. (See Input pg.?? on 'Neutrality'). At times, however, making clear such views and their reasons for them may be appropriate. Recognizing the very difficult nature of 'neutrality' or perceived neutrality, it is often more productive to attempt to be 'inclusive' rather than neutral, and to use co-partial facilitators who identifiably come from differing communities, but who can jointly and productively facilitate difficult discussions together.

All of the work in this book has been geared towards working with adults. While it is possible to adapt some of it to work with children, such adaptation needs to be carefully done to take into account the age and experiences of the children, their capacity for thinking abstractly, and the fact that few of them have significant capacity to change societal norms and institutions.

Finally, it is important to remember that these programmes are not ends in themselves. They are merely assistive methods to enable work that can help communities develop more peaceful processes such as politics or law, through which they can solve their conflicts. We should also remember that the fact that conflicts exist is not the problem – conflicts are the norm in any society - but the way we choose to solve them.

Care must also be taken when developing such programmes to take into account the often-difficult contexts within which participants live and hope to develop such work, and the communities to which they must return after a training programme. Time must therefore be given to preparing participants for re-entry into their particular community contexts, and if necessary to developing networks of support if their work is to be effective and sustained.

The use of the term 'facilitator' throughout is presumed to be synonymous with the terms that may be used by other agencies, e.g., tutors, trainers etc.

Chapter 2

YOUR CONTEXT

For many of us, the thought of involving ourselves in our own society, directly focusing on such issues as discrimination or racism, or cultural and political differences, is both confusing and frightening. It can be confusing for many reasons. Possibly because we see such work as useless and not worth trying. Maybe because the weight of our knowledge of history has locked us into feelings of helplessness and despair. Perhaps because we have already made up our mind on a solution which we feel will have either to be imposed by force or fought for by force, hence we see anti-discrimination, inclusion and peacebuilding work as secondary to that solution.

Many of us vary, from day to day, and from incident to incident about what we think and feel, and our lack of any consistent and clear perspective is sometimes perplexing to us. (1, 2, 3, 4)

ATTEMPTING INTERVENTION

In the past, our responses to what possibilities there appeared to be for action may have varied. Some of us may have totally opted out of any attempt to intervene, preferring instead to concentrate on work or family, remaining silent when contentious issues arose in a conversation or a situation, and hoping someone, or some group, somewhere, a politician, an armed group, a reconciliation organisation, would take care of the situation, and resolve it satisfactorily.

Some of us may have opted to align ourselves with particular groups, hoping by our intervention to effect some desirable change, but may now be questioning the effectiveness of such allegiances, or such actions.

Some of us may still be querying our right to intervene in the conflict, perhaps feeling that we represent no particular group, or that we have not sufficiently challenged our own motives for wanting to set up certain programmes, or develop certain forms of action. Often we may feel that we are either too much part of the problem ourselves, or too removed from it, to have anything clear to offer (5, 6).

FEARS AND DOUBTS

As well as being confused, many of us are afraid to involve ourselves in the work because we are afraid that the emotions engendered will prove to be too difficult for us to handle or respond to. We often fear being limited in such work either personally or as an organization by our own particular strong feelings about past events, present wrongs, or preferred political perspectives. (7).

Some of us are also conscious that, at many deep levels, we do not want to HEAR what people who belong to different communities/parties other than our own are saying about their rights, fears, etc. Sometimes this is because we feel we cannot afford to listen too hard because hearing them might diminish our energy to fight for our own particular cause, or because we genuinely believe that they are not interested in hearing about OUR rights and needs, and therefore such an attempt at empathy will only be one-sided and useless (8).

FORMULATING OBJECTIVES

Even those of us who are committed to the ideal of creating a society where inequalities and community hostilities will no longer be a factor in fueling discrimination and violence, can find it confusing to formulate objectives for this type of approach. Are we talking about loving our neighbour and forgetting about justice ? Are we talking about ignoring the wrongs we have done to each other, and the bitterness and hurt that we feel ? Are we talking about individual feelings, or collective feelings, or structural systems that we believe exclude our communities? And how do the rights of women, the unemployed, and other disadvantaged groups relate to our work ? Are we just playing into the hands of groups which are fighting for the benefit of their own group, but may not be particularly interested in a wider questioning of social equity? (9, 10,11,12,13)

ACCEPTABLE TACTICS

Even if, as individuals or groups we were agreed on a variety of objectives for our peacebuilding work, we may still need to do a great deal of reflecting on what we see as acceptable methods to employ in achieving these objectives.

Such work is particularly necessary in a situation where groups which are already in conflict are further divided in their views about what means they can acceptably use to pursue their objectives. This may have varied from arguments about explicit or tacit support for the use of violence by pro-government or anti-government forces, about the use of nonviolence or civil disobedience, the validity of protest or sabotage, or participation in electoral processes. We live in our societies, and may have varied, according to time and crisis, reflection and peer groups, in our support or condemnation of a variety of methods employed in pursuing the goals of our various communities.

It is all the more essential, therefore, that groups engaged in anti-discriminatory and peacebuilding dialogue work clarify for themselves methods appropriate to their work (18, 19).

'The 'Neutral' Facilitator?

In order to facilitate difficult discussions between people who have differing perspectives on possible political solutions to their conflicts, does one have to be a 'neutral' facilitator, i.e., without a personal or group preferred solution to the conflict? If we believe in certain solutions strongly (or even weakly), does that mean that we cannot do mediation/facilitation within our own conflict context? Is it inevitable that our preferred positions will interfere with our capacity to encourage frank and tolerant discussion among groups of people having differing political aims? Or can we learn a way to better enable us to facilitate such work, without imposing our own political views on a group, or attempting to convert those who disagree with us? Would we feel that to do such work would be a betrayal of our own beliefs? And are we afraid that our own beliefs, or perceived loyalties, would be affected by doing such work?

The task of finding supposedly 'neutral' facilitators within a conflict context is difficult and indeed it may in the long run prove to be counter-productive. While it might be easier to import mediators with no particular political convictions, or to use as mediators people from within the context who are genuinely uncertain about 'solutions' to the conflict, it also avoids the facilitator having to take on board the very difficulties with which most of the participants are often struggling. It is also usually almost impossible to find enough supposedly 'neutral' facilitators for the many hundreds, if not thousands of conversations that need to be held if an agreed political or other solution is to be sustainable.

A platform for 'partial' mediators.

Can people who acknowledge that they have partial/preferred views about a 'solution' or 'solutions' undertake honestly the task of facilitating political/societal discussion?

To do this, 'partial' mediators need an intellectual and emotional 'platform' on which to steadily stand - albeit temporarily - to perform a productive facilitation role in addressing difficult conflict and societal perspectives within a group. It demands that the facilitator 'model' and hold the group to a certain process of communication within the group. Otherwise, the discussion may prove to be no different from the usual blame/recrimination pattern which characterizes much political discussion in conflict situations.

The key that will enable a 'partial' facilitator to do this is a commitment temporarily, for the course of the group session, to commit themselves to the following principles:

1. A commitment to the process of the group itself, and the equal participation of all in it

2. A commitment to respect for feelings, fears, claims about rights, etc., of all within the group and all they represent

3. A commitment to assisting all groups present in helping them articulate claims, and analyze the fears and the values behind them

4. A commitment to undertaking the above so successfully that both or all sides will willingly invite them back for more discussions

This does not demand that facilitators give up their personal political/societal views, but merely suspend them temporarily for the sake of a time-limited commitment to a process of useful discussion.

It does not preclude the use of challenge by the facilitator vis-a-vis issues of facts, rights, justice, etc. However, such challenge must be based, and be seen to be based, on a genuine attempt to explore issues of value (e.g., democracy, justice, self-determination), as they apply to all sectors of the community and not just one's own.

The above 'platform' does not always preclude the revelation by the facilitator of particular views about preferred political options. It may be possible in certain particularly confident and articulate groups that such revelations would merely become grist for the mill of the discussion. If, however, such revelations are likely to prevent the above process happening and interfere with the dialogues one is trying to encourage, then the facilitator should subordinate the public sharing of them to the prior task of facilitating the group.

(Recognizing the very difficult nature of 'neutrality' or perceived neutrality, it is often productive to use the term 'inclusive' rather than 'neutral' or to use co-partial facilitators, i.e., facilitators who identifiably come from the differing communities, and who can jointly and productively facilitate difficult discussions together.)

Remember - an easy way to evaluate whether or not a 'partial' facilitator has been successful in providing safe space for difficult discussions is whether or not both or all groups invite you back to facilitate another discussion. (14,15)

1. One Minute

Objective: To get people in touch with their feelings about the place where they live, and the people with whom they live.
(This can be used as an introductory session.)

Time: 30 - 45 minutes

Materials: An object easily handled (e.g. a piece of fruit, a shell, etc.); A stop-watch.

Method: Ask the participants to sit in a circle. Ask for a volunteer to hold the object and start the exercise. Each person in turn is to talk about their society non-stop for one minute. A ten second penalty for faltering. As a person finishes, s/he chooses another participant to speak by handing them the object.

When all have spoken, have a brief discussion on how the exercise felt.

Discussion:

- Did participants feel people listened to them?
- Did they find it difficult to listen to others?
- Did they find one minute a lot of time to fill, or too little?
- Were they afraid they would reveal too much about their own views?
- Would they have spoken differently in other company?
- What were their fears about doing the exercise?
- What are their fears now having done it?
- What feelings did they have as other people spoke?

2. Telling It

Objective: To allow the participants to safely share with each other some of their feelings and past experiences of living in their society.

Time: 1 - 2 hours

Materials: None.

Method: The facilitator asks the participants to sit in a circle. When everybody is comfortable, the procedure and the ground rules for the discussion are outlined. The facilitator then reads the first question, gives her/his answer, speaking for up to 3 minutes. The next person then answers and so around the circle. Anybody can 'pass' and not answer a question.

Ground Rules:

a) Speak from your own feeling and experience, not from theory and opinion.

b) Answers are to be made in turn - not through volunteering.

c) The decision not to answer is fully respected.

d) There is no discussion of what anyone says - only listening.

e) Everything that is said is confidential to the group.

Possible Questions:

A sample list only - make up your own as appropriate. Use specific groups names or historical events, as appropriate, e.g., for # 4 or 5. (Probably 3 or 4 questions will be enough for one session, depending on the number of participants.)

1) When was the first time you became conscious of there being a difference between the conflicting groups?

2) What have your parents said to you to explain the conflict?

3) What do you feel when you are stopped by police or security forces?

4) What were your feelings about key events in the past?

5) What did you feel about controversial historical figures?

6) What were your feelings about any times when you felt that your society might change for the better or for the worse?

7) Who are the people you most admire here in your context?

8) Have you ever felt discriminated against?

9) How do you feel about the celebrations and traditions of the other group?

10) Where were your first feelings about key changes in laws or treaties? Give examples of such.

Allow at least 15 minutes for feedback in Plenary discussion.

Discussion:

- How did the exercise feel?
- How difficult was it to listen without wanting to interrupt or reply?
- Did many statements make you angry? Confused?
- Was it difficult to be honest when speaking?
- If so, why? Who were you worried about?

Variations: The above exercise could be done in pairs (e.g. participants to take the list of questions and form into pairs for approximately 10 minutes). Then choose another partner for 10 minutes and ask questions in turn of each other. Partners can be chosen arbitrarily, or on intra-community or inter-community basis (i.e., pairs from the same background, or from different backgrounds). The same ground rules apply.

Other lists of questions can be suggested by the participants and used for the dialogues.

3. Picturing The Place

Objective: To involve all the participants in expressing some of their feelings about their society and their place in it.

Time: 45 minutes.

Materials: Large sheet of paper - flip chart, paper taped to wall or table, or wide lining paper. The size will depend on the number in the group. Allow approx 15sq.ins. per person. Crayons, markers, Blu-tac.

Method: Put a large sheet of paper where people can mill around it. Ask each person to draw on their segment of the paper some of the particular aspects they dislike most about living here. Some may disclaim any drawing talent - suggest that they use stick figures, or diagrams or symbols if they wish. (10 minutes)

When the drawings are finished, ask the participants to explain their particular part of the drawing.
(10 minutes)

Put another large sheet of paper on the floor and this time ask people to draw on it the things they most like about living here. (10 minutes)

When the drawings are finished, ask people again to share their drawings with the group. (10 minutes)

Ask the group to look over both large papers. Do they have any reactions overall?

Comment: It is probably best for this exercise, particularly if it is used in the initial part of a course, just for everybody to listen, without comment, to people's explanations of their drawings, and to leave until later any discussion of possibly controversial topics that may arise.

Variation: Each person can take separate sheets of paper, and draw their pictures on them, sharing them later in small groups or plenaries.

4. Figuring It Out

Objective: Sculpting is an alternative way for groups to take a new look at a conflict situation, and possibly find new perspectives on it.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: None.

Method: Usually up to 6 people will be required to act as possible models, plus one person to act as the sculptor. The rest of the group - up to a preferred maximum of 6, can act as observers first and eventually as 'resculptors'. Extra persons may observe, and join in eventual discussion.

A volunteer offers to be the first sculptor, and to 'sculpt' the conflict, using the other participants.

The Sculptor will choose the necessary participants s/he needs for the exercise, using them to create a 'living sculpture' of a conflict situation. Participants are to be placed as desired, with bodies moved around to convey existing groups, tensions, emotions, roles, conflict situations, etc.

The exercise is to be done without discussion. When the sculptor is happy with the positioning, s/he can give a brief explanation of why the bodies have been placed in that way.

Participants are then asked to express how they feel in their positions, and whether they would like to change anything about their positions. Observers may become re-sculptors, or may take on a role to offer a change.

According to time available, another participant can offer to do another 'sculpt' and repeat the process. Each 'sculpt' will take approximately 20 minutes.

5. Getting Here

Objectives: To assist participants in establishing for themselves, and sharing with others, events which they see as having been important steps in leading them to this particular type of work/seminar.

Time: 45 minutes, if used as an introductory exercise; 1 or more hours, if used to look at common factors facilitating change in attitudes, etc.

Materials: A sheet of paper for each participant, plus markers, pens

Method: Ask each participant to take a sheet of paper, and a pen or marker, and draw a line across the page. At the beginning of the line, mark an X and at the end of a line, mark an arrow.

The arrow represents where they are now - involved in this particular type of work, attending this particular seminar or group.

Going as far back as they can remember, and starting near the x mark, label the important events that they can remember happening in their lives that appear to mark steps along their path to this particular work/commitment/seminar. These could be incidents, people, books, meetings, demonstrations, experiences of violence that may be remembered by the participants as being in some way significant.

Allow approximately 10 minutes for this, and then ask participants to form into pairs, and discuss their line of events. Allow about 15 minutes for this.

If using this as an introductory exercise, briefly reconvene the group and ask them how it felt to do the exercise. For example, were they surprised at the things they discovered, and the differences or similarities they discovered between themselves and others?

If using the exercise to look at common factors affecting change in each of them, such factors can be shared in plenary, and written up as groupings on the board.

6. Staying On

Objectives: To help people to articulate what they feel they can contribute as individuals by staying and working in their society.

Time: 1 hour

Number in group: Maximum 10

Method: Facilitator asks the group to imagine a situation where it has been deemed by some higher forces that at least one member of the group, for reasons known only to a bureaucratic and unchangeable mind, must leave for distant and somewhat inhospitable parts of the planet. They understand that some of you may want to stay here and, in slight deference to your wishes, it has been agreed that you will be collectively allowed at least 20 minutes during which each of you may state the reasons as to why you think your presence here is vital to any positive peacebuilding developments in the next 10 years.

The facilitator then moves out of the circle and allows the discussion to proceed.

When the group has finished, discuss the experience.

Discussion:

- Did many of you just want to leave?
- Did many of you find it difficult to find reasons for staying?
- Did you dislike the exercise? Why?
- Who did you think made a good case for staying? Why?

At the end of the discussion, announce that there has of course been a reprieve, and all are now welcome to stay here!

Variation: If there are a variety of groups or organisations present, this can be done as groups (e.g., each group having to agree on points and delegate someone to speak for its case.) In this case, the discussion time taken will be within groups, followed by a feedback to hear each group's case.

Comment: It is important that, if a lot of feelings (e.g., helplessness or inadequacy) come to the fore in this exercise, time be allowed, perhaps at a later stage, for confidence-building exercises.

7. What Will Happen If . . .

Objectives: To have participants get in touch with their fears about doing peacebuilding work, and to help them express and share them.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pencils and Paper, Flip-chart, Blu-Tac and Markers

Method: Ask participants to list on a piece of paper up to 5 fears that they have about doing peacebuilding work. (10 minutes)

Ask them to share their fears in groups of 3 or 4. (30 minutes)

Ask the group to convene, and list the fears on the flip-chart.

You may find it useful to categorise the fears in the following way:

1) Fears for themselves

2) Fears for the participants

3) Fears for the agency they work for

4) Fears for family, friends, or associates

People may like to spend some time being more explicit about their fears in plenary. Ask for further comments, etc.

Comment: This exercise can usefully be done at the beginning of a training weekend - and can be returned to at the end of the weekend to see whether or not feelings have changed, people feel more confident or less confident.

8. The Party Game

Objectives: To assess knowledge of the aims of existing political parties or other politically active groups, and to identify gaps in that knowledge.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Facilitator will have prepared cards in advance for the parties or groupings to include. This may include political wings of armed groups, parties of countries involved (e.g., Turkey and Greece for Cyprus,) or others deemed to be relevant(e.g. Jews in America, diaspora in Sri Lanka, Tibetan Youth Congress, Kurds in Syria etc.)

Method: Cards to be placed on the floor, with titles unseen. First person to choose a card, and to talk for 3 minutes about the aims and objectives of that party, as if they were a member and using the first person singular (e.g., I am a member of the .... party/group and what I want to see happen as a result of this conflict is...................)

At the end of the 3 minutes, the facilitator and the rest of the group can add on any other bits of knowledge that they feel would add to a true picture of the aims of that party/group. Each person in turn to follow suit, with a different card.

After small group discussion, findings about gaps in knowledge can be shared in plenary, along with possible strategies to learn more about any existing knowledge gaps.

9. What Can We Do?

(The facilitator may wish to read Input 10 on Aims and Objectives, which follows, before doing the exercise)

Objective: To set objectives for their peacebuilding goals.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: 5 postcards per person, Flip-chart, Markers, Blu-Tac.

Method: Each person to take 5 cards, and to write on each of them 5 specific objectives they have for their work with groups in conflict, and how they hope this will help end the conflict.
This can be either a general list for such work, or a list for their own agency/group. This should take approximately 10 minutes.

When finished, all the cards are to be put face up on a table/on the floor in the centre of the room. Each person then picks up 3 cards (not their own) with which they can agree. If they pick up one they do not agree with, they may put it down and pick up again until they get three that they are happy with. When finished, each person reads aloud the three that they have. As they are read, the facilitator is to put them on the flip-chart, and ask for agreement/disagreement. Continue until all the objectives are up on the flip chart.

If time allows, this can be followed in two ways:

1) Having made a communal list of the objectives, people can number them in order of how they would prioritise them, e.g., for their agency or for their team. This can be done individually, or in small groups, and subsequently the result of such prioritising can be shared in Plenary.

2) People can choose one objective, and begin to design a tactical strategy to work on it.

10. Setting objectives (Input)

Aims and Objectives for Anti-Discrimination/Inclusion Work

This approach is generally based on the belief that, while an eventual satisfactory political settlement for a conflicted society must be developed, for the acceptance and stability of such a settlement, much can be done before this. Any settlement will be assisted by the development of anti-discriminatory attitudes and skills to increase inclusion, such as a strategy to increase equity for all citizens, regardless of their status or background. It is essentially about nurturing processes that might lay the necessary groundwork to facilitate the development of inclusive solutions, rather than about defining a particular settlement.

AIMS

Anti-discriminatory work is concerned with structuring our society so that discrimination on an economic, legal, social, cultural, religious or political nature does not take place on the basis of any group identification or allegiance.

While legislation to enforce non-discriminatory behaviour is the essential basis of any such programme, it is not sufficient to ensure it. Lack of respect, lack of knowledge, intolerance, fear, bigotry, all of these can combine to make it difficult to achieve a fair and inclusive society, free from discrimination..

Improving Relationships

For this reason, work on improving relationships is also necessary, since it aims at increasing positive attitudes of respect, communication and understanding between communities in order to increase the possibility of developing agreed frameworks of justice, cultural plurality and political responsiveness.

Strategic Objectives

Deciding upon strategic objectives that might prove to be productive in contributing to the achievement of the above aims is essential, if the resources of an agency are to be most effectively used. While strategic aims may vary from agency to agency, it is important that they be realistically achievable, and take into account such important considerations as the will of the agency, its resources, the willingness and capacity of its members and constituents to engage in the approach, and possible future developments that might affect it. It is also important to understand how any such activities can help to achieve 'Peace-Writ-Large' i.e., an overall strategy to end the conflict.

Ideally, strategic objectives should be set by the agency itself. Some overall objectives might include :

a) A contact programme designed to maximize knowledge and tolerance between or among the differing communities within the society.

b) A politicisation programme for communities, focusing on productive ways to handle inter- and intra- community conflicts. These may erupt around or take the form of protests or demonstrations, intimidation, public rituals, harassment by security forces or local groups, celebrations of different holidays or landmarks, etc.

c) Programmes to facilitate community discussions on the merits and demerits of various political options.

d) An education/discussion programme about rights among all possible communities, with the ultimate aim of producing a Bill of Rights or code of conduct for a particular context, butt he immediate aim of involving as many groups as possible in the process.

e) Space/resources and encouragement for groups to unite around common social needs and to co-operate in developing strategies and tactics to meet these needs.

f) Programmes aimed at providing space for people actively involved in party politics to explain and justify their political beliefs to a wide variety of groups, and for local people from various parties to take space themselves to develop programmes - separately or together – which might be responsive to present political realities.

g) Developing a community arts team that will act as roving provocateurs for social and political discussion.

h) A programme designed to stimulate widespread discussion among groups about the adequacy of the present legislation designed to counteract discrimination.

The above strategic objectives, which are just a suggested few from many possibilities, vary in extent, apparent relevance, achievability, etc. It is important that agencies/groups define their own particular objectives, before proceeding to the next step - that of Tactical goals.

Tactical Goals:

These are the steps one needs to take to work towards achieving the particular strategic goals agreed upon. Such steps can include identifying potential resources, blocs, critical people and groups, and appropriate methodologies. For example, if one took Strategic Goal (g) above, one would probably start by contacting community theatre groups, checking- out funding possibilities with NGOs or a local arts council, and perhaps contacting interested sociodramatists.

We should also be very aware of allied strategic goals. These are aims that are necessary to the achievement of our objectives, but that need to be addressed by other agencies or at other levels, perhaps involving government agencies or external partners. For example, allied strategic goals likely to contribute to any overall success in defeating sectarianism would likely include:

- Economic development - particularly such as will stimulate employment

- Community development programmes designed to encourage local community thinking and action.

- The development of a more responsive political process and of channels of community participation

- The drawing up of creative and acceptable political options for constitutions, borders, federations, electoral systems, etc.

- Appropriate legislation, and mechanisms to ensure that it is implemented effectively

- Education that fosters understanding and respect rather than enhancing divisions

How to use the above input

This input is primarily designed for the use of the facilitator. The main work should be done by the participants as they try to draw up for themselves possible agreed objectives for their group/agency.

A session for setting objectives might be structured as follows:

1) Suggestions for overall aim of the work (i.e. the ultimate purpose of the work). This is usually couched in general terms, and should be the sort of statement with which many people, even those not actively involved in any particular kind of work in this area, can agree.

2) Suggestions for strategic goals - a strategy for doing this is outlined in Exercise 9.
   A further / alternative step is to use exercise 49 to define strategic goals for a particular agency

3) Suggestions for Tactical Steps - having achieved one or a set of strategic goals, brainstorming can begin on tactical steps towards achieving them.

11. – Who – Us?

Objectives: To determine participants' views about whether their agency should:
  a) involve itself in work to end discrimination.
  b) if so, in what ways it should involve itself.

Time: about 1 hour.

Materials: Copies of the Question list.

Method: The facilitator should write on the flip-chart a definition of discrimination [or the particular form it takes in this society, such as racism, ethnic, religious or cultural exclusion (these can overlap)] on the Flip-chart.

