

Teaching Conflict Resolution Processes through Animation Resource Materials

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Introduction

This paper introduces animation resource materials that present and facilitate conflict approaches that contribute to peaceful conflict outcomes. For human society to survive and flourish, teaching the necessity, responsibility and the possibility of renouncing violence and war as alternative responses to conflict is central. Establishing a Culture of Peace is crucial to abolish war and to create a nonviolent world. Institutionalizing peace education may take years, but incorporating conflict resolution education in a school curriculum may be a possibility. The animation DVD was made in response to the need of having a visual teaching material to teach conflict resolution skills within limited class hours in the established school curriculum. It offers humane, inclusive and thoughtful conflict response possibilities. Experiential activities in the forms of constructive conflict resolution approaches and sample lessons will be introduced. The DVD consists of three short animated stories using different conflict resolution processes (namely “I” Statement, Ho’oponopono and Transcend Methods) with an emphasis on constructive approaches.

Culture of Peace

The preamble of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) charter mentions that "War begins in the minds of the people, thus it is necessary to build peace in the minds of men." Furthermore, peace not only describes a state without war, it states that a culture of peace must be found in the daily lives of people. To achieve a culture of peace, individuals must transfer from the culture of war and violence to a culture of peace.

UNESCO designated the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace, a culture that consists of values, attitudes and behaviors that resolves conflicts nonviolently by addressing their root causes and prevents conflicts through collaborative dialogue. Violence cannot be resolved by violence.

The United Nations defines the Culture of Peace as “a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations.” (UN Resolutions A/RES/52/13: Culture of Peace and A/RES/53/243,

Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace). In this world, where violence still prevails, there is a need for an education that teaches the citizens of the world to understand global problems and have the skills to resolve conflict constructively (Global Campaign for Peace Education Statement).

Human security cannot be obtained by force even if it is used to fight for so called “justice”. Any act of violence would cause the birth of violence. Violence can be created from hurt and grudges built from the vicious circle of violence. According to the mainstream idea of heroic acts against terrorism, the oppressed may “punish” the oppressors with violence and force used as the last resort taken to “protect” the weak. At that very moment, according to Paulo Freire, an educator and influential theorist of critical pedagogy, the oppressed becomes the oppressor and the oppressor the oppressed. Liberation is to transform the condition of the oppressed by the oppressor, therefore, when the oppressed uses violence, no constructive transformation takes place. It may seem that peace has been achieved, but the violence used would reappear, in some occasions as a bigger force, in another era or circumstance as it did in New York and Washington D.C. on September 11, 2001.

Significance of Dialogue

Freire’s message is that the system of using violence to fight against terrorism and for freedom and justice is not true liberation. He noted that, “Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons—not by those who are oppressed, exploited, and unrecognized” (Freire, p.55). Freire respects the dignity of all people. Furthermore, he stated the oppressed must not turn into the oppressor, “If the goal of the oppressed is to become fully human, they will not achieve their goal by merely reversing the terms of the contradiction, by simply changing poles.” (p. 56). He further explained that,

The leaders do bear the responsibility for coordination and, at times, direction—but leaders who deny praxis to the oppressed thereby invalidate their own praxis....If they are truly committed to liberation, their action and reflection cannot proceed without the action and reflection of others (p. 126).

Peace and justice can only be achieved through dialogue, which require particular communication skills and attitude offered by education.

Freire’s philosophy of education is to educate to transform the social structure of the society that would include the benefit of the less privileged. The outcome of the education

may not resolve the tense situations in the war zones of the world; but it may be the education for the young to educate themselves and their offspring that every individual has a choice and the choice rests upon us. We can choose to have war, but we can also choose to have dialogue and transform structures without violence. We can dismantle the structure of the society we live in to make it a safe and secure place where we can enjoy peace and adequate standard of living. Transformation needs to be done at all levels of classes and institutions, from the individual to the government. As discussed earlier, Freire stated that:

True dialogue cannot exist unless the dialoguers engage in critical thinking—thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and the people and admits of no dichotomy between them—thinking which perceives reality as process, as transformation, rather than as a static entity—thinking which does not separate itself from action, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved. (p. 92)

Freire argued for the importance of critical thinking in education: “Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education” (p.93). Critical thinking and dialogue require important skills to resolve conflict and perform constructive negotiation that benefits both confronting parties. These are the skills needed, as Frederico Mayor, former Secretary General of United Nations has announced, “To make peace, we must act to transform the conflicts of everyday life into co-operation to make the world better for all.”

