



St Ethelburga's  
Centre for Reconciliation and Peace

# YOUTH REFUSING VIOLENCE



## **ABOUT ST ETHELBURGA'S CENTRE FOR RECONCILIATION AND PEACE**

After surviving the Great Fire of London (1666) and the Blitz (1941-3), St Ethelburga's church was devastated by a massive IRA bomb on April 24 1993. The Bishop of London decided, against all odds, that it should be rebuilt in a new form as a Centre for Reconciliation and Peace.

Since opening in 2002, the centre has existed to inspire and equip people to practise reconciliation and peacemaking in their own communities and lives, offering the tools and space to build relationships across divisions of conflict, culture and religion.



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# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Firstly thanks go to all the young people, youthworkers and the resource people who took part – without whom the project could not have happened.

Thank you to Rabbi Jeremy Gordon, Shawinder Singh, Navdeep Singh, Mark Prince, Helen Gilbert and Anam Hoque for sharing their time and wisdom with us. Thanks also to Debbie Young-Somers, Mark Solomon and Alice Sielle for sharing their ideas and offering guidance and Dr Chris Hewer for being an expert advisor to this project.

We are very grateful to Quaker Peace and Social Witness, who gave us the opportunity to start this project and Peace Child International who were gracious partners in allowing the use of their staff time to help with the creation of aspects of the programme.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Many of the activities and games you will find in this resource are both commonly known and widely played and most have had their authorship claimed by many different sources! They are included in here not to imply creative ownership, but simply for ease, to enable groups to have everything they need at their fingertips for running this course.

# **ABOUT THE RESOURCE PACK**

## **WHO IS THIS RESOURCE FOR?**

This resource is written from the perspective of a facilitator. It is designed to help a group leader design a workshop/series of workshops for young people to address the themes within the time period available to them.

Leaders might be:

- from faith groups wishing to get their group exploring the relevance of their faith to the way they deal with conflict and put it into practice.
- peer leaders who would like to explore how to apply the learning in their own faith, and others, to everyday situations.
- youth workers wishing to explore conflict and alternatives to violence with their young people.
- educators wishing to put different faith beliefs into a practical context relevant to young people. While this pack is primarily aimed at groups of one faith, the material can be easily adapted to mixed and non faith groups.

## **HOW TO USE THE RESOURCE?**

1. Read the 'Background Information' section of the handbook which will help you to understand the aim of the YRV project and the various aspects of the resource.
2. Decide which themes you wish to explore with your group and how much time you have to cover them.
3. Read the introduction and aims of those themes.
4. Read the suggested workshop pages, to see how they might fit into your timeframe.
5. Read through the exercises relevant to the themes you have chosen.
6. Watch the corresponding parts of the film on the CD-ROM to see how you might want to incorporate them.
7. After reading the 'Creative Commons' information in the handbook, print out the exercise materials and use them as they are, or tailor them to fit your group.
8. Use the materials together, pausing for discussion and acting where necessary!
9. We'd love to hear your feedback on running the programme and any suggestions you have – do send us an email: [info@stethelburgas.org](mailto:info@stethelburgas.org) with "YRV Resources" as your subject line.

# **WHAT'S FAITH GOT TO DO WITH REFUSING VIOLENCE?**

St Ethelburga's aim in creating the Youth Refusing Violence Project is:

- To offer young people insight into the nature of conflict and violence.
- To help young people relate to and draw from the wisdom that is found in their own and other faiths, which may help them refuse the use of violence as an automatic response to conflict.
- To equip them with realistic alternative methods of dealing with conflict.

## **WHY REFUSE VIOLENCE?**

A key area of St Ethelburga's work is to promote 'refusing violence'. We recognize that in every situation of conflict, we are presented with choices, some of them violent but many of them not violent. We aim to equip people with the knowledge and skills to choose an approach which does not involve violence.

This is because we understand that violence is a self-perpetuating cycle, and to liberate people from violence involves finding alternatives and looking for real solutions which address the underlying reasons for a conflict.

In this course, young people are able to discuss this for themselves, learning about the nature of conflict as a potentially creative opportunity rather than a win or lose situation. They will be able to find out and discuss how effective violence is as a long-term solution and evaluate the alternatives.

By understanding that conflict is about more than winning and losing, and that violence has many more faces than just the physical, young people are more able to make choices which result in positive outcomes for themselves and their community, benefitting a whole variety of people.

## **WHY FAITH?**

Alternatives require a different kind of strength to violence, and one of the key messages of all religion is about developing an inner strength and relationship with something larger than ourselves. Faith can guide us into taking positive action, based on what we learn from our faith tradition, values and wisdom.

Some of the greatest peacemakers of history show us how important faith can be in refusing violence, people such as Martin Luther King, Gandhi and Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi, all of who are from different religious traditions but were able to refuse violence by drawing on the strength and wisdom of their faith.

# **THEMES**

The handbook and DVD are designed to enable groups to explore three distinct themes. It is not intended to be a prescriptive and set course, but rather a 'menu' of options from which groups can choose those most appropriate for their own needs. The activities are designed to be flexible and fit within the timescale available, enabling groups to explore the themes over a few weeks or just a few hours.

## **THEME ONE: REFUSING VIOLENCE**

The aim is to:

- explore the variety of types of violence and broaden young people's understanding of what violence is.
- find out the 3 ways of responding to violence
- understand that in every situation there is a choice to be made which does not need to be violent.

## **THEME TWO: WISDOM IN FAITHS**

The aim is to:

- create space to think about how faith might relate to different types of violence.
- meet or research someone of faith and discuss how that particular faith offers wisdom about how to deal with conflict and violence.
- think about the guidance offered by the group's own faith to deal with conflict and how it relates to them.

## **THEME THREE: FAITH INTO PRACTICE**

The aim is to:

- create space to put what has been talked about into practice.
- develop and practice practical skills for dealing with conflict and refusing violence.
- make space to discuss whether the project has changed young peoples perceptions of the relevance of faith to violence.

# **SUGGESTED WORKSHOP PLANS**

## **VERY SHORT**

Time available: 1 ½ to 2 hours

Suggested themes covered: Refusing Violence

Suggested workshop plan:

- Stop/Go
- What is conflict?
- Violence Spectrum
- Violence Grid OR violence triangle
- Violence mapping (if time allows)
- 3 Ways

## **A MORNING OR AN AFTERNOON SESSION**

Time available: 3 hours

Suggested themes: Refusing Violence, Wisdom in Faiths

Suggested workshop plan:

- As above in 'very short'
- Creating a group agreement
- Resource Person Q & A

## **DAY WORKSHOP**

Time available: 6 hours

Suggested themes: all

Suggested workshop plan:

- Stop/Go
- What is conflict
- Violence Spectrum
- Violence Grid
- 3 Ways
- Resource Person Q&A

OR work with material from the groups' faith tradition

OR work with variety of case studies

- Act and Discuss



## **5 WEEK PROJECT**

Time available: up to 5 sessions of about 1 ½ hours

Suggested themes: all

Suggested workshop plan:

- Session 1: Same as 'very short' workshop (above)
- Session 2: Forum Theatre Step 1  
Resource person Q&A
- Session 3: Insights from faith (either one as a whole group or all in small groups)  
Forum Theatre step 2 (i.e. sharing experiences of conflict in order to think about ones they might want to work with)
- Session 4: Case Studies (discuss in small groups and then share learning as a whole).  
Forum Theatre step 3
- Session 5: Finalise theatre pieces  
Forum Theatre step 4 - perform to each other to practice interventions and improvising responses.
- Session 6: Perform and forum to an invited audience.  
(This may be a shorter session, of around 45 minutes to 1 hour)

**THEME ONE:**  
**WHAT IS REFUSING VIOLENCE?**

‘actually, I don’t want  
or need to use violence  
in this situation’



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# **THEME ONE: WHAT IS REFUSING VIOLENCE?**

## **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'REFUSING VIOLENCE'?**

We mean having the knowledge, skills and strength to say 'actually, I don't want or need to use violence in this situation'.

To do this we need to understand what violence looks like in all its forms and to be equipped, within ourselves, to deal with it and make the right choices.

## **WHY DO WE WANT TO REFUSE VIOLENCE?**

If you look carefully at patterns of violence, you can see that combating violence (in whatever form it comes) with further violence, at best, perpetuates a cycle of more violence. By refusing violence and finding alternatives, this cycle is broken and the consequences of the situation are changed.

In order to understand how to refuse violence, it is also important to make sure we know what we mean by the words 'conflict' and 'violence', and the difference between the two. This section has three parts; 'Conflict', 'Violence' and 'Refusing Violence', with respective activities for each.

We recommend that you include near the start of any workshop the 'What is Conflict' activity as this really helps the group to understand that in situations of conflict there are always choices to be made which do not need to be violent and that conflict does not have to be a violent occurrence.



# **USING THE FILM CLIPS**

There are two sections here; the first shows some of the activities you can use to look at violence and the second is made up of stories shared by members of some of our groups.

## **ACTIVITY CLIPS**

These two clips are to help you plan your workshop. It may help you to see how we ran some these activities as they involve sticking things to a board. However, you may be also be able to use them in a variety of ways.

## **REAL STORY CLIPS**

These clips show some of our groups sharing stories about violence they have encountered. You can use these to start a discussion with your own group, showing them one or two before encouraging them to share their own.

### JEWISH STORY

This story is about a protest involving Ultra Orthodox Jews intimidating people who they feel are not upholding Jewish law sufficiently.

Ask the group:

- What kinds of violence can you see here?
- How could the group have dealt with this violence?
- Discuss whether it is ever appropriate for one group to force their views on others. How could the protestors have presented their views in a non violent way?

### MUSLIM STORY

This relates to the referendum passed in Switzerland, where the population decided that they did not want to allow mosques to build minarets, which are the tall towers that are a feature of Islamic buildings.

Points for discussion might be:

- What kinds of violence can you identify in Alima's story?
- What do you think motivated the Swiss people to vote against the building of minarets? How could these reasons be counteracted?
- What can we do in our own communities to prevent fear of the unknown leading to violence?

# **WHAT IS CONFLICT?**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

To get the group thinking about the nature of conflict. To understand that it is not, in itself, a negative thing, but can be a constructive process if handled properly.

## **PREPARATION**

You will need pieces of scrap paper for groups to write on, and a board for you to write on.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

15 minutes.

Split everyone into groups of 4 and give them a piece of scrap paper. Tell them that they have 5 minutes to write down as many words as they can think of to do with conflict.

Once they have done this, bring everyone back together. Draw a line down the middle of the board. Get them to feed back some of the words they wrote. Write the negative words on one side, and the positive, or neutral words on the other, but don't tell the group what the categories are.

When you have a nice full board, ask the group what they think the two categories are. Once they have got the idea, point out that while conflict can cause a lot of the negative things, there are a lot of positive things which come out of conflict as well.

Ask whether they think that conflict – as in a difference of opinion about something – is in itself a bad thing? What would happen if no one ever had a conflict? Do we need conflict? They should pick up that conflict is an inevitable human condition, in fact we need conflict for change to happen. Therefore our aim should not be to eliminate it; it is HOW we deal with conflict which is the important thing. Dealing with conflict violently is more often than not, a way to continue a conflict, rather than to end it. Ending a conflict nonviolently involves a lot more skill and determination.