One such definition is offered below.

Ask the participants to fill in the following lists individually. (10 mins.)
Ask them to share their views in groups of 4, appointing a reporter to feedback to plenary group.
Convene the group, and chart the results on the flip-chart.

Question List:

1) Should our organisation involve itself in anti-discrimination work?

2) Does the organisation now serve all of the community fairly equally, irrespective of tradition or identity?

3) Should it support any particular political or social stance?

4) Should it encourage people to look at:
   a) cultural differences
   b) different political stances
   c) issues of rights and discrimination
   d) social issues of common concern
   e) others (give or ask for examples)

(This exercise could be combined with (9) on setting Aims and Objectives.)

This work is concerned with the restructuring of our society so that discrimination of an economic, social, legal, cultural or political nature does not take place on the basis of ethnic, religious or political or other allegiance.

12. How It Happened

Objective: To develop strategic long-term thinking, linking future goals to present action. To reveal assumptions about how change happens, and to look at how realistic these assumptions are.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pencils and Paper. Wall Paper. Markers or Paints. BIu-Tac.

Method: Ask the participants to pick a particular strategic objective decided upon by an agency, perhaps one formulated and agreed upon in (9) or (49). Participants are then to divide into groups of four. Each group is to imagine themselves 10 years hence, making a T.V. programme about how the overall peacebuilding objective was achieved, and the particular contribution of this group or agency in making it happen. Describe year by year how the goal was reached. Each group is to work for 30 minutes, devising a' running order' outlining scenes included, people interviewed for the TV Programme, and so on.

Each group will then present its 'programme' to the rest of the groups for comment as to its realism and its possible implications for strategy.

The 'Running Orders' for the programmes can be posted on the wall, for closer perusal afterwards.

13. Checklist For Change

The following checklist may be useful to groups or agencies setting up any programme designed to precipitate change, whether of attitudes or structures. The questions may be used as the facilitator sees fit.

1) What are your objectives?

2) How do these fit with the ultimate goal of sustainable peace?

3) What degree of change is intended? What will you be satisfied with ?

4) How will you know when you have obtained your objective?

   Whom are you trying to change?

5) Do they feel the need for change?

6) What would motivate their need for change?

7) What resources have you or your agency to initiate change?

8) What structures have you or your agency to sustain change?

9) Whose support can you elicit?

10) What structures, existing or otherwise, could you use? Which structures will need to change for you to achieve your objectives?

11) What strategies do you feel comfortable using?

12) What possible consequences, either negative or positive, might follow for you or your agency, when you have achieved your objective?

A final, important question for all 'change agents' :

What is your motive for wanting to be involved in this particular 'change' programme?

14. Who is "Neutral"?

Objectives: To assist participants in exploring any contradictions they perceive between any political position they hold, and its implications for being a facilitator of discussions about political options.

Time: around 1 hour

Materials: Question lists below

Method: Put definitions of peacebuilding work on the flip chart. Some suggested definitions are contained in Chapter1if the facilitator wishes to use them.

Give the participants the list to fill in. (15 minutes)

Ask them to share as much about their answers as they wish in groups of three to four. (30/45 minutes)

Reconvene in Plenary to share perceptions, both positive and negative.

Question list:

1) Do you have a preferred political position (either for a political party or personally) which you feel is non-negotiable?
   If answer is yes, go to questions 2,3,4 and 5.
   If answer is no, go to questions 2,3,6,7, and 8.

2) Do you think therefore that anything can be achieved by engaging in peacebuilding work?

3) If you think something can be achieved, what is it?

4) If you have a conviction about a particular political option, but nevertheless feel that this work is worth doing, how would you justify it to someone of a similar political persuasion to yours? To someone of an opposite political persuasion?

5) If you accept a role as a facilitator of political discussion, clarify how you would see that role.

6) Do you feel that you are 'on the fence,' i.e. undecided about political options?

   How does that make you feel?

7) How do you justify your work to those in your community who might see you as a traitor?

8) If you accept a role as a facilitator of political discussion, clarify how you would see that role .

Comment: As the point of this exercise is not only to clarify possibilities for those who want to do the work, but also to identify those who feel they cannot or should not do this work, the decisions of those who feel for their own reasons that such work is not for them must be respected.

They may, however, like to share with the group their feelings about such a decision.

INPUT: 'The 'Neutral' Facilitator?

In order to facilitate discussion between people who have differing perspectives on possible political solutions to, e.g., Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Nigeria, Syria, etc., does one have to be a 'neutral' facilitator, i.e., without a personal or group preferred solution to the conflict? If we believe in certain solutions strongly (or even weakly), does that mean that we cannot do mediation/facilitation within our own conflict context? Is it inevitable that our preferred positions will interfere with our capacity to encourage frank and tolerant discussion among groups of people having differing political aims? Or can we learn a way to better enable us to facilitate such work, without imposing our own political views on a group, or attempting to convert those who disagree with us? Would we feel that to do such work would be a betrayal of our own beliefs? And are we afraid that our own beliefs, or perceived loyalties, would be affected by doing such work?

The task of finding supposedly 'neutral' facilitators within a conflict context is difficult and indeed it may in the long run prove to be counter-productive. While it might be easier to import mediators with no particular political convictions, or to use as mediators people from within the context who are genuinely uncertain about 'solutions' to the conflict, it also avoids the facilitator having to take on board the very difficulties with which most of the participants are often struggling. It is also almost impossible to find enough supposedly 'neutral' facilitators for the many hundreds, if not thousands of conversations that need to be held if an agreed solution is to be sustainable.

A platform for 'partial' mediators.

What kind of commitment will enable persons who acknowledge that they have partial views about a 'solution' or 'solutions' to undertake honestly the task of facilitating political/societal discussion?

To do this, 'partial' mediators need an intellectual and emotional 'platform' on which to steadily stand - albeit temporarily - to perform a productive facilitation role in addressing difficult conflict and societal perspectives within a group. It demands that the facilitator 'model' and hold the group to a certain process of communication within the group. Otherwise, the discussion may prove to be no different from the usual blame/recrimination pattern which characterizes much political discussion in conflict situations.

The key that will enable a 'partial' facilitator to do this is a commitment temporarily, for the course of the group session, to commit themselves to the following principles:

1. A commitment to the process of the group itself, and the equal participation of all in it.

2. A commitment to respect for feelings, fears, claims about rights, etc., of all within the group and all they represent.

3. A commitment to assisting all groups present in helping them articulate claims, and analyze the fears and the values behind them.

4. A commitment to undertaking the above so successfully that both or all sides will willingly invite them back for more discussions.

This does not demand that a facilitator give up their personal political/societal views, but merely suspend them temporarily for the sake of a time-limited commitment to a process of useful discussion.

It does not preclude the use of challenge by the facilitator vis-a-vis issues of facts, rights, justice, etc. However such challenge must be based, and be seen to be based, on a genuine attempt to explore issues of value (e.g. democracy, justice, self-determination), as they apply to all sectors of the community and not just one's own.

The above 'platform' does not always preclude the revelation by the facilitator of particular views about preferred political options. It may be possible in certain particularly confident and articulate groups that such revelations would merely become grist for the mill of the discussion. If, however, such revelations are likely to interfere with the dialogues one is trying to encourage, then the facilitator should subsume the public sharing of them to the prior task of facilitating the group.

(Recognizing the very difficult nature of 'neutrality' or perceived neutrality, it is often productive to use the term 'inclusive' rather than 'neutral' or to use co-partial facilitators, i.e., facilitators who identifiably come from the differing communities, but who can jointly and productively facilitate difficult discussions together)

Remember - an easy way to evaluate whether or not a 'partial' facilitator has been successful in providing safe space for difficult discussions is whether or not both or all groups invite you back to facilitate another discussion.

Chapter 3

BELONGING - AND ITS PRICE

Our Need To Belong

From the time we are born, we are almost always all part of a group - usually a small family group, which exists in a certain community, which lives in a certain country and may feel itself to belong to a nation. Most of us need to belong to a group to survive, not just to achieve physical security, but also emotional security. Staying within that group usually means learning and abiding by its rules, and being relatively supportive of its members. Often the norms of the group itself will dictate our behavior, i.e.. we will judge the behaviour that different groups require of us and adjust our attitudes and behavior accordingly. As we live most of our time in groups, our behaviour may be more often determined by group needs than by individual ones, and our responses to situations are usually not just personal, but are usually made in the context of collectively shared rules and meanings.

Our need to fit in with our group.

Abraham Maslow in his hierarchy of 'needs' describes an ordering of the basic requirements of human beings to develop. He suggests that our' belonging needs' - that is, our need to feel respected and loved by our peer groups and communities - must first be fulfilled before most of us develop our 'own' attitudes and behaviours. Further evidence suggests that we cannot develop individualistic attitudes which are at odds with those of our communities without a great deal of struggle, and painful feelings of being excluded. Therefore, groups often resist innovation in ideas or perspectives that threaten their own ideas, and will often react negatively against such ideas (16, 17, 18)

Conflicting Loyalties

For some of us, the groups to which we belong tend to support and strengthen our religious, cultural or political beliefs. We may belong to a church or political party, rotate our social life around its institutions, and have mainly friends from those institutions or allied ones.

We thus have often been safeguarded from new ideas that are likely to disturb us and our beliefs. Now, however, the old religious and racial identity certainties are breaking down for many of us. As the diversity of our societies increases through immigration, refugee flows, more mobile workers, etc., and there is an accompanying understanding of the importance of minority and human rights, such changes can bring many societal and personal tensions. We may feel these tensions as creative, or as stressful, and our loyalties can become more diffuse, or, sometimes, more certain. (19)

The Benefit Of Enemies

When a group of which we are a member is threatened from outside by another group whom we perceive as hostile, such a threat often leads to a new closeness among group members. This new closeness is developed by members increasing their perception of their similarities with each other and temporarily forgetting their differences, while exaggerating their differences from the threatening group. It is a well-documented fact that an increase in the amount of hostility directed from an external source towards a group can very much increase the cohesive feelings of the members of that group, and can increase their feelings of pride, of defensiveness, of protectiveness and of excitement.

The Need For Scapegoats

Freud would claim that people can only bind together in love, as long as there is a common enemy – someone they can blame for many of the bad things in life!

Even where there is no direct conflict between groups, an external group can serve as a useful 'blame' or 'scapegoat' factor for a group trying to find a cause for its own problems. Historically, many minority or marginalized groups have served as scapegoats, e.g., the Jews served this purpose for the Germans in the face of their economic depression. (20, 21)

Differences As Threat

Most of us will often fall into the trap of seeing differences of colour, religion, culture, sexual preference and language as a threat. We find it difficult to believe that, while real differences do exist between us, such differences do not have to be graded along a hierarchy of merit (i.e., that one of us has to be 'better' than the other because of the difference). Recognising the right of people to maintain such differences as long as they are not used to justify exploitation or discrimination is an important area of work for us to consider. (22, 23)

Confidence And Discrimination

Groups that are sure of their position, morally or legally, can often tolerate other groups/minorities more easily. Groups that are unsure of themselves are more likely to discriminate against other groups or minorities. Becoming confident means being able both to take on board the aspects of our group that we can be proud of, while at the same time acknowledging the aspects of it that we dislike or disapprove of. (24, 25, 26, 27, 29)

Ignorance Assists Conflict

Often, our desire to protect ourselves as groups means that we do not take any care or trouble to find out what our supposed enemies are thinking, believing, and wanting. In fact, many of us go to great trouble to avoid situations where such sharing might take place. Sometimes, this is because we do not want to disturb each other by offending someone, and sometimes because we are unsure about our own views. So 'straight' talking between groups about their fears, beliefs and differences is very difficult, especially if we lack confidence. (29, 30, 31)

Persuading Groups To Co-Operate

At the moment, behavioural norms for human beings living in groups – as races, cultures or nations - appear to be depressingly negative. Most groups spend a good deal of time defining and attempting to defeat other groups - and often discriminating against those that appear threatening to them.

However, there is some hopeful evidence that such conflict can, under certain circumstance, turn into co-operation. It should be noted that more frequent contact between individual members of conflicting groups seems to have little influence on more positive ultimate attitudes or cooperative behaviour. However, if such contacts can take place on a group basis, the positive influence of such contacts can be increased. For example, if groups meet, share information and negotiate together as representative groups, and not just as individuals, this can change attitudes and behaviours more permanently, provided that an unthreatening environment can be provided for the meetings.

If the above methods are combined with a need for constant co-operation between groups to achieve common goals, such as issues of collective concern or surviving a common crisis, then such a relationship can produce more respectful intergroup relationships.

16. Coming Together

Objectives: To help the participants to gain an understanding of the processes involved in the formation of groups.
To study relationships between groups as they develop.

Time: approximately 1 hour

Method: The facilitator asks the group to form themselves into sub-groups, in any way they like, and to occupy themselves as productively as they wish for an hour. The facilitator lets them know what rooms/spaces are available for their use, then leaves the room to return after an hour.

Discussion:

- How did people make their choices about groups? On grounds of interest, allegiance, friendships, safety, to avoid someone, or chance?

  How anxious did people feel about being left out/put in charge?

  When they were in a group, did they worry about their choice?

  Were there any displaced people, people who found it difficult to choose, were rejected or changed their minds?

- Did any leaders emerge? Why were they chosen?

  Were they self-chosen? – Who decided the purpose of the group – how was it decided? Did people feel that their group made progress toward its purpose? What did groups feel about rival/alternative groups?

17. Insider / Outsider

Objectives: To provide an immediate experience for the participants of the feelings that come from being part of an 'outsider' group, and an opportunity to discuss those feelings.

Time: 1 hour

Method: Arbitrarily divide the group in half. Send one half of the group outside the room, asking them to remain outside the room until requested to return. With the rest of the group, the facilitator proceeds with an exercise designed to be both stimulating and amusing to the group (e.g., story-telling, the most embarrassing or amusing moment of my life, joke-telling, fun exercises, etc.)

After 20 minutes, ask the group not to disclose what has happened in the room to the other group when they return, and send a messenger to ask the excluded group to come back into the room. When they return, proceed to start a session on any topic relevant to the course, or a discussion on a matter of concern to all the participants.

After 20 minutes, finish or 'pause' the discussion and ask the "excluded' group to talk about:

- How they are feeling now - do they feel like participating in the group, or are they feeling resentful?

- How they felt when excluded.

- What they did outside the door.

- How they felt towards the group when they returned.

- Why did they think they were excluded?

Variation: This exercise can also be done by dividing groups along gender differences, or religio/politico differences.

Comment: Because this exercise can provoke feelings of exclusion, resentment and anger, care should be taken to set up another exercise to subject the members of the 'included' group to a similar exclusion exercise (perhaps 18) or take extra care to provide time/inclusion experiences for the 'excluded' group.

18. Why Me?

Objectives: To help participants experience discrimination within the programme, in order to facilitate discussion upon the topic.

Time: Experience may be spread over a few hours: A session plus a coffee break, lunch break or walk followed by a discussion period of 45 minutes.

Materials: Arm bands or colour tags.

Method: The facilitator arbitrarily picks names for 'stigmatised' persons from a list (e.g., every fourth person on the members list). At the beginning of the session, ask each of the 'stigmatised' persons to wear an armband or special colour tag to distinguish them from the other participants. These people are then asked, without any reasons being given, not to participate in the next session, though they may sit in the room. Following the session, participants are asked not to join the group during the tea break, or to sit at a separate table for lunch, and not to speak to the other members.

During the following session, discuss in plenary with the 'stigmatised' group:

- How they felt about being excluded.
- Did they feel it was something to do with them personally?
- How they came to terms with their 'oppressed' status - or whether they did.
- Did it remind them of any previous experiences?
- How the 'normal' group felt about the others.

Comment: It is important that, before the discussion session finishes, participants be told the way in which they were selected (i.e., totally arbitrarily). The group should discuss the implications of this exercise in exclusion for their own work in facilitating dialogue.

Following the discussion, it is also important to either set up similar 'exclusion' exercises for the 'normal' members of the group, or to take extra care to provide space/inclusive experiences for those temporarily 'stigmatised' .

19. Where Do I Belong?

Objective: For participants to look:

    a) at the variety of groups to which they owe 'loyalty'.

    b) to prioritise the importance of these groups in their lives.

    c) to realise the tension that belonging to different groups can create.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pens and Paper, Flip-chart, Markers and Blu-tac.

Method: Participants are asked to think about the different groups, large or small, to which they belong. Ask them to list on a piece of paper up to 10 of these groups. These may range from family, church, neighbourhood, to political, work, nation, gender, sports group, etc. (5 minutes.)

Share and mark up on flip-chart in plenary the variety of groups they identified. (10 minutes.)

The participants are then asked to list their own groups in order of priority (i.e., the one that is most important to them at this point in their lives is marked number 1, least important number 10).

They are then asked to link together with connecting arrows the groups that create tension in their lives by imposing conflicting demands on them, and list a few words about why they cause conflict. For example:

- family/sports life - conflicts of time and money;
- church/politics - conflicts of religious beliefs and political beliefs;
- family/work - conflicts of time and energy;
- work/politics - conflicts of identity and allegiance.
- gender/occupation- conflicts of norms and pay.

Ask participants to share in pairs any findings that are of interest to this - and how their membership of particular groups conflicts with competing demands. (15 minutes)

Reconvene participants for a plenary.

Discussion:

Were participants surprised at how many groups they 'belonged' to?

- Did they find it difficult to prioritise them?
- Which memberships created particular conflicts?
- Were there any groups that they 'belonged' to but did not feel at home in?
- Were there any groups they wished to stop belonging to?
- Were there groups they wished would incorporate them more?

20. It's all your fault

Objectives: To look at the variety of agents who are 'blamed' for the problems of society, depending on our social or political frameworks.

Materials: Flip-chart, Markers, Blu-tac.

Time: 30-45 minutes.

Method: Provide a brief input for the group on stereotyping, as outlined in the Introduction to Chapter 4. Emphasise that it appears to be a natural tendency in all of us, which often helps to simplify our lives, but can also considerably exacerbate group hostilities. (15 minutes)

Then ask the group to brainstorm about what they see as the major problems in their society (e.g., unemployment, discrimination, poverty, violence, sexism, power of the authority structures, etc numbering up to a maximum of 10 'problems'.

Ask each of them to write these 'problems' on a piece of paper.

Ask the question: Are there any particular groups, agencies or institutions that you see as being primarily responsible for these problems? If so, list them beside the problems.

At the end of the exercise, check which groups you have 'blamed' most frequently.

Compare in Plenary:

Ask each person to name the groups they had most frequently mentioned.
Note the difference in overall responses.

Check through each 'problem' and note the differences.

Comment: It is important to avoid provoking heated discussions about who is or is not to blame for all the ills of our society, and to keep people to the task of seeing the patterns of stereotyping that different groups will produce. At a later session, work may subsequently be done on political discussion about causes (Chapter 8).

21. Us And Them

Objective: To clarify the stereotypes that opposing groups hold about each other.

Time: 1½ hours

Materials: Flip-chart, Blu-tac, Markers. Papers and Pens for participants.

Method: The facilitator may like to begin with a short introduction about the definition and function of stereotyping. (Chapter 4)

Divide the groups into their community of origin /identity groups, using whatever identifier participants themselves choose, and ask them to consider, as a group, in separate rooms if possible, the following questions, which will be written on the Flip Chart.

1) How do we think our group generally sees the others? (e.g. how do liberals see conservatives, or how do Irish people see African immigrants? etc.)

2) How do we think our group generally sees members of our group?

3) How do we think the other group generally sees our group?

(Please try and achieve a consensus on adjectives for the above questions, and include at least six to eight for each of the categories.)

Allow 30 minutes for the above exercise. It can be done by individuals within the group filling in their answers to the above questions, and then sharing them in their larger group, or by doing the whole exercise as a group. Results are to be written on the Flip-chart. When they are finished, ask the participants to bring back the completed charts to the whole plenary group. They may be pinned up on the wall, and compared.

Discussion:

Was it difficult to achieve consensus within the group? Were they surprised - pleasantly or unpleasantly - by any of the discussions within their group?

How do they feel about what the other groups have come up with - is it what they thought it would be ?

22. Differences Rule OK

Objectives: To establish the 'normality' of differences between people and groups.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pens and Paper

Method: Ask everyone in plenary to share with the group one thing about themselves that they are fairly sure no one in the group knows.

Give a short input on 'differences,' i.e., that most people at times feel 'different' to others, which sometimes feels uncomfortable and sometimes is enjoyable, depending on the degree of self-confidence we feel. Say that the aim of the exercise is to get in touch with some of these differences, and to share our feelings about them. Then ask people to take 20 minutes to answer on a sheet of paper the following questions:

1) Three things about me that are the same as everybody else in the room

2) Three things about me that are the same as some people in the room, but not others

3) Three things about me that I feel make me different from everyone else in the room
   (Optional depending on time, and degree of trust/knowledge in the group)

4) Three qualities/characteristics that I feel other people in the room have that I do not have.

When completed, ask each participant to choose a partner and share as much of their lists as they want with each other. (20 minutes)

In a final plenary, people can share how it felt to do the exercise.

23. Vive La Difference

Objectives: a) To acknowledge that differences exist between us, to recognise that these can vary in type and be important or unimportant, depending on culture, history, circumstances and so on.

b) To provide an unthreatening method of dividing participants up into groups according to group identity, whatever that may be in your context.

Time: 30 minutes or more

Materials: Space!

Method: Facilitator asks the participants to go to different ends of the room, depending on which group they belong to. If they are unsure, stay in the middle. Pace should be fairly snappy, and fun.

Divisions can vary according to the group - below is a sample.

- Exercisers and non-exercisers
- Vegetarians and meat-eaters
- Snorers and Non-snorers
- Video Owners and Non-video owners
- Cat lovers and Cat haters
- Nail-biters and Non-nail biters
- Open-window sleepers and Closed-window sleepers
- Parents and Others
- Men and Women

Then such variants as:

Religious Differences: Catholic/Protestant/Muslim/Hindu/Buddhist/Jews/Sikhs etc.

Racial differences: White/Afro-American/Latin American/Asian American

Ethnic differences: Dinka/Nuer/ Hutu/ Tutsi, etc.

Cultural differences: e.g., language, music, sports, etc., depending on the context.

Then, if useful and pertinent, further divides such as Protestant/Catholic, Sunni/Shia, Orthodox versus non-orthodox Jews, etc.

It is important to use a phrase such as 'those brought up as'_____, as some participants may be of mixed background or not be practicing believers, may not be sure they feel this is their identify group, and be unsure where that leaves them.

At any point, the facilitator may stop the groups, and ask them to look at one another, expressing their feelings about the other group. Stopping the groups at the men/women divide can be quite potent in terms of feelings as can an ethnic, religious, racial, or linguistic divide.

Depending on time and appropriateness, the main contested division can be called for somewhere in the middle of the exercise, thus de-emphasising that particular division for the moment, but allowing it to be established for future use.

Discussion:

- How did it feel?
- Did we dislike admitting to some aspects of ourselves?
- Or like owning up to others?
- Which did we feel uncomfortable about?
- Which did we feel good about?
- How do we feel now?

24. It's Good To Be . . .

Objectives: To encourage acceptance and pride in belonging to a group

Time: 45 minutes or more

Method: Ask the participants to form into pairs. One person to choose a group that they belong to and speak to the other for 3 minutes on why they are glad to be a member of that group, or what was good about having been raised as a member of that group. Then the other of the pair shares similarly. Each has free choice over which group to celebrate, among the many they belong to.

For example:

It's great to be a Russian /Georgian /Irish speaker, etc., because ....

or

It is great to be a Muslim/Hindu/Jew/Christian/Buddhist because.....

Participants are then asked to share in their larger groups (up to 10 people) what they discovered, found difficult, or found interesting about the exercise.

(30 minutes)

Participants may wish to share their findings together in a final Plenary.

Discussion:

- How difficult was the exercise?
- Who found it impossible? Why?
- How much could we allow ourselves to acknowledge that there had been 'good' and 'less good' aspects to belonging to our particular groups?

(Adapted from Cherie Brown.)

25. Who We Are

Objective: To introduce participants to the cultural and symbolic objects of the others' tradition.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: As outlined below

Method: Previous to the workshop, the participants can be asked to bring to the workshop all the objects that are in their house that are unlikely to be found in the houses of participants from a different persuasion. This might mean religious books or symbols, cultural costumes, musical instruments, cooking utensils, etc.