Dialogue and negotiation involves communication skills. Conflict is a situation where people have different ideas and interests. Conflict often happens because we think that everyone sees things the same way. The first step is to understand how the situation appears from another person’s perspective and how that person might feel about the situation. We need to respect and understand our differences. We need to learn how to care for others.

Conflict can be resolved through effective communication and good communication behavior. Conflict can be transformed through collaborative negotiation or constructive negotiation. The idea of “win-lose” focuses on winning or having an advantage over the other person. Problem-solving dialogue, collaborative communication focuses on a “win-win” result. This result can improve the relationship and the ability to work together.

Practical Skills in Collaborative Communication

Dialogue, as mentioned by Freire, is an alternative way to transform the structure of the society without using violence. In terms of dialogue practiced in building peaceful personal relations, particular methods and communication processes are necessary. Learning to master the procedures and skills needed for collaborative communication will open opportunities to transform conflict constructively. Practical strategies to build skills in conflict transforming processes will improve relationships and the ability to work together.

Conflict transformation is achieved through collaborative communication. It encourages personal growth and development while effectively communicating with others. Learning how to approach others will enable the exchange of ideas and information, and the building of personal and professional relationships productively. Skills to solve conflicts peacefully through dialogue will enable everyone involved to choose an outcome where their needs are met.

According to World Book Dictionary, 'conflict' is 'a fight, struggle, battle, disagreement, dispute, or quarrel.' Conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur. Internal conflict is when conflict occurs within a person. Interpersonal conflict can occur between two or more people. There is also conflict between two or more groups. Conceptual conflict occurs when there are incompatible ideas, which means that information being received does not seem to fit with what one already knows. Conflict of interests occurs when needs, values, and goals are incompatible such as when certain resources are scarce or when competition for rewards and privileges takes place. Conflict is something that should not be feared for every conflict has values. Intellectual conflicts (controversies) are important to good learning. Conflicts are important to promote caring and good relationships among persons. They are important for healthy social development. They help you to understand what you are like as a person and how you need to change. Skills in managing conflicts constructively make you more employable, enhance your career success and increase the quality of your life.

Dialogue through collaborative communication is the key to peacebuilding without using violence. However, Krauss and Morsella (2006) warn that

More realistic is a view of communication as a neutral instrument—one that can be used to convey threats, as well as offers of reconciliation, to put forth unreasonable offers as well as acceptable ones, to inflame a tense situation as well as to defuse it.
(p.156)

Having these pitfalls in mind, communication related to conflict requires much attention, awareness and skill in order to achieve collaboration and constructive changes.

Collaborative communication needs to follow principles of empathetic listening; understanding other's perspective, active listening and restating of each other's messages. Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, & Miall (2005) note that "The communicative dimension of conflict resolution can usefully be considered under three headings" (p.288): interactive conflict resolution that searches for an outcome that is acceptable for both parties concerned, dialogical conflict resolution that focuses on trust building and cross-cultural understanding, and discursive conflict transformation that prevents recurrence of conflict and develop skills to practice nonviolence. These three categories of communicative approaches of conflict resolution are communication processes practiced in collaborative communication. Such communication skills require training and need to be taught in formal and nonformal educational institutions. It is hoped that the culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world learn to resolve conflict constructively through collaborative communication skills.

Resolution means act of resolving or a solution to a problem. It can also mean a statement expressing the feelings, wishes or decisions of a group or an individual. Thus, if we combine both meanings together, conflict resolution is resolving a disagreement of ideas and interests by expressing feelings, wishes or decisions with words that are comprehensible to others. Conflict resolution also involves understanding of others. Conflict resolution involves managing conflicts constructively. One must first seek to understand, and then to be understood. Then, how can one express their feelings to others so that others can understand what one really wants to say? And how does one show others that one understands how others feel?