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:**

Ask the whole group to decide on just 5 words, from all of their suggestions, which describe 'conflict'. This should involve negotiation between the groups and discussion about which words are most suitable. Hurry the groups to make their decision. When they decide on a word, write it on the board.

The idea is that this discussion becomes in itself a small conflict between the different parties.

# **STOP-GO**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

This is a great warm up to start the group thinking about conflict and the choices they make on a daily basis.

It can also be something you come back to and the group can get better at. Practicing the process of putting in some thought between being told to do something (or being about to do something) and actually doing it is a great discipline to help deal positively with conflict and refuse violence.

## **PREPARATION**

You must be in a sufficiently empty and spacious area for everyone to move around without bumping into each other. You may wish to think of some other instructions which you can add in, as young people normally pick it up very quickly, making it hard to catch them out!

## **TIME REQUIRED**

15 minutes.

Everyone walks around the room trying to fill the spaces until you shout out an instruction.

Start with the following:

- "When I say Stop I want you to go"
- "When I say Go I want you to stop"

As they get used to it, add in:

- "When I say smile, frown"
- "When I say frown, smile"
  
- "When I say Hop, Duck"
- "When I say Duck, Hop"
  
- "When I say Jump, Say Your Name Out Loud"
- "When I say 'Say Your Name', Jump"

(You can, if appropriate, bring a competitive element to the game by getting anyone making a mistake to sit out. They can then help watch for others making mistakes until you have a winner)

Bring them back together. Ask them how it felt? Was it confusing? Was it hard? What was it like having to think about an influence before acting on it? Were they influenced by what people around them did?

# 3 WAYS

## EXERCISE SUMMARY

The aim of this exercise is to encourage young people to think about the 3 possible ways in which situations of any kind of violence can be responded to: Violent response; not violent response and no response. By discussing positives and negatives of each response option, young people's concerns about refusing violence are brought to the fore and the effectiveness of other, more commonly known responses, are examined.

## PREPARATION

You may wish to print out the examples young people have suggested of positives and negatives given below, to act as prompts if necessary.

## TIME REQUIRED

Discussion based – 20 minutes. Activity based – 40 minutes.

## UNDERSTANDING THE 3 WAYS

See DVD ROM for a demonstration of how this might be done.

Write on the board the numbers 1,2 and 3. Tell the group that there are three ways in which we can respond to conflict. Ask them to suggest what they might be. They are 'Violently', 'Not-violently' and 'No response' (which might also be suggested as 'fight' and 'flight'). In pairs ask them to think of a positive and a negative for a violent response, non violent response and for no response. When they have done this ask the groups to share their idea, writing them down underneath each one.

E.g. For a violent response a suggestion of negative might be that people get hurt and a positive might be that you get revenge. Explore examples further asking what's might happen next. In this case someone may suggest a further cycle of violence. For each suggestion ask prompting questions like 'is getting revenge necessarily a positive?'

This can lead onto the following drama activity.

## DRAMA ACTIVITY:

The group will need a short (no more than 3 or 4 minutes) scenario of violence which they can all relate to and care about. This could be chosen from something which came up in the Sharing Circle if you have done the Violence Grid (get permission from the young person first), a film clip (Kidulthood/Adulthood provide many possibilities) or an incident the young people have already created through drama. The only criteria for the chosen incident is that it offers the possibility of one of the characters or a bystander(s) to choose between all three responses. In other words, a scenario where somebody kills themselves is not appropriate because no response can be offered.

Some possible scenarios which offer opportunities for people to intervene might be:

- Sees someone is about to stab somebody else.
- Overhears a group of girls gossiping about something.
- Sees on TV that the G8 are ignoring environmental issues in their current summit.



- Grow up with their friends on an estate and is there when they are all “invited” to join a gang.
- Reads a scaremongering headline that “Refugees are taking all our benefits”.
- Catches a glimpse of suspicious looking scars on a friend’s arm when they know that friend has been feeling really down since their parents split up.
- Is pretty sure that a teammate deliberately kicked the opposition during a football game tackle.

In groups, ask for them to act out their scenarios and prepare three responses by the bystander/character who is in a position to change the outcome. These should be a violent response, a non violent response and no response.

Get the groups to show each other their role plays with the three different responses. Ask the audience questions like:

- How effective was that response at dealing with the situation?
- Were there/what were the good things about that response?
- Were there/what were the bad things about that response?
- Which one would you choose yourself and why?

# **VIOLENCE SPECTRUM**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

This well known exercise introduces the topic of violence by laying out a number of different scenarios and enabling young people to 'vote with their feet' as to whether they think it is a violent or non violent action. It encourages the group to critically consider the nature of violence and opens up space for a broader understanding to be explored. It allows young people to consider others opinion and see if it influences their own and lays the path for them to consider the types of violence within their own experience. This exercise leads on well to 'mapping' and to the 'violence grid'.

## **PREPARATION**

We recommend that you read the descriptions of different types on violence in the exercise 'Violence Grid' (page # 20) before running this exercise so that you are familiar with the different types of violence and may be able to draw some of them out of this activity.

If you're not using/adapting the list given here, prepare a list of scenarios which include the following areas of violence: personal, interpersonal, social, emotional, physical and structural. Ensure they are situations relevant to your group of young people; using the same situation twice but slightly altering the details is often a very effective way of drawing out opinion. You need sufficient space to move around in and it can be helpful to have a sign at either end saying 'Violent' and 'Not violent'.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

Minimum 20 minutes.

Explain to the young people that you are going to call out a series of statements and they have to decide whether or not they think what you describe is violent or not violent. Draw an imaginary line down the middle of the room and nominate one end as being "violent" and the other "not violent" (you may wish to stick up visual reminders) – remind them it's a sliding scale and they can stand in the middle also.

Read out one scenario at a time and then the young people position themselves on the imaginary line. Select a couple of young people at random and ask them to explain why they stood where they did. Once they have finished, ask the young people if any of them would now like to move based on what they have heard – if any do, ask them why.

Repeat with all scenarios. You may well find that other situations seem to arise, or that after only a few scenarios the group has been naturally led into a discussion and you wish to leave the exercise there.

A variation is to add in another imaginary line at right angles to the first line (a "y" axis), one end of which stands for the action being justified, the other if the action is not justified. Participants must now place themselves relevant to both scales. This often reveals a great deal about where priorities might shift and opinions change.

## VIOLENCE SPECTRUM SAMPLE STATEMENTS

- Your 4 year old sister steals a toy from another child. The other child hits your sister. This shows that all humans are born violent and we can't help it. Are we born violent or not violent?
- "Somebody" shouts out while the teacher's back is turned in your English lesson. The teacher keeps the whole class late after school as punishment because nobody owns up to it. Is the teacher's action violent or not violent?
- Mari smacks her daughter who is being cheeky. Is her action violent or not violent?
- Jamaal has grown up in East London all his life and likes his school and his neighbourhood. His Mum has always warned him to keep away from the 'bad boys' who get into trouble and get into fights about where they live. One day though, he gets caught up in a fight and although he's not hurt he's very badly shaken up. After that he starts to notice that he's getting more and more hassle from some of the older lads until one of them turns around and tells him he should join the local gang and they'll protect him from the others. Scared he might get caught up in even worse fights without mates to protect him, he joins. Is the fact that Jamaal felt like he had to join a gang to stay safe violent or not violent?

*NB for leader: this is a form of structural violence. In other areas, there might be effective policing, activity provision for young people, more stable homes etc. However, the 'norms' of the area and society allowed troubles in this neighbourhood to continue and therefore inflicted a form of violence upon Jamaal in that he felt he had to join a gang in order to stay safe.*

- An advert for a famous cleaning brand goes up on a poster outside of your estate – it works by making it seem as if men are stupid but the product is so easy to use that even men can manage. Is this advert violent or not violent?
- Mariam spray paints "this is sexist" over the poster. Are her actions violent or not violent?
- Navdeep sees a man across the road repeatedly slapping a woman who appears to be his girlfriend. Scared what might happen if he gets involved, he hovers around, not sure what to do. Eventually the man and his girlfriend walk away. Was Navdeep's inaction violent or not violent?
- Serena has always struggled with her weight because of all the skinny models and celebrities she sees every day. To make matters worse, she sees that it's only her slim friends who the boys go out with – never her. Is what Serena is experiencing violent or not violent?
- Serena becomes so upset about her weight that she finds she can never stop criticising herself. When she looks in the mirror, when she gets dressed, when she's with her friends she finds she can't get rid of her voice in her head telling herself that she's rubbish, ugly, doesn't deserve anything. Are Serena's actions to herself violent or not violent?
- Serena becomes so miserable that she starts cutting herself. Is this violent or not violent?

# **VIOLENCE GRID**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

Helps to explain in a very visual way, some of the different types of violence.

## **PREPARATION**

You will need a large board or wall and some blu-tak. You will need to print out all the words and pictures and arrange them in the grid as demonstrated below. You will also need plenty of post it notes!

## **TIME REQUIRED**

30 minutes

## **STAGE ONE – UNDERSTANDING THE GRID**

Explain that there are lots of different types of violence, and what we have here is a model to help us try and understand them. Take the group through the meaning of the words 'emotional', 'physical' and 'structural' and then 'personal', 'inter-personal' and 'social'. Explain some of the examples on the cards below to demonstrate how things can fit onto the grid. Make it clear however, that some may fit into more than one category.

## **STAGE TWO – APPLYING OUR EXPERIENCE**

Introduce a structured discussion with your whole group. Get everyone to sit in a circle and emphasise that people should only share things they feel comfortable sharing and remind everyone that this is a confidential space, and people should not take anything that's been said outside to tell others (see notes on page #35 about creating a safe space).

Go around the circle asking each person to share a true story of when they have either witnessed an incident of violence or been part of one. Encourage them to think about the different types of violence here. When they have told their story, ask the group where on the grid they think that story lies. You could write them on post-it notes and physically stick them on the grid.

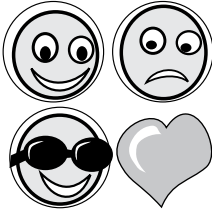
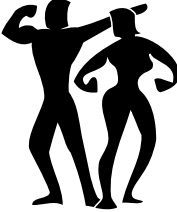

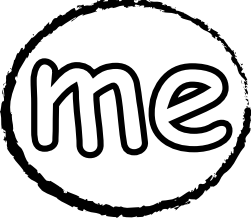

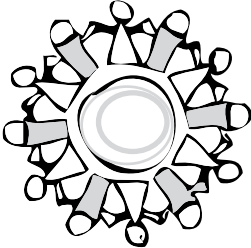
Go around again and this time ask whether, considering the different types of violence, anyone has done anything they consider to be violent, which fits onto the grid somewhere. Its sensible to emphasise again that people should make sure they feel comfortable sharing their story before they start.

Again, after each example ask the group where this example might go on the chart.

Debrief the group about the exercise, asking what they learnt and how they felt about sharing those stories. What was it like to be listened to in the circle? Does thinking about violence in this way change anything? Do they see any of the types as particularly 'worse' than other types of violence?