Participants are asked to sit in small circles of up to 5/6, ensuring that each circle has a mixture of participants from different traditions. Each participant will unwrap her / his bundle of objects, placing them on the floor or table. In turn, each will explain what they know about the objects, what they represent, their use, their history. When all have finished talking about their particular pieces, participants are then free to ask questions about each other's objects. As it is likely that participants will have some questions that no one can answer, these questions can be gathered up, written on a sheet of paper, and brought back to the Plenary (30 mins.)

Plenary: Participants may mingle with other groups, to see what they have brought, asking questions as they go. Or, participants can share in plenary their unanswered questions, which can perhaps be answered by other participants.

26. Where I Belong

Objectives: To help participants to identify for themselves what they feel is their identity, and why.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: None

Method: Mark the four corners of the room with four labels. These might be any aspect of identity which is contested, for example: Tamil, Singhalese, Muslim, Buddhist, for a group in Sri Lanka; or Scottish, English, Labour, Conservative for a UK group; Republican, Democrat for a USA group, etc

Ask the participants to choose one identity corner for themselves -whatever they feel most comfortable with. If there are none of the identity labels they feel are appropriate for them, ask them to stay in the middle for the moment.

When all have found a place for themselves, recheck those in the middle. Ask participants to decide what particular identity tag or combination they would feel most comfortable with. Some may choose one that has not been assigned a corner. If there are enough of them, form them into groups.

Ask the different groups to retire somewhere to discuss among themselves the following questions:

a) Why they chose the corner they did.

b) If they had any difficulties in choosing it, what were they?

c) How it makes them different to other people.

d) Would they have chosen a different corner five or ten years ago?

They will then appoint a convener to report back to the main group on their discussions. Or, if the whole group is relatively small- perhaps less than 12 - they can prepare to share their choices personally with the other groups. (40minutes)

The groups then reconvene, either hearing the reports from the groups, or hearing the personal accounts of the participants.

27. My Tune, Your Tune.

Objectives: To assist participants in sharing one another's musical culture.

Time: 1 hour - or more, depending on the conversation
Timing - good for a late evening session

Materials: See below:

Method: Previous to the weekend/meetings, ask all the participants to bring along the records that they have, and the song sheets, or at least the words of songs that are particular to their culture. If there are any musicians, ask them also to bring along their instruments. (If their culture really does not have its own, particular music, they can bring examples of art or poetry which evokes strong emotions within their group.)

It might be useful to start the proceedings by a brief discussion about the power of music, evoking the participants' memories of hearing particular songs, late night singing sessions, patriotic or military music about victories and losses, wrongs done to them and others, and what their music commemorates. Most will have such memories.

Explain that each is now going to present some songs (or art, poetry, etc.) for the others. They can do this by separating into groups, retiring to different rooms and selecting at least two songs (or poems or paintings) which they want to share with the other group.

Each group will then choose the songs it is going to share by

a) writing the words of it on a flip-chart, or getting them photocopied, or displaying on flip-chart or whiteboard their art object;

b) practicing the songs or explanations, if necessary. (20/30 minutes)

They will then return together as the larger group, and each group will take it in turn to perform, subsequently encouraging the other group to either ask questions, or to join in by reading the words from the flip-chart or word sheets.

Variation: It may prove useful to follow this at some stage with a discussion about how it felt to be listening to the other side's songs, probably the following morning, if it seems appropriate.

28. Two Sides To A Story

Objective: To help participants acknowledge that there are aspects of their own 'group' which they dislike.
(Can be useful in conjunction with the exercise 'It's good to be' (24) which looks at the aspects of our group which we like.)

Time: 45 minutes

Method: Ask the participants to find a partner who belongs to the same identity group as themselves.

Taking it in turn, each participant speaks to the other for two minutes about their own group, starting with:

'What I dislike about us is ......'

Ask participants to keep on talking for the two minutes, and not to censor themselves.

After two minutes, reverse roles.

Variation: This can be done by the participants in their own larger groupings (up to ten) and each participant speaks for two minutes starting with:
'What I dislike about us ......is....' speaking about your own group.

Discussion:

- Who felt uncomfortable doing this exercise? Why?

- What did you not like about it?

- How did you feel about what the other participants said?

- Was it easier to share with your own group?

- How would you have felt sharing it with the other group?

Comment: It is very important that this is done only within groups. - otherwise it can lead to increased hostilities between groups.

It may be easier to start with less controversial groups first, e.g., smokers and non-smokers, carnivores and vegetarians, married and single.

29. What I'd Like To Know

Objective: To provide an environment for participants to ask each other questions about their differences in a safe manner.

Time: 1½ hours, with a break in the middle.

Materials: Pencils and Papers. Flip-chart. Stop-watch.

Method: Divide the participants into identity groups. Each group is to draw up together a list of things that they have always wanted to know about the other group. These can be written down on a flip-chart, and if time is allowed for a break, they can be typewritten up and photocopied so that each person has a copy.

Participants are then brought together in the same room, and asked to ask their questions in the following way, while keeping to the ground roles below.

Each will take their list of questions (or flip charts may be prominently placed so that participants can see them) and will find a partner from the other group. For three minutes each they may ask each other questions in turn, and listen to each other's answers. They may have time to ask only one question, or more than that. Facilitator should do the timing, and call out a three minute signal for the participants.

At the end of the six minutes, the facilitator calls out 'All change' and the participants find another partner with whom to repeat the exercise, perhaps asking different questions, or the same ones as before. This may be repeated four or five times depending on time.

Note: While the above time may seem very little for each mini-dialogue, it is deliberately short because the time limit provides both the energy and the safety to do the exercise, and it also lets a large number of topics come to the surface.

Allow at least 20 minutes at the end for discussion.

Discussion:

- Were you surprised at the questions you were asked?
- Did you mind being asked the questions?
- Were there any you found particularly difficult to answer?
- Are you worried about any of the answers that you gave?
- Why?
- Were there any questions you deliberately avoided asking?
- Which ones were you most afraid of being asked?
- Were you satisfied with the answers you were given?

- Did you feel you learned something?

- Did you find the time too short?

Variation: Participants may place their questions in a hat, which may then be typed up to form a list.

Or, the facilitator may draw up a list of 20 questions prior to the exercise that they know are likely to be asked, and offer those as suggestions.

30. We'd Like To Hear

Objective: To give different groups the opportunity to explore their differences and satisfy their curiosity about each other.

Time: about1 hour

Method: Ask the participants to divide themselves into their relevant groups - this can be done through using Exercise 23 if necessary. If there are people who are unsure of which group they belong to, they may state their doubts, and, if they wish, ask to join one of the groups.

The groups will discuss among themselves what questions - up to a total number of 10 - they want to ask the other group (20 mins.) These can be questions eliciting information, clarification about beliefs, values, attitudes, cultural or political desires. These questions will be written down and handed to the other group. After the exchange of questions, the groups retire to consider their answers, appointing a spokesperson to convey them.(30 minutes.)

Then the groups sit facing one another. Each takes it in turn to convey their answers. Only listening allowed, while the answers are being conveyed.

This can be followed by a final plenary discussion.

Discussion:

- Did individuals in the group feel uneasy about being seen as part of a particular group?

- Were the groups surprised by the questions they received?

- Did they find it difficult to agree on answers to give?

- How did they eventually agree?

- Did the people conveying the views feel uneasy about their role?

- Did they have to convey any views they disagreed with?

- Did people find it difficult to listen to the answers they were given, or did they want to jump in and argue?

- Are they any clearer now about the answers to some of their questions? If not, why not?

Comment: Some participants may be frustrated by the structures imposed on the discussion by the method above. Nevertheless, it can prove valuable in:

a) giving people collective anonymity to ask questions they would feel uneasy about asking personally;

b) exposing people to the contradictions they often find within their own groups, in the safety of their own groups, rather than 'publicly';

c) creating space where listening is the main task, and where defensive arguments are temporarily disallowed.

If people wish to move on to political discussion per se, then some of the discussion tools in Chapter 8 may prove useful.

31. What We Want You To Hear

Objective: To assist listening between two groups about their experiences and to enlist possible support from the 'other side' .

Time: 1 hour

Method: According to whichever division you have decided to concentrate on, ask the participants to separate into their groups.

Give each group an opportunity to reflect upon these four questions.

What do you want everybody in the other group to hear about your experience as a member of your group?

What do you want everybody in the other group to promise never again to do to you or say about you as members of your group?

What things do you like about the other group, that you would like to see them continue doing?

What kind of things would you like the other group to start doing that could be supportive of you?

Groups to take 30 minutes separately to do this, and to appoint a spokes person. Then in turn, each group to share their reflections with the other group.

Chapter 4

THE OTHER SIDE

Prejudice is an opinion held in advance about something, someone or some group without good reason or adequate knowledge or experience. Because the world is so complicated, we often have neither the time nor energy to treat each event or individual as unique, and so we simplify our lives by pre-judging them. Often, such prejudgements are harmless, making our world seem more manageable. However, such prejudgements can be destructive when they happen between individuals or groups of people in such a way as to negatively affect their behaviour towards each other.

Few of us can escape being prejudiced, due both to our family and societal upbringing and our need to belong to a group. (See Chapter 2)

Truly prejudiced people (bigots) do not change how they feel or what they think, even if they are shown evidence to the contrary, or something happens that would normally change a person's mind. Most people are able to reconsider their prejudices when they see contrary evidence or get to know people who do not fit their stereotype.

Prejudice is about feelings and beliefs. and it can influence our perception. There is a good deal of evidence to show that what we believe actually influences the way we see an event or person, i.e., people are not usually prejudiced because of what they see or hear, but will see or hear people/events differently because of what they believe. (32)

People are more likely to be prejudiced if they have been reared in a very authoritarian fashion - in a home or social setting where questioning of the status quo is frowned upon; if they have poor self-esteem; or if their chances of meeting groups of people other than their own kind are limited. There is also evidence to show that people who are very prejudiced against one group areal so more likely to be prejudiced against other different groups – someone who is very anti semitic is also likely to be very anti-homosexual. Prejudice is often also fostered by governments to suit their particular policies, e.g., the anti-American/anti-Russian propaganda which had been fostered by both of these governments over the last few decades, and the anti-black apartheid policy of earlier South African governments.

Stereotyping is what happens when we so simplify our prejudgements about a certain group of people so that we see all members of that group as having certain traits. These stereotypes could be positive, for example, expecting clergy to be compassionate, but many are negative, such as seeing all women as over-emotional, all men as aggressive, all Russians as power-mongers, all Irish people as drunkards. It is very difficult for us to avoid stereotyping, as our culture, our media, and often our politicians encourage stereotypes. (33).

In Northern Ireland, for example, people belonging to the two main religio/politico groups traditionally have had relatively fixed stereotypes about one another. Studies have shown that Catholics in Northern Ireland saw Protestants as power-holders, bigoted, loyalists, and murderers. Protestants saw Catholics as

priest-ridden, breeding-like-rabbits, superstitious, and murderers. Both groups saw themselves as fine, decent people, but saw each other as bitter and brainwashed.

Stereotypes are sometimes composed, as are prejudices, of a certain degree of truth and falsehood, but stereotypes impose these characteristics on all individuals regardless of the truth of the allegations. (35, 36)

Prejudices and stereotypes are mainly concerned with feelings and attitudes. Feelings are nurtured through our childhood, community and society, and are often, by the time we reach adulthood, instinctive. (37)

While it is important to recognise the extent of our own prejudiced feelings about many groups, what we need to examine is what we do with those feelings as expressed through our resultant behaviour and action. What matters most is not whether we find it difficult to have loving feelings towards our traditional enemies, or even whether we feel prejudiced against them, but whether these feelings determine our behaviour, and the structures and institutions of our society.

Discrimination is what happens when a prejudice is translated into behaviour. It can occur at an individual level between two people, or at an institutional level, when institutions become structured in such a way as to favour a particular group of people and to discriminate against certain other group/s of people.

We can be a conscious or an unconscious agent of discrimination. Even if we do not consciously discriminate, very often our membership of a group with power can make us an unconscious agent of discrimination. Our behaviour can also be discriminatory in its effect, even though not in intention. (38)

Sectarianism (or sectarian discrimination) is discrimination that is based on grounds of religion. In many societies, religious affiliations have become so intertwined with political aspirations that sectarianism usually refers to discrimination that occurs between two or more main religio/politico groupings.

The more power a group has, the more it can discriminate. Throughout most of the world, men traditionally hold power, and so women fare less well. Often skin colour will be used to discriminate

While arguments may rage about who did what to whom, it is usually more useful to see racism, sectarianism, cultural dominance, etc. as being, unfortunately, a 'normal' product of power, springing from a group's desire to affirm its own superiority, and protect its own people. All groups wish to do this. What they vary in is usually the power they have to do it, the nature of that power, and how they use it.

Prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination and sectarianism can be conscious or unconscious. Few of us recognise our own prejudices, and will normally deny them, giving good excuses for our feelings/ behaviour. Institutions will usually deny discriminatory practises, claiming that they are not intentional or due to factors beyond their control.

Discrimination can be direct, e.g., in the British constitution, the British Monarch cannot be a Roman Catholic; the rules of certain golf clubs exclude women or Jews; or the second-class citizenship of Fijians of Indian origin . More often it is indirect, e.g., conditions of work that make it impossible for women with young children to take up certain jobs, job advertisements that only reach certain communities, unspoken/unwritten assumptions that people from certain schools make better employees. It is easier to

deal with obvious discrimination than to investigate less tangible discrimination such as employment practices that contribute to discriminatory results. (39).

Possibilities For Change

Reflect, for example, upon the changed attitude to the mentally ill, or people with a minority sexual preference. The 'village idiot' is no longer the butt of humour, and the fate of Oscar Wilde is inconceivable today – at least in most of the Western world. Stereotypes of the Irish have changed for many recently due to their recent economic successes. Sometimes they change according to the social and economic demands of the times, e.g., during World War II, women were seen as capable of doing most men's jobs, but after the war were soon once again deemed unfit for anything except mothering, due to a very thorough propaganda campaign by their governments.

There is evidence also that programmes to 'treat' stereotyping can successfully be developed through contact and educational programmes that are on-going and focused. However, while they can change, such stereotypes generally change slowly. We are most of us reluctant to let go of 'enemies', and any temporary gains in positive attitudinal shifts can be easily wiped out through the latest 'crisis'.

Discrimination and Law

Legislation can be very effective in changing attitudes and discriminatory practises, and is the obvious first course for any government intent on eliminating discrimination, whether it is racism, sectarianism, sexism, etc. However, experience has shown that aspirations for an end to discrimination for women, for example, are not easily achieved, and have entailed much hard work, combining legislation with a programme of education and an attempt to analyse all the factors which combine to keep women from equality of jobs and pay. Similarly with the discriminatory inequalities of employment. Finding strategies to implement aspirations of equality is fraught with many dilemmas, and appears to be made even more difficult when there are economic and employment difficulties.

Positive Discrimination:

Asserting basic human rights will often not be enough to remedy perceived injustices. Achieving justice may at times mean actively having to intervene to break a destructive cycle of discrimination. It may mean making extra opportunities available for those presently disadvantaged, to help them achieve greater equality. Once those disadvantaged get such equality, the need for this positive type of discrimination ceases to be necessary, or passes to another group in need.
(40, 41,42,43,44,45,46,47,48,49)

32. Not Me!

Objective: To help participants to realise that most of us have our perceptions clouded with a good deal of prejudice, much of which is unconscious.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Pens and Paper

Method: Ask each of the participants to take a sheet of paper and a pen. As the facilitator calls out the following words, the participants are to write on their piece of paper the first word that comes into their minds. Ask them not to censor their replies, and to write quickly.

redheads

nuns

women drivers

gypsies

punks

catholics

homosexuals

children

peace protestors

communists

USA americans

social workers

nail-biters

police

muslims

immigrants

evangelical christians

transgender people

football fans

Russians

politicians

(Add or delete, as you see appropriate)

Discussion:

- Who found themselves censoring?
- Why?
- Were people surprised by anything that they wrote down?
- Were there positive prejudices as well as negative ones?
- Was there anyone who failed to make any negative responses, i.e., who appeared to have no "stereotypes"?

33. The Others

Objectives: To help participants to realise how, both consciously and unconsciously, we have all 'internalised' prejudice and stereotypes about people from different communities and countries.

Time: 45 minutes

Method: Ask participants to work in pairs. One person to choose a nation, e.g., the Germans, the Japanese, the English, the Iraqis, the Nigerians. Call out that nationality to their partner. "The Germans. . ." who has to respond with the first word that comes into her / his mind. Do this quickly 10 times using the same nationality each time i.e. the person will free associate quickly 10 times with that word. Then switch roles, the questioner choosing a different nationality, and repeat the exercise.

Discussion:

- Who found themselves censoring?

- How do you feel about what you said?

- Were you surprised/shocked?

- Where did the images come from?

- What images are being formed today in our minds/in our children's minds about particular populations?

34. The Lingering Past

Objective: To establish how we learnt to be prejudiced and the sources from which our stereotypes came.

Time: about 1 1/2 hours

Method: The facilitator will give a brief introduction on prejudice and its sources, perhaps using some of the material used in the introduction to Chapter 4.

Participants are tasked to divide into the identity groups into which they were born.

The participants are asked to take time as a group to look at the types of negative and positive attitudes, stereotypes or prejudices they heard expressed, or inferred about the relevant 'other' group up to approximately school-leaving age. What were the feelings they picked up about those groups?

This can be usefully done by asking people to recall what they heard up to the age of 11 and from 11 upwards until they left home. In particular, it may be helpful to recall what they heard through home, relatives, friends at school, at church, in sports clubs or music groups, and any other relevant social groups. Ask the participants if they can remember the feelings around these attitudes: envy, resentment, fear, etc. Did they remember ever feeling they had to disagree with or test the stereotypes?

Allow approximately 1 hour for the above part of the exercise.

Discussion: Recall groups for a Plenary in order to share:

a) How it felt to do the exercise.

b) What they learnt from it.

It may be important in the discussion to emphasize the cultural aspect of prejudice, and that in most societies we end up prejudiced whether we choose to or not.

Variation: It may be more appropriate to do this exercise by dividing groups on lines of gender in addition to or instead of the above exercise, to show the universality of stereotyping.

35. Feeling The Fears

Objectives: To have participants get in touch with their feelings about the 'other side' and to discuss the importance of the feelings.

Time: 45 minutes

Method: Ask the participants to find a comfortable place in the room, and to sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Ask them to close their eyes. The facilitator may want to do a relaxation exercise, or play some quiet music for a few moments.

Read aloud a fantasy, adjusted to take account of the everyday lives of groups in conflict situations, and ask participants to fill in the blanks in their minds. Ask them to pay attention to their feelings, their bodies, and their thoughts.

Below is an example of a fantasy particular to Northern Ireland everyday life – change/adjust to fit your context.

'You are driving through the countryside.. It is a beautiful day. The sun is shining, it is warm, and the mountains look beautiful. You feel ....

As you round a bend, you see a security point ahead. You feel........

As you approach the checkpoint, you see a security person lying with his gun cocked in a nearby hedge. As you wait in the queue you watch him and you feel........

You arrive at the checkpoint and you are questioned by a security persona who asks to see your driving license. You hand it to him and as s/he examines and you feel........

S/he hands it back, and you drive on.

Five miles further on, you arrive at a small village, and you note that the buildings and decorations as you drive through are marked to indicate that this area belongs to the 'other side.' You feel ....

Just as you come to the end of the village, you are stopped to let a parade pass. It's a celebration of an opposing group's holiday, a commemoration of their victory and your side's loss. You feel........

The parade passes, and you drive on out towards the mountains. You notice that the road is deserted, with no other cars ahead or behind you. Just as you turn a comer, your car starts to fade: you are out of petrol. From a nearby field come a group of noisy youth, leaving the local football pitch. As you crawl to a halt, you notice some of them are sporting jerseys and badges identified with the other side. You feel........

They point you to a local house where a mechanic lives. As you approach his door, you notice it has a flag above the door. You feel........

After the mechanic gives you the can of petrol, you drive off home through the fading evening light, feeling ....

Allow time for participants to share in a small group/ plenary as much as they like about the feelings and thoughts that occurred to them, as they listened to the fantasy. (15 minutes)

Ask the participants to make themselves comfortable again.

Read aloud another fantasy, perhaps an urban one, asking the participants again to fill in the blanks in their minds as they occur.

Allow 15 minutes for participants to share as much of their feelings and ideas as they want to in a group/plenary.

Discussion:

- Were you surprised by any of the feelings?
- Were many of your feelings confused?
- Did the feelings change as the narrative progressed?
- From where did the feelings come?
- Have you changed your feelings in the past about any of these' triggers'?
- How did that happen?

Comments: This can be done in a mixed tradition group, with everyone doing both fantasies, and comparing them. Or they can be done separately.

Discussion: as above

36. Memories Are Made

Objective: To have participants reflect upon their personal experience of differences in their society.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Each participant to have a copy of the 'Memories are made …' questionnaire. Pens.

Method: Give each of the participants a copy of the questionnaire. Ask them to take 15 minutes to fill in as much of it as they can, according to the strength of their memories. Ask them to be as specific as possible about the events/experiences they are remembering.

Ask the participants to share their experiences in small groups of 3/4 for 30 minutes.

Reconvene group in Plenary.

Discussion:

- How did participants feel about doing the exercise?
- What issues came up for them?
- What were the similarities/differences in the memories?

Memories are made questionnaire. Adjust to fit your situation.

1) When did you first discover that belonging to one identity group rather than another made a difference? [Facilitator can, if desired, fill in the names of specific groups.]

2) Were there any events that made you feel that you were superior or inferior because of the group you belonged to?

3) Have you ever wished that you were born on the 'other side'?

4) Have you ever felt envious of the 'other side'?

5) Did you ever feel ashamed or guilty of belonging to your group?

6) Did you ever feel angry with your own side for the way in which they talked about people from a different tradition?

7) How do you feel about what you are now?

37. It Happens Everywhere

Objective: To help participants get in touch with the feelings evoked through suffering discrimination.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: None

Method: Ask the participants to think of an incident in their lives in which they felt they were discriminated against. Ask them to think about it for 5 minutes:

- What did you feel when it happened?
- Did you ever follow it up or do anything about it?
- Are you still angry or sad over it?

Please choose a partner, so that each of you can share your feelings about the incident and what you did about it.

- On reflection, would you like to have handled it differently, and how? (20 minutes)

Ask the large group to reconvene. It may be useful to chart the results of the discussion on a flip-chart.

Discussion:

- Does everybody remember some form of discrimination?
- What kinds were they? Sexism? Sectarianism? Ageism? Racism?
- How did the incidents make you feel?
- If you were with other people, how did they respond?

Variation: This exercise can be used to get directly in touch with the participants' feelings about discrimination, by just confining the participants to reflecting upon incidents when they were discriminated against because of their race/religion/politics/gender.

38. Sectarianism Is.... [Or, insert the type of discrimination e.g., racism ethnocentrism, whichever is the focus]

Objective: To help the participants clarify what they see as sectarianism /racism/ethnocentrism, etc.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Pens and Paper. Flip Chart and Markers.

Method:

1) Ask the participants to jot down on their pieces of paper whatever comes to their mind in response to the statement *sectarianism/racism/ethnocentrism is...*

2) Draw a large circle on the flip chart, with lines radiating out from it, with *sectarianism/ racism/ethnocentrism is* ...written in the middle, and write at the ends of the lines the participants' responses.

Variation: Groups can be divided into groups, collective exercises done on a circle, and written up on separate pieces of flip-chart. Subsequently, they may be compared between the groups.

39. What's What

Objectives: To help participants clarify for themselves the difference between prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, racism and sectarianism

Time: about 1 hour

Materials: A copy of the 'WHAT'S WHAT' statement list below.

Method: Facilitator may want to begin with a short input on the difference between prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, racism, sectarianism, etc. The input in Chapter 4 may be used if desired. (15 minutes)

Give each of the participants a copy of the 'What's What' Checklist.

Ask them to fill them in small groups of 3/4 and to note any problems they have in filling them in. (30 minutes)

Ask them to reconvene as a plenary, for discussion.