Misunderstanding often occurs because we assume that everyone sees things in the same perspective, namely, the same way of viewing the world and our relation to it. So the first important step is the ability to understand how a situation appears to another person and how that person is reacting emotionally to the situation. This ability is called social perspective-taking. Different people have different perspectives. No two people see an issue in exactly the same way. One needs to respect and accept the differences. One needs to learn how to care for others. Perspective-taking improves communication and reduces misunderstandings. One needs to respect his or her self and others.

Conflict resolution skills can be taught in various educational settings, both formal and nonformal. From the experience of instructors and facilitators who are involved in such trainings, it is clear that educational visual materials would be very helpful. Takabe, the author of this teaching DVD materials states, "Having had an experience in teaching, I thought that there is a need for teachers to have a visual teaching material to teach

conflict resolution skills within the limited hours in the established school curriculum.” The animation DVD introduces three scenarios: 1. “I Message” constructive negotiation skills based on a story about a penguin and seal fighting over food, 2. Ho’oponopono, the Hawaiian practice of reconciliation and forgiveness based on a tradition story of “Peach Boy” with a transformative outcome and 3. Transcend Method based on a conflict in a classroom.

The “I Statement”

As part of a strategy to resolve conflict, there are six rules to consider: 1. Deciding how to Manage a Conflict, 2. Do not withdraw from or ignore conflict, 3. Do not engage in “win-lose” negotiations, 4. Compromise when time is short, 5. Confront to begin negotiations and 6. Use your sense of humor.

, A set of procedures and strategies for managing conflicts constructively are:

1. Respecting self and others, 2. Describing and stating your needs and feelings,
3. Listening carefully to other person’s wants and feelings, 4. Reversing perspectives.
- And 5. Reaching an agreement.

The first animation is about Johnny, the penguin and Percy, the mother seal. This story is based on Johnson and Johnson’s (1992) negotiation process. Thus the use of “I Statement” will help each person to analyze and share the problematic situation and state the message that is comprehensible to the person you are facing. You will hear the characters in the animation DVD state their “I Statement” based on the following formula:

I _____(feelings)
when you _____(specific behavior)
because _____(how it affects me)

First, one must identify their wants and feelings, and then, make a personal statement about how one feels about a specific behavior of the person involved and how that behavior affects him or her. Feelings are described through “I Statement” in the following manner: "I(feeling)when you (specific behavior) because (how it affects me)," for example, "I feel sad when you tell a lie because I trusted you and I think lying is betraying other's feelings." Thus, a behavior description includes a personal statement that refers to I, me, my or mine, a behavioral descriptions statement that includes the specific behaviors observed without judging or evaluating nor inferring the person's motives, personality or attitudes. The problem should be attacked without blaming the person. After stating one's wants and feelings, the next step is to listen carefully to the other person's wants and feelings. To listen to another person, one must first face the

person, listen quietly, think about what the person is saying, and then, show that one understands. Paraphrasing is the keystone to good listening. Paraphrasing is restating in one's own words, what the person says, feels, and means.

Reversing perspectives is to confirm if one understands the others' statement and vice versa, if the other party understands what one has stated. Each person has a different perspective and that is why misunderstandings often occur because one assumes that everyone sees things from the same perspective as one does. For example, the "I Statement" sample could be confirmed by the other party in the following statement, "Do you mean that If I tell a lie you feel sad because you trusted me and you think that lying is betraying?"

To reach an agreement options should be invented for mutual benefit. Agreement is not a competition and there are no losers. Agreement should make both parties involved as winners by searching for mutual gains (See the form "Bridge to Understanding" attached at the end.