**The pictures and titles for this activity can be found and printed from the DVD Rom.**

This is how the chart should look when it is set up:

	EMOTIONAL	PHYSICAL	STRUCTURAL
	 <p>Heart</p>	 <p>Body</p>	 <p>The Way The World Is Organised</p>
<p><b>PERSONAL</b></p>  <p>You</p>			
<p><b>INTERPERSONAL</b></p>  <p>Between People</p>			
<p><b>SOCIAL</b></p>  <p>Done By or Affecting Lots of People</p>			

## EXAMPLE STATEMENTS:

	<b>EMOTIONAL</b>	<b>PHYSICAL</b>	<b>STRUCTURAL</b>
<b>PERSONAL</b>	Constantly telling yourself you're rubbish at everything.	Self harm	People hiding the fact that they are gay because they are afraid how others will react.
<b>INTER-PERSONAL</b>	Other people constantly telling someone they're rubbish at everything.	Mugging; punching; raping.	A group of teenagers are often stopped by the police. Overall, the black teenagers end up being searched far more times than their white friends.
<b>SOCIAL</b>	Low self esteem amongst asylum seekers because of the way they are treated by the authorities and the media.	Violence against the earth; genocide.	Globalisation of Western values destroying many cultures around the world.

# VIOLENCE TRIANGLE

## EXERCISE SUMMARY

Helps to explain different types of violence for a more advanced group.

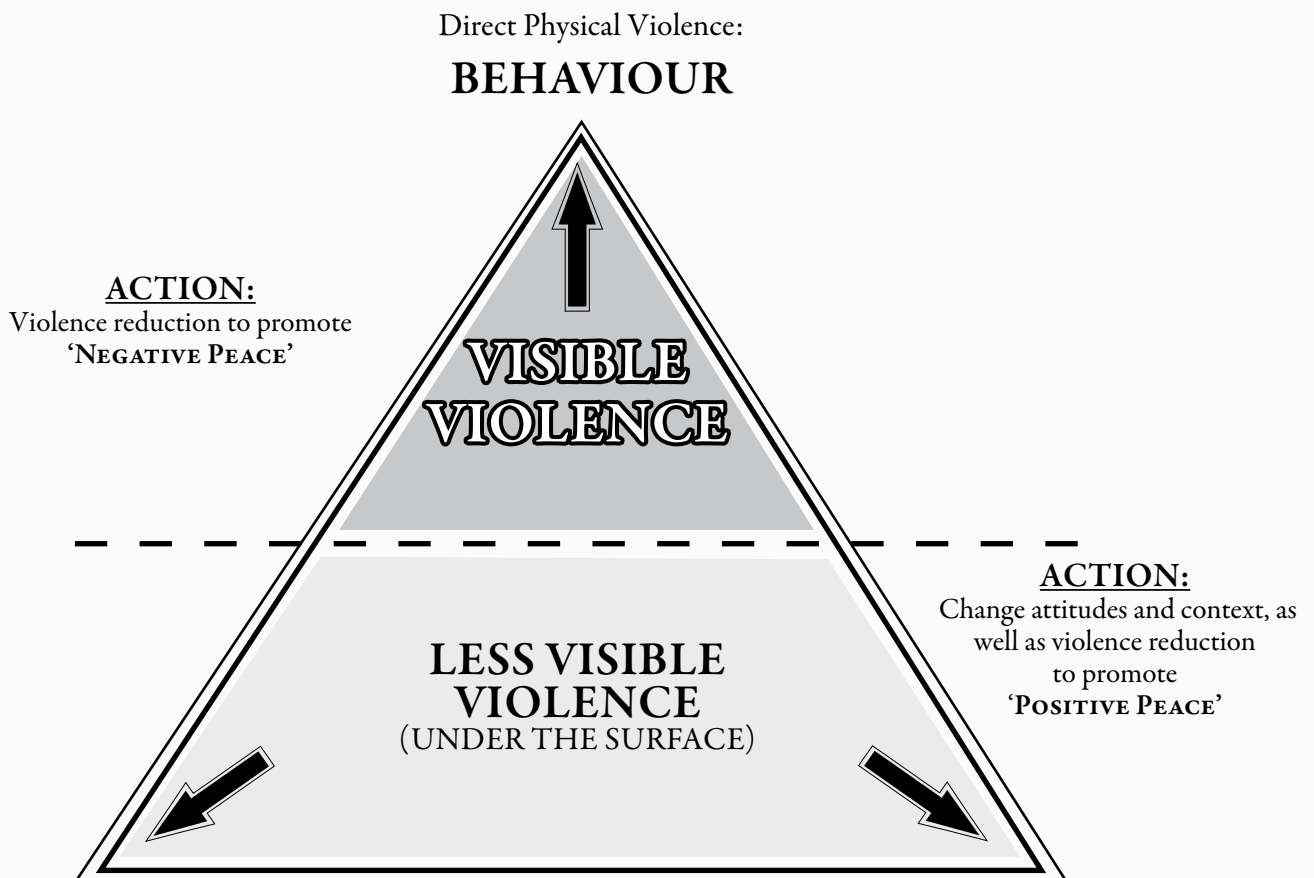
## PREPARATION

Draw the diagram below on a board or flip-chart so it can be seen clearly

## TIME REQUIRED

10 minutes to explain

Explain the diagram to the group:



### Sources of Violence: **ATTITUDES, FEELINGS, VALUES**

- Hatred, fear, mistrust
- Racism and sexism
- Intolerance

### Structural or Institutional Violence: **CONTEXT, SYSTEMS, STRUCTURES**

- Discrimination (e.g. education, employment, healthcare)
- Globalisation of economies
- Denial of Rights
- Segregation

**BEHAVIOUR:**

This is what we see as physical violence which can be inflicted on oneself, between people or to large groups of people.

**VIOLENCE AS CONTEXT OR STRUCTURE:**

In recent years our understanding of violence has grown to include less obvious forms, which can be equally damaging and often more difficult to confront.

For example, killing someone with a gun is obvious physical violence, but can we make much distinction between that and killing someone through lack of food and other essentials to life? In each example, one party inflicts suffering on another. This can be deliberate, but also occur when one group does not take into account the needs of another. There are many systems and structures which operate like this. For example many see international financial systems as violent structures where one group of nations impose deliberate suffering on another for their own financial gain.

**ATTITUDES AND VALUES IN RELATION TO VIOLENCE**

These make up a deeper layer to our understanding of violence relating to less visible mental processes: the feeling, attitudes and values that people have which affect their behaviour. These are not violent in themselves but can easily become the sources of violence, or at least allow violence to happen.

Follow this explanation with the activity '**VIOLENCE MAPPING**' and ask the group to identify these different types of violence on their maps.



# VIOLENCE MAPPING

## EXERCISE SUMMARY

By asking the group to draw maps of their area and identify different types of violence which happen there, young people can start to relate what they have learned about violence to real places and situations.

## PREPARATION

You will need pieces of paper and pens for all the group

## TIME REQUIRED

30 minutes

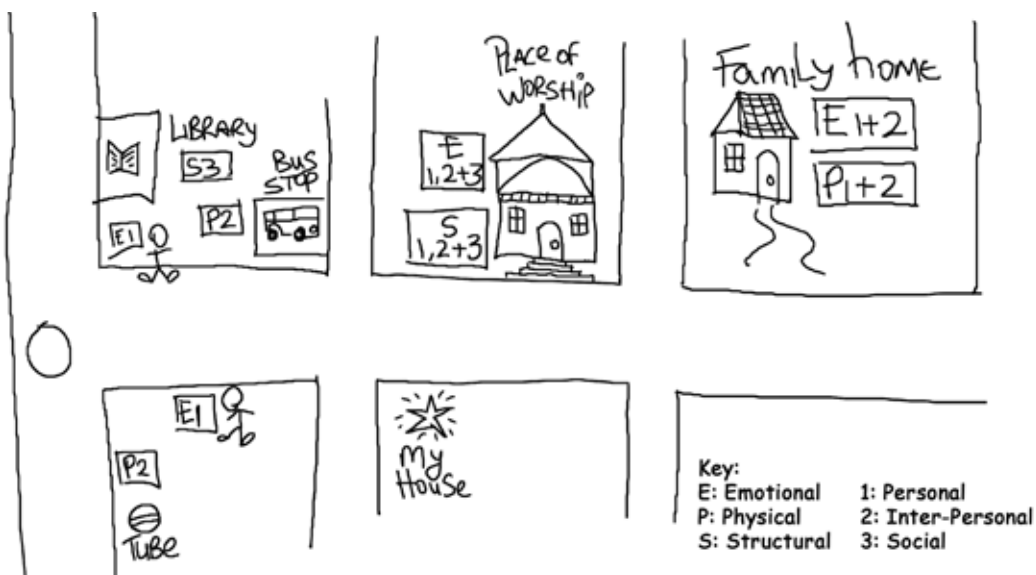
Arrange everyone into pairs or small groups. If there are a few people from the same area they might want to work on one map together. If there are people from different areas, put them in pairs to chat with their partner about what they are each drawing.

Tell the group that they are going to draw a map of the area they live in, near their house. They must, based on the violence grid or violence triangle activity, mark on this map places where different types of violence are found. Give them at least 10 minutes to do this.

Get everyone's attention back to the wider group, and ask the different groups to take us through their map, pointing out where violence happens and what kind it is.

## ASK QUESTIONS LIKE:

- Why do you think that kind of violence happens in that particular area?
- Does it involve particular groups eg. Men, women, young people, elderly people, minority groups?
- How do you feel about going to those areas?



**EXAMPLE:** Violence map drawn by one of our participants, drawing on the categories of violence explored in the "Violence Grid" activity.

# **CENTERING**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

The aim of this exercise is to think about how we react, physically, to situations of violence and conflict and what we need to do in order to respond in the most positive way. It introduces the idea of being centered and aware of our feelings and surroundings.

## **PREPARATION**

You might want to have a flip chart and pen ready to write down some of the group's suggestions so that they learn visually as well.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

About 15 minutes

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Start with everyone sitting down and ask them, what happens to your body when you encounter a conflict? Answers should be things like 'you feel tense', 'your heart beats faster', 'adrenaline pumps around your body' and 'tunnel vision'. If these aren't mentioned, bring them up, and write them down on your board/flipchart.

Explain that we're going to explore ways of controlling these physical reactions.

## **GAME:**

Get the group organized into pairs, labeling themselves number 1 and number 2. Ask them to stand opposite each other in two lines down the room, with 1s on one side and 2s on the other.

Tell them that number 1s should put their hands out in front of them, at about shoulder height, palms facing their partner.

Tell them that when you say, and ONLY when you say, number 2s will have ONE attempt to push firmly against number 1s hands with their own palms and try to off-balance them. Emphasize that they get one try only. Give them a countdown; three, two, one... and push. Make sure no one is trying to keep going!

Ask number 1s how many of them managed to keep their balance. Then do the exercise again so that number 2s put their hands up and number 1s try to off-balance them.