Discussion:

What difficulties arose for the group?

(Note to the facilitator: It is not getting the answers 'right' that counts in this exercise, but the discussion about the issues. For example, No.3 could be seen as 'positive' discrimination, but many people feel it is justifiable because of women's particular needs in their pursuit of equality. The fact that it is true that Catholics in N.I. have historically more children than Protestants does not negate the fact that b) is stereotyping..

What's What Checklist.

Classify the following statements as instances of:

a) Prejudice, ie., negative feelings or attitudes about a group or individual without reasonable knowledge of that person or group.

b) Stereotyping, i.e., simplifying judgements about a certain group of people so that we see all members of that group as having certain, usually negative, traits.

c) Discrimination, i.e. negative or positive prejudice translated into action and behaviour.

d) Racism/ethnocentrism, i.e., discrimination based on race or ethnicity

e) Sectarianism, i.e., discrimination based on religion

All of the above can:

    i) occur at an individual level or an institutional level,

    ii) can be conscious or unconscious,

    iii) be direct (e.g. sustained through legislation) or indirect.

Choose a), b), c), d) or e) for the following.

1) Catholics are oppressed. They are forced by the church to have too many children.

2) We are an equal opportunities employer, but we don't ask to know our applicants' religion on our application forms.

3) (To a man) You can't come to this women's studies course - it's just for women.

4) I don't like our new secretary - he's got punky hair and a funny way of dressing.

5) Muslims are just brain-washed, they just let their leaders do their thinking for them.

6) We are open to interviewing women for our top jobs, but they just don't apply. You can't expect us to do more.

7) I am not racist - I can't be, I'm an African-American,

8) I've always done my best by my employees - we usually recruit them by word of mouth - that way we know who we are getting.

9) Women are different to men - they are better at the child rearing and all that motherly stuff that children need.

10) Those people (identify the group) are all lazy, they don't work as hard as we do.

11) We have a right to exclude Blacks and Jews from our golf club - they would just crowd up the greens if we let them in.

12) We are a state school, and open to all. So we don't discriminate. It's not our fault that only one group apply.

13) I am not sexist, I can't be, I'm a woman.

14) Itinerants /gypsies should all be made an offer of a decent house, and that will get them off the roads.

15) I didn't like the look of your new friend – his long hair makes him look like a girl

16) Homosexuals should not be allowed to work with children – children are much safer with heterosexuals.

17) I don't want my daughter to marry someone from that group (name the group) because life would be too difficult for them.

18) It would be bad to have low-income housing in this neighbourhood. We should all stay with our own.

19) You could never trust a policeman - they just protect their own.

20) I never notice what people are - I just treat them all as equal.

40. Fighting Back

Objectives: To help participants to develop alternative responses to deal with discrimination

Time: about 1 hour

Materials: Paper and Pens

Method: Ask the participants to describe on separate pieces of paper one or more instances of discrimination that they have encountered - remarks, jokes, decisions about jobs, intimidation, etc. (10 minutes)

Place all the papers in a pile, shuffle them, and ask participants to choose one from the pile. Participants will then form into groups of 3/4 and choose one incident to deal with through role play. (20 minutes)

Groups will then role play the incident for the rest of participants in turn.
(Approximately 10 minutes per role play)

Discussion in plenary to follow.

Discussion:

- What patterns did people see in their own behaviour and that of others?
- In the examples, did someone counter the discrimination?
- What kinds of strategies or responses helped in dealing with discrimination?
- What didn't?
- What else would they like to try?

41. What Can We Do?

Objective: To help participants to clarify actions that they can take to reduce discrimination.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Checklist below for each participant

Method: Give each participant a copy of the following checklists.

Ask them to fill them in. (10 minutes)

Then ask them to share in small groups of 3/4 any of the suggestions on the checklist that they feel might be appropriate for them to consider and the fears they have about doing them. (30 minutes)

Reconvene the groups in Plenary to share :

a) their reactions to the items on the list.

b) fears about doing them.

c) any other options for action that they see.

Fighting Back Checklist

Part I. Mark with a tick in the following list of actions the ones you have already considered or tried.

Part II. Mark with an X the ones you that you feel might be appropriate for you to try in the future and make a note on how they can be tried.

1) Have I spent time looking at the possibility that I might be discriminating in my attitudes and behaviour?

2) Have I spent time trying to hear and understand the fears and resentments of people from a different tradition to my own?

3) Have I openly challenged remarks or actions of others that I can perceive as being discriminatory?

4) Have I ever challenged what I see as discrimination in my workplace?

5) Have I ever actively questioned whether there is adequate legislation to deal with discrimination, and campaigned to achieve it or have it enforced?

6) Have I challenged my political representative to make sure that s/he works equally - and is seen to work equally - for the benefit of all communities?

7) Have I genuinely committed myself to a political solution that will be respectful equally of all groups?

8) Other options - please add as you see appropriate.

42. Next Steps

Objective: To help individuals identify for themselves what steps they can take to combat discrimination or improve community relations.

Time: about 1 hour

Materials: Flip-chart, Markers, Pens and Papers.

Method: Ask participants to take 5 minutes to quickly jot down at least three actions they could take that they feel would begin to tackle discrimination, or to improve community relations.

The facilitator will then ask the group to call out their ideas, which will be written up on the Flip-Chart. When this is completed, the facilitator will then check with the participants if any more have occurred to them and write them up also. Participants are then asked to choose 6 ideas from the list that they feel they could tackle.

They then list them for themselves in order of difficulty, e.g., the least difficult one for them to tackle first, the most difficult the last. They are then asked to put a time-limit beside each action, giving themselves a schedule for when they will pursue each of these actions.

Participants will then share in groups of 3/4 their decisions, resolutions and timetables for action, and the difficulties they perceive in pursuing them.

Variation: Participants are asked to brainstorm for 10 minutes as a group all possible actions they might take. Ask each participant to write the list and categorise the actions as follows:

Actions they would find easy, to be marked with an (E), difficult with a (D), or impossible with an (I). Participants then share their lists in pairs for 20 minutes. Final discussion can centre around the differences in what individuals thought would be possible. It is important that this be done in a non-judgemental way, emphasising that people vary in confidence, and in circumstances.

43. Next Step Continued

Objective: To help participants to anticipate difficulties they may encounter in pursuing their plan of action.

Time: 1 hour

Method: Ask participants to choose from their action list (42) one of the incidents they are likely to find most difficulty in pursuing. Ask them to break into pairs. For 15 minutes, the pairs will discuss with each other the difficulties they anticipate in trying to pursue their objective, and try to find ways around these difficulties, e.g., potential opposition from parents or family, difficulties in explaining actions to peers within the community, and lack of support for on-going action.

Participants will then feed back to the Plenary group their anticipated difficulties, and tactics to surmount them.

Other participants may add extra suggestions, either from their own experiences, or their own ideas.

Variation: Participants may choose to role-play for the group the dilemmas they anticipated, and their subsequent conversations/actions. They can choose to concentrate on an anticipated dilemma of one of the participants, or on both.

44. Going Home

Objective: To help participants anticipate factors that will diminish their enthusiasm for anti-discrimination or community relations work on their return to their communities.
(Particularly suitable at the end of a programme)

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Flip-chart and Markers

Method: Ask participants to discuss together in small groups the following questions, which may be written on the Flip-chart:

1) How much of what you have experienced or learnt in this session will you share with your family, groups, peers, etc.?

2) Are there any particular events or ideas that you would feel reluctant to share?

3) If you have drawn up a personal plan of action (see 42) how would it be seen by them? Will this negatively or positively affect your ability to pursue it?

4) Do you see any possible way to involve them in supporting you?

Variation: Participants may be divided into area groups, and use the opportunity to begin to plan support and meetings for and with each other.

45. Who, Us?

Objectives: To help participants identify for themselves the ways in which discrimination may be operating in their own agency/institution.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Paper and Pens for all participants. Flip-chart.

Method: Ask participants to divide into groups of 4, and discuss the following questions together for 30 minutes. Appoint a reporter to feed back to the Plenary group the results of the discussion.

a) Is there an imbalance of numbers in the representation of different groups in our staff?
   Is there an imbalance in terms of power held (.e.g. positions of responsibility? Salary level?)

b) Do we serve all of the community equally, irrespective of group/identity?

c) Do we presume that a particular political stance is supported by most people within the agency? If so, what is it and how does it manifest itself?

d) Do we allow equal display of symbols and celebration of holidays in our institutions?

e) How do we / how did we deal with people wanting time off to support a political strike, protest march, or holiday or event important to their culture?

f) Are there 'unspoken' issues that divide people within the agency, and which people avoid discussing? What are they?

Share results of small group discussions in Plenary, marking them up on a flip chart, and designating those on which the group would like further discussion - perhaps later in the programme or on another day.

46. Equal What?

Objectives: To facilitate a discussion among participants on what 'equal opportunities' mean to them. (This exercise is particularly appropriate for within-agency work.)

Time: about 1 hour

Materials: Enough copies of the 'Equal Opportunity' questionnaire below for each participant.

Method: The facilitator may want briefly to introduce the topic by outlining any relevant laws or regulations referring to equal opportunities.

Participants are then asked to take the Equal Opportunities questionnaires and to fill them in separately for approximately 10 minutes.

They are then asked to then share their reflections in small groups of 3/4 for 30 minutes, and to appoint a reporter to give feedback to the Plenary group.

Participants will then reconvene for a general discussion on their findings.

Equal Opportunities Questionnaire

1) What does the term 'equal opportunities' mean to you?

2) Do you consider the current policy of our country / our agency (if they have one) on Equal Opportunity to be effective? Give reasons for your answers.

3) What do you understand by the terms 'positive action' or 'affirmative action'? What do you feel about it? What place has it in tackling discrimination?

Discussion:

- Were people able to come to a consensus definition of what 'Equal Opportunities' meant?

- Did they consider current policy adequate? If not why not?

- Were there disagreements on what they meant by the term 'positive action'?

- Were there areas of agreement? Suggestions for improvement?

47. What's The Result?

Objective: To assist an agency in examining its own possible involvement in discriminatory practices.

Time: about 1 hour

Materials: Flip-chart and markers.

Method: The facilitator will introduce the session by a brief introduction to three different approaches to discrimination, looking at intention, method and effect.

1) To focus on INTENTION is to look at whether or not an agency consciously means to discriminate in its practices.

2) To focus on METHOD is to look at whether or not the practices of an agency, e.g., advertising for jobs, its workplace ethos, or pay and promotion - are discriminatory.

3) To focus on EFFECT is to look at whether the results within an agency_ (e.g., employment, placement and promotion ratios), are discriminatory.

Facilitator will then write the three words, intention, method and effect on the Flip-chart.

Participants are then asked to break into small groups for 45 minutes to discuss the following aspects of their agency, focusing on an analysis at the above three levels.

a) recruitment procedures

b) promotion practices

c) situation of the workplace (Is it located in a place where one segment of society feels uncomfortable or unwelcome?)

d) ethos of the workplace (e.g. symbols, holidays, dress code, language, forms of address)

e) customer service

Discussion:

- Did people find it helpful to distinguish between the various levels?

- If groups found that their 'methods' were discriminatory, did they try to justify them?

- Did they find that, despite no conscious discrimination, and the use of 'neutral' methods, the effects in their agency were sometimes unbalanced?

If groups wish, they may then proceed to (48)

48. Changing The Result

Objective: To assist agencies to consider the possible changes needed to increase equality within their agency.

A useful exercise to follow after (47)

Time: about 1 hour

Materials: Results of discussions by groups from (47)

Method: Facilitator to list the following aspects to be considered on the Flip-Chart:

a)   recruitment procedures

b)   promotion practices

c)   situation of the workplace

d)   ethos of the workplace

e)   customer services

Participants will already have identified through (47) the aspects of their agencies where discriminatory effects have been noticed.

Taking each aspect in turn, the participants are asked to consider the following questions. This can be done through different small groups considering an aspect each, or, if the group is not too big, it can be done in plenary .

1)   Are there any changes that need to take place in our methods to reduce discriminatory effects in our organisation? List them.

2)   Do we need to look at our underlying intentions either as individuals or as an agency? What problems do we have of belief, or of feeling, that prevent us from noticing shortcomings or initiating change in our methods?
Outline these problems.

Several sessions may follow from the above exercise:

From Question 1: Participants may need to structure further time to look at the practicalities of implementing their suggestions.

From Question 2: Participants may need to do some work from Chapter 4 'The Other Side' or other chapters in the book, looking at their own assumptions about equality, rights, and discrimination.

49. Where From Here?

Objectives: To assist an agency in setting objectives for anti-discrimination work within and by its own agency.

Time: about 1 hour

Materials: Flip-chart and Markers, Postcards.

Method: As outlined in (9), emphasising that it is agency goals that participants are concentrating on.

From the finished list, participants are asked to vote on what they see as the three most important objectives to start with - or more, if enthusiasm, energy and resources are high.

Participants will then break into groups of 3/4 to consider the possible implementation of the objective under the following headings:

a) specific objective

b) possible tactics and actions to achieve it

c) time limits/timelines for particular actions

d) Who is responsible for what aspects of action?

e) How progress will be evaluated.

Groups may then meet in plenary to share their results.

Chapter 5

A QUESTION OF JUSTICE

The Developing History Of 'Rights'

The idea that human beings have 'rights' that need to be considered and enshrined in law is a fairly recent one in the history of humankind. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was originally promulgated by the United Nations in 1948, and its development took many years of argument and debate. However, the debate has been as old as history itself and is still continuing. When we reflect upon the groups that have at some stage or another in our history been denied what we in our time now see as basic human rights, such injustices seem difficult to credit:

- The aboriginal Australians were assigned only 'animal' status in the 18th and 19th century. This was subsequently changed to the status of 'children' and eventually to that of human beings.

- Slaves were considered merely as expendable property in most empires of the world. Just over 100 years ago a court in Virginia ruled that a slave 'is not a person but a thing'.

- Women who got pregnant out of wedlock were once confined by law to an insane asylum.

- The segregation laws of the American South which led to the Civil Rights movements in the 1960's forbade black people to sit in buildings and buses with whites.

- Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, and other religious minorities had to economically subsidise the established Church in some countries until the late 19th century.

- Women were once presumed to be too stupid to vote or hold property in their own name.

- Sex between two consenting males was once considered a prisonable offence.

It is important to remember, however, that to most people in their day, and particularly to those in power, their particular rules seemed reasonable and were supported by the majority of people as well as by the law of the land.

The problem is that past denial of rights always appears to us to be very blatantly unjust, but questions about the present denial of rights usually not so obvious, although they may appear to be equally unjust in 100 years time. A law which made sense at a particular period of history may appear to be both anachronistic and discriminatory to many people in the more secular-minded 21st century. (50)

The Role Of Law In Deciding Issues Of 'Justice'

As can be seen from the above list of now archaic instances of injustices once upheld by the law, the law itself is not necessarily an instigator of justice - it is often reflective of the prevailing power structures of a society and of the people who will benefit from such structures remaining unchanged.

However, as the history of the above rights issues will testify, it can be changed, though not usually without a struggle, e.g., the Suffragettes, the Black Civil Rights movement in the US, and the Northern Ireland Civil Rights movement, and more recently the right of marriage between gay couples. (51, 52)

Rights as Claims

There are no such things as 'natural' rights which appear so obvious to all societies that they will readily agree to them. Human rights are only claims to particular entitlements. Even the 'right to life,' which might appear logically to be a basic one, can be seen as being denied by every country which allocates to itself the right to impose capital punishment or the right to oblige people to fight a war. Claims about rights will vary from country to country and time to time, according to growing expectations, developing conceptions about rights, and the power of a particular group to negotiate for their claims. Such claims are also often culture-bound. In the USSR, claims were usually based on ideas about collective rights, and in the West on ideas about individuals' rights. Even established claims can be superseded by what a Government sees as expedient for a particular situation, e.g., the suspension of the right to jury trial or a formal charge for people to be detained in jail.

How 'Claims' To Rights Emerge

The emergence of these claims will vary from country to country, from age to age, and will depend on a variety of factors. For example:

- contradictions that emerge in trying to combine a particular moral framework with the structures we live in. The fight against slavery was spearheaded by Christians who noticed the contradiction between the teachings of religion and the treatment meted out to slaves.

- growing confidence on the part of a minority (or oppressed majority) which nurtures their sense of self-worth and confidence in their capacity to fight what they see as their oppression for reasons of class, colour, gender, gender orientation, etc.

- support and solidarity from groups outside the situation, to reinforce the growing confidence of the oppressed group, as in South Africa.

Claims and Values

Claims to rights are based upon ideas about values. Values are ever-changing commodities, often reflecting the prevailing political or theological ideologies of a particular country. The success or failure of a claim to a particular right will usually depend upon whether or not the values of a country uphold such a right, or feel threatened by it. There is no right to refuse to pay taxes to develop nuclear weapons for British citizens. There is no right to a free press or media in Bhutan. These maybe changed at some point, but are unlikely to be changed until the overall values of each country have shifted.

Any discussion about rights without a prior discussion about the values upon which they are based is limited. Unfortunately, values are often vaguely defined, and usually used to support the claims of a particular group. Armed groups often claim to be peacemakers, and wealthy land-owners may call themselves rural organic farmers who need extra water supplies, so negotiating and navigating among the conflicting claims can be difficult. Usually, groups mean 'peace' or 'democracy' the way they define it, and they often define it in a way that excludes others. (56, 57, 58, 59)

The Right Of The Majority

The difficulty of combining the principle of majority rule with adequate protection for minority rights is a major problem in most societies. It affects not only our attempts to find political solutions, but also many social dilemmas of varying degrees of intensity (e.g., the rights of people of minority sexual preference or minority gender identity, the handicapped, itinerants, non-smokers, people with AIDS, etc.)

Feelings about the rights of such people will vary in intensity, sometimes related to the amount of energy these groups put into publicly fighting their cause, and sometimes in accordance with the amount of sympathy or hostility they receive from the media. (60)

The Double Minority Problem

The problem of Ireland has been defined by some groups as a 'double -minority' problem, i.e., a situation where both groups at different times and in different frameworks have felt like a minority, and felt the need to defend their rights against possible infringement. Similar situations include Sri Lanka, Georgia and Abkhazia, and Fiji. Each of the opposing groups feels that it is in the minority in at least one framework, and each has a "big brother" or sponsor outside the situation to offer support. For example, Indians in Fiji are treated as second class citizens, while native Fijians fear being overwhelmed by thousands more Indians arriving. As is common in such situations, rights are contested: language, property ownership, historical mistreatment, access to education or healthcare, and so on. Each group fights for the rights it feels it is denied, and denies the rights the others demand.

Bill of Rights

Many such situations have led to the development of a Bill of Rights. People have, of course, varied in what they would see as priorities for such a bill.

Nevertheless, the expression of interest is indicative of a desire to address the confusion which allows divided parties to use similar slogans to justify differing demands.

While developing an agreed Bill of Rights between opposing parties in this kind of situation would no doubt be a useful exercise because of the discussion it would generate, by itself such a bill is useless unless adequate parallel work is done on agreed ways through which the rights can be implemented.

Many countries which appear to have very questionable records where civil and political rights are concerned, such as Iran, have ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which forbids governments to interfere with freedom of religious practice or to allow forced labour. Many people would suggest that the record of both the UK and the Republic of Ireland - however they may justify their actions – also transgresses many of the tenets of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (61, 62)

Communal Rights

Consideration is usually given, in drawing up a Bill of Rights, to the claims of the individual. However, it may be important as well to develop and clarify the concept of communal rights that would establish, where necessary, that a group may claim on its collective behalf certain rights which it sees as pertaining to a just treatment of the group. Many communities in Africa, for example, understand their rights primarily in a collective sense. Codifying group rights would address more adequately the kinds of claims that are made by communities who see themselves at risk from threats to their culture, language, or environment, e.g., through redevelopment, resettlement or mining. This approach may contribute to the confidence of both communities and hence allow more constructive political accommodation to develop between them on other matters. It could, however, decrease individual flexibility in terms of identification and exit strategies from a particular identity group.

50. Rights - Past and Present

Objective: To assist participants to reflect upon the changing history of justice and rights.

Materials: Flip Chart, Markers, Blu- Tac.

Time: 30 minutes

Method: On the top of one piece of flip-chart mark the word VICTORIES.

On the other mark ON-GOING BATTLES.

On the left side of the victories sheet, write the word groups and on the right hand side write claims won. On the left hand side of the on-going battles sheet, write groups, and on the right hand side write present claims. Ask the group to call out the victories that they can remember about particular groups. The resulting charts might look like this:

VICTORIES   **CLAIMS WON** (in some contexts!)

Groups   Citizenship
Slaves   Votes
Women   Property rights
U.S. Blacks   End to segregation
Australian Aborigines   Human status
Catholics in Northern Ireland   End to gerrymandering
Homosexuals/Lesbians   Right to marriage

ON - GOING BATTLES

South African blacks
Women in most countries
Lesser abled/Handicapped
Transgender people.
Albinos (Africa)
Dalits in India.
Rohingya in Burma
Plus ?????

Plus full equity and inclusion for many of the groups who have won some initial victories.

Discussion:

- Does the above chart make you feel hopeful or depressed?

- Are we improving our record of human rights universally, or not?

51. Which?

Objectives: To help participants to express some of their ideas about issues of justice in their situation.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Large piece of wall-paper, pinned to the wall. Paper and pens for all participants.

Method: Ask all the participants to take some paper and pens. Ask them to write down the first three things that come to their minds in answer to the question:

What are the greatest injustices that you see in our/your situation? (2minutes.)

When participants are finished, ask them to take their list to the wall,- take some markers, and write them up - illustrating them as desired.

Discussion:

A short discussion on the similarities and differences in the issues mentioned.

52. Looking back at Human Rights demands.

Objective: Below, as examples are the initial human rights demands of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, founded in 1967. This exercise was devised to discuss the negative response by the authorities to these demands, and the reason for such resistance.

This exercise should be adjusted to take into account the demands/previous demands of minorities/groups in other conflicted situations.

Time: 45 minutes.

Materials: Copies of the demands of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association for each participant, with the accompanying questionnaire.

Method: Give each participant a copy of the demands and of the questionnaire.

Ask the participants to fill them in separately (15 minutes).

Participants are then asked to discuss their findings in separate groups (in this case, it is Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland,) to compare and collate their answers as far as possible, and to appoint a reporter to feed back their answers to the other groups in plenary.

The demands of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. (1969)

1. One Man (sic), One vote in Local Elections
2. The Removal of Gerrymandered Boundaries
3. Laws against Discrimination by Local Government
4. Allocation of Public Housing on a Points System
5. Repeal of the Special Powers Act, which permitted jailing people without due process
6. Disbanding of the B-Specials, a particularly contentious group of all-Protestant security forces which were frequently challenged as sectarian

'One Man, One Vote, One House, One Job'.

a) What was your feeling when you first noticed the movement for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland in the late 60's? Or if you were too young at the time to comprehend them, or are not familiar with Northern Ireland, what do you feel on looking at the demands now?
b) Did you agree with the above demands, or only with some of them?
c) If you disagreed with them, or some of them, why?
d) How do you feel about the demands now?
e) If NICRA were to produce a new set of demands, what do you think they would produce?

53. My Rights, Your Rights

Objectives: To give the participants a chance to establish 'rights' and 'responsibilities' for themselves

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pens and Papers, Flip-chart, Blu Tac and Markers.

Method: Ask participants to take two pieces of paper, and mark one 'RIGHTS' for people present in the room, and the other one 'RESPONSIBILITIES' for those present. Ask them to take 10 minutes individually to fill in both pieces of paper. They can then be shared in Plenary and put on the flip chart.

RIGHTS might include such suggestions as :

- being treated with respect
- my ideas listened to
- my right to a good night's sleep
- my right to a smoke-free room accepted
- not to be treated in a sexist manner

RESPONSIBILITIES might include such suggestions as :

- being as honest with the group as I safely can
- accepting that people are sincere in expressing/feeling different opinions
- checking out other people's views on smoking, noise, etc.
- trying to see both sides of an argument
- trying to find out more about people who are different

Discussion:

Are there any rights which people have indicated they would like to claim with which you disagree?

- If so, how would you argue/negotiate for them?

How do you feel about your responsibilities - are they different to what others feel are theirs?

