

BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT

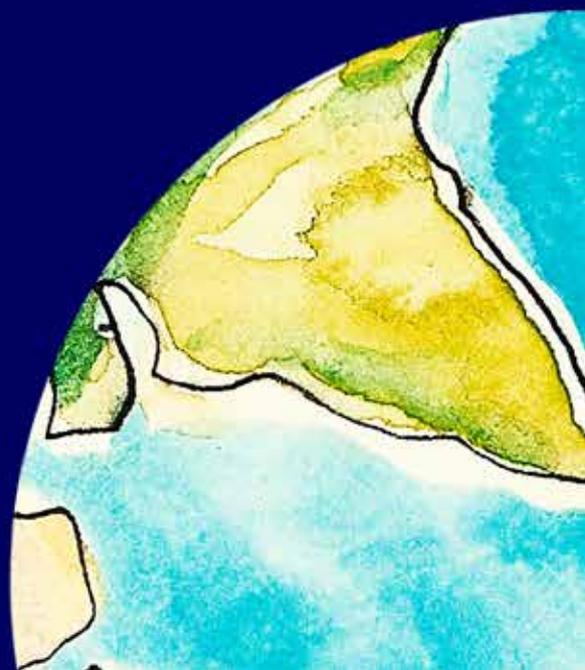
How children, youth and adults
can solve their conflicts peacefully

THEORETICAL PART



A Handbook for Schools
and other Institutions

 **terre des hommes**
Help for Children in Need



The Peace Handbook “Be True Not Violent” consists of three parts:

- A. Theoretical Part (for teachers, educators, social workers and others)
- B. Practical Part (for teachers, educators, social workers and others)
- C. Cartoon (for children, youth and adults)

The aim of this International Peace Handbook is to reach as many people as possible. Copies may be made for non-commercial use only. In case of doubt, please contact contact@papui.org or the publisher.

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BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT

How children, youth and adults can solve
their conflicts peacefully

Rita Erben, Astrid Kummer and
Emanuele Scanziani



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FOREWORD

To strengthen the peace energy of children

“A nonviolent person has always more power than a person, who uses violence.”

Mahatma Gandhi

This quote from Gandhi is a wisdom, easy to understand even for children. Violence is always used when there is a desire for something, which cannot be obtained by the use of other means. Or people use violence when they are hurt, feel inferior to someone or even humiliated. In both cases violence is used out of a state of weakness. Children commonly experience this in their everyday-life. A child (or sometimes an adult), punches around or insults others, because it thinks it is the only way to get what it wants or because it feels sad, treated unfair or even deeply hurt inside.

It is very important for everyone, who works with children, to teach them, that being peaceful and not using violence in a conflict means to be especially strong and selfconfident. Even more important is to live this message, rather than preach it. Teachers, social workers and parents are role models and should pay special attention to act in nonviolent ways. No matter whether in everyday-life, in school or in the family, neither physical nor mental or verbal violence such as mocking or humiliating shall be performed or allowed to be performed. Instead they should show children how to solve conflicts in a peaceful way: by having respect and empathy for the other and his desires and needs as well as by finding fair compromises.

Though, non-violence is not just about moral behavior of the individual. Almost all states in the world have agreed by contract to protect children from any form of violence, which implies just legislation, law enforcement and prosecution as well as social programs, prevention and education. This is being expressed in article 19 of the UN Convention On The Rights Of The Child, which has been signed by all countries except for the USA. Therefore the protection from violence and its prevention is a central and universal human right of all children.

Gandhi says that non-violence is powerful in a special way. Children will understand this because every child carries a peace energy inside. The desire to live in peace with other people and nature is not easily disturbed as long as the emotional environment holds and supports a child. Therefore love and care for children are the most important contributions to a more peaceful world. But children should also learn to be aware of their own feelings and needs as well as the ones of other people and to respect them. “Be true, not violent”, the title of the manual shows this clearly: “Act and behave the way you truly are – be non-violent.”

**“The self is the source of truth and wisdom.
The power of the self is the power of non-violence.”**

Mahatma Gandhi

We see, to promote non-violence, the self of children has to be strengthened. Children, who are strong and self-confident and who carry the energy of peace and tolerance in their hearts will not promote the use of violence and war once they become grown-ups. They will stand up for peace, following others, who have successfully done so. There are for example hundreds of thousands of young “Red-Hand-Activists” from all over the world, who protest against the use of child soldiers¹. Or youth peace groups and conscientious objectors of military service in Colombia, Syria or other conflict zones, who bravely step up to break the vicious circle of violence in their country.

Strengthening the self-confidence and the peace energy of children is also a central goal in many projects with children and youth funded by the child rights organization terre des hommes. They are located all over the world, in Latin-American, Asia, Africa and Germany. The self-confidence of many of these children, their inner voice, the „SomethingElse“, is often very much weakened. They need love and care, especially if they have experienced violence or already behave in violent and aggressive ways. In these cases it is an important step to tame the dragon, the Draggy, the anger and sadness inside.

Similarly „Draggy“ and „Something Else“ are little Papui’s best friends in the beautifully illustrated comic part of the peace handbook. They help him to heal the wounds of the soul, to overcome fear and anger and to solve conflicts peacefully. Furthermore the handbook contains a theoretical and a practical part for teachers and parents. The theoretical part encourages readers to reflect on their feelings and perception of conflicts as well as their conflict behavior. The goal is to approach conflicts in a more conscious manner and therefore be a real role model. The theoretical part is also the basis for a true understanding how conflicts and violence evolve and how they can therefore be solved. The practical part on the other hand contains a concept how to actually teach the knowledge to kids. In 33 group sessions of an hour each, aimed at children between 6 and 14 years old, they are able to learn through games, stories, breathing and relaxation exercises.

Reading the handbook and the comics is a joyful experience, as it contains beautiful sentences of truth. Hereby I wish to express my gratitude to the team of Rita Erben, Astrid Kummer, Emanuele Scanzani and all the others. The team has worked on this peace handbook for a long time and under great efforts. Congratulations!

terre des hommes and its partners will use the peace handbook in Latin-America, Africa, Asia and Germany and contribute to its hopefully wide spreading. It is an extraordinary tool for prevention of violence and education of peace – a small but significant step on the way to a more peaceful world.



Ralf Willinger

Child Rights and Peacebuilding
terre des hommes Germany – Help for Children in Need



¹ www.redhandday.org

HOW TO USE THIS PEACE HANDBOOK

Instruction for teachers, parents and social workers

Every child carries an authentic force of peace within him or herself. Children and young people are the future of our planet. They need protection from violence. And they need adults who take sides for life and against violence and war, with all their strength and determination. They need a living and learning space characterized by truth and trust. These are the guiding principles for the creation of this peace handbook.

BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT is a violence prevention program for school children and social institutions. The curriculum is structured in a way so that it can be used internationally: for children in trouble spots, in developing countries and also in a daily environment in the western context.

Violence is prevalent everywhere. Violence can happen anywhere in the world: in schools, in the playground, on the bus and at home.

This program covers the school year with 33 sessions and is intended for children and youth.

The Peace handbook BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT was already translated into English, Portuguese, Spanish, German, Tamil, Thai, Burmese, Karen, Khmer, Cebuano and Filipino. The illustrations represent different cultures.

BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT is a program to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior in children. They will learn how to recognize their feelings and to express them in a healthy and positive manner. Solving conflicts peacefully without the use of force or violence is the learning objective of this program.

The children will learn their limits and boundaries; to take others seriously, and to think about the feelings of others. They will also learn how to empathize with others; and to identify and deal with their anger and frustrations. These are the primary building blocks of the BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT program. Furthermore, we want to show alternative ways of cultivating self-confidence in children, in order to make them “strong” enough to deal with today’s world.



The three parts of the manual:

A. A handbook with *theoretical basics* of dealing with civil conflicts. For example: “What is violence?” and “The steps of conflict escalation”. Educational basis: Dealing with anger, empathy and impulse control.

B. A handbook with *practical instructions* for teachers and social workers with explanations and methods for 33 group hours. The handbook is illustrated with clear drawings.

In the Annex of the practical part you find *flashcards* with drawn pictures of conflict situations and key situations from “Papui and his Adventures”. For example, two groups of children are facing each other. The children become angry and they start shouting at each other and some of them get violent. They argue about what game they want to play. Papui looks at them from a different perspective.

These cards show different situations. They are taken from the cartoon magazine. The teacher or social worker can show the children one flashcard relating to a certain conflict situation. The children then role play the situation, and later discuss how to deal with the circumstances that would make everybody happy.



C. A *cartoon magazine* Papui and his Adventures with various stories of Papui, his dragon and SomethingElse.

Papui is the model who runs through the entire project. The small boy Papui is an art figure who moves through life. By means of stories, Papui repeatedly experiences confrontations with violence, fear and situations of difficulties and conflict. The idea is: “How does Papui deal with it? How does he solve these conflicts? How does he respond to violence and fear?” Also Papui asks questions: What is behind the violence? Why do human beings hurt each other?

With the help of SomethingElse – his invisible friend and his inner voice and self healing powers – Papui tries to find out the deeper meaning behind things, and to not judge others but rather, develop understanding and empathy for one’s fellow being.

The logo shows Papui riding a tamed white dragon. We have chosen this logo because children everywhere in the world are afraid of the “dangerous” dragon. Papui made the dragon his friend and helper because also behind the dangerous dragon lies a soul that longs for love and affection.

I. WHAT IS VIOLENCE

1.1. Introduction

How does a war start?

“Daddy, please explain to me how a war starts?” a little boy asks his father.

“Yes, okay, I will try to explain it to you then”, says his father. *“Imagine, America sends their military troops to Alaska?”*

At this moment his mother comes in and interjects, *“How can you tell such nonsense to the child? When did America ever go to war against Alaska? There are only Inuit, polar bears, seals and penguins in Alaska. I never heard such nonsense!”*

Her Husband tries to clarify, *“My dear wife, I only wanted to give an example of how war starts.”*

But, his wife is now angry, and snaps at him, *“With such stupid examples you only confuse the child. And anyway, it’s not true that America ever started a war against Alaska.”*

“What! Are you calling me a liar?” demands her husband, angrily. *“I take the time to explain something to my son and you just start to nag. If you think you could do a better job, then why don’t you do it? Any way, you always think you know everything better!”*

His wife shouts back, *“What! It’s outrageous how you speak to me. I will never say anything any more.”* She runs out of the room and slams the door.

Their son shakes his head and says, *“Dear parents, you don’t need to explain to me how a war starts. I can imagine it quite well now.”*



Whenever people of any age, sex, culture or religion interact with each other, there is always a potential for conflict. Conflict, then, can be part of our everyday life. However, it is not the conflicts that are the problem, but, the way we try to solve them – often with violence.

1.2. The four categories of violence

In order to effectively prevent violent behavior and to deal peacefully with each other, we have to first be clear with what we understand to be violence.

Each of us will have a different definition of violence; for example, one person might feel that violence is happening when they are being shouted at or insulted; whilst another might feel that violence is being committed only when they are being hit, or kicked.