If there were any members of the group who managed to remain balanced, ask them to demonstrate how they did it with their partner. Hopefully they will have done it by remaining flexible and letting their arms go floppy so that they didn't fall over (if this wasn't the case, and they were just really strong, move on and see if anyone else did it the other way!). If no one managed, get a partner and demonstrate, letting them do the pushing and you let your arms be loose so that when they push you, only your arms fall backwards and not your whole bodyweight.

Explain that this is a good demonstration of how to handle conflict. That when adrenaline is pumping around your body it is easy to be very tense, allowing you to become easily 'off-balanced' from taking positive action. You need to be flexible, to move with the other person and not be rigid; otherwise you will not be able to deal with the situation constructively. The way to be able to do

this is by being centered, and allowing yourself an opportunity to think about how you are feeling and control your reactions.

So what does it mean to 'be centered'? Remind the group that one of the body's responses to conflict is 'tunnel vision'. Ask if anyone knows what that is... its when all our attention focuses on the other person/situation and we become unaware of everything else, our surrounding and our own feelings. By bringing our attention back into ourselves, back onto our bodies and our feelings, we break the tunnel vision and are able to think more rationally about the situation and how to handle it. To break this, to center ourselves, we need to do the following.

### **PRACTICING CENTERING:**

Ask the group to stand in a circle. Tell them to put their hands on their stomachs, take a deep breath in... and out. Tell them to think about their belly button! Tell them to think about how it feels under their clothes. By bringing attention to your belly button you are bringing your attention back to yourself.

Ask the group to move around the room, at variable speeds (very slow, medium, very fast) and when you shout stop, they must stop and center themselves before moving on. You could choose to shout stop in a very loud, aggressive manner, just to show how it feels to centre themselves when something unnerving has happened.

### **TAKING IT FURTHER:**

Explain that often an inner strength and calm is helped by a belief in something bigger than ourselves and this can lead onto looking at the case studies in Theme 2, of people of faith who were able to stay strong in situations of conflict and violence. What enables them to be so good at centering themselves?

# **I' STATEMENTS**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

The aim of this exercise is to practice using 'I' Statements which are carefully constructed sentences which help to resolve a conflict nonviolently.

## **PREPARATION**

Print and cut out the situation cards so that you have one between two.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

30 minutes

Put the group into pairs and ask hand each pair a situation card. Ask them to each take on the role of one of the characters and think about how they would respond to this situation in a real life encounter. Invite the pairs to either act out the situation and how they would deal with it, or discuss what they would probably say and do.

After each example, ask the group how well they think the antagonist would respond to the confrontation. If there are some constructive ones, ask the group why they think that might work and pick out any of the reasons which relate to I statements.

## **NOW EXPLAIN ABOUT 'I' STATEMENTS:**

If you use 'you' statements, people get defensive as they feel that they are under attack and are therefore less likely to want to help resolve the situation. If you take responsibility for your own feelings, they cannot argue with these.

A good I statement has three parts:

1. "When..." and state the behavior or situation which is the problem. Its VERY IMPORTANT that it is a fact and not a generalization, exaggeration or interpretation of the situation.
2. "I feel..." and state how you feel about this. Be honest and don't play down your emotions. No one can argue that you don't feel something.
3. "I would like..." and a suggestion of an alternative behavior/outcome, which may involve you both working at the situation.

For example "When we arrange a meeting and you are half an hour late, I feel disrespected and as if my time is not important. I would like it if you could let me know if you are late so that I can make the best use of my time"

Get the pairs to practice constructing their own 'I' statements by using them to resolve the situation on their cards. Get them to swap roles so everyone has a chance to try. Make sure you pick up on any 'you statements' or sentences laying blame.

Tell the group that good 'I statements' take practice for them to sound natural and so might take some time to perfect. But keep persisting and they are one of the most useful tools you have in a conflict.

## SITUATION CARDS

One night you and your friends arrive back at your house later than you had told your parents. They get very angry and tell you off in front of all your friends who have come round to stay. How would you feel? How would you tell your parents not to do this again in future?

A teacher tells you off for getting poor grades and compares you to your older sister who got much better grades in the subject than you. How does this feel and how might you approach the teacher about it?

A friend of yours regularly uses homophobic language when messing around and insulting people, which you disagree with. How would you try to stop this?

Your brother carries a knife for 'protection' when you go out at night time but this makes you very uneasy. What would you say to him?

# **SILENT DISCUSSION**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

A method to encourage all members of a group to respond to a series of questions and statements related to a topic. Excellent for discussion of a potentially controversial, difficult or embarrassing topic as it enables a dialogue where participants can anonymously express their feelings without feeling inhibited. This will enable any preconceptions to be exposed and challenged.

The silence gives space to think. The method allows the group to 'hear' the voices of those who are generally quieter in conversation. The format is readily accessible to young people as it follows a similar style to online communication methods like blogging, Instant Messaging and "tweeting". Participants must be comfortably expressing themselves through writing.

## **PREPARATION**

Depending on the size of the group, prepare 4 – 8 statements, questions or direct quotes relating to your theme at the top of a flipchart sheet. Ensure there are a sufficient number to prevent the group crowding around too few headers. The questions need to allow/provoke discussion, not simple "I agree/disagree" answers. Space the sheets out around the room. You will need 2 or 3 different coloured post it notes.

## **EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS MIGHT BE:**

- "Violence is part of human nature and so wars and violent conflicts will always happen"
- "If someone using physical violence against me, trying to be non-violent with them is pointless"
- "Refusing violence takes more courage than using violence".
- Who is responsible for preventing violence in our community? (Remembering all the different types of violence).

## **TIME REQUIRED**

30 minutes to 1 hour.

Participants move SILENTLY around the room, choosing three or four of the questions to respond to with the first colour of their post-it notes. They write their responses SILENTLY. Encourage the participants to explain WHY they feel the particular way they do. Can they think of examples, anecdotes, exceptions? Be prepared for contentious comments. This part lasts for 10 minutes.

Participants go around the room SILENTLY again, reading the first responses to the questions. Give them each the second colour of post-it notes and ask them to silently counter-respond, in writing, to two or three of them, sticking their responses next to the original comment. (Emphasise that they can counter-respond to any of the topics and responses, not necessarily the ones they commented on first). Encourage participants to address the challenges of statements they disagree with. This part should last no less than 15 minutes. You may wish to extend this section to allow for further responses to counter-responses, so that 'chains' of 4 or 5 post-it notes are built up.

Split everyone into smaller groups (you need the same amount of groups as there are questions). Give each group one of the flipchart pieces; they need to read all the comments and in their identify the main thread of that paper, ready to feed it back to the rest of the group.

Get each group to nominate a spokesperson to feed back what they have read them to present their summary. Emphasise that you are interested in hearing what is ON the paper - not their own reaction or interpretation. Also make it clear that this is not a place for those who wrote the comments to 'own' them.

A wider group discussion will now very naturally follow on from each groups summary, with the issues identified and everyone having contributed.

## **THEME TWO:** **WISDOM IN FAITHS**

**Creating a safe space is essential to ensure that young people feel able to share and discuss matters openly.**





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# **THEME TWO: WISDOM IN FAITHS**

This section includes the model we used to explore the wisdom within a particular faith, as well as some of the ideas about refusing violence we encountered from the 4 different faiths we worked with. We also offer a guide to creating safe space for your group to feel comfortable sharing with each other.

Through the process of developing this resource we worked with representatives of the Christian, Muslim, Sikh and Jewish traditions. This includes both young people, and in each case a 'resource person' who was a member of their faith community who would be able to answer questions about violence, their religious teachings and then join in a discussion with the group on the topic.

These 4 examples are obviously a very tiny selection of the faiths represented in London, but the hope is that our exploratory workshops with them will provide a model and some useful ideas for exploring other faiths too.

If your group is from one of these 4 faith traditions, we hope that the resources will be useful in exploring your group's feelings about their faith based response to violence.

If your group is from a different tradition which has not been addressed here, or is an atheist or mixed faith group, we hope that you might look at all the examples given and get the group to discern what they might draw from the teachings of other faiths, which is relevant in their own lives.

If you wanted to run this course without having to arrange an outside 'resource person', we have also included a section on teachings and case studies from each of those 4 faiths we worked with.

Each of the faith sections include activities and questions for discussion which can be used in any of the above groups. In each example young people should be able to identify means by which they can refuse violence, leading onto Theme 3 and activities exploring how they might put this learning into practice.

## **FILM CLIPS**

On the DVD-ROM you can see some of the learning which came out of three of our faith workshops, including questions asked by participants, answers from resource people and general discussion about the groups' own ideas around the wisdom in their own faiths which can help them to refuse violence in their lives.



# **USING THE FILM CLIPS**

These are a selection of film clips from our different groups. You may want to watch these to see what kind of questions might be asked and the format of the discussion, or you can use them as a stimulus for discussion with your group.

## **CHRISTIAN CLIP**

This clip shows Mark Prince, the father of murdered teenager Kyan, meeting the group and answering one of their questions which is ‘when you lost your son how did you overcome your doubts [in God]?’

Some questions for further discussion might be:

- How would you expect someone in Mark’s position to behave towards the killers of his son?
- What is it that made him able to hold back and control himself when he saw his son’s murderers? Where does that strength come from and how do you think you can nurture it?
- What are the costs and benefits of forgiveness?

## **SIKH CLIP**

Shawinder explains the significance of the kirpan in terms of being “the protector and the destroyer”.

Some questions to consider might be:

- What do you understand to be the effect of carrying the kirpan on a Sikh?
- Do you think that carrying something around to remind you of your values and God’s guidance, would be helpful to you personally? Do you do this already in some way?

## **MUSLIM CLIP**

Our Muslim group have a discussion between themselves about the teachings in Islam they know of which can help them refuse violence.

- How does anger effect a conflict situation?
- Can you think of an example of a time you used violence because you were angry?
- Do you know whether your faith has any advice about how to deal with anger? (You might like to link this with the story of the Prophet at Ta’if on page #43).

# **CREATING A GROUP AGREEMENT**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

Creating a safe space is essential to ensure that young people feel able to share and discuss matters openly. Creating a group agreement is a helpful way of ensuring this; and displaying it as a visual reminder throughout the activity means the agreed 'rules' can be referred to if necessary. As the group create their own agreement, they feel ownership over each part of it and are therefore more likely to adhere to it.

This is a really important thing to do before asking a group to share any personal experiences, as they will be more willing to do so if they feel the space is safe.

## **PREPARATION**

Split young people into smaller groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a piece of flip chart paper and a pen. Make sure there is sufficient space for each small group to work separately.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

10-15 minutes

Invite each group to think about what kind of guidelines might help them create a secure, trusting and safe group environment that they would feel comfortable in. Encourage them to draw or write down 5 things on their piece of paper. When each group has at least 5, gather the group into a circle.

Get each group to nominate a spokesperson and ask them to read out all their ideas. The whole group should then discuss each one and decide whether they would like to include it in their group agreement. If yes, then the nominated person draws or writes it on a new sheet of flipchart.

Once that group has finished, the next group reads out their ideas – not reading any that have already been mentioned. This process continues for each group until every idea has been discussed and either included or discarded. Invite everyone to sign the group agreement.

Display the agreement prominently throughout the activities, and refer to it where necessary.

# **Q & A DISCUSSION WITH A RESOURCE PERSON**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

This is a simple but thorough way to help the group explore what their faith has to say about refusing violence and how this fits with their personal opinions.