Does hearing about theirs make you want to increase or decrease yours?

- Can the group create a collective agreement?

(If so, it may be written up on a Flip - chart and pinned to the wall) (63)

54. An advertisement For rights

Objective: To involve participants In clarifying their values about the rights of a disadvantaged group.

Time: 1- 11/2 hours

Materials: Paper, markers, pens etc.

Method: Ask the participants to brainstorm a list of groups who claim to be or appear to be disadvantaged in their society.

Participants are then to divide into groups of 3/4 and plan a publicity campaign using whatever methods they like (T.V., Newspapers, social media, etc.) to persuade the public of the just claims of one of the disadvantaged groups. They can choose their group either by picking blindly from a set of postcards on which the groups have been written, or by groups/individuals opting to do a particular campaign. Money for the campaign is no object!

Groups to take 20 minutes to develop their proposals, and then all to assemble in a plenary to share their ideas.

Each group to take 5 minutes to present their programme, and the ideas behind it, followed by about 10 minutes discussion on it by the group.

Discussion:

- Why did they choose that particular group?
- What values did they use to persuade people?
- Who was the campaign aimed at?
- What were the rights that were claimed for?
- What do the rest of the group think of their ideas?

55. What's Your Worry?

Objectives: To help participants to clarify the issues they see as most in need of urgent attention in their society and to initiate a discussion on priorities for action.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Sufficient sheets of the grievance list below for all participants.

N.B. facilitators will review the list of grievances to make it appropriate for their particular situation.

Method: Ask each of the participants to take a grievance list. They do not have to resolve these grievances, just prioritise them.

The following list of grievances is on their desk, and they need to prioritise the order in which they will be tackled, i.e., mark with a (1) the issue they see as most important, down to (12) the issue they see as of least importance. (10 minutes)

Participants are then asked to form into groups of 5/6 and are asked to collectively achieve a ranking on priorities in so far as is possible. This is not to be achieved through 'averaging' the results, or through 'majority rule' voting, but through collective discussion which is aimed at achieving consensus. (30 mins.)

Each group to appoint a reporter to feed back the results of the group discussions in plenary.

Discussion:

- Was it easy or difficult to achieve a consensus?
- Were they surprised at other people's rankings?
- How did the group go about the task of collective ranking?
- Who predominated in the group - and why?
- How do they feel about the final result?

A 'Grievance' list might include the following:

- Denial of citizenship
- Unemployment and underemployment
- Exclusionary politics
- Discriminatory sectarian employment practices
- Inadequate education and welfare programmes
- Security forces soldiers/police that do not represent minorities

- Biased administration of justice

- Emergency Laws that affect one group unfairly

- Inadequate functioning of local councils because of identity issues

- Biased political coverage by the media

- Gerrymandered election districts or unequal access to voting

- Inadequate enforcement of Law and Order in relation to one group/community

- Second class status of minorities

- Poor recreation facilities and programmes for certain communities

- Ineffective political leaders

- Etc.

56. Four Corners

Objective: To assist participants in reflecting upon the difficulties in defining and agreeing on rights within and between groups.

Time: At least 1 hour

Materials: A room as empty as possible, with the centre and four corners of it clear.

Method: Begin by labeling the four corners of the room, with big labels, visible to all, saying YES, NO, SOMETIMES, NOT SURE. Inform the participants that you are going to read some general statements to them and that after each one, they are to move quickly to the comer labeled with they answer they prefer. They should not stop to think, just react. Emphasise that you are not, for the moment, concerned with the rights or wrongs of what you will say. Put your own additions to the list if you wish, and then read it at apace that prohibits reflection.

As people make their decisions, please note those where there appears to be (a) most differences, and (b) most indecision.

Choose up to 3/4 depending on time. Allow 10/15 minutes discussion on each.

Then do the 4 corners exercise again.

Emphasise that it is still OK to use the 'not sure' comer.

Discussion:

Did people resent the pressure to make choices?

Did they feel free to choose the 'sometimes' or 'not sure' comer?

Were they swayed by where other people went?

Did they feel their choices might have been misunderstood and seemed like bigotry or bias, while they felt they were rationally based?

Variation: The Issues List is just a suggested list. Feel free to add or delete from the list of issues.

Four Corners (Issues List)

General:

a) Parents should have the right to hit their children if they misbehave.

b) Patients should have a right to see their medical records.

c) The rights of people who don't smoke should take precedence over those who do, even if those who don't smoke are in a minority.

d) People with a record of mental ill health have the right to lie about it when looking for a job.

e) Shops selling pornography should have the right to trade freely

f) Regardless of their stance, or the issues they evoke, groups should be allowed to march wherever they like so long as they can guarantee a peaceful march.

g) There should be positive discrimination in favour of women in the public sector.

h) There should be positive discrimination in favour of disadvantages groups in the public sector.

i) Individuals should be allowed to fly whatever flag they want above their house.

j) People of different religions/cultures/race/ethnicities are entitled to separate educational systems funded by the government.

k) The state should respect holidays of differing cultures and religion, not just the majority culture.

l) People should be able to communicate with the local and national government parties in their own language.

m) A country should be free to determine its own laws, without outside interference.

n) If a majority of people within a region agree they want an independent state, they should get it.

Etc.

57. Today's News

Objective: To assist participants in distinguishing issues of rights as they occur daily within their context and to discuss them.

Time : 1.5 hours

Materials: A set of the week's newspapers from all perspectives and traditions

Method: Divide into 4 groups. Put the newspapers on a table or on the floor, and ask each group to read through them and choose some item about a happening that they see as an issue of rights. When each group has chosen, ask them to choose an aspect of the particular incident and to role-play it. Each group to take 20 minutes to choose a case, decide on the issue, and choose roles. Then each group will do the role-play for the whole group (5/10 minutes) with 15 minutes for discussion afterwards.

Discussion:

- How did it feel to play the roles?
- Why did they choose these particular incidents?
- How did the rest of the group feel when watching the role play?
- What issues emerged that needed to be addressed?

58. A Round of Rights

Objectives: To give people a chance to develop arguments for or against the 'rights' of various groups in their society.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: A room large enough to cope with a carousel seating arrangement as outlined below.

Method: A carousel seating arrangement to be set up. If you have twelve people (unwieldy beyond this) set up 6 chairs in a circle facing out in the inside circle, and 6 other chairs facing them in the outside circle. Ask people to sit down, and you now have 6 pairs of participants facing one another.

Ask those on the outside to pick unseen a card from the facilitator, containing a statement about the rights of some individual or group.

On being told to start, the rights advocator has to attempt to persuade the person facing them of the case for this particular right, while the person facing them has to formulate reasons why it should be denied.

After three minutes, the facilitator stops the discussion, and asks the advocators on the outside to move around one seat. They then select a new card and try to persuade the next person on the inside of their case also.

This continues until the circle is completed. Whereupon all change seats from inside to outside, and the new advocators begin their task with new rights cards.

After everyone has played both advocator and defender, all return to plenary discussion.

Discussion:

- For all of the above 'lobbies' there are opposing sides. Were there any you found particularly difficult to 'present' or 'oppose'? Why?

- When you were presenting your argument - what kind of 'opposition' made you re-question your attitudes?

- Did you feel you were listened to?

- Did people cope differently in opposing you?

- Was the pressure of time a hindrance or a help?

Variation (1): Depending on how comfortable the group and the facilitator feel, issues can be chosen merely from the list below, or ones that are particular to the context in question.

Variation (2): The claims to 'rights' could be written on postcards, and participants asked to choose one unseen, and argue for it to the group for 2 minutes, while the group just listen. Participants can then talk about how difficult they found the experience, or what particular issues they found easy and why.

A Round of Rights

(Issues list) General

1) Children should have the right to spend their pocket money as they please.

2) Women should have the right to have their children born at home if that is what they want.

3) Parents should have the right to hit their children if they are behaving badly .

4) People should not be compulsorily tested for AIDS.

5) Smoking in any enclosed space should be forbidden if there are non-smokers present.

6) Itinerants (gypsies) should have the right to park their caravans wherever there is unused space.

7) Farmers should not always have the right to cut down trees on their own land because of the environmental consequences.

8) People should have the freedom to purchase pornography if they want it.

59. Justice In Action.

Objective: To give participants a chance to involve themselves through role playing in an active discussion about issues of justice .

NOTE N.B. This exercise requires considerable preparation time on the part of the facilitators, who will prepare scenarios according to the challenges in their own context. The ones below are particular to the issues in Northern Ireland, but may give the facilitators some ideas about issues in their own contexts.

Time: 1.5 hours

Materials: Copies of the scenarios

Method: Ask the participants to divide themselves into groups of 6.

Each group to choose a scenario from the ones outlined below (or one may be developed that may be of more particular relevance to the participants.)

Each group to take 15 minutes to decide the roles that they wish to play, and to reflect a little upon who they are, their history and their views.

Before the role - play begins, the participants should:

a) read the scenario to the rest of the main group.
b) briefly introduce themselves in their new role for 1 minute.

Participants will then role play the particular meeting outlined below for 15 minutes, while the rest of the participants watch.

Allow at least 10 minutes discussion after each scenario for people to reflect back their comments on the role playing, and, if no solutions have been reached, to suggest possible ways of developing them.

Variation: Groups may be divided so that each side may take a scenario that might happen in its own community and role play it, thus helping the others to see the difficulties of divided allegiances within communities.

Alternatively, groups may play the scenario which would obviously not happen in their community, and the others can comment for accuracy and so on.

Rights In Action.

Scenario 1

Mr. Devlin is the owner of a small fish-processing factory by the shores of Lough Neagh, whose staff are totally Catholic. The fishing industry has traditionally been one of the employment areas available to them, as most of the factories in the areas nearby are owned by Protestants, and jobs usually are passed from father to son, cousin, etc. Following an advertisement looking for a plant operator, a Protestant applied for a job in the factory and was turned down. He went to the Fair Employment Commission who found in his favour. They declared that Mr. Devlin had discriminated against him as he appeared to have more skills than the other applicants.

Role Play: The scene is the canteen in the factory, at tea break, where Mr. Devlin is breaking the news to the workforce.

Scenario 2

It's coming up to the 12th of July, a holiday particular to the Protestant/British community. The Union Jack and Ulster posters are appearing on the factory walls, the way they always have for as long as the majority of the workers can remember. However, one morning when the workers appear, they notice that the posters have been taken down. By lunchtime, tension in the factory has risen, and the usual amicable conversation between the majority of the Protestant/unionist workers and the approximately 10% Catholic/nationalist workers is obviously strained. For historical reasons, these latter group have only recently been employed by the factory, and only under pressure from the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) whose job is to legally ensure equal employment opportunities for all identity communities. A delegation to the management elicits the fact that certain members of the management were responsible for removing the posters and emblems. Most of the Protestant workers are against their removal. The shop steward has called a meeting for 4.00 p.m. to clarify the situation. About half of the workers attend the meeting. During the meeting, about 6 people do the majority of the talking.

Role Play: The scene in the boardroom where the employers, the trade unions, a member of the EOC, a representative from the Catholic workers, a representative from the Protestant workers, and the Human Resources section of the factory are brought together to address this problem.

60. The Majority Shall Prevail

Objectives: To help participants to look at how selective we are in deciding when and where majority or minority wishes should prevail.

To initiate discussion on the reasons and values behind our selection.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Enough photocopies of the issues list for everyone. Pens, Flip - chart, Markers and Blu-tac.

Method: Give each person their issues list - other issues may be added if they seem appropriate. Ask the participants to fill them in individually first. (10 minutes)
The issue list should be adjusted to take account of existing areas of tension within a particular conflict.

If groups have been divided into religious/political/cultural etc. groupings, they should divide their bigger group into small groups of 3/4 people to discuss their findings, in particular those they appear to disagree on most.(30 minutes)

The facilitator then asks each individual to re-mark their issue list if they have changed their minds on any issue, and to reconvene as a total plenary.

The results are then taken separately from each group in plenary, and added up separately on each flip chart.

If groups are not separated, after participants have filled in their list they break up into small groups as before, for 30 mins. Then re-mark, if necessary, and reconvene. Their results are also charted.

Discussion:

- Were there many differences apparent within the groups?

- Did any of the participants change their minds on their marking after the small group discussions? Why?

- Were the differences when compared between groups, as they expected?

- Were there more agreements than differences, or less?

- Were there any surprises?

- Where were the most differences? The most agreements?

- What were the reasons/values that people would give to defend their decisions on some of the divisive issues?

- Are there any particular differences they would like time to discuss?

Optional. If the programme and the objectives of the group allow for it - any of the formats for political discussion offered in the handbook in Chapter 8 could be used.
Issues List for The Majority Shall Prevail . . . ?

Please mark the following with a tick (./) if you agree with them, and an (X) if you disagree with them.

1) If the majority of people in a room are smokers, they should be allowed to smoke in it.

2) If the majority of people decide they don't want to wear seat belts, it should not be compulsory.

3) If the majority of people in a district decide they want the leisure facilities (parks, pools, cinemas etc.) closed on a religious holiday, they should be closed.

4) If the majority of people in a state decide that divorce should be legal, it should be legal.

5) If the majority of people in a factory or workplace want to display the particular flags and symbols of their religious, cultural or political allegiance, they should be entitled to do it.

6) If the majority of people living within a particular constituency decide to change its name, they should be entitled to do it.

7) If the majority of people within a district want to erect banners with political or other slogans on public property, they are entitled to do it.

8) The majority of people in a country are entitled to decide the ultimate political arrangements of the country.

9) In any decision, majority rule is the best rule-of-thumb we have yet devised.

10) When making social/political decisions, we should not use majority rule but suggest an alternative, which could be .....?

61. A Bill Of Rights

Objective: To engage the participants in drawing up a Bill of Rights for their particular context/ region/state/country, etc.

Time: 1.5 hours

Materials: Pens and Paper. Flip-chart, Blu Tac and Markers.

Method: Divide the group into teams of 'planners' with up to 6 people in each group.

The groups are then told that they have been given the task of devising a Bill of Rights for their society. They do not know what religion, linguistic, class, cultural or political group they themselves will be in any new order.

Suggest that they limit their Bill of Rights to a maximum of 10 rights.

The groups will need at least 30-45 minutes to do the above.

Ask them to share in Plenary, for the other participants' comments.

Discussion:

- What difficulties did they encounter?
- What ideas did they come up with?
- Did they find the task too difficult?
- On what values did they base their plan? Did they all agree?
- What were the disagreements within and between groups?

62. Dream v Reality

Objective: To provide a forum for participants to explore the possible contradictions between the behaviour and legislation of their government, or particular political or militia group, and their espousal of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Copies of the relevant tenets of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child, as outlined below.

Method: Divide up participants into groups of 3/4. Ask each group to choose, unseen, one of the tenets below, written on postcards and placed face down on a table.

Each group is to prepare for the large group a 10 minute presentation about any contrast that they may see between the ideals noted and their particular government or group.

The presentation is to begin with a member of the group reading out the declaration, followed by a dramatisation of a situation which they feel points out the contradictions between ideals and practice, and if they feel it necessary, a justification of them.

Each dramatisation may be followed by a 5/10 minute discussion by the Plenary group on the presentation, and the issues it raises, if there is time.

Universal Rights - dreams versus reality ?

The following tenets have been selected from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, but feel free to choose others as you wish.

Article 2: Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 7: All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 10: Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him. (62)

Article 12: No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 19: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 23. (2): Everyone has the right to equal pay for equal work.

The following is from the UN Declaration of the Rights of the child.

Principle 10: The child shall be protected from practises which may foster racial, religious and any other form of discrimination. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.

63. Community Rights

Objectives: To introduce the idea of 'communal' rights to the participants.
To have them reflect on the practical implementations of such legislation.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: As many copies as are needed for the participants of the relevant 'rights' sections.

Method: Ask the participants to form into groups of 5/6. Ask them to take a copy of one of the suggestions as mentioned in the paper below, and to examine it for:

a) positive reasons for enacting it

b) negative reasons against enacting it

c) ideas for its practical implementation (i.e. what it would mean in practice)

Groups to take 45 minutes to do this.
Share in Plenary 15 minutes.

Discussion:

- Did the participants think the establishment of such 'rights' would be a good idea? Why? Why not?

- What would be the factors that would be against establishing such 'rights' ?

- What practical use would the establishment of such rights offer? To whom, when, and in what situations?

List of possibilities.

1. It has been suggested by some rights activists that any Bill of Rights should not be limited to the traditional individual rights, but should also extend to communal rights. Below are some of these possibilities.

2. **Education**: The right to maintain a separate educational system for differing identities, including the right to train teachers.

3. **Culture**: The right to express and enjoy a particular group culture including the guarantee for more positive allocation of state funds/media resources for differing cultures.

4. **Language**: Specific rights to use a minority language on appropriate occasions such as street names and official dealings with the government.

5. **Economic Opportunity**: In addition to protection against individual discrimination in employment, employment opportunities should be fairly distributed among qualified applicants in

both/all communities. These collective rights might be extended to cover other spheres, such as housing.

6. **Citizenship**: All communities should have the right to protection against discrimination with respect to citizenship.

7. **Electoral Rights**: Arrangements could be made for the entrenchment of collective electoral rights, such as proportional representation.

Chapter 6

POLITICAL ASSERTION

Introduction

When we feel that our needs and rights as individuals, groups and communities are not being respected, when others appear to be benefiting from the way in which our society is structured much more than we are, what are our choices for action?

1) We can continue to accept our helplessness to effect any change in our lot. We can band together and bemoan our fate as victims of unfairness and injustice, and take some comfort from a collective sharing of our sense of oppression, but go no further. If we have 'leaders' of a sort, we can give up and hope that they know what they are doing and will eventually look after us. These are PASSIVE responses to felt oppression.

2) If we get angry enough, we may go on the attack. We may abuse those we see as preventing us from achieving our goals, or those we see as benefiting more than us. We may try to find all their vulnerable points, perhaps formulate a strategy directed towards obtaining victory over them, and getting what we want at their expense. All our attention will be directed towards defeating them. These are AGGRESSIVE responses to felt oppression.

Both PASSIVE and AGGRESSIVE responses to social and political dilemmas often come from the same source - feelings of helplessness, resentment, a lack of confidence in a group or community's ability to make its voice and needs heard in the face of apparent resistance. These are often accompanied by a group or community's lack of clarity about its own rights within a system, and also the system's unwillingness or inability to respond when demands are made upon it.

POLITICAL ASSERTIVENESS is about collectively defining our needs as groups/communities in realisable terms; clarifying our rights to obtain such needs, bearing in mind the needs of other groups/communities; and organising as powerfully as we can, separately or with others, to obtain these rights without resorting to AGGRESSION. (64, 65).

The Rights of a Group or Community

Defining our collective rights, whether as a group fighting over particular social demands or a community fighting to establish its right to cultural or political aspirations, is a first step to Political Assertiveness. Defining such rights for groups or communities might include the following:

1) The right for all communities to be treated with respect.

2) The right to define the priorities that we see as important for our communities.

3) The right to express our needs in realisable terms, whether they be social, educational, economic, political or cultural.

4) The right to be listened to and taken seriously by other communities, and by the institutions that purport to serve us - those of the state, church, etc.

5) The right to engage in organising to ensure that our needs that are justly based will be heard, listened to, acknowledged and responded to by allot her groups and institutions who hold power with or over us.

Organising Powerfully

Failure to organise powerfully is often attributed to the very real opposition of systems or groups who benefit by a community's oppression, whether that benefit be of an economic or political nature. This presupposition contributes to both passivity ('We can never change anything') and to aggression ('They'll only listen to force'.) While there is ample evidence that the latter tenet is the basic belief of every government which sponsors an army, and every armed or paramilitary organisation, nevertheless there are enough tales told in history about unbloody battles won (51) to provide some hope for groups wishing to organise their local battles assertively as opposed to aggressively.

It is also important to remember that every battle that can be fought through to a just and satisfactory solution without violence is another huge victory for humankind, in a world where the possible price to be paid for violent victories rises higher by the day, as our weapons become more sophisticated and more devastating. Assertive victories also leave far fewer scars of bitterness to deal with when 'solutions' have been achieved, and leave the way open for a wider range of constructive relationships with erstwhile enemies.

However, whatever possibilities there are for achieving satisfactory responses to our needs without the use of aggression, these will only happen if we organise ourselves and our communities effectively.

Our responsibility to campaign

To fail to understand our right to assess and address the needs of our communities is also to misunderstand the nature of what a democracy is supposed to be - though admittedly, the nature of our structures of government often contributes to that misunderstanding. In theory, a democracy is 'a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people collectively, and is administered by officers appointed by them'. (Chambers Dictionary)

Taking heart from this definition, groups then may see that it is not only their right, but their duty to make the relevant 'officers' hear what are the needs of the people and of the various groups within its communities. These needs may be of a social, economic, cultural, legal, or political nature.

It may also be useful to remember that, in the last resort, 'democratic' states can only exist through the acquiescence of most people within them. The more enlightened the government, the more consultation it will hold with all interested parties before it makes major decisions about social or political practice. The less responsive the government, the more need there is for groups to enlighten it.

Becoming Assertive

For many of us, a good place to start learning to be assertive is at the personal level. The issues are sometimes more manageable, and can provide suitable learning practice for the bigger and more collective concerns that we need to tackle in our society.

The Need for Personal Assertiveness

Many of us find it difficult to assert ourselves in our daily interactions with other people. We may feel unconfident about speaking up in a group, seeking the information we need from our doctors, relating to our bosses, handling comfortably our consumer rights or normal conflict situations without resorting to aggressive language or tears. For some of us, becoming politically assertive means starting with our own feelings of helplessness to take control in our personal lives, and learning to develop methods to expand our personal power.

The Need for Community Assertiveness

However, many of the dilemmas we find ourselves in because of discrimination, such as racism or sectarianism in our society, are not appropriately addressed by individuals. They must, because of their nature, be approached collectively. Issues like harassment, intimidation, discrimination or violence, at work or in our communities, often require collective community action.

Such action requires the development of self-confidence on the part of both individuals and groups within communities, in order to tackle both divisions within their groups and divisions between themselves and other groups, as well as formulating adequate strategies to tackle the community's felt grievances and needs. (66, 67)

Understanding Power

In order to engage successfully in such action, a community needs to define for itself what are the sources of power within its community, in society and increasingly at a transnational level. (68, 69, 70)

It also has to define for itself what kind of power it feels it has - if any - to lobby effectively for the needs of its members. In order to achieve its objectives most satisfactorily, a community will also need to develop between its members structures that ensure adequate participation and hearing-time for those who want to join in decision-making. These structures should allow for differences of opinion to emerge and be taken into account, without the group at any stage resorting to accusations of 'disloyalty' or to pressure and intimidation of those who would challenge accepted beliefs about political strategies or otherwise. (71, 72, 73, 74, 75,76)

Acceptable Tactics

Any group wishing to focus on developing effective social or political action, as well as focusing on particular objectives for its group to achieve, will also need to spend some time together as a group developing an agreement on the tactics that are acceptable for the group to use to achieve those objectives. Otherwise, differences among the group about acceptable tactics can engender tension and intimidation between them.

Such work is particularly necessary in a situation where conflicting attitudes about which means groups feel they can acceptably use to pursue their objectives have, consciously or unconsciously, divided communities from each other. We have all varied in our support or condemnation of the methods employed by particular groups in pursuing their objectives. Our views may vary according to time and crisis, reflection and peer groups, experiences and public discussion, or just with the "latest atrocity." It is all the more essential, therefore, that all community groups, when engaging themselves in action of a social or political nature, should clarify for themselves methods appropriate to their work and situation, acceptable to their members - and which take into account the rights of other groups. (77, 78, 79)

64. Starting To Be Assertive

Objective: To introduce a 3-stage model of assertiveness appropriate for both individuals and groups.

Time: about 1.5 hours

Method: The facilitator will introduce briefly the concept of assertion and how it differs from passivity and aggression. (Introduction, Chapter 6)

The facilitator will then ask the participants to decide on situations in which:

a) they have a personal difficulty in being assertive, or

b) in which the group wishes to assert its demands to another agency in relation to a particular need in the community. (10 minutes)

(The smaller the issue to start with, the easier the exercise, e.g., fight for better local play facilities rather than major constitutional choices!)

The facilitator will then introduce the following 3-stage model of an assertive interaction.

