

A Challenge to Change Our Thinking About War: An Overview
Draft Facilitator's Agenda 10/31/10
SESSION I - WAR IS OBSOLETE

An introductory overview course based on the book, "Living Beyond War: A Citizen's Guide". This course will give participants the opportunity to:

- Explore the possibilities for a world without war
- Embark on a path to becoming an Everyday Peacebuilder

Goals/Objectives/Outcomes

By the end of this course, our hope is that participants will have gained the following:

- A new awareness about conflict and war, and about the consequences of our choices in response to conflict;
- A broader knowledge about alternatives to war and ways to avoid war;
- A connection between their own attitudes, actions and responses and the means to live without war; and
- A sense of empowerment in their ability to make positive change.

SESSION I - WAR IS OBSOLETE

Preassignment: Read Part One: War is Obsolete (Chapters 1-3 of the book, pages 19 – 62)

Goals for Session I:

- Develop comfort within the group
- Explore participants' current thinking about war, terrorism and conflict
- Raise awareness of the gravity of the time we are in
- Begin awareness of personal responses to conflict

Agenda

7:00 Welcome and introductions

Have name tags prepared; refreshments available

Welcome – Intro facilitator(s); set people at ease –I am excited to have you here.

Each person say name and 3 brief things they would like others to know about them. Say what brought you to the course and what expectations you have for it?

7:20 Overview of course

4 meetings – (confirm dates and times at end of meeting)

This is an overview course. Each meeting focuses on a section of the book

War is Obsolete

We Are One

The Means are the Ends in the Making

The Challenge of Change

We will bring in some additional resources-- videos, exercises as we go along. The course is geared to help you explore with each other the ideas in the book—and others they bring up. (It is not for us to be selling them to you or convincing you about Beyond War.) All views are welcome. We want to create an

atmosphere that makes everyone comfortable to explore possibilities & to challenge our own thinking together. We hope to spend time each session exploring the issues at both the global/national level and at the personal level.

Group Norms

It often helps a group to make some norms or expectations for the group explicit instead of having assumptions about them. Can we list some things that would help you to feel comfortable participating and being able to express challenging ideas? (List on flip chart.)

Facilitator may suggest things like:

- Listen to understand
- Let one person finish before jumping in
- Share air time
- Take air time
- Respect all views
- Share differences
- Take care of your needs—breaks, etc.

Ask about role of facilitator – How would they like you to help? Typically you serve as a timekeeper for the evening's activities, and can help with taking turns during discussion. Let me know if you are waiting to speak by motioning/raising hand, etc.

7:30 Emptying the Mind: Sharing Response to readings/response to WAR

Before we jump into specific issues on the topic of War is Obsolete, let's go around again to hear what is on your mind. (Tell the cup of tea parable, if comfortable.)

What is on your mind after reading the War is Obsolete Chapters? Share feelings and thoughts (divide newsprint in two columns and record) Clarify difference between feelings and thoughts; note any similarities and/or differences in feelings, etc....that all are accepted...safe to express)

Use the following questions, if needed, to spark discussion: (have questions written on a flip chart.)

What would you say about:

1. The usefulness of war in our age and why?
2. The inevitability of war
3. The elimination of all war?
4. The role nuclear weapons play?

7:50 Terrorism: Show video: Colin Powell intro and trailer from The Nuclear Tipping Point.

<http://www.nucleartippingpoint.org/home.html>

(See Resources list for other options. This video focuses on nuclear weapons and terrorism.) Build context based on their comments. Suggest that we are using the video to get us into a different part of our brain, remind us what is going on in the world today, and look at one of the key reasons we need to move Beyond War.

8:00 Following DVD, ask for feelings and thoughts. If needed, use the following questions to spark discussion: (If group is large, divide into small groups for discussion. Have questions written on a pad.)

5. What concerns do you have about terrorism?

6. What is the relationship between war and terrorism?

7. How might terrorism be addressed most effectively?

8:15 War and Conflict: Chalk Talk Exercise (Can use this during break time to let people move around.)

Make a chart divided in half (If group and space are large, use two separate sheets):

War is.../Conflict is....

Have people put up words or symbols under each (If break doesn't work & group is small, you can do this in the large group, with facilitator writing up comments.)

Review charts together to notice the comparison; look for negative or positive views of conflict.

Summarize with(if it hasn't already come out in the group): "Conflict is necessary; war is not."

But we often find similar roots of war in ourselves when we are under stress in conflict.

8:30 Our Approaches to Conflict: An exercise

Ask people to self identify their "natural" first response to conflict as one of four categories—found in research to be most people's responses. We all use all the responses, but one is usually more natural for us (our "gut" reaction). The categories are: Avoid, Accommodate, Compete, Compromise. Hand out the following descriptions to each.

When conflicts arise I tend to:

Avoid – Try not to get into it, avoid the subject, the person, etc.

Accommodate – Find out what the other person needs and give it to them. Take care of the problem quickly.

Compete - Try to be sure my voice is heard and my wishes are met.

Compromise - Try to give the other some of what they want, and me some of what I want.

Ask people to share their most comfortable approach or their typical "gut reaction". Depending on numbers and groupings, have people gather with others of the same approach. If not enough, just have them get into pairs to describe why they put themselves in this category, then discuss:

- What works well about your approach?
- What doesn't work so well about your approach?
- When would you use this approach?
- What should others know about working with people with this approach?

8:45 Share in large group

Summarize with graph showing the degree to which the different approaches (styles) satisfy one's own needs and the other's needs. Add the approach of collaboration, which satisfies both (win/win approach). {See handout/attachment for diagram.)

8:55 Next Meeting- confirm date/time

Assignment: Read Part Two - We Are One On This Planet pp. 67-89

Listen to CD Interview with Greg Mortenson

9:00 Close – play "Tell Me Why" 3:49 Great song by a 13 year old boy: Declan Galbraith

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKMoHLxDncU&feature=related> This version shows lyrics. Better than the ones on the BW Ning site.