## **PREPARATION**

You will need to find a member of the relevant faith of the group, with an active interest in peace issues to come and help. It could be a religious leader (see our Sikh group) or a role model in the community, known for their strength of faith (see our Christian example of Mark Prince).

## **TIME REQUIRED**

In two parts.

Part One: 20 minutes

Part Two: 1 hour

1 hour 20 overall, but the two parts do not necessarily need to run on from each other.

## **PART ONE: CREATING QUESTIONS**

Put the group into pairs or groups of three and ask them to come up with a short list of well thought out questions to find out what your visitor thinks about their faith, non-violence and the connections between the two. Encourage them to think of both general questions (eg. What does the Koran say about dealing with violence?) and more personal ones (eg. Could you tell us about an experience where your faith helped you deal with a violent situation?) Allow them to ask questions which may seem unrelated, if appropriate (for example 'what is your favorite ice cream flavour?'), as a few of these can be helpful at the start to break the ice and to get to know their visitor.

Explain to the group the difference between closed questions (which only leave room for a yes/no answer or a piece of information) and open questions (which encourage the person answering to reflect on their experience and give a more complex response).

## **PART TWO: ASKING QUESTIONS AND GROUP DISCUSSION**

Gather the group in a circle with your visitor and start with some introductions if they do not know each other. Perhaps this might be a quick name game.

If you have made a group contract, go over the ground rules you set, as this activity will involve discussion and therefore everyone needs to look out for each other and treat one another with respect.

Introduce your visitor more formally and explain what you are going to do – ie. we are going to have a question and answer session followed by group discussion. We will go around the room and each pair will ask one of their questions. You probably won't have time to ask all the questions but try to ensure each pair/group gets to ask at least one, and that they pick the question they are most curious about.

Ask who would like to ask a nice easy, friendly question to begin with. Ideally a question which helps us to get to know the visitor better. This will make it easier to ask more complicated questions later. After a couple of these, ask for more focused questions.

When the visitor has answered a question, open up the discussion for the group to talk about their own responses as well. This ensures that the session is a dialogue and the group can form their own ideas too. However, keep an eye on the time as you need to make sure lots of questions are addressed.

# **SOME INSIGHT FROM THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION: WALTER WINK'S VIEW ON JESUS AND NONVIOLENCE**

Walter Wink is a professor of Biblical Interpretation in New York and he argues that the following teaching by Jesus is one of the most revolutionary political statements ever made:

*"...you have heard it said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'. But I say to you, Do not resist an evil doer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile"<sup>2</sup>*

Wink argues that humans are conditioned to respond to evil in two ways:

1. Passivity
2. Violent opposition

However, he asserts that there is another way, which we are rarely taught:

3. The third way of active nonviolence as described by Jesus.

This teaching can be found in Luke (6:29-31) and also in Matthew (5:38-42). Jesus clarifies his response to evil with three examples relevant to his listeners, which today hold little meaning for us out of context. However, understanding their significance can throw light on a whole new meaning to Jesus' teaching about how to deal with violence, for Christians and non-Christians alike. See across the page for Wink's ideas about each example.

We can see that Jesus is encouraging us to:

- Seize the moral initiative
- Find a creative alternative to violence
- Assert our own dignity
- Meet force with ridicule and humour
- Break the cycle of humiliation
- Refuse to submit or accept the inferior status
- Expose injustice of the system
- Take control of the power dynamic
- Make the oppressor aware of and acknowledge their behaviour
- Force the Power to make decisions for which they are not prepared
- Recognise our own power
- Be willing to suffer rather than retaliate
- Cause the oppressor to see you in a new light
- Deprive the oppressor of a situation where a show of force is effective
- Be willing to receive the penalty for breaking unjust laws

<sup>1</sup> Walter Wink (2003), *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*, Fortress Press

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 5:38

Wink criticises the teaching of ‘turn the other cheek’ to mean submitting to oppression, pointing out that many a battered wife has put up with her treatment because of this. He also points out that we can hide behind the teaching to ‘turn the other cheek’, too afraid to do anything else.

***It is important to him that non-violence can never be a genuinely moral response unless we are first capable of thinking about the possibility of violence, but then making a conscious decision to refuse to use it. He warns that otherwise, non-violence may be merely a mask for cowardice.***

**“IF ANYONE STRIKES YOU ON THE RIGHT CHEEK, TURN THE OTHER ALSO”**

The question we must ask here is why the right cheek? How do you strike someone on the right cheek? Think about it... a blow in the right handed world (which it was at the time of Jesus) would land on the left cheek. To strike the right cheek with a fist would involve using the left hand, which at this time was only used for unclean tasks. Even gesturing at someone with the left hand would result in punishment. The only way to strike someone on the right cheek was with the back of the hand, the way in which a master would hit a servant, a husband hit a wife or a Roman hit a Jew. In each of these unequal relationships retaliation would be suicidal. However, Jesus suggests another way. By turning the left cheek to the oppressor, the oppressed is robbing them of the power to humiliate, saying “hit me again as an equal, with your fist” Logistically the oppressor would not be able to use a back hand slap (and at this time, backhanding someone who was your equal was punishable with a fine) so they would either have to acknowledge the other person as an equal and punch them with a fist, or step away. The oppressor here has therefore been forced, against his will, to regard this person as an equal. It is a good example of someone standing up the structures that place people unequally in society, a kind of structural violence. Even if the person is then given a flogging for insolence, the point, about demanding to be treated as an equal human being, has still been made.

**“IF ANYONE WANTS TO SUE YOU AND TAKE YOUR COAT, GIVE YOUR CLOAK AS WELL”**

This example needs to be imagined in a court of law. In the time of Jesus many Jews were crippled by the amount of taxes demanded of them by the Roman Empire. Because of this, they were often forced to borrow money and would therefore be hounded by moneylenders to pay back their debts. The poorest of the poor might have only an outer garment to offer to pay back their loan. It is also worth knowing that at this time nudity was considered to be very shameful; however shame did not fall on the naked person, but shame fell on the person viewing or causing the nakedness. And so in this context Jesus is telling his listeners that, should the moneylender try and take someone’s cloak in return for their debt, they should offer their undergarments as well, thus rendering themselves naked in front of the whole court and causing shame to the person who has demanded their cloak and challenging their oppressor.

**“IF ANYONE FORCES YOU TO GO ONE MILE, GO ALSO THE SECOND MILE”**

Again, the context of this statement reveals its revolutionary nature. During Roman times there was a law which limited the amount of labour a soldier could demand of a subject, like a Jew, at one time. This was to try and limit the anger of their occupied people whilst keeping their armies on the move. There was a strict penalty if a soldier forced a civilian to carry his pack for more than one mile. There were very clear mile markers on all Roman roads. So when Jesus tells his listeners to offer to walk another mile, again he is encouraging them to partake in an act which will challenge and take the power away from the oppressor. The soldier would be stunned at this response, never having had to deal with anything like it before. He would have to ask the civilian not to carry on, to insist that they have to stop, therefore restoring the initiative and human dignity to the civilian.



# **ACTIVITY: JESUS' THIRD WAY**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

Get the group thinking about Walter Wink's idea of a 'third way' and how it affects people in practice, and also how it could apply to their own lives.

## **PREPARATION**

Photocopy the situation cards on the previous page which have the 3 examples on.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

30 minutes

Divide the group into 3 (or 6 if there are a lot of people) and give each group one of Jesus' examples for them to act out (obviously miming the second example of removing clothes!). They will have to imagine the response of the oppressor and what happens next, as Jesus does not tell us this part! Emphasise that it is important that we can see the oppressor is challenged and does not know what to do.

Give them 10-15 minutes to practice their examples. Encourage all group members to join in as characters in the biblical context (e.g. onlookers, fellow servants, members of the court, soldiers etc) so that each person has a role.

Allow each group to perform their example through once to the group. When they have done this get them to:

1. Hold a freeze frame of their beginning position. Interview the characters and ask what they are thinking and feeling at this moment. Ask the audience to identify who has the power in this picture.
2. Hold a freeze frame of the moment the character takes the third way (so when they turn their other cheek, take off their coat, offer to carry the pack) and ask how each character is feeling. Who has the power now?
3. If they have continued their scene further, as them to freeze at the last moment, and again interview the characters to see what they are thinking and feeling at that moment.

Once you have been through all the scenes, as a whole group discussion, ask them to think about situations in their own lives in which they might be able to find a third way. These might be examples of unfair practices in schools, bullying, discrimination against young people etc.

This activity could be followed by '3 Ways' on page #16 to look more deeply at the consequences of non-violent action.

## SITUATION CARDS:

### **“IF ANYONE STRIKES YOU ON THE RIGHT CHEEK, TURN THE OTHER ALSO”**

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However, Jesus suggests another way. By turning the left cheek to the oppressor, the oppressed is robbing them of the power to humiliate, saying “hit me again as an equal, with your fist” Logistically the oppressor would not be able to use a back hand slap (and at this time, backhanding someone who was your equal was punishable with a fine) so they would either have to acknowledge the other person as an equal and punch them with a fist, or step away. The oppressor here has therefore been forced, against his will, to regard this person as an equal. It is a good example of someone standing up the structures that place people unequally in society, a kind of structural violence. Even if the person is then given a flogging for insolence, the point, about demanding to be treated as an equal human being, has still been made.

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This example needs to be imagined in a court of law. In the time of Jesus many Jews were crippled by the amount of taxes demanded of them by the Roman Empire. Because of this, they were often forced to borrow money and would therefore be hounded by moneylenders to pay back their debts. The poorest of the poor might have only an outer garment to offer to pay back their loan. It is also worth knowing that at this time nudity was considered to be very shameful; however shame did not fall on the naked person, but shame fell on the person viewing or causing the nakedness. And so in this context Jesus is telling his listeners that, should the moneylender try and take someone’s cloak in return for their debt, they should offer their undergarments as well, thus rendering themselves naked in front of the whole court and causing

### **“IF ANYONE FORCES YOU TO GO ONE MILE, GO ALSO THE SECOND MILE”**

Again, the context of this statement reveals its revolutionary nature. During Roman times there was a law which limited the amount of labour a soldier could demand of a subject, like a Jew, at one time. This was to try and limit the anger of their occupied people whilst keeping their armies on the move. There was a strict penalty if a soldier forced a civilian to carry his pack for more than one mile. There were very clear mile markers on all Roman roads. So when Jesus tells his listeners to offer to walk another mile, again he is encouraging them to partake in an act which will challenge and take the power away from the oppressor. The soldier would be stunned at this response, never having had to deal with anything like it before. He would have to ask the civilian not to carry on, to insist that they have to stop, therefore restoring the initiative and human dignity to the civilian.

# **SOME INSIGHT FROM THE ISLAMIC TRADITION:** **EXPERIENCES OF THE PROPHET**

To understand some of the Islamic wisdom on conflict and violence, it is helpful to look at the life of the Prophet Mohammad. However, Mohammad's story is very much in two parts, the first being when he was living in Mecca and preaching the message of Islam to convert people, and the second when he had a settled community of followers, and therefore much more power, in the Medina period.