Stage I: Letting the other person/agency know that you understand what their position or responsibilities are.

Stage II: Stating clearly through whatever appropriate means you have (verbally, or by letter) what you as an individual or group think or feel about the present situation.

Stage III: Stating clearly what you want, and what options you see for action. (10 minutes)

Participants will then work in groups of 3/4 and help each other to work out, using the above 3-stage model, what possible assertive and realistic demands they can make that they feel might adequately meet their needs. (45 minutes)

Discussion:

- Did they find the model helpful?
- Which bits of it were most difficult ?
- Were the groups working together able to produce examples of assertive action ?

Comment: While the above 3-stage model may be adequate in soliciting appropriate responses in some cases, particularly personal cases where assertiveness is needed, it is important that people and groups recognise that asking for what you want is often only the first step in a long process towards getting appropriate agencies to respond. This exercise could therefore be profitably followed by Exercise 65, which concentrates on options available other than merely asking.

65. The Next Step

Objective: To help participants understand that there are a variety of steps which groups can use to achieve their demands assertively.

Time: 1½ hours

Materials: Copies of the 'Assertion Steps' below

Method: Ask the participants to think of a campaign in which they or their group are involved, and which individuals/agencies/organisations they need to contact to facilitate the action they want taken. Ask them to call out the 'campaigns' they wish to work on. The facilitator will write them up on a flip-chart. (15 minutes.)

The participants will then divide into groups of 3/4, each group to work on a particular issue. If two or more groups choose to work on a particular issue, it does not matter, as it will be useful later to compare their different approaches.

Using the model of the 'Assertion Steps' below, groups are to work out their statements, or actions, for each step. They should also appoint are porter to feed back their decisions to the large group. (45 minutes)

Groups are then asked to feed back their decisions to the larger group, for comment and additional suggestions.

'Assertion Steps'

The table below contains the following:

Definition of different types of assertion steps

Examples of each type of assertiveness

The examples below are taken from an action campaign mounted by a Northern Ireland rural community called Ardboe in response to their concern about possible mining in their area. **Other appropriate examples should be substituted by the facilitator or the examples column left blank**.

TYPE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
BASIC	A straightforward statement that makes clear your feelings and demands	We want information, a public inquiry, an environmental impact study, and negotiation with the community.
EMPATHETIC	Statements that make clear you understand their possible difficulties in complying with your demand	We understand you may not have done this elsewhere, and may not have developed a procedure for it.
DISCREPANCY	A statement that points out the discrepancy between their public statements and their present actions.	Nevertheless, you have stated that you feel a particular responsibility to maintain the environment.
NEGATIVE FEELINGS	A statement which draws attention to the negative effect that their behaviour is having on people.	When you refuse to talk to the community, we feel angry and suspicious.
CONSEQUENCE	A statement that informs the other party of the consequences of their actions	We will refuse to cooperate with you and will resist the introduction of the rigs through non-violent, obstructive tactics.
RESPONSIVE	A statement that aims to find out the problems the other party may have in negotiating with your group.	We'd like to hear what difficulties there are for you in adopting our proposals or talking with us.

66. Speaking Out

Objectives: To assist participants in practicing the three steps to assertiveness in either their personal or their political lives.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Speak-out sheets, either personal or political as needed, one for each participant.

Method: Facilitator to introduce the three stage model of assertiveness, writing on the Flip chart the following steps:

1) Let the other person know that you understand what their position is.

2) State clearly what you think or feel about this situation.

3) State clearly what you want, and what options you see for action.

Give each person a speak-out sheet - either the personal or the political sheet. While it is sometimes easier to start with the personal, some groups may be willing to go straight on to tackle the political speak-outs.

Ask them in groups of 3/4 to devise answers for each of the scenarios on the sheets, e.g., what would be a passive, aggressive and assertive response to each of them? (30 minutes).

Ask the groups to convene, and, taking the situations sequentially, ask the participants to share their decisions.

Discussion:

- What did individuals think would be their usual typical response (e.g., passive, aggressive or assertive)?

- Were they able to come up with assertive responses that satisfied them?

- What were your fears about acting assertively? Did you think it was possible to act assertively on a purely personal basis for some of the scenarios - or did you feel it was too dangerous? If so, what sorts of collective action did you decide were possible, if any?

- Did you feel there were times when a passive or aggressive response was more likely to succeed than assertiveness? In some cases did you decide to delay your response to the situation in order more effectively to deal with it? Why?

- Would their choice/likely response to the situation have been different if they had been in a group?

Personal Speak-Out

1. You bought a pair of shoes last week and the heel has fallen off. You return them to the shop, but the dealer refuses to return your money, saying you must have mistreated them. Your response:

   Passive: ....

   Aggressive: ....

   Assertive: ....

2. You are attending a meeting. The person next to you is smoking and it is making your eyes water. When lighting up yet another cigarette, they say 'You don't mind if I smoke, do you?' Your response:

   Passive: ....

   Aggressive: ....

   Assertive: ....

3. You are in the doctor's office. The doctor has just examined you, told you that your sore stomach is probably just a bug, he will give you a tonic, and not to worry about it. There are some questions you still want to ask him, but he begins to usher you out the door. Your response:

   Passive: ....

   Aggressive: ....

   Assertive: ....

4. You are on the local church/chapel committee. A decision is taken to build a new community hall, A decision was previously taken to accept the lowest tender for the job. The estimates for the work have come in, and the second lowest one has come from a family member of one of the committee. With a few justifying murmurs, it is agreed to accept it. Your response:

   Passive: ....

   Aggressive: ....

   Assertive: ....

Political Speak-Out

1. You are walking down your local neighbourhood street and you come across a few youngsters daubing slogans on the wall of a neighbour who happens to be of a minority religion in the neighbourhood. Your response:

   Passive: ....

   Aggressive: ....

   Assertive: ....

2. A collector comes to your door, looking for contributions to the local 'Aid to Relatives of Prisoners' fund. You feel uneasy because you suspect that much of the money in fact goes to fund armed groups, with which you disagree. Your response:

    Passive: ....

    Aggressive: ....

    Assertive: ....

3. You are working in a youth club one night. There is a protest next day against a recent political event involving the use of the club, and a few of the lads make it clear that they expect to see you there. While you too disagree with what happened, you feel they are intimidating you. Your response:

    Passive: ....

    Aggressive: ....

    Assertive: ....

4. You are stopped by the army or police one day at a roadblock. They ask you questions that you feel they are not entitled to ask. While you feel you have nothing to hide from them, you also want to stand up for your rights. Your response:

    Passive: ....

    Aggressive: ....

    Assertive: ....

67. Next Time Around

Objective: To assist participants in practicing assertiveness in the face of stressful political situations.

Time: 1 ½ hours

Materials: Pencil and Paper for all Participants.

Method: The facilitator asks each participant to reflect upon a stressful political situation which has happened to them over the past few years and which they felt they had dealt with unsatisfactorily (e.g., hearing a bigoted remark, sensing discrimination, feeling helpless at political decisions, being harassed or intimidated). Participants are asked to write down a short version of what happened, and their response. (10 minutes)

They will then form into groups of 3/4 to share the incidents with the group and to ask their help on possible assertive responses to these situations.

The group may then, if they wish, select one situation for role play to the general group, showing a) the initial response made by the participant, and b) the assertive response devised by the group. (45 minutes)

The groups then role play their situation to the larger groups. (5/10 minutes each group)

Discussion:

- What incidents did people bring up?
- Were there many similarities?
- How many of you were happy with the assertive responses devised by the group? How many unhappy, and why?
- What were participants' fears?

68. Lining Up The Power

Objectives: To increase the participants' awareness of power within the group.

Time: 30/45 minutes

Method: Participants are asked to physically position themselves and each other in the order of their influence within the group, i.e., on what happens within this particular group in the room, not on their power in the 'outside' world. This must be done non-verbally, and should include group leaders and facilitators.

When completed, the facilitator should record the ranking on a flip-chart.

The group then sits and discusses how they came to do the ordering, how assertive they felt about ordering themselves and others, whether they wanted to withdraw from the process and whether they felt uneasy with the concept of power.

After the discussion, the group is again given the chance to order themselves, until they all express themselves relatively satisfied with the outcome. If agreement cannot be reached, discuss the different concepts of power that people hold, which make agreement difficult.

Variation: If the group is not too big (i.e., no more than 12), individuals may take it in turn to do the ordering of participants. Facilitator will note the results for the different ranking on the flip-chart as they occur. The rankings are likely to differ, providing discussion for how people see power, who they think has it, and why.

Comment: If there are people who are consistently put at the bottom of the power line, it is important to ascertain how they feel about this, and how they could change their ranking, if they wanted to. This could be done with the help of other participants' suggestions.

Caution: It is suggested that this exercise be done only with groups who work together frequently, and hence know each other quite well. It should also only be done with groups where all of the participants feel relatively self-confident, and only after the participants have had a chance to hear the method outlined and willingly agree to participate in it.

69. Power – In Our Society

Objective: To assist participants in analysing who they see as powerful in their own society, and why.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Flip-chart, and Postcards.

Method: This exercise is too time-consuming to be done with more than 12 in a group. If the numbers are larger, divide the group, after the initial brainstorming session, either on a random or religious, political or cultural basis – see Variation below.

Ask the participants to think about the following question: Who do you see as the most powerful people in your society?

Ask them not to worry about definitions of the word power for the moment. If the participants request such a definition, just ask for quick instinctive responses. People may suggest either groups or individuals, and these can both be marked up.

As the responses come in, put them on the flip-chart.

Write a postcard for each of the people/groups named, place them face down on a table, and ask people to choose a postcard and pin it to themselves.

Ask each individual in turn to do a physical line-up of these people in terms of how powerful the individual thinks they are, with the most influential at the top of the line and so on down.

Facilitator will allow about 2 minutes per person for each participant to do their ranking, and as they finish, will chart the results of each individual ranking on the flip chart. When all the participants have had a chance at doing the ranking, the group reforms into a Plenary.

Discussion:

- On what basis did the participants do their ranking?
- Were there disagreements?

Variation: This ranking exercise can be done by diverse groups doing the initial brainstorming together, but their rankings separately. Two sets of postcards will be needed.

They may then compare their results and see on what they are based.

70. Whom Do We Need?

Objective: To assist participants in clarifying the value of the power held by 'leaders' within their context.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pen and Paper for the participants.

Method: Participants are asked to assign themselves the role of someone they see as being very powerful in their own conflict context, each person taking a different role. When each person has assigned themselves a role, explain the following scenario.

You are all flying to a conference together. The pilot warns you that, because of a technical fault, you may all have to leave the plane by parachute, within the space of an hour. However, a count of the parachutes reveals that there are not enough for everyone - in fact you are three short. The pilot has his own, and is not prepared to relinquish it.

Each of you has to write down the reasons why you think you should be-assigned a parachute and thereby saved to continue your work.

Each of you is then asked to introduce yourself to the group, in turn, for up to 3 minutes and share with them the reasons why it is most important that you should be saved. When everyone has spoken, the group will vote as to who should get a parachute and who should not. They cannot vote for themselves.

Discussion:

- Did they find it difficult to reasonably justify their own survival?

- How difficult were their choices ? Why?

- On what basis did they eventually select people?

- Did they select people with whom they shared political aspirations, or some with whom they disagreed or did not like, but felt were necessary in the society?

- What did they learn from the exercise ?

71. Who's In Charge?

Objective: To ascertain who the participants see as the most powerful people/groups in their local community, and what they see as their sources of power.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Flip-chart, Markers, BIu Tac.

Method: Ask the participants to think about the following question:

Who do you think are the most powerful people or groups in your local community?

(Don't worry about definitions for the moment - just ask them for some quick responses)

As the responses come, put them on the flip-chart.

These may include business owners, religious leaders, teachers, heads of local associations (sports, tenants, trade unions, community development), local politicians, gangs or armed groups, etc.

When the list is finished, ask people to think about the sources of the power these people have - why are they powerful? Is it control over resources? control over attitudes? the use of violence? control over communications? norms or principles? traditional leadership? or other factors?

Comment: This can usefully lead into (72) and (73) which look at the different kinds of power people have in our society.

72. Why Them?

Objective: To ascertain who the participants see as the most powerful people/groups in their society, and what they see as their sources of power.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Flip-chart, Markers, Blu Tac.

Method: Ask the participants to think about the following question:

Who do you think are the most powerful people or groups in our society?

(Don't worry about definitions for the moment - just ask them for some quick responses)

As the responses come, put them on the flip-chart.

(These may include the media, political leaders, civil servants, churches, armed groups, pop singers, writers, etc.)

When the list is finished, ask people to think about the sources of the power they think these people have. Why are they powerful? Is it control over money, resources, or communications, power to shape attitudes, use of violence, power of their principles, traditional roles, and so on.

Comment: This exercise can usefully lead into (72) and (73) which deal with the different kinds of power that people wield.

73. Sources of Power (Input for 73 and 74)

POWER can be seen as based upon a number of sources, for example:

1) **Resource Control:** This can be the control of physical, financial or informational resources. It is a form of control particularly used by government, but can also be used by sectors of a community (e.g. the control of a power station or trains during a strike, the withdrawal of rents and taxes, the boycotting of shops, the refusal of laborers to work, etc.) While the most power is held by those who control the most valued resources, nevertheless, even a small amount of control over resources can be powerfully used (e.g., through control over the city hall by the caretaker or by the person controlling the key to the photocopier).

2) **Formal Authority:** Formal authority is often held legally, e.g., by the government, police or parents. It depends on people's acceptance of it, and is usually held in conjunction with other forms of power such as resources control, traditional authority, or coercion. It can also be contracted formal authority, such as that of boss to worker, religious leader to congregation, or head of school to teacher, which depends on role acceptance by the parties concerned.

3) **Coercive Power:** This is power that depends for its control on the use of coercion through possession of weapons, imprisonment, physical punishment, property destruction, or threats of such. Coercive power can also be mental, e.g., through intimidation or psychological harassment.

4) **Principled or Moral Power:** This is the power that can accrue to a person or group because sufficient people are inspired by their principles or ideas (e.g., the power of a political or religious group, a charismatic individual, an ideological movement). This can be a very strong source of power, capable of withstanding opposition of a formal or coercive nature. As its base is partly emotional, it is also a power that can be easily used to mislead people.

5) **Communicative Power:** Increasingly, a group or individual's capacity to attain or retain power is dependent upon their ability to communicate to their relevant audiences the particular merits of their case by their use of different forms of media. The quality of their message can sometimes matter less than the quantity and quality of their communication skills. This is an especially important source of power nowadays because of the prevalence and targeted audiences of social media. Also, media experts such as reporters, producers, and camera people can also wield power through their selection and presentation of their subject, and their choice of how to present it. Such selection can be conscious, dictated by them or by the authorities, or come from the unconscious bias of the people concerned.

6) **Skills Power:** This type of power belongs to those people and groups whose skills and expertise are seen to be important to the functioning of society, and without whom it appears obvious that the quality of our lives would suffer. Such skills may be technological, military, medical, financial, etc.

7) **Political Power:** Because of their power as elected representatives of the people, and the power that this gives to them as lobbyists and decision-makers, politicians have considerable power available to them. These channels are also open to all constituency members who may make use of local political advice centres, etc., to make their views known, to network, and to lobby government departments about the particular needs of their community.

8) **Cultural Power:** Cultural power is usually nurtured through the selective choice of cultural histories by a group or nation and the cultivated remembrances of particular events. While of its nature it is not necessarily sectarian or discriminatory, it does tend to be exclusive, focusing on selected choices of what to commemorate and how. It can be nurtured by the creation of songs or the uplifting of heroes to celebrate a community's victories or sacrifices, the revival of a language particular to an identity, or by the rediscovery of a history reaffirming its identity. At a more local level, it can be rediscovered through local history, which reaffirms the particular - and usually positive –aspects of that particular community. Such a power is often also used to reaffirm class status and to distinguish the opera-goers from the pub-singers, or the players and followers of one sport rather than another.

9) **Contractual Power:** This is power that comes from a contract for responsibility entered into by individuals or agencies with each other. It can be, for example, an individual's responsibility to deliver on a contract for services paid for, or the contractual responsibility of a local council to take care of waste disposal, and the citizens' responsibility to pay taxes accordingly. It is usually, though not always, accompanied by threats of coercive power if contracts are not fulfilled. This could be the possibility of a court case, the refusal to pay, public shame or loss of face.

10) **Innovative Power:** The increasing complexity of modern society seems to demand continual innovation to cope with the dilemmas and problems that are apparent in our society today, such as problems of unemployment, of the environment, of health care or of divisions within the society. A group's capacity to develop creative responses to the problems within its own communities can provide inspiration and example to other communities with similar dilemmas - and may, depending on such things as political climate, provide alternative models for other communities to develop on a wider basis.

It is important to remember that the above examples of types of power do not usually exist in isolation, but are frequently combined (e.g., formal and coercive, cultural and communicative).

74. What Have They Got?

Objectives: To help a group ascertain what kinds of power are wielded by different people and groups within their community.

Time: 1 ½ hours

Materials: 'Sources of Power' lists. Flip - Chart and markers.

Method: Give everyone a Sources of Power list.
Allow people 10 minutes to study it individually.
In plenary, take some time for the group (30 minutes) to agree/disagree/add or subtract to the list.

Then ask the participants to think about who, within their particular community, (local, national, or regional, depending on the concern of the group) holds these types of power.

Ask them to jot down the individuals or groups beside the various sections as they occur to them.
(15 minutes)

Ask people to share their findings in groups of 3 or 4 and to bring back feedback to the main group.
(20 minutes)

Total results are then charted on the flip-chart.

This exercise can be done as separate groups, according to a polarizing divide, and results shared, or with a diverse group from different communities wanting to discuss or compete with each other on particular social or political issues.

Comment: This exercise can be followed by the POWER WEB exercise (74) if a group wishes to explore their own balance of power.

75. Power web

Objectives: To allow a group to check for themselves what kind of power they think they can assert, and what power other agencies have in relation to them.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Sufficient copies of the Input 'Types of Power' for each participant.

Method: Ask each participant to draw a power web as outlined below.

The central circles represent the group. The circles around the edge represent agencies, groups or people with whom the group are or need to be connected in order to succeed in obtaining the expressed objectives of their association. These can be formal, governmental, or voluntary bodies, politicians or security forces or influential individuals.

On the connecting lines, the participants draw on one side of the line, marked by an arrow going towards the particular outer circle, the numbers of the types of power that they think the community or group has in relation to that particular agency or person.

On the other side of the line, marked by an arrow coming back to the central circle, the numbers of the types of power that that particular agency or person has in relation to the community or group. For example, if one of the outer circle represents the local council, you may feel you have Power 5, 7or 9 in relation to them, and they may have 1, 3, and 9 in relation to the community. If one of the circles represents the media, the community may have 4, 5 or l0 in relation to them, while they have 1 and 5in relation to your group. It is even possible that both groups have the same possibilities of power with respect to each other (e.g., #5 and #9.)

Discussion:

When participants have finished, ask them to divide into new groups of 4 to discuss their findings, e.g., any surprises, the types of power they feel the group has or the types it would like to develop further. (20 minutes)

Ask the participants to return to a plenary session, and share their findings.

Variation: If the exercise is being done to help a particular group to assess its own possibilities for power, groups of 5/6 could be asked to make a strategic plan for each section they would like to develop more effectively, e.g., political power or communicative power. (1 hour)

76. Holding The Mike

Objective: To enable participants to explore the dynamics of power and communication within the group.

Time: Up to an hour

Materials: A small ball or stick or other easily handled object.

Method: The facilitator has decided upon a topic for the group to discuss, preferably taking an issue of concern from a previous exercise in which the group have been engaged, and one which is likely to generate conflicting views. The participants are told that possession of the ball will determine who may speak. If participants wish to gain possession of the ball, they must signal this non-verbally to the person holding it. However, this person may, if they wish, refuse to surrender the ball to the person who requests it. If the speaker has finished speaking, he or she may return the ball to the center of the circle.

The facilitator then places the ball in the centre of the floor, announces the topic - perhaps in the form of a question that needs to be decided - and waits for the participants to begin.

After 15 minutes, the facilitator announces that the discussion on the topic is over.

Discussion:

How did participants feel about their right to take part in the discussion?

- Did they feel that certain people dominated unfairly?
- How did they feel if they wanted the ball, but were refused it?
- What methods did they use to get it?
- What way would they have preferred possession of the ball to be handled?

77. Means and Ends

Objective: To help participants to clarify for themselves some of the issues involved in the use of violence in their society by a variety of groups.

Time: 1 hour

NB: Advance preparation of list of violent incidents, including a range of types of violence and actors.

Materials: Pens and Paper for participants.

Methods: The facilitator asks the participants to reflect upon a list of incidents of violence, either by copying the list and distributing it, or by writing it up on a Flip-chart.

The facilitator then asks the participants the question:

The following tactics have all been used in our society. Which two of them have you found most disturbing? Why?

Discussion :

- What were the factors that influenced your decision?
- Was it the groups who had used them, and their alleged purposes?
- Was it the question of "legitimate" versus "illegitimate" violence?
- Was it those who were the victims of the violence?
- Or particular methods and the results?

Comment: This exercise is intended to help participants to clarify for themselves why certain violent actions appear to disturb them more than others. The object of the exercise is to obtain such clarification for themselves, and not to involve participants in arguments about whether one act of violence justifies another, or whether a particular action constituted violence or not.

78. What Will You Use?

Objectives: To help participants within a particular politico/religio group to define for themselves their acceptance or reluctance to use particular tactics in a conflict situation.

Time: 1 ½ hours

Materials: Gene Sharp's tactic list below for each participant.

Method: If wished, divide groups into differing religio/politico groupings.

Ask each participant to read carefully through the list, and write in the spaces provided incidents where they felt the tactics were acceptably used within their situation. (15 minutes)

Ask participants to share their ideas in groups of 5/6, and to appoint a reporter to feed back participants' views. (45 minutes)

Convene a plenary discussion to hear the participants' views.

Discussion:

- Can you divorce tactics from ends?
- Do the required ends justify the means?
- In all cases, or just some?
- In which particular cases? Why?

Comment: Unless different groups have developed a great deal of experience at listening to one another, to attempt to use this format for inter-community dialogue is likely to prove counterproductive, particularly on Tactic 6, below. It is slightly less contentious to use it for within-community dialogue but may still demand a good deal of skill from the facilitator, depending on the type of group using it.

Tactics for Protest

A range of tactics where two or more groups are in conflict has been classified by Gene Sharp[1] in the following way:

1) Protest and Persuasion. (e.g., formal statements, public speeches, mass petitions, banners, pickets, peaceful marches, teach-ins, walk-outs.)

2) Social and Economic non co-operation. (e.g., social boycott of individuals, non co-operation with social events, customs and institutions, economic boycott of goods/production, strikes, shutdowns, withholding rents/utilities).

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[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_n

3) Political non co-operation. (e.g., boycott of legislative procedures, of elections, quasi-legal evasions and delays).

4) Non violent Interventions (e.g., fasting, peaceful sit-ins, passive resistance/obstruction and civil disobedience, creating 'alternative' economic and social institutions).

5) Material destruction of property and goods - either selectively or indiscriminately targeted.

6) Physical violence against people - harassment, bodily harm, shooting (real or plastic bullets), explosives, again either selectively or indiscriminately targeted.

Name some incidents in which these tactics were used and where you felt the tactics were acceptable and unacceptable within your situation. If you think of tactics not named, but which you have seen used, you may mention those as well.

79. What's Possible?

Objectives: To help a group define for itself what tactics they feel are acceptable in pursuing a specific objective.

Time: 1 - 1 1/2 hours

Materials: Flip-chart plus Blu-Tac

Method: Take a specific objective on which the group have previously agreed as appropriate for action, and write it on the Flip-chart. It should be as specific as possible (e.g., persuade the local council to accede to request from the local community for a particular change, or involve at least 20 more people willing to work in the local community group, etc.)

Explain the 'brainstorm' purpose and method to the group.

The purpose of it is to generate as many ideas as possible for action, in the shortest space of time. The method is to have everyone call out, in rapid succession, any ideas they have for action in this particular case, no matter how crazy they may seem. Emphasise that they are merely a listing of possibilities, and should not be discussed, defended or argued for. These are written up quickly on the board in an abbreviated form.