It is important to have a common definition of violence before one starts working on the topic.

Here is a most commonly used definition:

“Any action which aims at hurting, damaging or destroying objects, plants, animals, other human beings or oneself is considered as violence.”

For even more clarity, we would like to differentiate violence into four categories specifically when working with children:

1. Physical Violence
2. Emotional Violence
3. Verbal Violence
4. Violence against things

Physical violence



Physical violence implies that a person harms another person, usually with intent, by means of physical strength and aggression.

This can be anything from scratching, pulling hair, hitting, kicking, and punching – to severe physical injuries caused by the use of weapons, or sharp objects. Another important aspect of physical violence is the violence one can inflict on oneself.

Emotional violence



Emotional violence occurs when a person intentionally hurts another emotionally, i.e. by rejection, avoidance, humiliation, deprivation of trust, discouragement, and emotional blackmail, etc.

Verbal violence



Verbal violence occurs when a person uses language to hurt or humiliate another person, i.e., by scolding, threatening, mistreating, or insulting them. This can happen 'face to face', or indirectly, behind their back.

Violence against things



This happens whenever aggression results in the destruction of objects; either aimlessly, at whatever is in reach at the time – or specifically, aimed at things which belong to a person with the intention of causing them harm.

This is a brief introduction on what violence is, and the many ways it can be expressed. However, this is just scratching the surface of a very complex issue.

1.3. Learning to understand violence

Why is it important to understand violence?

Often, violence is the expression of an underlying sentiment or frustration; this can be anything from anger, disappointment, fear, helplessness or a lack of attention, etc.

In order to prevent and transform violence, however, we first have to learn how to find the root-causes, then secondly, we have to work on dissolving them.



“Violence generates in inter-human relationships. No matter in what form it surfaces, it always represents the final stage of unexpressed conflicts, accumulated misunderstanding and misinterpretations. Violence is an expression of personal dissatisfaction and bitterness. Though violence is used as a means to solve conflicts, it always will create new conflicts.”

Bruedel, H., Hurrelmann, K.

It is extremely important to examine the sources of violence. Violence usually has a root in life history; a repeated pattern lived or witnessed as a child. Perhaps the person is sad or feeling excluded; treated unfairly, under pressure, abused or simply mistreated? Suffering like this leads to an immense inner anxiety. The person may think or feel that behaving aggressively will release the pressure.

It is important not to judge children who show aggressive behavior, or to exclude them from the group because this will only make the situation worse.



Likewise, it is important to help children understand that somebody who is acting in a destructive way, actually needs their help and friendship more than punishment and fear.

It makes a lot of sense to treat a violent child with understanding and acceptance, and to offer assistance to solve their inner dilemma. Therefore, an essential first step in the process of preventing violence and solving conflicts in a non-violent way is to ask the child the reason for their behavior. Although some children will not respond verbally, we need to stay aware and be sensitive to their non-verbal signals. Only then are we in a position to come up with appropriate and effective solutions.

1.4. Model role of adults

As mentioned earlier, there are a number of different definitions and forms of violence. Furthermore, each individual has their own idea about when an action is considered violent or aggressive. For some, violence starts with a child picking on another; whilst for others, it might not start until the child actually physically hits another.

Your understanding, or definition of violence, will influence your work as a teacher and the approach you take towards aggressive behavior within the class. Some of the questions you may want to ask yourself are: When do you intervene, and or not? What does this intervention look like and what are the means you use to help the children to act - that is healthy for them and their peers?

To effectively transform these difficult and destructive behaviors, it is essential to examine the expressions of violence and come to an agreement with your colleagues on when it is best to intervene. Your own understanding of aggression and violence has an influence on how you perceive and react in these situations.

Children observe and imitate the behavior of adults. They quickly become aware of how you interact and communicate within the teacher's team. Do you arrive at agreements with each other? Do you exchange views and opinions? Do you treat each other with respect? Or do you work by yourself; ignore the others, do not honour common agreements, and talk badly towards or even about your colleagues?



Children are extremely sensitive to their environment and surroundings. If, as a teacher you fail to act in a fair and just manner, they will not only stop respecting you as a teacher, but, will also grow up copying unhealthy social interactions from adults (especially teachers and parents) which will prove to be harmful to them in the long term.

In professions like teaching and social work where we work with children, it is particularly important to be aware of our role as models. When you are working with this program BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT, you will probably find that you become much more aware of your own perceptions and feelings - and on how you communicate with others. This programme can also be a useful tool in helping you to develop these skills.

In the following chapters we show how conflicts arise, escalate, and get out of control. We also demonstrate ways to deal with the conflicts peacefully, and offer alternative solutions.

Violence almost always generates counter violence, whether it is within the family, at school, or at work. Violence is handed down and passed on from generation to generation. It will only stop when our children learn to solve their conflicts peacefully, without the use of violence. Children are our future. We need to help them understand that 'goodwill towards all', usually encourages the same positive behavior in others – and that this will in turn, have a positive effect on society in general.



1.5. Cycle of violence

The following comic illustrates a chain of events leading to violence.



1.6. Dealing positively with conflicts

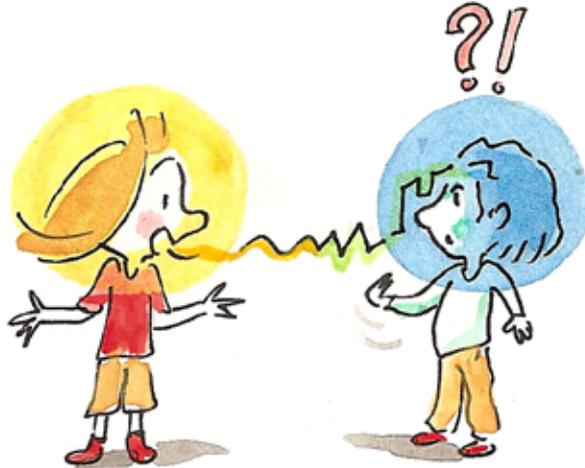
Instead of answering with violence, we have the choice to deal peacefully with each other. The Cartoon illustrates clearly how this can look like:



2. COMMUNICATION

Communication is particularly important in the context of violence prevention.

Marshall B. Rosenberg developed a method of non-violent communication that is often used in conflict resolution processes and mediation.



From our experience we know that it is not always easy to understand everybody. Misunderstandings are inevitable, and can happen frequently, even between people who speak the same language. This is because communication involves more than just the spoken word. When we communicate, for example, we don't only use language and intonation (verbal communication) to transmit and receive information, we also use body language (non-verbal communication) in the form of gestures, posture, and facial expressions, etc. If misinterpreted, these powerful signals/messages can lead to an atmosphere of tension and aggression – which frequently, leaves us feeling hurt, offended, rejected or disappointed. In order to avoid these misunderstandings when we communicate, it is very important that we don't only pay attention to what our partner is trying to convey – but, that we also allow them the time to finish before we react or interject.



Clear verbal and non-verbal communication helps to avoid misunderstandings. In order to send our partner/listener clear messages, our words should correspond with our bodily gestures and facial expressions.

Eye contact, or avoidance of eye contact can also send out messages. Generally speaking, the western culture stresses the importance of eye contact because it is widely believed that it signals interest and alert listening. But, in other cultures this might be avoided because on the contrary, it implies disrespect.

2.1. Successful communication

In order to communicate effectively with each other, there are a few simple tools we can use that will increase our understanding of one another - such as using 'I-messages', and being an active and alert listener. This lets the other person know that you are taking them seriously and that you are interested in hearing what they have to say. It is very important that we give one another the 'talk time' and that we allow the other to finish talking without interruption. Our task as a listener, is to observe, and to try to understand the other from their perspective, rather than our own.

In the practical part, we have included some practical exercises and games to help you learn how to use these tools.

Sending 'I-Messages'

When talking or sharing opinions with others, it is important to use words like 'I' or 'me'. When we talk about ourselves, we should avoid using generalizing words such as 'one' or 'you'. Using "I-messages" implies that we are assuming responsibility for what we express, and are not trying to hide behind generalizing or blaming the other. We are being direct, clear, and concrete when we speak in the I-form. For example, "I am angry with you because..." is better than saying "You make me angry ..." or "You are getting on my nerves".



Active Listening

When listening to somebody, take him or her seriously, and show them that what they are sharing is important. Take the time necessary to listen to them. If you do not understand something, ask for clarification. Check if there are hidden messages, and try to understand them.

Once you are able to sense what their needs are, check it out with them. Ask them if what you think and feel is actually what the other one wanted to express to you.

Basically, active listening means:

- Paying attention to the speaker and reading between the lines
- Focusing on the content
- Not allowing ourselves to get distracted
- Asking for clarification when things are not clear
- Holding back one's own opinions and judgements
- Acknowledging one's own feelings
- Recognizing the feelings of the other and addressing them

Let someone finish speaking

Although this should be the norm, it is often not the case. Often, children do not have the opportunity to communicate what is troubling them, especially when they are being interrupted. Many children need a strong self-esteem to try and explain themselves a second time.

Sometimes, people talk non-stop and don't let others get a word in edgeways. Then, one can interrupt friendly, and reach an agreement on 'talk time'. To communicate with each other, does not mean one-sided monologues, but, to enter into a dialogue with each other.

Observing and understanding body language

Often our body language is clearer than our words: For example, in crisis and conflict situations, we can read a lot from the facial expression, instinctive gestures, intonation, posture, lack of eye contact and agitation from the person providing or receiving the information.

2.2. Perception and intercultural learning

Essentially, human behavior is determined by perception, i.e., the process by which we detect and interpret the external world by means of the sensory perceptrors. How we behave depends to a large extent, on how we perceive the world around us, what we see, smell, hear, taste, and feel.

Our understanding of the world, depends on our ability to select and interpret the information we receive on a daily basis. This process of selection and inter-pretation is influenced by the way we are feeling at the time and by our perspective.

Every society or nation has it's own particular culture that is influenced by specific perceptions and emotions. Culture can be defined as being the artistic and social pursuits, expression, and tastes valued by a society or class. It is quite probable, that in today's multicultural world, we will find that our interactions with others, are not limited to people who share the same culture as ours. Therefore, we cannot assume that our understanding of the world around us, will correspond to theirs. Even within the same culture, individual differences can arise. It is important to not only be aware of how we perceive something, but, also to be aware of how others perceive the same thing, so that we are able to see things from a different perspective as well as our own.

The same gestures are understood differently in different cultures.

For example: nodding or shaking the head from side to side. In many Western cultures, this gesture is understood to mean 'no' – but in India, it is understood to mean 'yes', quite the opposite.



"The only true thing about a story is what the audience believes."

Hermann Hesse, Heumond

3. EMPATHY

3.1. What is empathy?

Empathy literally means, “in-feeling”, to put oneself in someone else’s position. It is the ability to put oneself in someone else’s shoes, to feel into his perspective.

“Walking in somebody else’s moccasins”

Indian Expression

complete: “Never judge somebody else before you haven’t walked a moon long in his moccasins”.