Here are two stories from these two eras which might inspire and help us to refuse violence in our daily lives.

## **THE PROPHET VISITS TA'IF**

As a consequence of the growing hostility of the Quraysh who opposed him, the Prophet decided to go alone to Ta'if to seek the people's help and to tell them the message he had received from God about Islam. He went to see three brothers, leaders of Ta'if, who rejected him and his message, rousing up a crowd to insult him and children to throw stones at him as he left.

On his way from Ta'if the Angel Gabriel appeared to the Prophet and offered to destroy the whole town. However, the Prophet replied that if the people were destroyed, they would never be able to worship Allah and so asked the Angel not to do so. He considered his own humiliation to be insignificant in comparison to their potential as human beings.

## **DISCUSSION:**

1. How do you think Mohammad felt as he was being chased out of Ta'if?
2. Do you think Mohammad would have been more successful if he had got angry?
3. How do you control your anger?
4. What can we learn from this story about how to deal with violence and humiliation?

## **THE STORY OF AL HUDAYBIYYA – “A CLEAR VICTORY”**

When Mohammad was at Hdaybiyya the Quraysh would not allow him and his followers to enter Mecca to perform a pilgrimage. Mohammad asked his followers to pledge their allegiance to him, to follow him no matter what.

Instead of entering into battle, however, a messenger named Suhayl arrived from the Quraysh and sat down with Mohammad to negotiate a treaty. When they had finally reached an agreement, Mohammad asked Ali to write it down (as he could not write himself). He began with the words “in the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful” which Ali wrote; but Suhayl objected to this saying that he didn't recognise their God. Some of the Prophets companions protested that Mohammad could not give in, but the Prophet ignored them, and asked Ali to write Suhayl's suggestion “In Thy Name, O God” instead.

Next Mohammad dictated “These are the terms of the truce between Mohammad the Messenger of God and Suhayl the son of Amr”, but again Suhayl protested that he did not know Mohammad to be the messenger of God and asked him to write “Mohammad, son of Abd Allah”. However, Ali had already written “the Messenger of God” and the Prophet told him to cross those words out.

Ali refused and so Mohammad asked him to point with his finger to the words in question and he himself struck them out. Ali then wrote Suhayl's suggestion.

The treaty went on to say that they would not fight each other for ten years on the condition that if anyone came to join Mohammad without the permission of their guardian, they would be turned away but whoever might come to the Quraysh from Mohammad would not be returned. They agreed not to enter Mecca this year, but that the next year, the Quraysh would leave Mecca for three days in which Mohammad and his followers could enter and perform their pilgrimage.

Mohammad's followers, having pledged their allegiance to him, ready to fight, felt disappointed that after all their efforts they would not be able to enter Mecca after all.

Mohammad then went and made a sacrifice (something which would usually be done only in Mecca), where they were and shaved his head in the manner of the pilgrimage. On seeing this, his followers did the same. The ground was soon covered in the hair of all the shaven heads when suddenly a powerful gust of wind came and blew the hair away towards Mecca, into the sacred area. The pilgrims rejoiced, taking it as a sign that their pilgrimage had been accepted by God in virtue of their intentions.

The Prophet later received a Revelation from God which told him they had received a "clear victory" and that God was so pleased with the believers for pledging their allegiance that he had sent down the Spirit of Peace upon them and had given them this clear victory.

After this episode many of the Meccans became Muslims during the two years that the treaty was observed.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

1. How do you think Mohammed's followers might have felt when he decided to sit down and write a truce instead of going into battle?
2. What was it that made the event a 'clear victory' in the end?
3. Do you think that this approach would work in your everyday life?
4. Why do you think this event might have led to more conversions?

# **SOME INSIGHT FROM THE JEWISH TRADITION:**

'*Shalom*' is one of the most well known words in the Jewish tradition. Its meaning is peace, but literally the root of the word means 'whole'. According to the Kabbalah, the Jewish mystical tradition, the entire world was created together, as a unified whole, shalem. The Kabbalah speaks of urns, shattered at creation, scattering God's light throughout the world. For Jews, peace is about making the earth, people, relationships, whole again, and in doing so returning these shards of light to God.

Jewish scripture provides many ideas about how this might happen. Below are two issues addressed in scripture, followed by a rabbinic interpretation which helps to explain what they mean to us.

## **HOW TO TREAT YOUR ENEMIES:**

Exodus 23:4-5 says:

*"When you encounter your enemy's ox or ass wandering, you must take it back to him. When you see the ass of one who hates you lying under its burden and you would refrain from raising it, you must nevertheless raise it with him."*

### **Tanhuma, Mishpatim, I comments on this:**

"It was you who established equity" (Psalms 99:4). Rabbi Alexandri taught: Two donkey-drivers who hated each other were walking along the road. The donkey of one of the drivers lay down. His enemy saw him and passed them by. After passing he thought to himself: It says in the Torah, "When you see the donkey of your enemy...you must nevertheless raise it with him." He immediately returned and reloaded and raised the donkey together with the 'enemy'. The designated enemy began to think: 'if the other donkey-driver was really my enemy he wouldn't have helped me.' He, therefore, concluded 'he must really be my friend and I hated him for naught. Let me proceed to reconcile with him.' They entered a tavern, ate and drank and made peace with each other. What is it that caused them to make peace? The fact that one of them peered into the Torah. This is the implication of, "It was You who established equity."

### **Questions to consider:**

1. Firstly, in your life, are there any people who might come into this category of 'enemy'? Who are they?
2. What good can showing kindness to someone who is supposed to be your 'enemy' do?
3. How would you feel/respond if someone you didn't get on with showed such kindness to you?
4. Realistically, day to day, where might you find opportunities to show kindness and compassion to someone you dislike or don't trust? Think of someone who you don't get on with – when could you do a kind thing for them? What do you think the result would be?

## **ANGER**

Proverbs 16:32 says:

*'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that rules his spirit [is better] than he that takes a city'*

Proverbs 19:11 says:

*"It is the intelligence of a person to be slow to anger, / And it is his glory to pass over a transgression."*

Avot de-Rabbi Nathan A, 23 comments:

Ben Zoma says: ... Who is it that is most mighty? One who subdues his evil impulse, as it is said, 'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that rules his spirit [is better] than he that takes a city (Prov. 16:32) ... And some say: [Mighty is he] who makes of his enemy a friend.

**Some questions to consider:**

1. Do you agree that intelligence is connected to anger? What do you think this verse might mean? If someone wrongs you, but you understand why they did it, are you less angry?
2. How can we gain understanding when we are feeling hurt and angry?
3. Are you able to centre yourself, take a step back and consider the other person's point of view? How do you think this might help?
4. How easy is it to suspend these feelings in order to understand and deal with the situation in a positive way?
5. Think of an example of when you were really angry with someone. Why did they do what they did? Would it have helped you to stop and think about their point of view? In future, how could you do this? Would it make a difference?

**Note: When considering this issue, it might be helpful to use the Centring exercise, on page #26, which may provide a useful tool to help implement this advice**

# **GERTRUD LUCKNER: THE THIRD WAY IN PRACTICE**

*“I thought: ‘You must always comfort them. The only thing I can do is walk the way together with them.’”*

## **WHO WAS GERTRUD LUCKNER?**

Born in 1900 to German parents in Liverpool, Gertrud’s early life was spent between Germany and England. She is a great example of a person who took small steps in her everyday life to live out Jesus’ message of a third, nonviolent way to react to conflict. She responded to the violence of the Nazis in a variety of creative and compassionate ways, at a time when many people stood by and did nothing.

## **WHAT DID SHE DO?**

Gertrud stood up to the violence she saw around her in small but significant ways. She relied on her own personal relationships and networks to put people in touch with one another and to organize events, in a highly restricted Nazi environment.

To try and stop the influence of propaganda she organized debates for students to think critically about the ideas behind the propaganda and hear different arguments. She realized the importance of information and would collect discarded international newspapers from the university so that she could keep up to date with the situation in Germany, as the media inside the country were not telling the whole story.

Gertrud organized a group of her friends to do the shopping of Jews who were unable to do it themselves because of their long and strict working hours. When the Nazis started deporting Jews, she would stay in the houses of Jewish friends who were living in fear. If old people were about to be taken away, she got doctor friends to admit them into hospital so that they could not be moved.

In 1941 when Jews were ordered to wear the Star of David to identify them, Gertrud would make a point of going up to Jewish people in the street and asking for directions in whatever city she found herself. She understood that the way to fight discrimination and persecution was to treat people as dignified human beings.

Luckner was a Roman Catholic, and felt that religion was about reaching out from person to person across boundaries of faith, race and nationality. She was eventually captured and interrogated for 9 weeks in a concentration camp for her role in protecting Jewish people.

Luckner was a Catholic, and felt that religion was about reaching out from person to person across boundaries of faith, race and nationality. She was very concerned about what affected the lives of others.

## **DISCUSSION:**

1. In what different ways did Gertrud stand up to the violence of the state?
2. What effect did these actions have on:
  - a) the Jewish community
  - b) the state
3. Is it still worth doing something if it appears to make little difference to the larger situation?

# **TIKKUN OLAM AND ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL**

*“By whatever we do, by whatever act we carry out, we either advance or obstruct the drama of redemption; we either reduce or enhance the power of evil” - Heschel 1965*

## **WHAT IS TIKKUN OLAM?**

Tikkun Olam is a part of Jewish law (mitzvah) which refers to making the world a better place. It is an ancient call to Jewish people, dating back to the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah who insisted that Jews should be involved in the moral issues of the time.

## **WHO WAS HESCHEL?**

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel is one person who had a very specific understanding of what Tikkun Olam should mean, and lived the message out through his life. Born in Poland, he was forced to flee the Holocaust and went to the United States in 1940 where he became a Rabbi and wrote many books, becoming one of the most well known Jewish thinkers of the century.

## **WHAT DID HE DO?**

Heschel was among the first people who protested against the Vietnam War and was also committed to working with the Vatican to reevaluate Catholicism’s relationship with Judaism. However, he is possibly best known for his links with civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr, who led the movement for the rights of black people in the USA in the 1950s and 60s. Heschel joined King using methods of nonviolent civil disobedience, walking beside him at the protests in Selma, Alabama in 1965. King himself credited Heschel with motivating clergy of all faiths to join the civil rights movement.

## **WHY?**

Heschel drew his inspiration from the prophets of the Jewish and other faiths. He argued that prophets all teach that we have to be involved in the affairs of our fellow human beings, especially of those who are suffering. He would say that prophets were individuals who stood up and said “no” to the injustices of the particular society they lived in, condemning their habits and assumptions in order to bring people closer to each other and God. Heschel’s conviction was that people should take a stand against what we might term ‘structural violence’ and not be content with the way things are.