It is better not to do this with more than 12 people - larger groups can divide if necessary and share results later.

When the time is up (e.g., 10 minutes,) or ideas have dried up, the facilitator will move down through the ideas, marking them as either 'possible', 'perhaps' or 'impossible/not acceptable' depending on how the group feels about the ideas.

Ideas can then be worked on separately or combined until final agreement, selecting tactics to be used, and timetables for them.

Chapter 7

POLES APART - CONFLICT AND INTERVENTION

Whenever individuals, groups or societies differ in what they are trying to achieve, or in the way they are trying to achieve it, there is conflict. It is a natural process, and can be one of the most energising and productive factors in human progress. However, its consequences can also be very destructive.

Conflict always needs at least two opposing parties, and can occur at a variety of levels. For example:

INTRA-PERSONAL: as individuals, we are often at conflict with ourselves about values, choices, and commitments.

INTER-PERSONAL: disagreements between two people on a purely personal level.

INTER-ROLE: between two people on the basis of their job or role (e.g. manager vs. union negotiator.)

INTER-GROUP/ORGANISATIONAL: Conflict that occurs between any two groups, whether of relative equality or vastly differing in power, e.g., advocacy groups vs. government.

INTER-COMMUNITY: between two bigger groups, allied by territory, religion, history or philosophy (e.g., Israelis/Arabs, Protestants/Catholics, Capitalists/Workers).

INTER-NATIONAL: Between nations. (80, 81)

What are the differences about?

The differences upon which a conflict can be based can come from a variety of factors. For example:

FACTS - how things are and how they got that way, i.e., who did what to whom, when, how, etc.

NEEDS - what people feel they need in their lives to feel secure and respected, and whether these needs are met. This can include material commodities, an identity to feel proud of, a sense of being treated equally, and some control over their lives.

VALUES - and assumptions about values. These are the long-range beliefs people hold about how things ought to be, e.g., equality for women, a socialist society, a nation's independence, the individualistic ethic, adherence to the Bible or the Koran, etc.

(It is not the value per se that leads to the conflict, but the claim by those holding it that their value should predominate, even over those who hold different values.)

POSITIONS - or goals held. These are the particular ideas people hold about the best way as they see it to obtain their particular group needs, e.g., through secession, a change in the border, tighter integration with a neighboring country, membership in a multi-national organization, or a Marxist state.

METHODS - the ways which people or groups feel are acceptable to achieve their goals, e.g., only legal means, illegal but non-violent means, violence against property, violence against selected persons, indiscriminate violence. (82, 83, 84, 85, 86)

Position versus needs/values:

Most conflicts revolve around different commitments to POSITIONS. In Northern Ireland, it tends to be around different political options, each of which some people have convinced themselves is the only possible one that will achieve their interests.

However, if groups can be persuaded to discuss their conflicts in terms of their NEEDS or VALUES, i.e., the specific, fundamental needs they feel are not being met, and the values they hold which they feel have compelled them to take up their particular position, then the possibilities for achieving a productive outcome to a conflict are increased. It has frequently happened throughout history that the achievement of particular 'positions' has not ultimately produced the desired ends, even for the 'victors' (87). This is particularly so when groups take up positions precisely because they are the opposite of what the other group wants. Achievement of such positions may not meet anyone's needs.

The development of a conflict:

One of the major difficulties about conflicts is that, as they continue, certain factors are likely to make their eventual resolution even more difficult. It may be possible to trace the development of these factors as they play out in each specific situation.

- Aims can become more fixed and compromise less possible.

- Stereotypes become more hardened.

- Communication that might improve sympathy for and understanding of the other side's position is avoided.

- Members of each side suffer and may even be killed. It then seems necessary to uphold the honor of the dead by continuing the conflict.

- Groups can become more cohesive as a group and more negative towards the other side.

- Leaders are required to be strong and uncompromising above all else.

Approaches to Handling Conflict:

Three basic approaches to conflict have been identified:

1) The WIN / LOSE position or the adversarial method. This is where the basic stance of both parties is based on a determination to win their position at all costs, in the belief that what one side wins, the other loses.

2) The NEGOTIATION position, where both sides are prepared to compromise so that both sides end up with a little satisfaction, and with a loss that they can cope with - for the moment. (Small win/small lose position)

3) The WIN/WIN position - sometimes called the joint-problem-solving approach. This is where both sides no longer insist that the problem belongs to someone else, (e.g., the British, the Communists, the Atheists, etc.)
They accept that it is now, whatever the history of it may have been, a shared communal problem, and that any 'victory' for one side means that both sides will lose out on the possibility of a just and stable society.

This latter approach assumes some pre requite conditions, specifically, that there is a willingness on both or all sides to seek a solution that is acceptable to all. It also assumes roughly a balance of power and respect between opponents.

If such equality or respect is not present, then raising the capacity of the less powerful side to negotiate may need to be done first.

As well as the above approaches, feelings of powerlessness and helplessness can lead to an attitude of AVOIDANCE, i.e., withdrawing from the arena of conflict, or ACCOMMODATION, that is, appeasing the 'enemy'.

However, as feelings of power or frustration grow, the conflict is often resumed. (88, 89, 90)

For further theory on different approaches to conflict see input (87).

The Structural or the Psychosocial approach?

People and groups vary in their approaches to handling a conflict. Some are more likely to focus on the structural factors that appear to be fuelling the conflict and some on the psychosocial factors.

Those who choose to focus on the structural factors of a conflict will study the facts of the alleged causes and results of the conflict (e.g., structural discrimination, gerrymandering, unequal job opportunities, or political structures that facilitate one group rather than another) and will focus their energy on attempts to address them.

Those who choose to focus on the psychosocial factors of a conflict will attempt to improve trust between the opposing parties, decrease stereotyping, change attitudes, increase contact and knowledge, improve clarification about the factual issues and the desired goals of the parties.

While some people and groups choose to focus their work on just one of the above spheres, it is likely that without work in both, long-term solutions to the conflict may prove difficult. (91, 92) For this reason, it can be helpful for groups using one approach to know about and encourage those using a different approach.

Third-party intervention - or mediation

Occasionally in a dispute, particularly when passions are running very high and communications have broken down, it is appropriate for parties in conflict to use a mediator. A mediator is someone impartial who can hold the parties to a process of communication and negotiation that can produce outcomes to the conflict that are satisfactory to all parties concerned. (92)

80. CONFLICT: The Good, Bad and Neutral

Objectives: To assist participants to see that conflict is an essential process in life with both desirable and undesirable consequences.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Flip-chart and Markers.

Method: On the Flip-chart, write the word CONFLICT.

Ask the participants to free associate with the word 'CONFLICT', and call out quickly whatever words come to their minds in relation to it. This should be done rapidly, for about 5 minutes.

The words are likely to fall into three categories.

1) Words with a positive connotation (e.g. richness, excitement, creativity).

2) Words with a negative connotation (e.g. death, aggression, destruction).

3) Words which are relatively neutral (e.g. tension, balance, inevitable).

Mark against the words offered by the participants the categories into which they fall. If there are disagreements over whether a certain word is positive, negative or neutral, put it in each category suggested by the participants.

Discussion:

• Did everybody offer words from all three categories?

• Did some participants only think of the negative ones?

• Did some people see some words as positive, while others saw them as negative/neutral? What did that mean?

• What would we lose in our lives if we did not have conflict?

81. Myriad Conflicts

Objectives: To help participants to recognise that conflict in all of our lives is inevitable, and can happen at a variety of levels.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Pens and papers for participants. Flip-chart and Markers.

Method: The facilitator will give a short introduction to the variety of levels on which conflict can occur, as outlined in the Introduction to Chapter 7. For example:

1) Intra-personal

2) Inter-personal

3) Inter-role

4) Inter-group

5) Inter-community

6) Inter-national

Write the above on the board. Ask each participant to think of at least one incident in their lives at which conflict occurred for them at the above levels. Have them mark the one that they found/find most disturbing, and write a few sentences about why.

Ask them to share their findings in groups of 5/6 for about 15 minutes, and then to reconvene for a plenary discussion.

Discussion:

- Was there a particular category for which you could think of lots of incidents in your own lives?

- Which categories did you find most disturbing and why?

- Were there any categories in which you had never felt involved?

82. How Was the Fight?

Objectives: To help participants to reflect upon some recent conflict in their lives, understand a bit better the issues involved, and check their satisfaction with the outcome.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: A copy of 'How Was The Fight?' sheet for all the participants.

Method: Ask each person to take a sheet and fill it in separately for 15 minutes. As they will be asked to share their reflections, ask them to choose a situation that they feel safe about sharing with another person. After 15 minutes, ask them to break into pairs and share the results with their partner, concentrating particularly on questions 7/8 (15 minutes). Then regroup in plenary, and discuss.

Discussion:

- Did participants find it difficult to think of the other person's needs?
- Were they happy with the outcome of the conflict?
- If not, why not?
- What ways did they use to solve it?
- Did they think there were other ways they could have resolved it?

Variation: Participants, after a brief description of what actually happened in the conflict, can role play what they might feel would have been a more productive way to handle their particular conflict.

How Was The Fight? Questionnaire

1. Think of a conflict you have been involved in over the last year. It could be between family, spouse, children, work, trade, cultural, political, community, etc. Who was the conflict between?

2. Describe the conflict in no more than three sentences.

3. What were your needs and/or goals? What did you want to achieve or 'win'?

4. What were the other person's needs and/or goals. What did they want to achieve or 'win'?

5. Describe the outcome of the conflict.

6. Describe the methods you used to solve the conflict.

7. How did you feel about each other after the conflict? Is another conflict likely between you?

8. Were you satisfied with the outcome? If not, why not?

83. Different Perspective

Objective: To provide participants with an alternative way of looking at a conflict, and exploring possible ways to resolve it.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: A sheet of paper per person, plus lots of felt tip pens/crayons.

Method: Ask each person to work alone for 10 minutes, and to draw an unresolved conflict that they have found themselves in because of the socio-political situation.

Emphasise that it does not matter about the participants' drawing ability - stick figures or symbols will suffice.

At the end of 10 minutes, share your drawing with a partner, explaining what you have drawn.
(5 minutes each)

Taking each situation in turn, the pairs are to suggest one possible, realistic shift which some person or agency involved in that situation could make, which would ease the conflict, and discuss the possible consequences of it.

Reconvene for a plenary discussion.

Discussion:

- What situations did people choose?
- Did they find it difficult to depict them graphically?
- Was it useful?
- Was it difficult to explain them to their partner?
- Was it interesting hearing what other people had drawn, and why they had drawn them that way?
- What shifts were people able to suggest?

84. Listening Plus

Objective: To help participants develop their listening skills, and in particular, their sensitivity to the emotions engendered by a topic.

Time: 1 hour

Method: Ask the participants to break into threes. Each participant is to pick a topic from the topic list below (which can be written up on the flip- chart). Other topics may be added or substituted. The discussion is to proceed as follows:

One person to talk about the topic for 3 minutes.

One person to listen carefully to the FACTS of what the first person is saying - what they THINK about the situation.

One person to listen to the EMOTIONS behind what the person is saying - what that person FEELS about the topic.

When the speaker is finished, the other participants feed back what they have heard. One person will reflect back the speaker's thinking, and another person will reflect back the feelings that were observed, both expressed and unexpressed (10 minutes.)

The exercise is then repeated twice, with the participants changing roles so that each gets a chance as speaker about their particular topic, as a reflector of thoughts and as a reflector of feelings.

The participants then reconvene to discuss the experience.

Discussion:

- Which part did they find most difficult ?
- Were they able to speak freely, or were they censoring themselves?
- Did they find it easier to reflect back thoughts or feelings?
- How accurate were people in their reflections?

The topic list should be developed by facilitators, incorporating topics which may be timely, controversial, political, or likely to evoke personal emotions. These may include government, family, security services, holidays, labor disputes, historical events or figures. If desired, facilitators may ask participants to add a few topics and increase the time available.

85. I'm Hearing You

Objectives: To develop listening skills in individuals who might find themselves in conflict.

Time: 1 hour

Method: Participants are asked to pair up as far as possible with people with whom they think they might have some political disagreements.

The facilitator will call out a topic from the issues list in (56) and the pairs will find somewhere to discuss it. The directions for the discussion are as follows.

The first person will speak for 3 minutes on the topic, stating their views, or their confusions, on it as clearly as possible without intervention. When they have finished, their partner will reflect back to them as accurately as s/he can, what they heard them say. They will continue with this reflecting back until the first person is satisfied that they have been accurately understood in what they were saying. The other person then states their views on the topic, and the exercise is repeated. (15 minutes)

Participants are then asked to change partners, a different topic is announced by the facilitator, and the exercise is repeated.

Three rounds of 'listening' is suggested.

Participants will then reconvene to discuss the experience.

Discussion:

- Did people feel that what they said was accurately reflected back to them?
- Did they find it difficult to listen? Why?
- What particular topics or aspect did they have most difficulty with?
- Were there particular people they found it difficult to work with? Why?

86. What's It All About

Objective: To assist participants to clarify the causes behind a variety of conflicts between groups in their society.

Time: 1 hour

Method: The facilitator will give a short introduction to the participants about the variety of factors on which a conflict can be based, as outlined in the Introduction to Chapter 7. These are conflicts about Facts, Needs, Values, Positions and Methods.

Ask participants to name pairs of individuals or groups who have been in conflict at some stage during the last 20 years in this situation. Facilitator writes these on the board.

On what are the conflicts between them mainly based:

FACTS, NEEDS, VALUES, POSITIONS, OR METHODS?

Ask participants to break into groups of 3/4 and to try to reach agreement on the above, appointing a reporter to relay their findings. (30 minutes)

Participants to reconvene for a discussion on their results.

Discussion:

- Was the exercise helpful?
- Did people find it difficult to distinguish between the categories?
- Were they able to reach a consensus on the main differences in any of the above conflicts? If not, were the differences of opinion enlightening?

87. HOW Do You Handle It?

Objective: To help participants define for themselves how they usually handle conflict situations.

Materials: Enough copies of the CONFLICT STYLE questionnaire below for each participant.

Time: 45 minutes

Method: Ask the participants to fill in, individually, a copy of the conflict styles questionnaire. (10 minutes)

Ask them to share their general findings in groups of 3/4 for 20 minutes.

Reconvene in a general plenary.

Discussion:

- Did they find a general pattern to their responses?
- Were their responses different depending on whom they were dealing with?
- Are they happy about the ways they deal with conflict?
- Are there situations they are particularly unhappy with?

Conflict Style Questionnaire

Fill in the questionnaire. Under 'other', please mark in other people with whom you frequently or sometimes have differences, e.g., relatives, priest/minister, police/traffic wardens, local teachers, politicians, etc.

How do you usually handle conflicts with:

Parents
Children
Spouse/partner/boy or girl friends
Neighbors
Workmates
Fans of the other team, at sporting matches
Protestors or demonstrators whom you disagree with
Bartenders who refuse to serve you
Boss
Bank managers

1. Verbal abuse ....

2. Giving in ....

3. Trying to compromise ....

4. Changing the subject..

5. Continuing to nag ....

6. Silence...

7. Physical retaliation ....

8. Logical discussion ....

9. Crying ....

10. Sharing ideas on solutions ....

11. Making a joke ....

12. Listening carefully to the other person...

13. Expressing your feelings ....

14. Postponing discussion temporarily to 'cool off'..

88. Conflict Styles (Input)

The way in which we resolve differences, whether they be personal, group, community or national, will tend to vary depending on the power or resources we have, our perspective of the future, the strength of our feelings, and the complexity of the problem.

Our approaches will tend to fall into one of the following categories:

1. The **AVOIDER**. The avoider's approach to conflict is to stay away from it as much as possible. They will ignore it, hoping that it will go away, will sometimes busily involve themselves in other activities, or may eventually withdraw from a threatening situation. It often comes from a feeling of hopelessness, of lack of self-confidence, feelings that other people have all the control, and that therefore action is useless, or that the costs are too high.

2. The **CONTROLLER**. The controller's approach is based on a perception of the conflict as a win or lose situation. It's either us or them, and I/we must win our particular goal at all costs. Whatever power is seen as being appropriate to achieve victory will be used. If relationships are embittered in the process, even with people we still have to live within the future, so be it - what is important is for us to win.

3. The **COMPROMISER**. The compromiser's approach is based on the belief that, if both parties can involve themselves in a process where each side can win some of what they want, and drop some of their demands, then an expedient solution to the conflict can be achieved. Such a middle ground solution will partially satisfy both sides, but can often leave unresolved issues which may surface at times of future tension.

4. The **ACCOMMODATOR**. The accommodator is primarily concerned about maintaining relationships between people or groups in conflict. S/he would prefer if possible to ignore issues which might interfere with caring relationships between individuals or groups, and may attempt to reduce differences of opinion by emphasizing only what people have in common. Their solutions to conflict tend to be based more on improving the attitudes of the protagonists towards each other, rather than addressing divisive issues of injustice, or incompatible political positions.

5. The **JOINT-PROBLEM-SOLVER**. The joint-problem-solver tries to find solutions to the conflict which will address the concerns, fears, and the issues behind the stated goals of the protagonists. S/he will act not only on behalf of the concerns of her or his own groups, but on behalf of the opposing party's concerns also. The joint-problem-solver sees the problem as essentially a shared one. While persistently challenging inequities, s/he does not lose sight of the necessity also to maintain or develop constructive relationships with the 'opponent' which will contribute to the stability of any future agreements.

Comment: No one style is necessarily better than another in every situation- an approach that is possible in some situations may be useless in another. It is also likely that people may use a different conflict style when they are party to a conflict, than when they are trying to help others sort out a conflict.

(The above has been adapted from Lariscy:
http://www.randylariscy.com/topics/conflict_management/styles-of-managing-conflict/)

89. Personal Style

Objective: To encourage participants to discuss different approaches they personally use in handling conflict.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: A copy of the 'Conflict Styles' sheet for each of the participants.

Method: The facilitator may first want to introduce the theory that individuals and groups tend to approach conflict in a variety of ways, and outline the approaches defined on the 'Conflict Styles' sheet. (10 minutes)

Participants are then given copies of the 'Conflict Styles' sheet and are asked to reflect upon the following questions by themselves for 10 minutes, making some notes about their answers on a sheet of paper.

(The questions can be put on the board or Flip-chart)

They are then asked to share their reflections together in groups of 3/4 for 30 minutes, before reconvening for a plenary.

1) What type of approach do you usually take?
2) Do you differ in your approach depending on who the conflict is with e.g., spouse, boss, social security office, etc. If so, why?
3) What have been the positive consequences for you of adopting that style?
4) What have been the negative consequences for you of adopting that style?
5) Are you able to change to different styles to suit the situation?
6) Is there anything about the way you handle conflict that you wish to change?

Discussion:

- Was it easy for participants to spot their usual style?
- What have been the positive/negative consequences of that style for you?
- How is that style interpreted by others?
- Are you able to notice the styles used by others?
- Is there anything about the way you handle conflict that you wish to change?

90. Political Style

Objective: To encourage participants to reflect upon the varying approaches to political conflict by different interested parties in their society.

Time: 1 ½ hours

Materials: Copies of the 'Conflict Styles' sheets.

Method: The facilitator will first give a brief introduction to the theory that groups tend to approach conflict situations in a variety of ways, as outlined in the sheets.

The facilitator then gives the participants copies of the 'Conflict Styles' sheets, asks them to break into groups of 3/4 and ask themselves the following questions :

1) Over the past twenty years, what groups in our political conflict do you see as having usually fallen into the categories below:
   (Stress the 'usually' as groups will vary at times in their approach depending on the circumstances)

   a) Avoiders

   b) Controllers

   c) Compromisers

   d) Accommodators

   e) Joint-Problem-Solvers

2) What stops people being joint-problem-solvers?

After 30 minutes, groups will convene for a Plenary.

Discussion:

- Did particular groups usually adopt particular 'styles'?

- Under what circumstances did they vary their style?

- Were there any categories the participants particularly disliked?

- What were the factors that stopped people being 'joint-problem-solvers'?

(If the participants also did the previous exercise, Personal Conflict Style, ask:
Do you think it is easier for an individual or a group to adopt a new conflict style?
Does it depend on circumstances, kind of conflict, or something else?)

91. Intervention - But How?

Objective: To give participants an opportunity to try out various 'styles' of conflict intervention in a variety of conflict situations common in their situation.

Time: 1 ½ hours

Materials: Copies of the 'Conflict Styles' Sheets if desired. Postcards. As many of the 'scenarios' outlined in (58) as are required, written on separate postcards/sheets of paper .

Method: The facilitator will give a brief introduction to 'Conflict Styles' (10 minutes)

The facilitator will mark the title of the 'styles' on different postcards (i.e., avoider, compromiser, controller, accommodator, joint-problem-solver.) Two or more sets may be needed depending on the number in the group. It would be too unwieldy to try and work with more than 3 sets (i.e.,15 people.)

Ask participants to choose, unseen, a postcard with a particular 'style' on it.

Participants will then form themselves as far as possible into 'sets' of 5people, each with a different 'style' card. If there are less than 5 in a group, it does not matter.

The facilitator will then give each group a scenario from (58).

The groups will be given 10 minutes to prepare how each of them, using their different 'styles,' would respond to the situation outlined.

They will then return to the plenary group. Each group will outline the scenario they have been given, and introduce themselves in their role as, e.g., an avoider. Each will then in turn say how they think they would respond to the situation. Or, if the groups are sufficiently confident, they can role play the scene, playing their particular parts.

Allow 15 minutes for each role play and discussion about it.

Discussion:

- How did people feel about the roles they were given?
- How did other people feel about the way they portrayed it?
- What made it difficult to be a 'joint-problem-solver?
- How did people feel about the 'avoiders'?
- What did they think would have been the eventual outcome of the scenario they were playing?

Variation: Groups may be divided along identity lines and asked to play either a situation that would typically occur within their own community, or one that would occur in the other. Comparisons can then be made between the groups.

92. Hard Or Soft?

Objective: To engage participants in a discussion about the respective merits of the 'structural' versus the 'psychosocial' approaches to tackling a conflict.

Time: 1 hour (1 ½ hours if used by an agency to decide on strategy)

Method: The facilitator will briefly outline the two approaches to tackling grievances between groups - the 'structural' and the 'psychosocial' approach.

The 'structural' approach focuses on tackling the apparent causes and results of a particular conflict of interests (e.g. structural discrimination, unequal job opportunities, income levels, or political structures that benefit one group rather than another).

The 'psychosocial' approach is that which focuses on attempting to improve communication and trust between opposing parties, decrease in stereotyping, changing attitudes, and improving clarification about the desired goals of the parties.

In tackling bigotry, discrimination, sexism and racism, people have differed about which of the above approaches is more effective.

Ask the participants to break into group of 5/6 and answer the following questions:

1) If you believe in the structural approach, what kinds of activities would you engage in?
   What organisations do you know of who are mainly engaged in this approach?

2) If you believe in the psychosocial approach, what kinds of activities would you engage in?
   What organisations do you know of who are mainly engaged in this?

3) Which approach do you believe is most important?

4) Does the best approach vary according to the problem you want to tackle?

Participants to take 30 minutes to do the above, and to reconvene for a plenary discussion.

Discussion:

- Were participants able to distinguish between the two types of approaches?
- What kinds of activities distinguished the approaches?
- Were organisations inclined to support one approach as opposed to another?
- Do some organisations engaged in structural work dismiss those engaged in 'psychosocial' work?
- Which approaches did participants believe were most important? Why?
- Did they believe both were necessary?

Variation: If working with an agency, add the following questions to the list for participants to consider.

5) Which approach is the predominant one in our agency? Are we happy with it?

6) Are we avoiding engaging in some activities of a structural or a psychosocial kind? Why?

Allow 45 minutes for the small group discussions if the above questions are included.

Discussion: As above, with some additional questions.

- Are we happy with the approach of our agency?
- Do we want to develop activities of a different kind? What kind?

93. It's Up To You

Objectives: To give participants a chance to plan what they would see as a positive way to handle a variety of conflicts.

Time: 1 hour or more, depending on the number of small groups.

Materials: None.

Methods: Divide the participants up into groups of 4/6.