Empathy means also to recognize that another person reacts differently than me to the same situation. And that I learn how to understand them and to put myself in their place.

Generally, human beings have antennas towards the feelings of others. This mostly happens unconsciously through the expression of certain body and vocal signals. Some examples are the tone and volume of our voice, body and facial gestures and our body posture. Scientists have discovered that only 20% of this information is perceived consciously and stored in our brain. They have also discovered that emotional information is mainly passed on through nonverbal communication. We are born with this ability to exchange emotional messages. An example would be: a mother receives signals from her baby and can react accordingly. Similarly, the baby can receive and react to the feelings of the mother.



When we are empathetic we have the ability to put ourselves in another person’s place and as a result fewer misunderstandings and disagreements take place. Empathy helps reduce anger towards someone’s behavior. Very often empathetic behavior generates being peaceful together. To feel empathy, a person usually has a good understanding of himself and his own feelings and is generally a confident individual who doesn’t feel threatened about life situations.

We have six basic feelings: sadness, joy, anger, fear, surprise and disgust. When we re-learn to recognize our feelings authentically, we begin to develop compassion and thus empathy.

Everybody is able to be empathetic. It is an inborn feeling. Only because of various influences many of us lose this ability over time. We can always re-learn it.

3.2. Cultivating empathy in children and youth

Excerpts of a lecture by Arundhati Roy:

Empathy – A “How To” Guide

The process of developing an ability to empathize involves distinct stages. The first step is self-awareness: we need to be able to identify our own emotions, recognize them for what they are and acknowledge them. A crucial precursor is allowing ourselves to experience emotions rather than blocking them.

Being cognizant and in tune with our own emotions enables us to undertake the next step: becoming aware of another’s emotions. The wider the range of emotions that we can experience and the higher our emotional literacy (the ability to correctly identify and label our emotions) the greater our chances to correctly “read” another person’s emotional message.

Good listening (which involves asking questions, filling in gaps and emotionally intelligent guesswork) is essential, as is the ability to interpret nonverbal cues. Sensitivity, of course, is crucial because the more sensitive one is, the greater is the ability to pick up the most subtle emotional nuances.

Being able to correctly and comprehensively read another person’s emotional messages empowers us to intuitively identify with the person. We are able to imaginatively insert ourselves in the other person’s situation and experience it intimately. And this, in turn, ensures that we feel and hence make an appropriate emotional response.

A simple example: when a person is scared he may react with aggression. Empathy allows one to accurately interpret the emotional trigger for this behavior and respond in a manner that addresses the feelings of fear (with reassurance, understanding, etc).

There are different approaches, but they share certain common strategies. First, space for introspection and reflection is built into the structure of every program so that self-awareness is possible.

Second, all subscribe to the principle that empathy can be encouraged only when the facilitator (teacher, leader, mentor) is an empathetic person. Teachers’ reactions to situations and people, their ability to handle their own emotions and relate to others’, has a direct impact on their ability to handle the emotional development of a class. Thus, even when a program’s primary focus is young people, it is crucial to include teacher training.

Ultimately, the survival of our species may depend on our collective ability to empathize: to be aware of our own feelings and to have the capacity for relating to and interacting with others in a healthy way. Steve Hein is part of a group of researchers in this field who have created a website on emotional intelligence. Hein makes a convincing argument for the need to regard empathy as an important factor in evolution. He argues that our ability to empathize is one of the primary ways that our emotions contribute to the survival of the species, and this is one of the ways nature slowly evolves towards a higher level of survival.

John Lennon's anthem to world peace is moving. "Imagine all the people living life in peace ... Sharing all the world." With our imagination we can see Lennon's vision. With empathy we can make it happen.

John Lennon's Song: IMAGINE

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
Imagine all the people
Living for today ...

Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too
Imagine all the people
Living life in peace ...

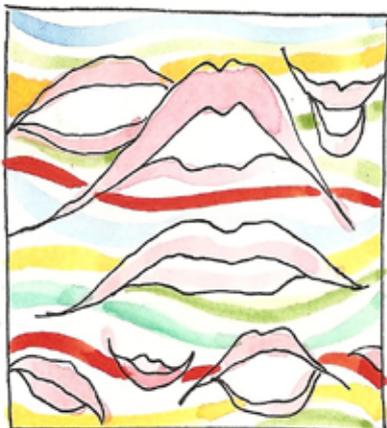
You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world ...

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will live as one

4. WHAT ARE FEELINGS?

Poem by Katja, a child of 11 years



Feelings go up



and feelings go down



There are feelings inside us all spinning around.



Sometimes they're good and sometimes they're bad



But feelings are something that everyone has.



Being excluded and feeling unsafe are feelings that I think Everyone Hates.



Like so beautifully and clearly expressed in Katja's poem, feelings are changeable, temporary and difficult to measure. They are reactions to our needs, desires, interests and experiences. Feelings can consume our body, mind, heart and soul. There are times when we cannot understand them – even though we all experience them from birth. It is only when we learn to identify these feelings, and to recognize and acknowledge them, that we are more able to understand ourselves and others.

Regardless of who we are, or where we come from, all of us experience feelings at one time or another, but, due to our cultural differences, for example, (socialization and conditioning), we may have been 'taught' to suppress them. It may be considered inappropriate in some cultures for men to cry, show, or even to talk about their feelings. This may result in them rejecting, denying, or refusing to 'own' their feelings, which will restrict their expression and behavior.

When we deny our anger and refuse to acknowledge it, we are not giving ourselves the opportunity to address it – and by not addressing it, it is quite possible that our anger will turn into aggression, or depression. The aggression may be aimed at other's or directed towards ourselves. In this case, we are likely to turn ourselves into victims, and to punish ourselves with feelings of remorse, guilt, hopelessness, or dejection.

Therefore, it is crucial that we not only learn to recognize and acknowledge our feelings, but, that we consciously address them, so that we do not express them in a way that is damaging or dangerous, to other's or ourselves.

As teachers or social workers, it is particularly important that you try to encourage shy or reluctant children to talk about themselves, and their feelings. When shy children are encouraged to talk, and are able to express their feelings and emotions, they are much more likely to behave in a positive way. If they do show signs of aggression, however, they should not be punished, as this will only lead to more aggression. You should encourage them to talk – and help them to learn that there are much more effective ways to communicate, and to express themselves.

When we recognize our unpleasant feelings, it does not give us the right to express them in an aggressive way. For example if we feel angry because someone took our pen without asking, it does not give us the right to hit them. This is what we will address in Chapter 5 – Impulse Control.

4.1. Teasing or bullying

Everyday, nine year old Ashok would ask his mother for more money to buy his lunch. The amount requested was increasing weekly, and yet he seemed to be getting thinner and thinner, and many times he would return home from school feeling hungry. After his mother inquired around, she became aware that Ashok was giving his lunch money to a bigger and older boy. The older boy was threatening to beat him up if he would not give him some money everyday.

Most children have been teased by either a sibling or a friend at some point in their childhood. And usually, it is not harmful when done in a playful and friendly way. But, when teasing becomes spiteful, or unkind, it crosses the line of respect and can be considered, bullying – which needs to be stopped!

Bullying is when a person or group tries to hurt, intimidate, or control another person. Sometimes, bullying can involve hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, or forcing someone to do something they don't want to do. However, bullying isn't just restricted to the use of physical abuse – it can also take the form of verbal or emotional abuse, i.e., threats, rejection, persecution, or abandonment. For example, calling someone names; saying nasty things about them, making them feel small, frightened, or even ignoring them on purpose.

It is important to take all forms of bullying seriously, and to address them. If we do not take any action, the child being bullied may lose their confidence or self-esteem. And in severe cases, this may even lead to horrible tragedies taking place, such as school shooting, accidents, or suicides.

4.2. Understanding bullying behavior

Children tease or bully for many reasons:

Attention

Teasing or bullying is a way of receiving attention. Unfortunately, for many children, any attention is better than no attention.

Feelings of superiority or power

Some children bully because they feel insecure or have a low sense of self worth. Picking on someone else who is weaker empowers them, and gives them a feeling of being more important, popular, or in control.

Peer acceptance

Often, children perceive teasing or bullying as being the “cool” thing to do. Their need to ‘belong’, feel accepted within the group, or to be popular, could be so strong that they may even feel it is necessary to bully another child.

Misunderstanding differences

In some cases, children may tease or bully because they simply don't understand that it is unacceptable to persecute children who are different, because of their size, look, ethnic group, or religion. And frequently, children with physical or learning difficulties are singled out, because they are vulnerable and make easy targets.

Imitation

Children often imitate what they see, or what is happening to them at home, by acting the same way towards others. If they are ignored, bullied, made fun of, or exploited at home – they will often imitate this behavior at school.

Media influence

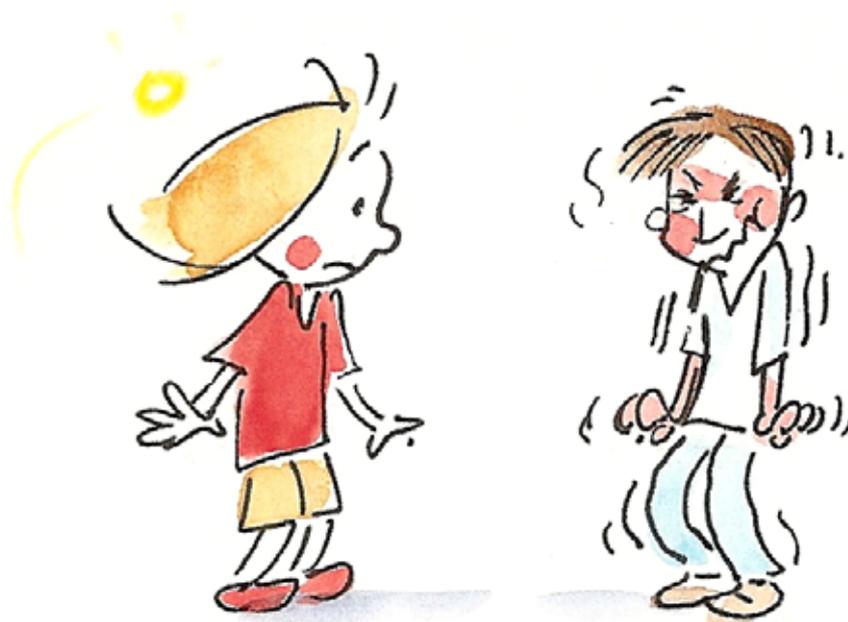
Children frequently see violence, bullying or lack of respect in television programmes, films, and computer games. They are easily influenced, and sometimes, may even try to imitate what they see on the screen.

5. IMPULSE CONTROL

Conflict is part of every day life, and often it leads to tension. When we do not address this tension, it can lead to impulsive behavior, such as shouting, slamming doors, or getting physically aggressive with each other, etc. Although this outburst may seem at the time, to have released some of the ‘unbearable tension’, it will not end the conflict itself.