*“What keeps me alive—spiritually, emotionally, intellectually—is my ability to be surprised. I say, I take nothing for granted. I am surprised every morning that I see the sun shine again. When I see an act of evil, I am not accommodated—I don’t accommodate myself to the violence that goes on everywhere. I’m still surprised. That’s why I’m against it; why I can fight against it. We must learn how to be surprised, not to adjust ourselves”*

Heschel felt that acts of social justice were part of a Jewish person’s responsibility for tikkun olam - repairing the world, and that such acts are deeply spiritual. He famously stated that *“when I marched in Selma, my feet were praying”*, illustrating the idea that worshipping God could be a physical act of making the world a better place

## **DISCUSSION POINTS:**

1. *“The opposite of good is not evil, it is indifference”* – what do you think Heschel meant by this? How might this relate to his attitude towards violence?
2. Why do you think Heschel was so keen to include all faiths in the civil rights movement? What was the value of having this support?
3. *“The ‘good drive’ is not invented by society but is something which makes society possible: not an accidental function, but the very essence of man... Mitzvot [good deeds] are spiritual ends”*. What do you think is Heschel’s message here? Do you agree with him?



# **NONVIOLENCE IN ISLAM:** **THE CASE OF ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN**

*“We have shed our fear and are no longer afraid of an Englishman or for that matter of any man. Englishmen are afraid of our nonviolence. A nonviolent Pashtun, they say, is more dangerous than a violent Pashtun.”*

## **WHO WAS GAFFAR KHAN?**

Abdul Ghaffar Khan (1890 - 20 January 1988) was a Pashtun political and spiritual leader known for his non-violent opposition to British Rule in India. A lifelong pacifist, a devout Sunni Muslim, and a close friend of Mahatma Gandhi, he was also known as Sarhaddi Gandhi (“Frontier Gandhi”).

## **WHAT DID HE DO?**

Having witnessed the repeated failure of revolts against the British Raj, he decided social activism and reform would be more beneficial for Pashtuns. This ultimately led to the formation of the “movement (Servants of God) during the 1920s.

The Khudai Khidmatgar was founded on a belief in the power of Gandhi’s notion of ‘Satyagraha’, a form of active non-violence. Khan told his followers:

*“I am going to give you such a weapon that the police and the army will not be able to stand against it. It is the weapon of the Prophet, but you are not aware of it. That weapon is patience and righteousness. No power on earth can stand against it.”*

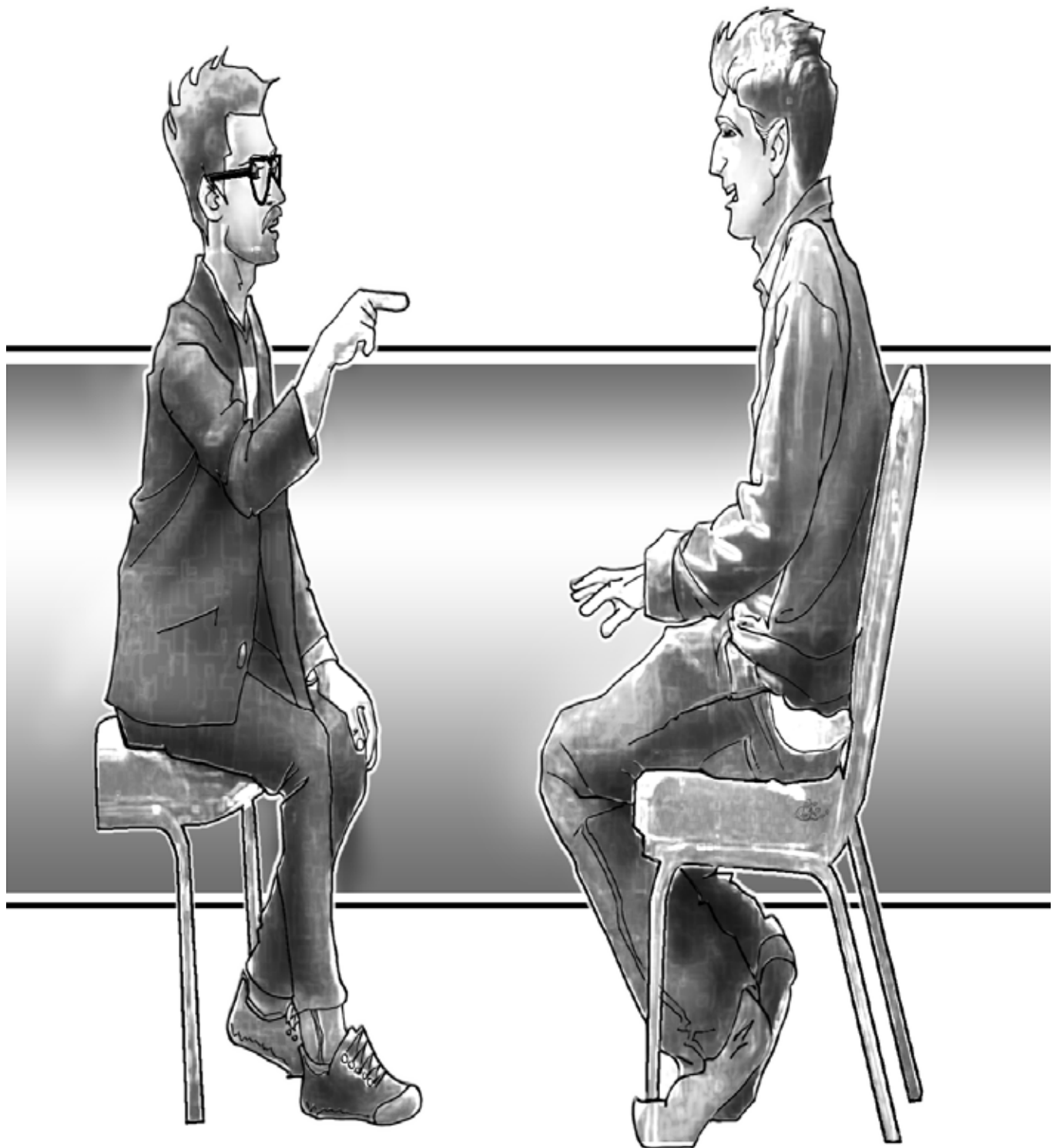
The organization recruited over 100,000 members and became legendary in opposing (and dying at the hands of) the British-controlled police and army. While the British crushed the violent movement in no time, the nonviolent movement, in spite of intense repression, flourished through strikes, political organization and non-violent opposition. If a British soldier was killed at the hands of a ‘Khudai Khidmatgar’, not only was the culprit punished, but the whole village and entire region suffered for it. The people held the violence and its doer responsible for the repression.

Ghaffar Khan was also a champion of women’s rights as well as nonviolence. He became a hero in a society dominated by violence; his unswerving faith and obvious bravery led to immense respect. Throughout his life, he never lost faith in his non-violent methods or in the compatibility of Islam and nonviolence. He viewed his struggle as a ‘jihad’ with only the enemy holding swords.

## **DISCUSSION POINTS:**

1. Why do you think Khan described a nonviolent Pashtun as more dangerous than a violent pashtun? What is dangerous about non-violence?
2. What do you think members of the Khudai Khidmatgar had to sacrifice in order to be part of Khan’s army? Why did they want to do this?
3. Why do you think non-violent methods were so successful in this case, where violence failed?

# THEME THREE: FAITH INTO PRACTICE



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## **THEME THREE: FAITH INTO PRACTICE**

For this section we have used various forms of drama as the tools to think about how to put what we have learned from our own or other faiths into practice in every-day, real life situations.

We start with using images to begin exploring ideas around conflict and violence and then move into telling stories and devising short scenes. We found that working with true stories from their own experience made the process much more powerful for groups.

We then went on to use the method of Forum Theatre as it is an excellent way of exploring responses to situations which resonate with participants. In the Forum process the idea is that the “rehearsal [of alternative responses] actually stimulates the practice of the act in reality” (Augusto Boal, 1979) and so the participants are able to rehearse actions of refusing violence in real life, in a safe and experimental environment.

This method can also include more people in the process, by inviting others from outside the group you are working with, to participate in the Forum and get involved in thinking about how to overcome difficult situations without using violence.



# **USING THE VIDEO CLIPS**

On the CD ROM, under the Theme 3 you will find three video clips of plays created by our groups. These can either be used to give you an idea of how the group could use drama to explore refusing violence, or as a stimulus for discussion.

## **PLAY 1**

The Christian group decided to create a play from their own experience and present it with two possible endings, to demonstrate putting their faith into action. You could show your group the first part of the play and the violent ending, and ask them:

- What happened?
- What would you do if you were Stu? Do you think this would resolve the situation?
- What might be a way to respond which would represent the ideals of your faith?

The group in the clip focus on the Christian teachings about forgiveness and we therefore see Stu finding the strength to forgive his friend Wisdom. After showing the final clip you could ask your group:

- Do you think this is an effective way to solve the situation?
- Where do you think Stu found the strength to do this? Was it difficult?
- Could you do the same?

## **PLAY 2**

This is a very short play which the group use as a stimulus for discussion and self reflection. It represents the War on Terror and subsequent climate of suspicion where people are stopped and searched, and an 'us and them' mentality develops. It is followed by the group's discussion about one of the issues raised; living in a place where everyone is constantly under suspicion.

Show the group the clip and then ask them:

- What kinds of violence do you see in this clip?
- Discuss Ben's statement 'is it an act of violence to live in a society in which you are constantly under suspicion?'
- Do you agree with Max, that these are the actions of a 'nanny state' or are they sensible steps to protect the population?
- What can (and did) people do to combat the structural violence which grew after 9/11, where certain groups were discriminated against and hate crimes increased? More generally, what can we do to combat structural violence?

# **FREEZE FRAMES**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

Creating still images gets the group introduced to the idea of using their bodies to express themselves, without having to jump straight into acting. It also helps the group to analyse certain situations in a calm and thoughtful manner, thinking about how they can be transformed.

## **PREPARATION**

Make sure you come prepared with the words you would like the group to make into images. You will need a large enough space for the group to move around and create images in.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

20 minutes

This activity is a good introduction to the idea of forum theatre, if you plan to use it, by allowing young people to begin to discuss how situations can be changed or resolved.

Working in groups, ask young people to create a freeze frame image with everyone in their group which expresses a word chosen from the following list (or some of your own):

- Exclusion
- Aggression
- Power
- Conflict
- Discrimination

The groups should view each other's freeze frame image. Ask everyone to discuss what they think is happening in each scene both objectively (what they can actually see – e.g. 5 people pointing their fingers at one person) and subjectively (how they interpret what is happening in the image e.g. they 5 people are making fun of the one person).

After you have tried out a couple of the easier words, tell the group that this time when they are showing the next image, you will walk around their picture and tap someone on the shoulder. When this happens, they need to talk about how they, as the character in the image, are feeling in the situation they have created.

For your last freeze frame get the group to form their picture as usual and then tell them that they now can change three things in the frozen picture to transform it from a negative image into a positive image.

Ask the whole group to discuss what changed and how, what did they learn from this, and is it realistic?

# **ACT AND DISCUSS**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

This exercise is a very simple way of getting the group to think about everyday situations; what kinds of violence are involved, how their faith might teach them to respond, how they actually respond and how they could transform their behaviour.

## **PREPARATION**

You will need enough space for groups to rehearse and then perform in front of everyone else.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

45 minutes if you have up to 3 acting groups, then add 5 minutes for every extra group.

Spilt everyone into groups of 5 or 6.