Give them the list of the following conflicts, and ask them to plan a strategy of intervention for one of the situations, and, if they wish, organise a role play to show how they would attempt to deal with the conflict. It does not matter if some groups choose the same situation, as comparing the variety of interventions will prove productive for later discussion. Give each group 20 minutes to prepare their role play.

Each group in turn will present their efforts to the plenary group. Allow each group about 10 minutes to present their role play, and 10 minutes following the presentation for group discussion.

Discussion:

- What approaches did you choose?
- Who did you decide to talk/meet with?
- What were your fears?
- Can the plenary group offer alternative suggestions for action?

Conflict Scenarios

If you were asked to help intervene in the following conflicts, how would you go about it?

1. A local community group in the area in which you live has asked you to act as a mediator between them and the local armed group, who have taken upon it themselves to punish young people engaging in vandalism.

2. The local Peace group has asked you to help them to negotiate with the local political extremists, who wish to stage a demonstration along a road that is likely to inflame those who disagree with them.

3. You live in a rural area, where most people do not trust the government or the security forces. Lately, a particular army regiment has been very active at the corner where the school bus leaves off the local children. Tension is rising, as some of the older children are beginning to throw stones when they see the soldiers. Some of the parents are worried that there will be trouble, and have come to you.

(Facilitators should design additional similar scenarios, reflecting likely conflicts.
These might involve different groups or places, such as shopkeepers in the town center, homeless veterans, religious extremists, etc., as appropriate.)

94. Third Party Roles: Mediation

Occasionally in a conflict, it is useful for the parties concerned to use a mediator. A mediator is someone who undertakes to work with the contending parties with a view to helping them settle or adjust their dispute satisfactorily. It is different to adjudication or arbitration, where decisions are finally made by the intervening judge or arbitrator. The mediator is not empowered to render any decision regarding the dispute, but instead concentrates on the process and the relationships.

Balance of Power:

Many, perhaps most disputes, whether personal or socio-political, involve unbalanced power: one party is stronger in some way than the other. It is possible to devise a process that balances the power somewhat, perhaps by encouraging third parties to assist the weaker group with expertise in technical issues such as borders or minority language rights. Some mediators will refuse to intervene in an unbalanced mediation process. In such cases, they may prefer temporarily to work as a mediator between intra-group factions or groups in order to increase the disadvantaged party's capacity to negotiate. This may, of course, make them appear biased, and therefore unacceptable to the other power as a mediator.

Mediation Skills:

The **skills and capacities** that appear to be useful in acting as a mediator are the following:

- not to take sides with one party or the other
- to listen sensitively and clarify the fears and concerns of both/all sides
- to help opponents to identify issues on which they can work together
- to reduce defensive communication between the opposing parties
- to be comfortable in allowing parties to express their conflict rather than avoiding the issues
- to be creative in helping parties to generate options for the possible solution or management of the conflict.

Things to avoid as a mediator include the following:

Blaming, moralising, showing shock, giving advice, patronising, accepting one side of the story as true, psychoanalysing, counselling, dominating, pushing your own values, cross-examining, solving the dispute, or allowing one party to dominate.

The Process of Mediation

Mediation can take place at all levels, and by anybody. Most of us do it naturally in the course of our lives as a parent, a colleague, a shop steward, or professionally as a family or marriage mediator, a community mediator, or an international mediator. We do it naturally, and we can learn to do it better.

The process in community conflicts appears to be similar, whether the situations of conflict appear to be simple or complex:

1) Helping the parties, through separate and collective discussions, to identify and define what they feel the conflict is about. This may include telling stories, which can help everyone to accept the other's experience as valid. Work will also be done with both parties on expressing the feelings of anger, hurt, resentment, and bitterness that they are feeling. Depending on the extent and the length of the conflict, this can take a great deal of time.

2) Helping the parties to identify creatively all possible options for solutions. Again, depending on the extent of the conflict, this can entail a great deal of effort, e.g., legal and constitutional options, possible safeguards about rights, etc.

3) Assisting the parties to evaluate the solutions, and their possible consequences for themselves and their communities.

4) Choosing a solution or combination of solutions which all parties can agree on.

5) Defining steps to begin and develop the implementation of the solution, developing a plan of action that is acceptable to all parties.

6) Developing also a process for evaluating the solution so that people can assess how it has worked, and whether it needs rethinking.

Training on mediation is now available in many countries for those who wish to develop skills in these alternative dispute resolution methods. These are different from the usual adversarial methods, which pit opponents against each other, and often end up in litigation or violence.

Chapter 8

WHATEVER YOU SAY

There is a Northern Irish poem by Seamus Heaney, one line of which is: "Whatever you say, say nothing." People often refrain from political discussion with anybody except those with whom they know they agree. In a conversation with someone from a different viewpoint, they will be careful to avoid saying anything that refers to the conflict or reveals their views on it. Within their own communities or among strangers, people do their own instinctive 'checks' to see how others feel about certain issues. Often, at the slightest hint of controversy, the subject is dropped. If people are feeling particularly angry, or have had a drink, they might plunge into a heated discussion which often ends with all parties feeling angry and misunderstood.

In some cultures, discussions across the lines of division tend to be even more limited. When people from different communities meet, it tends to be in 'neutral' settings such as work, or leisure pursuits, where to discuss politics would be seen as impolite. Even when major crises occur, discussion about such issues is carefully limited, while people's behaviors are carefully noted.

Many people, of course, rarely have the opportunity to discuss politics with their supposed enemies, even if they wanted to. Some conflicts are bounded by borders or walls which make meeting difficult. The structures of our lives may ensure that people pass most of their lives among their own communities, without having to involve themselves too much in listening to the fears, angers, and aspirations of the other side. Indeed, the price for such talking in some communities may be high - ranging from cynical questions to accusations of betrayal, or even attacks.

The advantages of not talking

In many ways, it makes sense not to talk too much to your 'enemy'. It is easier to maintain stereotypes when you don't trouble too much to check to see if they are valid. It is convenient to hear an accent and conclude that that person holds opposite views from yours. It is easier to shoot if you see just the uniform, and not the person. The less you know about 'them', the easier it is to dismiss anyone with different experiences, the simpler you can keep your perception of the conflict, and the simpler the solution will seem to be.

It is a well-documented fact that, as the likelihood of war between two nations increases, communications between them, instead of being upgraded and increased, are often deliberately limited. This is deemed a necessary preparation by government or cultural and political leaders, who will feel the need to harden the stereotypes a nation has of its 'enemies', and increasingly 'simplify' the conflict situation in such a way as to make whatever military manoeuvres are deemed necessary, acceptable to its population.

If a situation appears to be too complex, people might refuse to fight.

From that point of view, not talking with our enemies makes sense. Few of us want to challenge our strongly held assumptions, our basic 'positions,' and we will fight against great odds to keep them. In some cases, maintaining our positions, justifying them through appeals to theology and history, enables us to maintain privileges which we naturally do not want to relinquish. For others, maintaining our 'positions' gives us a sense of pride in who we are, in feeling principled, strong and united. In many cases, then, talking with our 'enemies' can be a dangerous idea - it may complicate our view of the situation, and of any possible solution, and hence diminish our energy to take part in the fight.

Possibly the loneliest people in any conflict are those who cannot, or will not, accept the 'simplified' version of the struggle as publicly espoused in their communities. It hurts to be isolated, to be seen as a traitor, a wimp, or a coward. Such is our human need to belong, as we desperately struggle to make sense of the happenings around us, we are likely to hold back our questions, silence our doubts, find ways to believe that 'their' deaths are justified, and 'ours' are not. If we want to belong somewhere, therefore, we limit our contacts, and avoid actually talking with people from the other side.

The advantages of talking

It is likely that, at some stage, even when conflicts have cooled cool or managed, communities will have to find some way eventually to accommodate and live with each other, in whatever political and social configuration is found to be acceptable to them.

It is possible - though it has at times in the past seemed problematic – to leave discussions about such solutions, and the issues behind them, to the politicians. As such solutions are, however, inevitably going to affect all members of our communities, it would seem appropriate that such discussions should engage the attention of as many people as have the energy and courage to embark upon them. Talking together is possibly too important to leave to the politicians, who have to function under the often intolerable pressure of seeming to know the answers and always under the burden of the glare of publicity. And, of course, leaving peaceful agreements to politicians and armed groups may encourage them to focus on sharing the power and resources between themselves, rather than considering the needs of communities .

Tools for discussion

The following section is devoted to 'tools' for discussion. Their basic aim is to provide structures which enable discussion of difficult and sensitive issues. They can be flexibly used in a variety of situations, and to discuss a variety of issues. Most of them involve time limits of some sort, which can provide the groups with a boundary or safety limit, and prevent some of the more articulate members from dominating.

It is often more productive initially to allow time (and usually it needs more than facilitators might expect) for within-group dialogue (i.e., dialogue between members of one particular tradition) before attempting inter-community dialogue. This is an opportunity for participants to hear a range of views on their own side, and to become accustomed to the idea of talking with people who may not agree with them. Such work also gives more time for participants to familiarise themselves with a variety of methods for discussion, which, because of their unfamiliarity, may cause resentful feelings of being manipulated if they are first attempted in an inter-community situation. If time is not allowed, it can increase the possibilities of hostilities between groups being reinforced.

Using the following tools reduces the possibility of discussions getting out of control and becoming so heated, and possibly abusive, that listening between the participants is eliminated. This possibility can be reduced still further by asking participants to agree to certain basic 'ground rules' before embarking on the exercises, if the facilitator feels such rules are necessary.

Ground rules can include the following:

1) Participants agree to stick to the time limits or discussion mechanisms agreed.

2) Participants will not interrupt when another person is speaking.

3) Participants will respect that what a person says is what s / he believes or has actually experienced, no matter how unlikely that may seem to the listener.

4) All statements made in the group are confidential, and will not be quoted outside the group unless permission is obtained from the participants concerned.

A useful tool to use if tensions do rise, and feelings of defensiveness or anger begin to interfere with communication, is for the facilitator to call for a few minutes silence for participants to recall themselves to their task of listening to each other. While very simple, it can be very effective, although it does depend on the confidence of the facilitator, and its judicious use. Tea breaks, physical exercises, games and drama can also be used to regulate unproductive tension and aggression.

95. Soapbox

Objectives: To give the participants a chance to experience the variety of ways in which proposed 'solutions' to their situation are perceived.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Postcards as outlined below.

Method: Participants will take up to 3 postcards, and write on each of them one possible solution to the political conflict in their society. First, they will describe the person whose viewpoint they will take (e.g., "as a committed socialist" or "as a businessman with factories to run" or "as a woman whose religion is most important to her.") Following this, they will briefly write a possible solution to the conflict. They do not have to agree with the proposal, they only have to write one that the group will consider.

Once the postcards have been collected, facilitators will go through them, and remove duplicates or any that seem to attribute negative intentions to the holder of the view.

At a signal from the facilitator, all the participants will pick up, unseen, a postcard on which is written one of the proposed solutions. The facilitator tells the participants that they are going to speak in support of the role assigned to them on their cards for 3 minutes. However, they will get a bit of practice first through the following method.

They are asked to form themselves into a circle, with all the participants facing out from the center. They are then asked to speak, all at once, at the same time, on their topic for 3 minutes.

When the time is up (and the din has ceased!), ask them all to sit in a circle, facing inwards. Place a mat, or a chair, in the centre, and ask them to state their case to the rest of the group for 3 minutes - or as much as they can manage.

When the participants have finished, tell them that they are now going to add their own suggestions. Ask each of them to take a blank postcard and fill it up as follows:

'As myself, I believe we could help solve the problem by.......................'

Emphasize that their suggestions may be as limited or as wide as they like, financial constraints are not to be considered, and they will be anonymous. When all are finished, the postcards are then put into a pile, and mixed about. Each participant then draws one out, and reads it to the group. The postcards are then pinned to a space on the wall, gathering together any that are similar, and also emphasizing the variety of approaches to 'solutions' there are among participants, and how helpful it might be to combine several. When all have finished, participants may discuss the process.

Discussion:

- How did participants feel talking with their backs to people?
- Was it a familiar feeling?
- How did they feel about the roles assigned to them?
- Did they feel people accurately represented the different perspectives?
- Which ones did they feel were inaccurately represented?

96. Hassle Line

Objectives: To create critical discussion on a variety of topics which divide people, while providing a time limit, and role-reversal possibilities.

Time: 30 minutes or more

Materials: A room with enough space for people in lines facing each other.

Method: Divide participants into two lines, As and Bs, facing each other.
Topics for discussion will be called out by the facilitator, who will emphasise that they are all topics on which many groups genuinely disagree. All the As are to take 3 minutes to persuade the Bs of all the positive reasons for supporting the topic..

Then the facilitator calls out a change-over, and B has to try and convince A of their reasons for disagreeing with the statement for 3 minutes. When both have finished, the facilitator asks the A line to move one person down i.e., all the A's move to face the next B person in line. The person at the top of the line returns to the end of it. Everybody is now facing a different partner. The facilitator calls out the next topic. On the next topic, B is to start by supporting the motion and A is to oppose it.

Topics could include the following - add or change as appropriate.

The Police and Army need a stricter code of conduct.

The majority of people want a power-sharing government, but one political party does not; the majority view should prevail.

Positive discrimination creates more trouble than it solves.

Unemployment and a weak economy cause most of our problems.

If everyone had the right to speak their language, practice their religion, and raise their children as they choose, we would be fine.

If we could get rid of the armed dissidents, we'd solve our problem.
Ordinary people get along. The politicians are corrupt and just want to be important.

The Police and the Army need to be more firm in protecting the lives and property of everyone.

The above can be done up to 4 times - more will exhaust the participants!

Participants may then reconvene as a plenary.

Discussion:

- Did people find it difficult to find reasons for some sides they were asked to take?

- How did they feel arguing against their own beliefs?

- Do they understand or believe that other people can sincerely hold those views?

- Are there any discussions they would like to continue at some stage?

97. Where I Stand

Objective: To provide a mechanism for participants to discuss controversial topics in a manner which enables each to have a turn at speaking about a different one.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: List a number of controversial issues on separate slips of paper.
Write each one so that it can be answered by yes or no, e.g., Do you believe in capital punishment? Do you think armed groups should be at the negotiating table ? These may be chosen from any of the topics lists in the book, or drawn up from the previous discussions of the participants.

Method: Each participant will take a topic, previously unseen, out of a hat or a box. They will decide whether they are for it, or against it, and speak for 3minutes on it. The topic is then opened for debate within their small group.

After 10 minutes for each topic, move on.

Groups should be no more than 5/6 to allow time for all participants to speak.

Comment: Topics that participants obviously want to discuss further, can be noted and more time allowed for them later.

It should be emphasised at the beginning of the exercise that the purpose of the exercise is to try and understand what people think or feel about the topic, and not necessarily to come to any decisions about the border, or law and order, or other controversies.

98. Scaling The Issues

Objective: To ascertain the divisions and agreements that exist within and between groups on what issues are important in maintaining the conflict.

Materials: Pens and Papers for everyone. Enough photocopies of the issues list. Flip-chart, Markers and wall adhesive.

Preparations: Facilitators will compose a list of about 10 or 15 issues that are main dividers between people in the society. These can include political, cultural, religious, or other kinds of topics.

Time: 1 hour

Method: Give each person an issues list - other issues may be added if they seem appropriate. Ask the participants to fill them in individually first. (10 minutes) They should rate each issue as follows.

Please mark the following on a scale of 1 to 10. (If you agree absolutely with a statement, give it a 10. If you agree only a little, give it a 3. If you disagree absolutely give it a 0)

(If you have questions about some of the issues, please write them below.)

Divide into small groups of 3/4 people to discuss their ratings. (30 minutes)
Groups can be divided randomly, or by religious or political affiliation.

The facilitator then asks the participants to reconvene as a total plenary and the results are taken separately from each group and added up on flip-chart.

Discussion:

- Were there many differences apparent within the groups?

- Were there differences between groups?

- Were the differences when compared between groups as they expected?

- Were there more agreements than differences, or fewer?

- Were there any surprises?

- Where were the most differences ? The most agreements?

- Are there any particular differences they would like time to discuss?
  (If the programme, and the objectives of the group allow for it, any of the formats for political discussion offered in the handbook could be used.)

Comment: It may be useful to emphasis
e that the aim of this exercise is to find out how people vary in their concern about issues, and not necessarily to resolve them, i.e., the purpose of the exercise is discussion, listening and clarification of views.

Variation: A smaller number of topics, or even just one, can be chosen from the list below for more in-depth discussion.

99. My Turn, Your Turn

Objective: To facilitate discussion between participants on controversial topics.

Time: As desired

Materials: This depends on the method chosen.

Introduction for all the methods: Emphasise ground rules for discussion, as outlined in the Introduction to 'Whatever you say . . .' It may be helpful to suggest a limited time for each speaker's "turn," perhaps 3 to 5 minutes. The choice of topic may be suggested by facilitators, or it may be open to each participant who speaks.

Method I: Tell the participants that whoever wants to speak in the discussion is only allowed to do so on possession of a designated piece of fruit, or other object. The object will be 'kept' in the middle of the floor or the middle of the table and whoever wishes to speak has to lift it from its position, and hold it while talking or while thinking if they wish. When they have finished with it, they return it to the floor, and the next person wishing to speak may pick it up.

Method II: A rule is established within the group that no one is allowed to speak twice until each person in the group has spoken at least once.

Method Ill: Groups may be allocated 3/4 tokens. These can be matches, peas, coins, etc.
Each represents a 'turn' at speaking. When the speaker's 'turns' are used up, they must remain silent.

100. What Do You See?

Objective: To provide a method for participants to speak about their personal responses to divisive issues in their society.

Time: 1 hour

Materials: An assortment of photographs about a variety of incidents likely to provoke differing responses, depending on people's tradition. These could include photographs of incidents which include the security forces, funerals, marches and demonstrations, royalty, church, symbols, commemorations, social issues. These can be collected through newspapers or from books. It is probably useful to have as many photographs as there are participants, unless they are being used for a within- group-exercise (as described below in the variation).

Method: Participants are asked, in turn, to pick a photograph from the selection supplied, and speak about what it means to them - how it makes them feel, and the issues it raises for them. A suggested time limit can be supplied (e.g.. 3 minutes). The task of the rest of the group is to listen.

When all participants have had a turn, the process can be discussed.

Discussion:

- Did participants find themselves censoring their thoughts and feelings? Why?
- What were they afraid of?
- Were there things that other people said that made them angry?
- What were they?
- Would they like time later to discuss them?

Variation: Similar selections of photos may be given to different religio/politico groups, who may be asked to comment upon them, within their own group. The Plenary discussion may then hear feedback from the groups about how it felt to do the exercise, the difficulties and the differences noted.

101. The News Of The Day

Objective: To develop discussion on everyday problems connected with the conflict through the use of newspapers.

Time: 1 hour or more

Materials: A selection of today's or yesterday's newspapers (multiple copies.)

Method: Divide the participants into groups of 5/6. To each group give a selection of newspapers. Get them collectively to select a story that is particularly illustrative of the conflict that divides their society. Ask them to organise a role play, with each person choosing a role to play, and setting up some scenes around the story.

Ask each group in turn to role-play for about 10 minutes.

Allow time after each role-play for discussion.

Discussion:

- Were all agreed that the story illustrated the conflict?
- Why?
- How did each feel about the role they played?
- Did the others feel they had portrayed it accurately?
- Were there aspects of their own feelings or behaviour that surprised them?
- Did they find it difficult to play some parts sympathetically?
  Which ones?

Chapter 9

TOWARDS ACTION

In violently conflicted societies, it can be easy to become weary, and to turn aside from the daily destructive happenings that destroy the lives of people all around us - some people more than others. It is tempting to try and get on with whatever life you have, and to ignore as far as possible the daily signs of an unfinished conflict. Most people do just that, for greater or lesser periods of time. Until the next crisis occurs and, once again, allegiances are called into question, people get angry, and they wonder where they stand, and what they can do that will break the seemingly unending chain of hostilities.

Some people have already decided how they will attempt to do this, e.g.. through pressing for particular political settlements, initiating adequate legislation, promoting mutual understanding, or creating alliances. It is hoped that some of the work outlined in this book may prove useful to them in supplementing their work.

Others, perhaps particularly those venturing into this type of work for the first time, will find that, unless they are careful to plan how they will use any new insights gained during the programme, their energy and enthusiasm will soon slip away - or be quickly knocked out of them on returning to the realities of life in their communities. For such people, it will be productive to anticipate what are likely to be the difficulties they will encounter in preserving their determination to encourage positive changes. As will be plans to provide for their own on-going support - if not from other participants, then from regular contact with networks of people intent on the exploration of like-minded work.

The following exercises may be helpful in anticipating future difficulties with the work, and clarifying possibilities for its continuance: (7,43,44)

IMPLEMENTING LEARNING

The Personal level

Ultimately, the effectiveness of any anti-discriminatory or shared societies work will be measured, not by what people say they have learnt, or what they have become aware of, but by what they do with that awareness. The effectiveness, therefore, of any programme will be measured by the amount of positive new behaviour that participants can initiate, either in their own lives or in the structures of their organisations, or at the wider political level.

The particular type of behaviour they will engage in will obviously vary.

For individuals, it may range from their personal attention to and confrontation of discrimination as they meet it - in themselves, their area, or their workplace - to perhaps becoming a member of an organisation which aims to challenge discrimination. Modules designed to help individuals translate learning into practice have been outlined throughout this handbook, particularly in the following exercises: (31, 41, 42, 67, 78, 91, 92, 93).

The Structural level

For agencies and organisations, new behaviour is in many ways more easily monitored, and yet may be more difficult to implement. It may mean initial discussions with staff about any manifestations of discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, that they are unhappy with. It may mean a monitoring of their workforce to check for signs of conscious or unconscious discrimination. If they are a particular kind of service agency (e.g., in community, youth work or education,) they may want to actively initiate programmes with their membership designed to combat discrimination and promote improved understanding between the various traditional communities. If they are a Government agency, and hence a large employer accountable to the public, their responsibility to check for discrimination within their agencies, or as manifested in their services, is particularly important. If they are a political organisation, they may want to ally their public pursuit of their particular political options with work designed to improve collective understandings of justice and respect among all people who will eventually have to live together.

For those agencies wishing to tackle possible structural discrimination within their organisations, or wishing to initiate practice and training designed to tackle sectarianism, the following exercises may provide some pointers to action: (9, 11, 13, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48,49).

The Political Level

What effect does the training or dialogue work have upon the wider political level? Does it involve or influence those with the power to end or positively change the conflict? Does it affect the attitudes of political and military leaders who may be crucial to ending the conflict? What effect does it have on people's willingness to involve themselves in social and political leadership at a community, regional and national level? What effect does it have on long-term strategies for developing and sustaining peace?

A useful framework for addressing peacebuilding effectiveness is the resource manual by CDA called *The Reflecting on Peace Practice Basics: A Resource Manual.*
http://cdacollaborative.org/publication/reflecting-peace-practice-rpp-basics-resource-manual/

The way forward

Conflict and discrimination are common in societies. This statement is not amoral condemnation of any particular group or people, nor a cry of despair, but merely a statement of fact. They are a product of historical circumstances and particular needs as experienced by groups of people. Elsewhere, other combinations of circumstances and needs have produced different yet similarly questionable phenomena taking on particular forms (e.g., racism in Great Britain and the United States, religious conflict in many countries, and sexism in almost every country.) Feeling guilty about it can be unproductive. It is an inheritance to be recognised, and its manifestations, particularly at a structural level, need to be examined and dealt with. Our responsibility for any present part we have in it needs to be acknowledged. And all of us, at any level at which we have the power to tackle it, need to begin to do so, whatever may be our aspirations for future political settlements.

If you're interested in helping to solve societal and global conflicts, then you will find this book to be an invaluable resource.

Dialogue in Divided Societies is written by two of the leading practitioners in the field of peacebuilding, and offers theories and exercises that have been tried and tested in some of the most challenging conflicts around the world.

The 101 exercises contained in this book will help to stimulate productive dialogue and navigate sensitive issues such as social exclusion, prejudice and discrimination, societal inequalities, distrustful relationships, issues of justice, sectarianism, racism and violence.

Effective in both formal and informal situations, these exercises can be used with local, national or international groups. They are designed to increase understanding and lead to sustainable agreements about what can facilitate more peaceful societies.

About the authors

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