If children react aggressively in tense situations, and we do not address their behavior, or give them boundaries, they may feel that this aggressive form of conflict solution is successful, because it worked for them! This is why it is very important that we don’t only address this kind of behavior, but, that we also act as role models ourselves – because often impulsive behavior of adults leads to impulsive behavior of children.

5.1. What does impulse control mean?



Impulse control basically means that we should learn to control our impulsive behavior. For example, when we are feeling angry or tense, we should not react without thinking, and do whatever we feel at the time – but, rather we should take a step back, and use the time to reflect, so that we are able to give a better response instead. An impulsive child tends to panic and react without thinking, if it is unable to cope emotionally.

With our programme, children will learn that there are healthier ways to resolve difficulties and differences of opinions, for example, through using techniques like role playing, theatre, sharing of stories and open discussions.

6. DEALING WITH ANGER

Anger is a feeling of great annoyance or resentment, as the result of some real or supposed grievance. Like fear or sadness, anger is a human emotion all of us feel in our lives, at some point or another. It can even be seen as being a necessary emotion – as it can act as a signal – and thus, warn us of possible danger. And it can even help us to establish personal boundaries – and allow us to dissociate ourselves from an insult, harassment, or someone’s unreasonable behavior.

It is, therefore, not the anger itself that causes damage, but the way that we express it, sometimes. For example, If we act before we think, rather than think before we act, we are more likely to act impulsively and are more likely to express our anger in a harmful or destructive way, i.e., hit someone, or break something of theirs because they have taken our things without asking.

When we act on impulse, it is definitely not dealing with our anger in a constructive way, because it does not give us the time to pause for reflection. Likewise, when we try to suppress our anger, it is also not dealing with it in a constructive way, because we will probably turn ourselves into a ‘pressure cooker’ and explode.



“There is no reality than the one we have in us.”

Hermann Hesse, Demian

“What you win by violence, can only be kept by force.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Learning to deal with our anger becomes much easier when we have learned to recognize and acknowledge it, i.e., "I am feeling angry because he took my things without asking." Once we have learnt to acknowledge it, we should take a step back, as this will enable us to think of more constructive ways to deal with it, i.e., "Please can you give me back my things because I need them." It is also advisable to take a time out and to let off the anger in a healthy way e.g. to do sports, listen to music, write, paint, sit on a tree, etc.

When we feel provoked, our body and mind switch to an 'alarm' position. The mind becomes aroused and the body reacts with excitement; tension, faster pulse, palpitations, and sweating. In such a state of agitation, conflicts are often difficult to solve. If we have not learnt to take a step back, the tension may become unbearable, and suddenly we may find ourselves exploding in a fit of rage. This uncontrolled outburst may even leave us with more negative feelings, i.e., guilt and remorse.

Therefore, in such situations it is necessary to calm down and relax and get a clear head. Once you have calmed down, it is important to resolve the conflict and not to avoid it.

"Good can never arise out of lies and violence."

Mahatma Gandhi

"Violence is the weapon of the weak, non-violence is the weapon of the strong."

Mahatma Gandhi

"Violence shatters itself."

Lao - Tse

Our program teaches children how to recognize and deal with their emotions, and how to solve their conflicts more peacefully.

7. CONFLICTS AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

7.1. Starting of conflicts

Conflicts arise when there are different points of view or interests about a matter. If a conflict is resolved positively, people can learn tolerance and broaden their horizons.

Therefore the point is not to avoid conflicts, but to create a positive conflict culture and to learn to deal with conflicts in a peaceful and creative way.

An example of a conflict situation: *Mary and Susan have a conflict. Mary wants to play ball with Susan, but Susan would much rather play with the dolls. Mary yells at Susan: "We always have to play what you want. Never what I want. It must always go after your head! Susan withdraws and doesn't talk anymore. Mary is insecure and thinks that her friend doesn't like her anymore and out of sadness she gets even angrier and says: "You're not my friend anymore". Susan gets desperate, sits in the corner and cries. No one can understand the other in her emotional situation.*



What does empathy mean in this context?

Mary and Susan deal with conflict situations differently. When Mary is sad, she reacts with anger, because the pain of her sadness overwhelms her. In order not to feel the pain, she turns the sadness around and reacts with anger. Perhaps she has learned from her parents that sadness is weakness, that she must not cry. Susan, on the other hand, gets scared and withdraws into her injury. She can't understand why her friend doesn't like her anymore.

If Mary knew her feelings, she could say: "It makes me sad to always play what you want. I never get the chance." Susan could then react appropriately and would not believe that her friend can no longer stand her. So they could find a peaceful solution together.

If Susan learns to empathize with Mary's feelings and Mary learns to empathize with Susan's feelings, then they can find a solution, a compromise.

Usually it is possible to solve every conflict. What is important is the ability to empathize: to recognize and to understand the feelings of others. And the use of techniques to look at interpersonal problems. The prerequisite for this is the willingness to resolve the conflict.

If one sweeps essential conflicts under the carpet, they emerge elsewhere and then push for a solution. Conflicts should not only be seen as a problem. They also contain an opportunity. Well-established behaviours have to be checked and, if necessary, replaced by new ones. New views and attitudes can be found.

Conflicts do not come with a bang. They get under way and become more intensive step by step. Because many people prefer to avoid conflicts, they overlook the first signals, such as tension in the air. Usually they only face the situation when something has already happened, when the conflict has escalated.

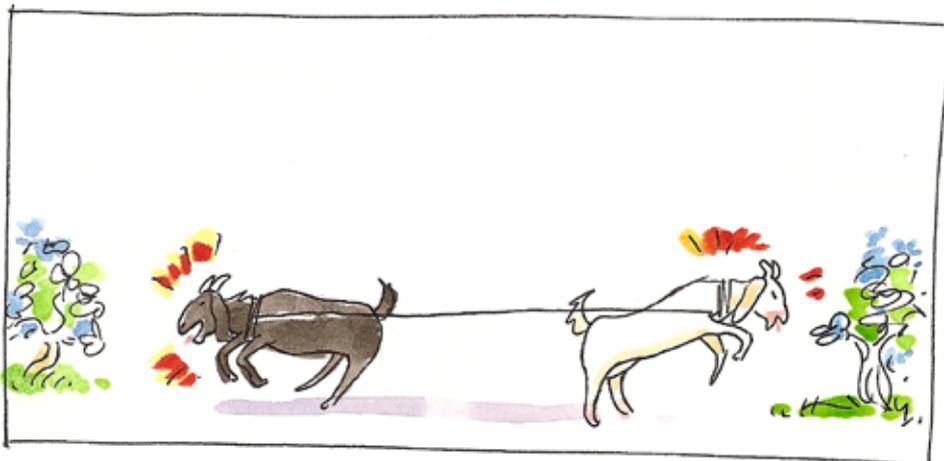
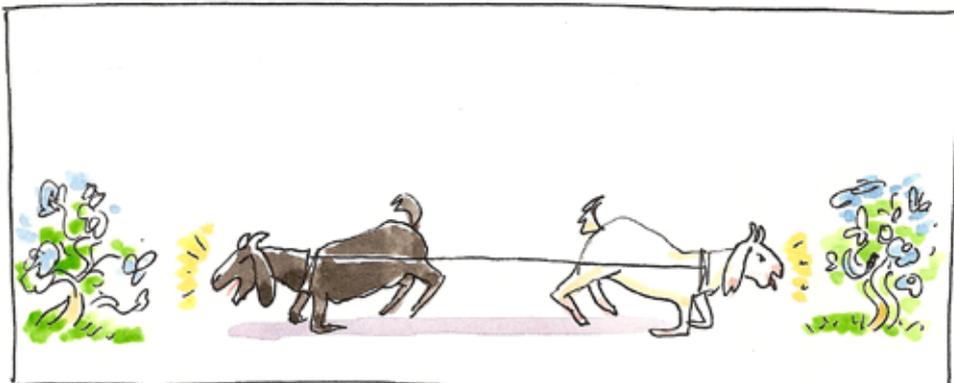
"Conflicts escalate in an erratic way, they move step by step into the depth - and maybe even definitely towards the abyss."

Friedrich Glasl

7.2. Stages of conflict escalation

THE NINE STEPS OF CONFLICT ESCALATION

1. Tension
2. Debate
3. Actions, not words
4. Building coalitions
5. Loss of face, creation of an enemy
6. Threatening
7. Limited destruction
8. Fragmentation of the enemy
9. Together into the abyss



How can one solve this conflict?

The conflict researcher Friedrich Glasl differentiates nine steps of conflict escalation. Let us take a closer look at these steps:

1. Tension

A situation becomes stretched/strained because of differing views or aims, which leads to an emotionally charged, and unpleasant atmosphere.

2. Debate

Conflict arises, as opposing points of view are put forward and argued. Both parties try to compete, feeling their argument is 'just', and the other's is not. Empathy is lacking, and a situation of 'inferior' versus 'superior' takes place.

3. Actions, not words

Communication breaks down. 'Talking' does not help anymore, because neither one is listening to the other. Tension increases, and is followed by the need for physical action of some kind.

4. Building coalitions

Groups are formed; both parties invite support, and allies (friends/groups/gangs) are enlisted to defend each other's argument/cause. Rumors are spread.

5. Loss of Face, creation of an enemy

'Battle lines' are drawn, and the atmosphere becomes hostile. Neither opponent trusts the other, and each one sees the other as the 'enemy', which needs to be defeated. 'The winner takes all'.

6. Threatening

Threatening of violence and punishment. The conflict intensifies as each opponent tries to gain the advantage, and 'out manoeuvre' the other. Strategies/plans are developed, to bring the opponent down, and 'battle cries' are issued in the form of threats, slander, and insults.

7. Limited destruction

The 'battle' commences. Dialogue has failed and compromises or solutions can't be found. Violence becomes justified as the only means left to achieve one's objective.

8. Fragmentation of the enemy

The violence increases, and the 'battle' continues as both sides try desperately to destroy each other. Blind hate.