Give them 10 minutes to talk amongst themselves about situations they might see or find themselves in which involve some kind of violence. They all need to agree on a situation or particular story from someone which they will put into a very short play (1 to 2 minutes long). The play should show this situation and clearly demonstrate what the conflict is about, so it is important they choose an example which will work well acted out.

After the 10 minutes are up, tell the group they need to start rehearsing and that you want to see them on their feet working on their pieces. They will only have 10-15 minutes to do this. Assure participants that the quality of the acting does not matter at all, you are just looking for them to represent the situation in a way that the others can understand.

Once the small plays look ready to perform arrange the room so that everyone is sat watching a 'stage' area at the front. Ask a group to volunteer to go first. Make sure everyone applauds them as they take their places and once they finish.

After each piece has been shown, ask the audience:

- What was the conflict?
- What kinds of violence did you see?
- Did the conflict get resolved?
- How would you have responded in the main character's shoes? (You need to make clear to them who the main character is first!) Perhaps give them a moment to talk to the person next to them to discuss this one, so everyone has to reflect on it.
- Could the situation have been resolved without the use of violence?
- What does your faith tradition teach you about responding to a situation like this – can you think of any examples (eg. Martin Luther King, Guru Ram Singh etc?)

Depending on group size and time, spend 5-10 minutes focusing on each performance.

When all the plays have been shown and discussed, debrief with the questions:

- What alternatives to violent responses came up?
- Do you think they could be useful in real life?

# **INTRODUCING FORUM THEATRE**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

Forum Theatre is a method which was pioneered by theatre practitioner Augusto Boal in South America as a way to combat injustice, as part of his 'Theatre of the Oppressed'.

It is particularly well suited to this programme as it allows a group to explore the issues around a conflict and experiment with different ways to resolve it, drawing on their learning from themes 1 and 2

## **TERMINOLOGY**

- **JOKER** – The teacher or facilitator of the group who runs the session. The joker acts as an intermediary, ensures smooth running of the theatre and teaches the audience the 'rules'. The word 'joker' is used in the context of a joker in a pack of cards who does not belong to any suit.
- **PROTAGONIST** – The central character who is experiencing difficulties in the scene.
- **SPECT-ACTOR** – When a spectator jumps into the scenario to take part in the scene, transcending the boundary between stage and audience, they become a 'spect-actor'.
- **ANTI MODEL** – this is the term for the play which is devised, as it is not a 'model' but an 'anti-model' which needs to be resolved.

## **DEVISING A PIECE OF FORUM THEATRE**

A good anti-model needs:

1. a clear protagonist
2. the protagonist to struggle valiantly against the situation but to fail so the story ends badly
3. to present multiple opportunities for intervention, where audience members can step in and change the course of the action.

There might be more than one antagonist. They may represent a structure/agency. Characters who are neither protagonist or antagonists are potential allies for spect-actors.

**IMPORTANT TIP: NEVER have someone play themselves in a forum, as the effect of rehearsing their own failure over and over is not pleasant!**

## **THE "RULES" OF THE GAME**

It is important to spell out the 'rules' at the start and stick to them until everyone has got the hang of the game. After that, the process can be flexible. On laying out the 'rules' at the start, they should sound something like this:

- It is best to introduce the idea of participation slowly so "You will see a play and while you are watching I'd like you to log any moments where you could do something differently in the main character's shoes, to change the outcome of the play."
- After the audience has seen the anti-model "You will see the play again and this time, when there is a moment you feel like they could do something differently you can shout 'stop' and will be invited to come and show us what that is. So its not unrealistically easy, the actors will react as they might on a bad day. The situation cannot be fixed by magic and so no flying or superheroes will work, but they will respond to your ideas as realistically as possible"



The three questions a joker should be asking themselves throughout the process are:

1. Are we learning anything?
2. Are we having fun?
3. Is this useful?

See page #57 to 60 for more information and guidance on Joking a piece of Forum Theatre

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

- Games for Actors and Non-actors (1992) Augusto Boal, Routledge
- Theatre of the Oppressed (New Edition) (2000) Augusto Boal, Pluto
- The Rainbow of Desire (2004) Augusto Boal, Routledge
- 'From Spectators to Spect-actors' Kent and the Wider World. A useful guide for using Forum Theatre to explore global citizenship. [www.commonwork.org/school\\_resources.htm](http://www.commonwork.org/school_resources.htm)
- Cardboard Citizens, the homeless people's theatre company. Give performances and training: [www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk](http://www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk)
- International Theatre of the Oppressed Organisation, [www.theatreoftheoppressed.org](http://www.theatreoftheoppressed.org)

# **FORUM THEATRE**

Please read the Introduction to Forum Theatre before reading this page

**NOTE: The stages in this method can be spread out throughout the course to develop a solid and well rehearsed piece of theatre which the group can share with their peers (eg. Their yeargroup, other members of the youth club etc). See the suggested workshop plans on page #9 for details.**

## **PREPARATION**

Space: Ideally the space used should be large enough for people to work in small groups without disturbing each other, to practise short scenarios and to perform to the rest of the group. A small hall is ideal though classrooms may be adapted if chairs and tables are moved. The focus is not about creating theatrical realism, but on the actual stories and action, and so props, furniture, etc, are not necessarily required

## **TIME REQUIRED**

At least 1 ½ to 2 hours (or more depending on group size)

## **STEP ONE – 15 MINUTES**

Start with a drama game to introduce the group to the idea of using their bodies to express themselves. We recommend Freeze Frames or if you do not have time, Stop/Go will at least get the group moving around.

## **STEP TWO**

Split your group into teams of 5 or 6 and either give them pre-made scenarios which you have devised in advance (see the ones below for some ideas) or if you have time, take an extra 15-20 minutes for the groups to share some personal experiences of conflict, which they could use. Make sure that each group ends up with an example in which:

- there is a clear protagonist
- the protagonist struggles valiantly against the situation but fails and the story ends badly
- there are opportunities for intervention, where audience members could step in and change the course of the action.

## **STEP THREE**

Give the groups time (minimum of 20-30 minutes) to work on their scenarios.

**(NOTE: if the stories come from the groups themselves, they are more likely to be effective, as they will be easily identified with by their peers)**

## **STEP FOUR**

When they are ready, get the first group to perform their short scene to the others and then, before showing it again to 'forum' it, explain the rules to the audience.

See the Guide to Jokering page which explains the best way to facilitate the performance.

Spend between 5-15 minutes (depending on how many groups you have) foruming each scenario,

allowing discussion to follow interventions in the action. It may be that there are many ideas for one particular moment in the play, but try to move on to other moments as well to demonstrate ways of dealing with other situations

## **SCENARIO IDEAS:**

These scenarios reflect two common issues in a school environment. There is a lot of room for creating detail and adapting them to the context of the participants.

### **1. ESCALATING VIOLENCE**

A small accident (for example someone kicks their opponent whilst playing football) turns into something bigger. The person who is hurt is encouraged by their friends to react and so they start shouting and insulting the person who did it. The person who did it therefore decides to laugh and call the other person names (wuss, sissy etc).

The incident leads to gossip amongst their peers throughout the day, with people saying that there is going to be a big fight. Both people involved then hear the other is planning to fight them and so they both start to get ready, contacting friends and older siblings for back up.

At the end of the day the incident comes to a head, with both groups ending up in a fight and someone (preferably the protagonist, who is the person who accidentally caused the incident in the first place) gets seriously hurt

### **2. SPREADING RUMOURS**

A group of girls in school are feeling really fed up with a second group who are always making out they know everything and spreading rumours about people behind their backs. They decide to get their own back by pretending, in front of the other group, that they know a scandal so huge, they couldn't possibly tell a soul (they do not make up any details about what it is though, just that they have a MASSIVE secret).

The second group then start speculating about what it could be throwing ideas around about the worst sorts of gossip possible. Someone hears them talking about it and tells someone else, who tells someone else.

Later on that day an older girl comes up to the first group, shouting at them because the whole school is saying she is a slut and that she's pregnant. She heard it came from them. She is really angry and upset and threatens to tell the whole school something untrue about one of them in return.

# **GUIDE TO 'JOKERING'**

<b>STAGES</b>		<b>ROLE OF THE JOKER</b>
<b>1</b>	Assemble the audience ready to watch the play (the 'anti-model')	Explain how forum theatre works to the group. They should lay out the 'rules of the game' and explain that performance skills are not important but actors should speak loudly and clearly.
<b>2</b>	Play out the scene or play in full.	Discuss the play with the group once they have seen it: what was happening, and what were the issues or problems being raised?
<b>3</b>	Run through the scene again. Before starting the joker invites spectators to pause the action at any point by shouting 'Stop!' (or putting their hand up as this can be less intimidating). The spect-actor then replaces the central character and tries to change the situation to achieve a positive conclusion.	The joker should run over the 'rules' in more detail making sure everyone understands. Making it clear that this is a game helps to lower the stakes for the spect-actors.
<b>4</b>	All group members should applaud when someone volunteers to be a spect-actor, as they enter and leave the action.	The joker must encourage everyone to get involved, gently coaxing the quieter group members and not letting the more confident ones dominate. If no one volunteers the Joker can lower the stakes again, discussing the scene and asking where interventions might come before inviting spect-actors to show us.
<b>5</b>	All other actors in the scene should continue in their roles as before. For example, if someone is in character as a bully they would not suddenly become a best friend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The joker should challenge discriminatory behaviour in any interventions, such as racist or sexist comments by asking people to justify their comments, or asking the rest of the group whether they think this behaviour is effective in solving the problem.</li> <li>• The joker should judge where to stop the action if necessary by asking the audience "how are they doing?" and discussing how well the intervention is working. They should try to find a positive in every intervention and make sure the spect-actor is applauded for their efforts.</li> </ul>

6	<p>Once the spect-actor has tried to resolve the situation, then others may have ideas for the same moment or the play can continue from where it was stopped so others may stop the action at another moment and try a different strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The joker should facilitate discussion after the spect-actor has tried to resolve the situation. For example, what happened, what changed or did not change?</li> <li>• After the first intervention and subsequent discussion of how effective it was, the joker can encourage anyone who didn't agree that it was successful or says they would have dealt with that moment differently to come and show the audience how.</li> </ul>
7	<p>The interventions should reflect reality and be achievable. This means that no magic or super heroes are allowed, and spect-actors cannot make the protagonist invisible or fly. Nor can they change the motivation of the protagonist, e.g. if s/he wants to be in the football team s/he is being excluded from, s/he cannot suddenly take up a different sport.</p>	<p>After a few (4 or 5) interventions which are directly related to the content of the play (the microcosm) the Joker should draw out ideas from outside the world of the play (the macrocosm) i.e. other characters who might be able to help (a lawyer, a doctor, a teacher...)</p>
8	<p>You can finish on a positive note by running through the scene again and change the ending to a positive one. However, at the end of the session, it may not have been possible to reach a resolution. What is important is that people engage in discussion of the problems and recognise points of intervention and possible strategies which could achieve a more positive outcome.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The joker should make a note of any positive strategies which helped the situation and any negative strategies that should be challenged.</li> <li>• To conclude the session, the joker should summarise the discussion which arose from the play and reiterate the intervention points when the spect-actors stepped in and the strategies devised by the people to resolve the problem.</li> </ul>



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