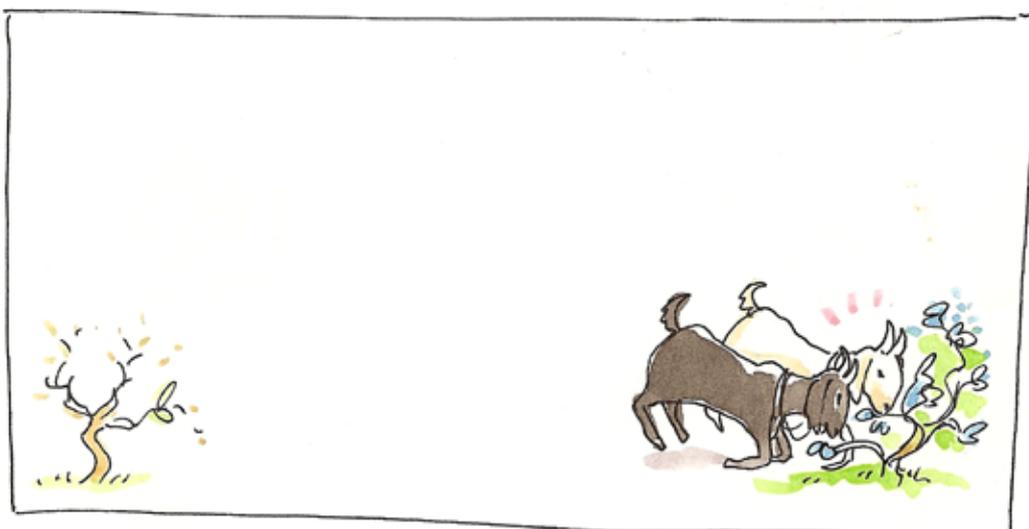
9. Together into the abyss

'Past the point of no return'. A 'no win situation' – There is no going back, and no possibilities of moving forward. There is only one objective left – to completely destroy and annihilate the enemy

7.3. Ten rules to avoid conflict escalation

TEN RULES FOR CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT COURSES

1. No Violence
2. No one-sided finger-pointing
3. Willingness to talk
4. Openness to dialogue
5. Mediation
6. Trust
7. Fair-play rules
8. Empathy
9. Common interests
10. Balancing of Interests and Reconciliation



1. No violence

Threatening behavior, or physical violence of any kind, will never solve any conflict. It will only damage the other party concerned and escalate the conflict to a 'point of no return', i.e., out of control.

2. No one-sided finger-pointing

Finger-pointing in order to drive home your point, is very one-sided in any argument, and can feel extremely intimidating to the other party involved.

3. A willingness to talk

In any conflict, it is important that both parties are willing to talk to each other. There can be no hope of finding any solutions/compromises, if there is no attempt at communication with each other, i.e., dialogue or discussion.

4. Openness to dialogue

Both parties should attempt to be 'open-minded' during dialogues. It is important that they both listen to each other, without interrupting, and that they show a willingness to consider the other's point of view.

5. Mediation

A mediator is someone who is asked to intervene, in order to conciliate in a dispute or conflict. This may be necessary, for example, in situations where communication has either broken down completely, or become extremely difficult.

6. Trust

Trust means honesty and reliability. It involves placing the confidence or faith in each other, to be honest and reliable. For example, if we ask someone to do something, we can depend on them to do it. It is important that we show a readiness to trust the other, and to prove ourselves worthy of trust.

7. Fair-play rules

It is always advisable in any conflict, to establish and conform to a set of 'basic rules', in order for it to be as 'fair' and 'just' as possible. This will help both parties to maintain a certain standard of decency, i.e., 'fair play', during the conflict.

For example, agreeing to respect each other's boundaries and limits, and to 'own' our feelings/emotions, i.e., I was angry with you , instead of, 'you made me angry'.

8. Empathy

If we are empathetic towards each other, it will enable both of us to see and understand each other's point of view. When we look at a problem/conflict from a different perspective, it opens up new doors, and allows us to find alternative solutions to the ones we had in mind.

9. Common Interests

Finding solutions is always easier when you can focus on common interests, i.e., the things that you both have in common and enjoy doing together, rather than things you don't.

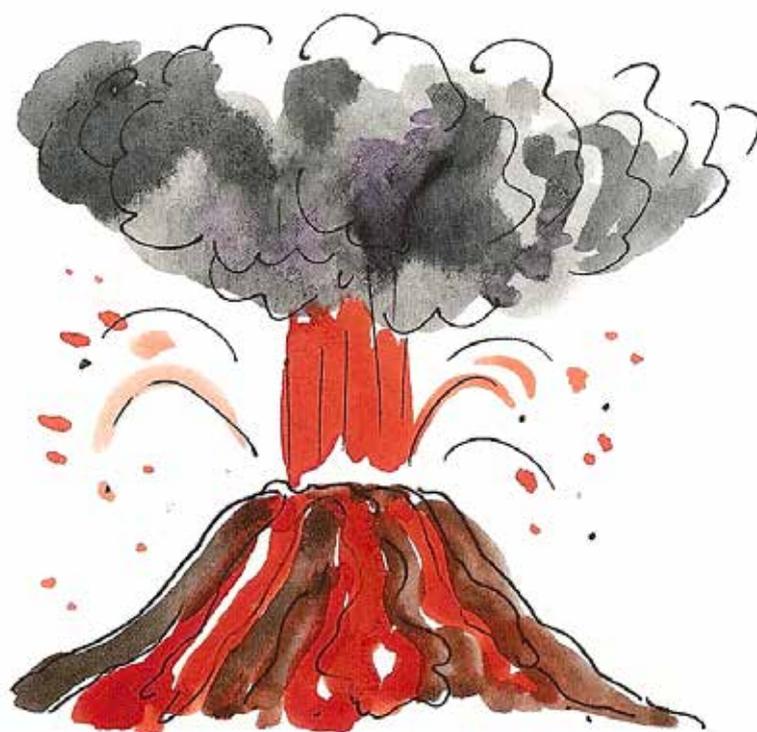
10. Balancing of Interests and Reconciliation

When this happens, a new relationship is developed between the conflicting parties. A common solution or compromise is agreed upon that satisfies both sides.

The way adults deal with a conflict, influences children in how they deal with a conflict. Therefore it is important that we think about how we want to deal with a conflict situation.

Conflicts escalate, when ...

- We offend or make a fool of someone
- We do not differentiate between the conflict and the person
- We get into power struggles or try to exercise power
- We reproach someone
- We only consider our own interests
- We do not acknowledge the needs of others
- We lack the ability to know 'right' from 'wrong'
- We form groups, to fight with each other
- We overstep each other's boundaries
- We overstep rules



Key words for a peaceful interaction - Without violence -

Address the problem immediately

When a problem arises, it is better to address the problem immediately, rather than try to 'sweep it under the carpet'. Denying there's any problem, usually results in us 'bottling up' emotions, which later on, explode.

Speaking in the I-form

When you talk about your feelings, always try to 'own' them, i.e., by using the 'I' word, instead of the 'you'. By owning your feelings, you take responsibility for them, and therefore, do not blame others for the way you feel. The more you use the "I" word, the easier it is for someone to try to understand your feelings. In a conflict situation, using "I" instead of "You" has another advantage in that it forces you to be clear, and to reveal your true intentions – and also it encourages the other person to do the same.

Do not interrupt

Always try to let the other person finish speaking before interrupting. If someone talks endlessly, without listening, you can always interrupt them in a friendly way, and remind them that it is your turn to talk.

Address the other person directly and maintain eye-contact.

When you want to communicate something, always look at the person concerned and talk to them directly. This avoids any confusion or misunderstandings, especially if they happen to be in a group.

Finding a common point of view

What is the other person's point of view? How does it differ from your own? Is it not possible to look at the problem from their perspective, as well as your own? So that both of you can hopefully reach a common point of view?

Stick to the issue

Try to focus on the issue you wish to talk about, rather than jump from one issue to another. This only confuses the other person, and makes it difficult for them to understand what you are actually trying to say.

Avoid accusations and insults

Blaming the other person for the problem, or insulting them by calling them names, etc, is not very helpful, or effective. It only makes the other person feel more angry or defeated, and will only make the situation worse.

See Walter Kern

7.4. Why children beat

Why do some children act in a certain way?

Every child is different, and therefore, will react differently, in certain situations. Some children may even behave in a way that we feel is inappropriate, or even violent, for example:

- They may hit/kick another child, or break something – because they cannot express, or communicate what they are feeling inside.
- They are silent, and withdraw into themselves – because they feel overwhelmed by their problems.
- They avoid others, and try to keep them away – because they are frightened, and don't know how to protect themselves.
- They 'day dream', and live in their own fantasy world – because it offers an alternative reality, that is much better than the one they are actually living in.
- They shout, throw things, or generally disrupt activities – because any attention is better than no attention.



Teachers and social workers who work with 'difficult' children, need a lot of patience and understanding. It is very important, for example, that they try to establish and maintain a warm and friendly relationship with these children, built on trust, respect and empathy.

7.5. Mediation

Mediation is a method of 'conflict resolution', which was developed in the USA in the 60's and 70's, and is still being used successfully today. Mediation involves an unbiased party, the mediator, intervening between two or more parties in a dispute. Mediators help to find a solution with which all sides are satisfied.

Mediators shall neither make an award nor a judgment nor present the solution. A solution should be worked out by the parties to the conflict themselves. Everyone should win through the agreement reached.

This way of constructive conflict solution can succeed even if the conflict parties are stuck in a dead-end street and can no longer get on alone or talk to each other at all. Mediators listen to both parties concerned, and allow them, without bias or judgement, to express their feelings freely. They try to help both parties to clarify their needs and interests, and encourage them to work together to look for solutions, by providing them with a safe and protected space.

This approach allows each party to experience the other party's point of view, feelings, interests, and emotions. The aim is to develop trust and understanding, in order to find a solution everybody can agree upon. Finally, the agreement is signed by all conflict parties.

See Christoph Besemer

Steps of Mediation:

- ① Introduction
- ② Clarification
- ③ Solution
- ④ Agreement

8. DEVELOPING SELF-CONFIDENCE

Self confidence is a feeling of self assurance, which means you have faith in your own worth, powers, and judgement. It is a positive feeling, gained from a belief in your own ability to do things well.

In today's competitive and career-orientated world, if you want to succeed at anything, it is important that you have confidence in yourself and your abilities. When you feel confident, others will also see you as being confident, and therefore, more capable. You are much more likely to fulfil your own potential, because you know who you are, what you want, and what you can achieve, realistically. Confident people are more self aware, because they know their own strengths and weaknesses. They are more likely to feel in control of their lives, and less likely to feel victims of fate or circumstance.

It is important, as a teacher/social worker, that you encourage children to have confidence in their abilities and skills. This will help their growth and development, and will enable them to feel good about themselves and others.

BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT aims to raise awareness, and encourages the development of self-confidence through role play and games.

8.1. The secret of inner strength - resilience

Resilience is the key word which explains why some people can cope with extreme pressure, while others can't.

Researchers call our mental resistibility; resilience, which is the ability to be able to spring/bounce back into shape after bending. Why is it possible, for example, that one person is able to withstand something, that another person can't? And why are some people more able to recover quickly from difficult conditions or situations than others? What skills or abilities do we need in order to leave a crisis situation feeling stronger and more able to cope?

New research in psychology suggests that everyone has the potential to master a crisis, provided they train their inner strength or resilience. Some people manage to cope with the most difficult situations in life (violence, separation, poverty, loneliness and death), and surprisingly, this does not seem to psychologically destroy them or affect their mental well being.

In science, resilience means, elasticity, swing and flexibility. In psychology, it means resistibility, which allows people to master crisis situations and difficulties. Resilience is the will to survive, and the ability to move forward or get on with one's life, without there being any long term damage.



Psychologists have been researching resilience/mental resistibility for almost thirty years. This interest was triggered by the observation that not all children growing up in extremely stressful situations were adversely affected in their growth and development. While some children struggled and suffered later on, other children coped much better, and were able to put it all behind them.

Life can be a 'roller-coaster' and full of ups and downs. However, it's not so much the crisis itself, as our ability to handle them. Everyone at some point in their lives will experience a difficult situation of one kind or another. As a child growing up, we may, for example, have felt neglected, or been sexually or physically abused? Or maybe one of our parents left the family, was an alcoholic, or died?



Any major crisis, can be extremely stressful, and have the potential to cause psychological damage later on. However, research has shown that our ability to cope with them depends on our inner strength, or resilience. If we are born with an easy-going and accepting nature, for example, we are more likely to be able to 'weather' life's ups and downs. Whilst we may not have been born one of the 'lucky' ones, (that never seems to have any problems), researchers have found that children can learn to develop resilience, especially if they are taught during the first 10 years of their life.

The next question is,

How do we learn and develop resistibility?

Researchers agree that we need certain qualities in order to cope with a crisis, and to be able to put the broken pieces of our lives back together by ourselves. For example:

- Relationship skills
- Hope
- Independence
- Fantasy
- Creativity
- Humour
- Decisiveness
- Courage
- Understanding
- Reflection

This is the framework that holds us together and helps us to withstand crisis situations. But how can one learn and develop these skills? Researchers agree that it is possible if we are determined enough, and are given a set of practical tools; such as the seven pillars of the “Resilience-Concept”:

1. Optimism
2. Acceptance
3. Solution orientation
4. Leaving the victim role
5. Taking responsibility
6. Build up social network
7. Future planning



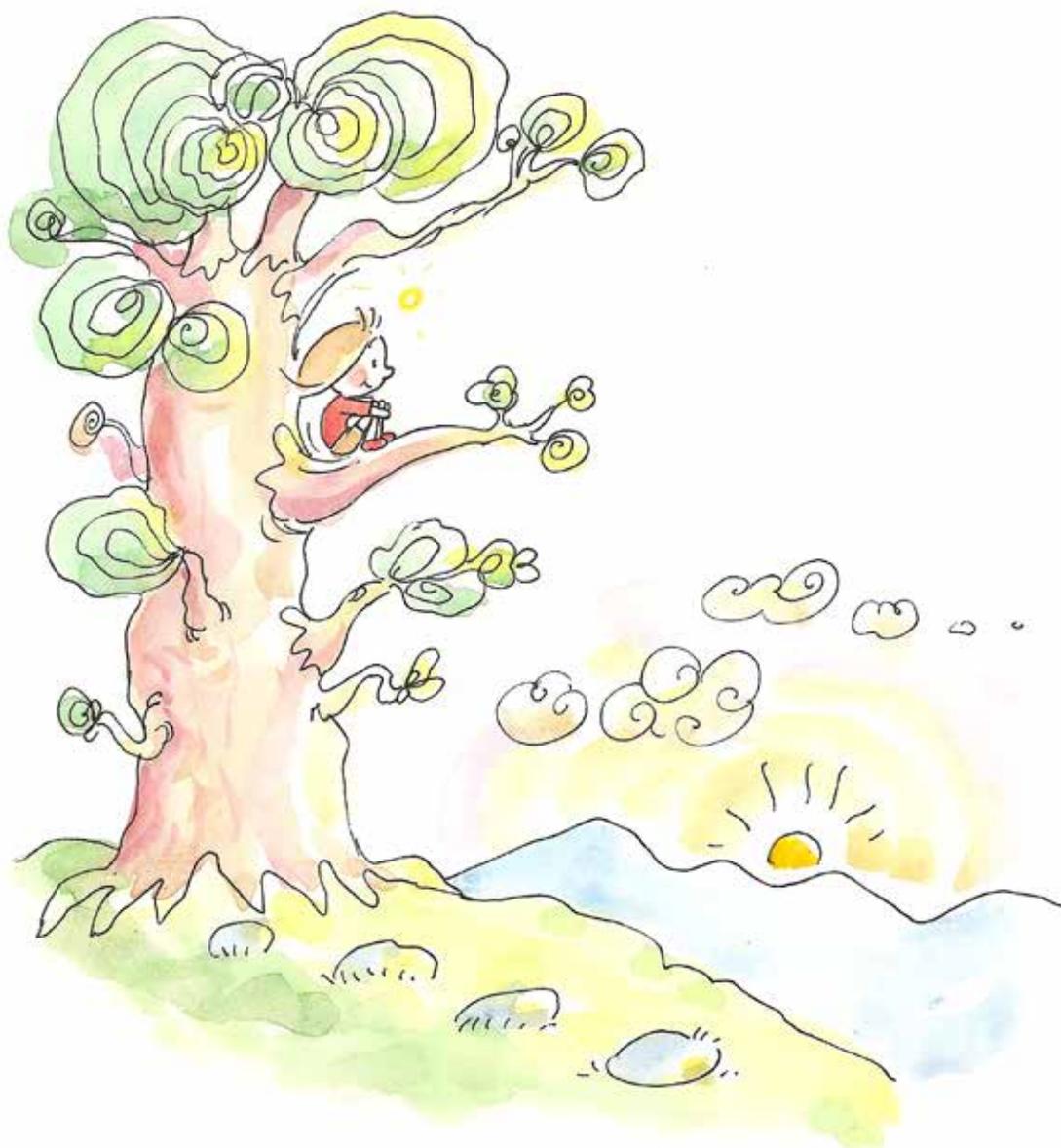
Resilience, a way to cope with a crisis?

The American family therapist H.N. Wright compares a resilient person with a boxer, who is knocked out in the ring, gets up and then chooses a totally new tactic.

Non-robust people do not change their style, but get knocked down again. According to Wright, they make two mistakes: They curse their crisis. They put their whole attention into the development of, and in the problem itself. But they do not think about the question of how to solve it. Resilient people deal differently with strokes of fate and defeat. From the present psychological research, the following characteristics of resilient people can be grasped:

1. Acceptance of the crisis, and the connected feelings during crisis times

Resilient people take more time. They know: running away does not help. They are aware that they cannot think straight at that moment or make decisions. They assume that there will be a time when they will know what to do. Until then, they look for a place where they feel comfortable (their own bed, a place in nature, etc.) – and let their emotions run wild. They are not ashamed of their tears, their anger or their fear, and do not freeze their emotions.



2. Looking for solutions

People have the opportunity to react differently to crisis situations. For example, some people complain: “Why did it happen to me?”, “What did I do to deserve it?”, “Why do I always have such bad luck?”

While others, who are more resilient, may react differently: “Okay, things aren’t looking very good at the moment, but, hopefully they’ll get much better.”

3. Sharing the problem

People with resilience often talk to others about their feelings, worries, or concerns. They do not try to solve their problem on their own, and look for support. Psychological studies frequently emphasize that people who have social networks, are much more able to cope with conflicts than those who don’t. Resilient people look for support from family members and friends who are empathic and strengthen them when they are in a difficult situation.

4. Leaving the victim role

Sometimes, it's easy to feel a victim of fate or circumstance when in a crisis situation or conflict. Blaming other's for what has happened, or blaming it on something else, means that we don't have to take responsibility ourselves, or try to change things. People with resilience, however, are not so easily defeated, and rarely blame other people or themselves.

5. Staying optimistic

Resilient people usually manage to stay optimistic in a crisis, i.e., 'they always try to look on the bright side of life'. They often assume, realistically, that life cannot get any worse, it can only get better. Even if there doesn't appear to be any solution at the time, they hope that things will eventually get better.

6. Forgiving ourselves

Often, we blame ourselves and feel guilty for what has happened, for example, we might feel it is our fault, if someone rejects or abandons us; "If only I hadn't done that... they probably wouldn't have left me..." Resilient people rarely indulge in such self accusations, because they know it won't solve the problem. And they also know that while they may have had a part in it, other people or factors were involved as well.

7. Future-oriented planning

Resilient people do not take anything for granted. They take into account the ups and downs of life and are prepared for them mentally.

Resilient people do not cling onto people, ideas, things which could give them pain. They rather have the attitude "It is like it is and nothing can be hold onto, neither the good nor the bad." They assume the defeats are temporarily, do not blame themselves in difficult life situations and view problems as a challenge which allows them to grow. Resilience is the end product of a process that does not suppress risks and pain but enables people to deal with it effectively.

See Birgit Wolter

How can adults help children to strengthen their inner resistance?

Research has shown that "Strong children" are less likely to get depressed, or to harm themselves and others, by using violence, alcohol, drugs or other forms of substance/ self-abuse.

The key to inner strength is self-confidence and emotional competence. For example, believing in yourself, and your ability to do things well; in having self-esteem, worth, and the ability to bounce back, after being bent out of shape.

How do children become 'strong' and develop self-confidence?

If, for example:

- *They grow up in a dysfunctional family, i.e., with violence, abuse or neglect*
- *They grow up in war zones or trouble-affected areas*
- *One or more family members have died*
- *Their parents are separated or divorced*
- *Their parents are unemployed, and the family is poor*
- *They feel rejected, unloved, abandoned or alone*
- *Their daily life and environment is characterized by violence*

To be strong children need a healthy environment:

1. Family members and friends
2. Person of trust
3. Positive role models
4. Structure and routine
5. Hobbies and interests
6. Boundaries and responsibilities
7. Support in times of conflict



Healthy children or children who are emotionally well balanced, need stability, structure and routine. In cases where this isn't possible, for example, in war torn areas, or in dysfunctional/broken homes, it is important that they have someone they can talk to, who will listen, and offer them support, i.e., grand parent, auntie or uncle. If no family member is available, it may be possible for them to seek support outside the family circle, i.e., friend, neighbor, teacher, or social worker.

Children can develop self-confidence and inner strength. However, they do need help and support from adults who are positive role models. It is important that we try to guide them, and teach them how to take responsibility for themselves, and their own actions/behavior. In difficult situations, it is important that we offer them understanding and support, and show them how to cope in a crisis. Crisis can knock down people but also let them grow.

The Practical Part of the Manual addresses how we can cultivate and nurture the inner strength in children with the help of exercises, pedagogic instructions and games.

9. CHILD RIGHTS

On 20th November 1989, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. For the first time in history, a document detailing children's rights, was drawn up and made legally binding under international law.

With 196 state parties, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most successful Human Rights Treaty. It is universally recognized. Of all states worldwide, only the United States of America have not signed it.

The message is:

Human rights apply to all age groups; children have the same human rights as adults. But children are particularly vulnerable and therefore they also have particular rights that recognize their special need for protection and support for development as young persons. The States and societies are responsible for creating these conditions. They have to make sure that these duties are fulfilled on all levels, for example in families, schools and communities, on regional and national level.

The adoption of the Convention of the Rights of the Child was a milestone in acknowledging children's rights. But the implementation and realization of these rights is still a great challenge in all countries worldwide. There was a lot of progress in realizing child rights since the adoption of the Convention in 1989, but there is still a lot to do and to improve. Human rights and child rights groups, activists, children and youth themselves and many other people are fighting and advocating for the realization of children's rights every day.

The Convention of the Rights of the Child guarantees government protection and services and specific rights for all children and youth under the age of 18. There are 41 articles describing the rights of children and youth. Here is a selection from the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

12 important Child Rights - a selection

1. **The best interest of the child always has to be the first priority**
2. **The right to have a family, well-being and a safe home**
3. **The right to adequate and healthy food and water**
4. **The right to health services and medical treatment**
5. **The right to appropriate care and treatment**
6. **The right to protection from violence and exploitation**
7. **The right to protection from military service**
8. **The right to education and training**
9. **The right to equal treatment and non-discrimination**
10. **The right to be legally registered at birth and to have a nationality**
11. **The right to participate fully in social life**
12. **The right to free time, play and recreation**

The Convention also devotes some specific articles to serious violations of children's rights. For example:

Article 19 – Protection from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect

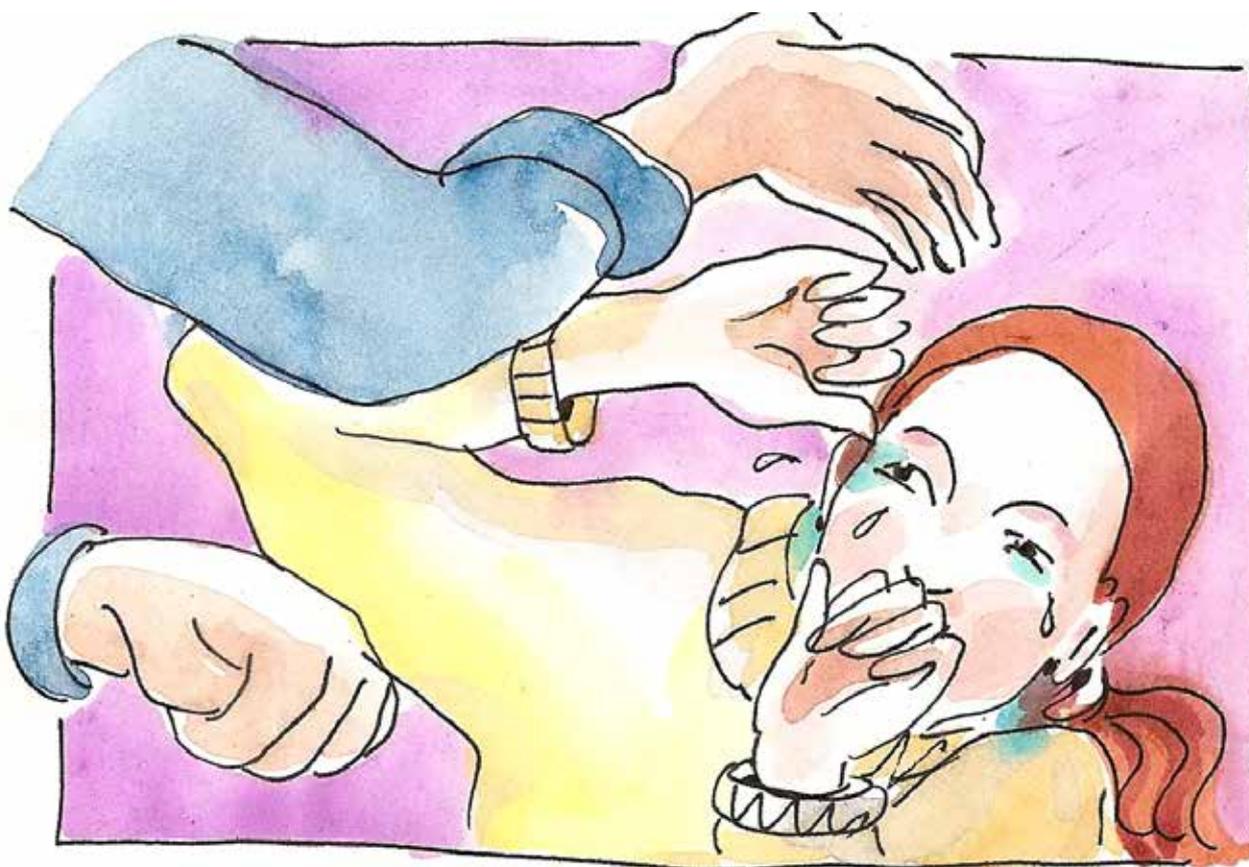
Article 32 – Protection from economic exploitation and harmful labor

Article 34 – Protection from sexual abuse

Article 35 – Protection from child trafficking

Article 38 – Protection in armed conflicts and from recruitment into armed forces

Violence against children in family and school



Article 19: Protection from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect

State Parties have to legislate and take all measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, mal-treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

Everywhere in the world and every day, children are being beaten, abused, neglected and abandoned, many of them in family or school. However, there is progress in some countries and hopefully, one day all children will be able to live their lives without fear. Awareness raising and campaigning continues for further change.

Children as commodities - exploited and destroyed



Article 32, 34 and 35: Protection from economic exploitation, harmful work, sexual abuse, abduction and child trafficking

Article 32

States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Article 34

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Article 35

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

Hundreds of thousands of children in the world are sold to be used as slaves for work. Also, the number of children being trafficked to meet the growing need for adoptive children in richer classes and countries is increasing. United Nations experts estimate that two million women, girls and boys are trafficked for prostitution every year.

The trafficking of children follows a similar pattern, i.e., the trafficker (middleman, neighbor or relative) lures the victims (or their families) with promises of money, a good education or a well-paid job. Once the children (or their families) have accepted the bait and fallen into the trap, the children are carted off somewhere to a place far away, to be sold and exploited.

Traffickers usually look for easy targets, for example orphans, ethnic minorities, vulnerable children who have been sexually or physically abused, children who have run away from home, displaced children or children who are living in poor or difficult conditions.

Lack of awareness, professional coordination, funds and a failure to act on behalf of governments worldwide, makes the dirty work of the trafficker very lucrative and easy. Child trafficking and child prostitution is a worldwide business which is becoming almost as profitable as the dealing of drugs or weapons.

The fact that inhumane but profitable ‘businesses’ like child trafficking flourish, is due in part to a huge economic imbalance in the world. The disparate distribution of income, unjust global market structures, a decline in global market prices for certain goods, the destruction of nature by big agricultural and mining companies and mega projects like huge dams lead to poverty and push many families to the brim of existence, especially in rural and indigenous areas. Low wages without social protection are not enough to survive – even if both parents work. Therefore, many families require their children to work under harmful conditions, for example, in textile industries or selling goods on the streets.

Child labour is cheap. Under growing competitive pressure, for example in the textile industry, many children earn a starvation wage while their parents become unemployed.

What to do?

One of the most effective measures against child labour is better wages for adults and social security measures. International child right organizations like ‘terre des hommes’, and working children’s organizations as the movements of child workers in Peru (Manthoc), Bolivia (Unatsbo), India (Bal Mazdoor Sangh) or Africa (AMWCY) are not against children doing any kind of work, but, are against any form of forced or harmful labour and exploitation – in accordance with Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

They insist, publicly, that working children get better working conditions (for example adequate and limited working hours, better pay and medical treatment) and can go to school. Working children claim their right to work under conditions suitable for children, because they don’t want to be criminalized or punished for working. Of course, all forms of exploitative, harmful and dangerous child labour should be legally banned, offenses by companies or employers should be penalized strictly.

Children in armed conflicts



Article 38: Protection in armed conflicts and from recruitment into armed forces

State Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that the rules of international humanitarian law applicable for children in armed conflicts are respected and that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities. Important: In the year 2000, an additional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child ratified by at least 168 countries has increased the age limit for recruitment to armies and armed groups to 18 years.

Many children grow up in war and crisis areas. Their everyday life is shaped by war, violence and destruction. Some are forcibly recruited as soldiers by armies or armed groups and abducted. Others are lured by false promises and money. They hope for protection and care, more security and a better chance to survive through the possession of a weapon. Some also want to take revenge for the killing of parents or family members. Only a few fight out of religious or political conviction.

The development and the barely controlled, massive proliferation of small and light arms enables the warring parties to send young children into armed conflict. Countries like the USA, Russia, China, the United Kingdom, France, Germany or Italy export huge amounts of small arms to crisis areas. Conflict countries are flooded with arms, the illegal arms trade is flourishing. The prices are low, often, a gun is available for less than 50 US-Dollars.

As soon as they are a part of the armed forces, the children – like all soldiers – are subject to strict rules and obedience that are harmful to children in many ways.

For example, punishments for disobeying often include torture or death penalty. Child soldiers often have to take on particularly dangerous tasks, such as clearing mines, spying and attacks on the front line. They are in great danger to be killed, maimed or traumatized.

What to do?

The recruitment of children under the age of 18 to armies and armed groups has to be prevented by any means. All child soldiers should be demobilized and get support to be able to reintegrate to their families and to society. Arms exports to crisis regions should be strictly banned by international and national law.

- Millions of children in the world are exploited and forced to work under hazardous conditions.
- Every year millions of children die of hunger, malnutrition and preventable diseases.
- About 250,000 children worldwide are abused as child soldiers in wars and armed conflicts.

Despite the universal ratification of the UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child, social injustices and grave violations of children's rights still continue. Whether it's due to economic problems, personal, political or religious conflicts, unjust global market structures, failure of governments or due to any other reason - it needs to be stopped!

More political will, better laws and law enforcement, more international efforts and more financial resources are required to make progress on these problems. Aid and child rights organizations and civil society groups working for child rights and better living conditions for children need more support, politically and financially.

Everybody can get active on these issues, on local, regional, national or international level. One positive example is the Red Hand Campaign: half a million people in more than 50 countries have already shown red hand prints to stop the use of children as soldiers.

www.redhandday.org

10. EQUAL RIGHTS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

What does gender mean?

Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and opportunities attributed to girls and boys in a society and how they interact. The roles and social responsibilities change and differ from one society to another, often creating inequalities and the discrimination of one sex. According to Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children shall not be discriminated against and all children shall enjoy equal rights “irrespective of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status of the child, its parents or guardians”. Girls and boys should therefore enjoy equal rights and be respected equally.

The term ‘gender’ refers to the social role of a person as opposed to the biological sex. In other words, ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ are (social) gender categories, while ‘female’ and ‘male’ are (biological) sex categories.

The term ‘gender’ has more than one valid definition. The World Health Organization (WHO), for example, uses ‘gender’ to refer to “the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.”

The term ‘sex’ is therefore about biological and physical differences between men and women, whereas ‘gender’ differences are constructed by cultures and societies, they have no necessary biological component. They are a product of socialization – where societies agree upon and construct different roles and social responsibilities for men and women.

Sex differences (biological and physical differences between men and women)

- Men are taller than women, on average
- Women have different genitalia than men
- Women give birth, men don’t

Gender differences (socially constructed differences between men and women)

- Men often earn more money than women for doing the same job
- In some countries, men are allowed to drive a car and women are not.
- In many countries, raising the children is primarily the responsibility of women.
- In many countries, more men than women can read and write; in others, it is the other way round

In some societies, gender differences and cultural prejudices lead to discrimination against women or men in certain areas: for example, unequal civil rights and freedoms, economic inequality or gender-based violence.

Double discrimination:

In many countries, girls don't have time to prepare for class because of time-consuming household duties. In school, they are punished for not doing their homework.

What is gender-based violence?

Gender-based violence is any kind of violent action that results from social inequality between girls and boys or between women and men. It can be physical, emotional or sexual, can be committed at home, at school, at work or in public. Gender-based violence has its roots in family and society. Therefore, family and school are important factors in educating people to non-violence.

Gender-based violence both reflects and reinforces inequities between men and women and compromises the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims. It covers a wide range of human rights violations, including sexual abuse of children, rape, domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment, trafficking of women, girls and boys and many harmful traditional practices such as genital mutilation, circumcision of girls and boys or child marriage. All these forms of abuse can cause deep psychological injuries and damage health in general and reproductive health in particular, and in some instances, results in death.

The World Health Organization (WHO) states: "Gender-based violence and violence against women is a major public health and human rights problem throughout the world. WHO's World Report on Violence and Health notes that "one of the most common forms of violence against women is that performed by a husband or male member of the household." This type of violence is frequently invisible since it happens behind closed doors, and legal systems and cultural norms often do not treat them as a crime, but rather as a "private" family matter, or a normal part of life."

Girls often experience and deal with violence differently from boys. For example, girls are more likely to be victims of rape and sexual abuse. Boys are more likely to be exposed to physical violence such as kicking and punching and are also more likely to become physically violent when they are angry. Girls, on the other hand, tend to use emotional violence such as insults or blackmail. But these are only tendencies, there are also big individual differences.

II. FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE

The importance of friendship

As human beings we need to belong and feel connected. When we are very small, having friends is very important to us. Some of us even have imaginary friends, or even our pets and stuffed toys become our intimate friends. The need for friends continues as we grow older into our teens, and we begin to find our own identities. Friends have a big influence on how our personality develops.

Friends are people who like us in spite of our faults, and who listen to us and tell us the truth. Friends support our decisions or tell us when we are being foolish.

They laugh with us and share our grief. They are companions and share our interests. They argue with us and stimulate our minds. They are people we don't mind telling our secret wishes and desires to, or what is really on our minds.



Friends are our support system along with our family. When you can rely on your friends, you feel safe and cared for. You belong. Friends offer acceptance and emotional support. They also help, occasionally, with the practical aspects of everyday life, cooking a meal (or

taking you out), helping with chores or giving you a lift when you need one. Friends are also there to offer you advice, an ear to listen, or a shoulder to cry on. Friendship helps us to feel connected, and less isolated.



Friends are vital to school-age children's healthy development. Research has found that children who lack friends, can suffer from emotional and mental difficulties later on in life. Friendship provides children with more than just play-mates.

Friendship helps children develop emotionally and morally. In interacting with friends, children learn many social skills, such as how to communicate, cooperate, and solve problems. Having friends, children learn how to recognize and handle their emotions, and how to respond to other's. It gives them the opportunity to think things through, and to negotiate difficult situations that arise in their relationships.

Having friends even affects children's performance at school. Children tend to have better attitudes about school and learning when they have friends there. In short, children benefit greatly from having good friends. Friendship is very important to help children grow. They help them to develop self-confidence and the social skills they need as a child and later as an adult.

See Millie Ferrer and Anne Fugate

THE TEAM



Rita Erben (Germany)

born in 1955, lived in Cologne and since 2008 in South India, in Auroville. She studied Social Pedagogy and Communication Sciences. After 10 years working as a social pedagogue, she shifted her work area to the media. From 1993 – 2008 she was a freelance radio and TV writer for the public stations (ARD and ZDF) with focus on human rights and social politics. For 15 years she worked all over the world in war and crisis zones. *During this time I learned that we cannot find peace through violence, science, revolution or religion. Peace can only be found inside oneself. Working on this peace document is a first step.*



Astrid Kummer (Germany)

was born 1970 in Viernheim, Germany. She attended the College of Education in Berlin. Later she worked for a year at a girls' school in London. Since 1995 she has been living in Auroville, India where she is involved in various social and cultural projects. I didn't learn this kind of thing in school. So, I feel that children can be better equipped for life if they are taught to know and understand themselves better. And hopefully the result would be that we could all deal more peacefully with each other.



Emanuele Scanziani (Italy)

was born 1966 in Milano, Italy. He started being an illustrator at the age of 16 and worked for 12 years in his family's business, a drawing office creating greeting cards and illustrating children's books. In 1995 he moved to Auroville where he works as an illustrator. He has illustrated many books for projects from all over the world promoting sustainable development as well as illustrating environmental and educational projects.



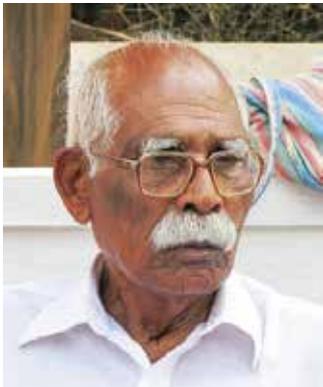
Ralf Willinger (Germany)

journalist and mediator, has been working for the international child rights organisation terre des hommes since 2007. *Travelling through conflict areas I met young people who organized demonstrations for peace and soccer tournaments despite death threats. These people are like dwells of peace. They can rouse the power of peace which lies dormant in each of us. They can inspire others with their enthusiasm and courage. It is important to strengthen this inner peace power and the comprehension for others and oneself – also with the help of this wonderful manual. My children are delighted with Papui, Draggy and SomethingElse.*



Oliver J. Wiebelt (Germany)

was born 1968 in Heidelberg, Germany. He started his professional career as a banker. He has been involved in seminars on personal growth and used to teach software programs. He lives in Auroville for many years now. *Life to me is all about consciousness ... Even though it does not always prevent one from making mistakes, it is the base for the change. Mankind is on the verge of a major change and to plant the seed and ground for children now, to become part of a better life without violence, is a must.*



S. Mahalingam (India)

I am happy to have had a small part, a very small part like that of the squirrel in the Ramayana, in this benevolent, imaginative and effective project to help children and youth to be true, avoid violence and thus live in harmony within the family, the community and the wider world. I thank Rita for giving me an opportunity to serve this noble cause.

ABOUT AUROVILLE

The authors and many people participating in the program are living in Auroville.

Auroville was founded as a universal township by the French national Mirra Alfassa called “The Mother”. Following a call by UNESCO, on the 28th February 1968, youth representing 124 nations and all the Indian States came together to inaugurate the township and receive its Charter.

The purpose of Auroville is to realise human unity – in diversity. Today Auroville is recognised as the first and only internationally endorsed ongoing experiment in human unity and transformation of consciousness, also concerned with – and practically researching into – sustainable living and the future cultural, environmental, social and spiritual needs of mankind.

Auroville is located in south India. People from over 40 nations, from all age groups, from all social classes, backgrounds and cultures live there representing humanity as a whole. The population of the township is constantly growing, but currently stands at around 2,000 people, of whom approximately one third are Indian. Auroville is a unique model worldwide for peace and international understanding. The township is continuing to grow and in the long term is planned for a population of 50,000. Among others UNESCO and the EU support Auroville in its aims.

“Auroville wants to be a universal town where men and women of all countries are able to live in peace and progressive harmony above all creeds, all politics and all nationalities. The purpose of Auroville is to realize human unity.”

Mirra Alfassa



A DREAM

There should be somewhere upon earth a place that no nation could claim as its sole property, a place where all human beings of goodwill, sincere in their aspiration, could live freely as citizens of the world, obeying one single authority, that of the supreme Truth; a place of peace, concord, harmony, where all the fighting instincts of man would be used exclusively to conquer the causes of his suffering and misery, to surmount his weakness and ignorance, to triumph over his limitations and incapacities; a place where the needs of the spirit and the care for progress would get precedence over the satisfaction of desires and passions, the seeking for pleasures and material enjoyments.

In this place, children would be able to grow and develop integrally without losing contact with their soul. Education would be given, not with a view to passing examinations and getting certificates and posts, but for enriching the existing faculties and bringing forth new ones. In this place titles and positions would be supplanted by opportunities to serve and organize. The needs of the body will be provided for equally in the case of each and everyone. In the general organisation intellectual, moral and spiritual superiority will find expression not in the enhancement of the pleasures and powers of life but in the increase of duties and responsibilities.

Artistic beauty in all forms, painting, sculpture, music, literature, will be available equally to all, the opportunity to share in the joys they bring being limited solely by each one's capacities and not by social or financial position.

For in this ideal place money would be no more the sovereign lord. Individual merit will have a greater importance than the value due to material wealth and social position. Work would not be there as the means of gaining one's livelihood, it would be the means whereby to express oneself, develop one's capacities and possibilities, while doing at the same time service to the whole group, which on its side would provide for each one's subsistence and for the field of his work.

In brief, it would be a place where the relations among human beings, usually based almost exclusively upon competition and strife, would be replaced by relations of emulation for doing better, for collaboration, relations of real brotherhood.

Mirra Alfassa



terre des hommes

Help for Children in Need

terre des hommes Deutschland e.V. was founded in 1967 by dedicated members of the public to help children seriously injured in the Vietnam War. terre des hommes is independent of governments, economy, religious communities and political parties and supports about 400 projects for children and young people in more than 30 project countries. The target is a “terre des hommes”, an “Earth of Humanity”.

terre des hommes helps street children, abandoned and working children, looks after children who have become victims of war and violence and ensures their education. terre des hommes supports boys and girls whose families have died of AIDS, supports the cause of maintaining biological and cultural diversity and of protecting the rights of discriminated population groups.

terre des hommes consistently stands up for children’s rights. The project partners, native local initiatives, take care of ill or war wounded children, organise education programmes for children and adolescents and support families in growing food and securing their water supply. Together with its partners, terre des hommes strives for a fairer policy towards developing countries.

In Germany, people in 90 locations are voluntarily involved in achieving the aims of terre des hommes.

Donations account

IBAN DE34 2655 0105 0000 0111 22

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Soyez Vrai – Non Violent סוּיֵז וֵרַאִי – נוֹן וִיוֹלֵנְט सच्चे बनो-हिंसक नहीं। Sii Vero - Non Violento Se Verdadero y no Violento

Juntos contra a violência உண்மையுள்ளவனாய் இரு வன்முறை தவிர்த்து

ander – Ohne Gewalt Soyez Vrai – Non Violent סוּיֵז וֵרַאִי – נוֹן וִיוֹלֵנְט सच्चे बनो-हिंसक नहीं। Sii Vero - Non Violento Se Verdadero y no Violento

Be True - Not violent 폭력을 넘어, 사랑으로... Juntos contra a violência

Juntos contra a violência உண்மையுள்ளவனாய் இரு வன்முறை தவிர்த்து

BE TRUE NOT VIOLENT is a violence prevention programme for children and young people in schools and other social environments. They learn to perceive and express their feelings and to deal with their anger and frustration.

They also learn to empathize with others and to resolve conflicts peacefully and without violence. This strengthens the self-confidence of children and young people and makes them strong for life in today's world.