Ho'oponopono

Ho'oponopono is a Hawaiian approach to conflict transformation and reconciliation. Pukui, Haertig and Lee (1971) described the approach as follows:

In ho'oponopono, one talked openly about one's feelings, particularly one's angers and resentments. This is good. For when you suppress and repress hostilities, pretend they do not exist, then sooner or later they are going to burst out of containment, often in destructive, damaging ways. Ho'oponopono used the "safety valve" of discussion as one step towards handling old quarrels or grudges, and even more importantly, as prevention, so minor disputes would not grow into big grievances. (para 60)

The process of ho'oponopono exemplifies the Utopian Justice method mentioned by Clark (2005), in which she described how traditional justice is conducted among indigenous groups in Africa and North America in a nonviolent manner. She stated, "such non-coercive processes of justice ultimately require, however, a willingness on the one side to apologize in some way for the harm done, and on the other, to forgive" (p. 11). She explained that healing is a difficult process:

As all humans trying to recover from emotionally painful rifts know, both apologizing and forgiving are very, very difficult, and require considerable emotional courage. But they alone

make possible the eventual recovery of trust and the ability to collaboratively create together a new, common history that finally eliminates the pain, though not the factual memory, of the past. (p. 11)

Basically, ho'oponopono means to correct the wrongs that had happened in someone's life and make right with the ancestors, or to make right with the people with whom you have relationships. It is the Hawaiian code of forgiveness to help people heal. The actual ho'oponopono process is as follows:

1. Establishing the facts, what happened
2. Exploring why it happened, emphasizing acts of commission and omission.(What you did and what you didn't do)
3. Sharing responsibility, also for acts of omission (what you didn't do), apologizing.
4. A constructive, future-oriented program, based on [1], [2], [3].
5. Declaring the conflict closed, symbolic burning of records.

As the participants follow the five phases of the process one by one the victimized can hopefully transform their feelings of anger and grudges into a step of settling grievances so that the participants can correct the wrong and make right their relation so that they can live together in harmony .

The second story is titled "Momotaro Warrior Who Doesn't Like Fighting." It is based on the traditional reconciliation method of the Pacific Islands called Ho'oponopono. The story ends by introducing the following resolution:

1. The characters (the ogre family and the farmers together to talk about the conflict/problem one by one.
2. The main character, Momotaro serves as the wise person (facilitator) who can listen to everyone's story.
3. Each participant explains the facts of what happened in the community, what they did and what they didn't do.
4. The community explores why it happened.
5. Every participant shares responsibility: Explaining the wrong committed (including what they did and what they didn't do).

The animated story of Momotaro, the warrior is an alternative story to the original fairy tale called "Peach Boy", which is about a young warrior who goes to "ogre island" to win over the treasures with violence. The dog, the monkey and the pheasant join Momotaro and travels with him to the island where the ogres live. The participants can first act out the "Peach Boy" story as the narrator reads it to experience how violent this fairy tale is. Then discussion can follow up on how the participants felt as they acted out the story,

what human weaknesses (discrimination, polarization, us and them attitude) are seen and what can be an alternative story based on resolution process in a peaceful way. The DVD animation can be shown later to learn the effectiveness of Ho'oponopono. The participants experience a more constructive conflict transformation method that considers the needs of both the "ogres" and the "human community".

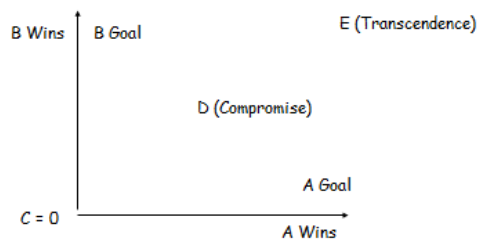
Transcend Method

The transcend method originated by Johan Galtung (1996) states that the conflict triangle includes "Attitudes," which involves how parties to a conflict feel and think as well as how they perceive "the other;" "Behavior," which is about how parties act in conflict; and "Contradiction," which defines what the issue is or what the conflict is about. Conflict is perceived firstly through good diagnosis that follows the steps that begin with conflict formation to complete a mapping. Some of the questions raised to complete the diagnosis process are: who the peace actors are, who the violence actors are, what the roots of the conflict are, what the conflict history is, and how did conflict reach the stage it is at now. Then conflict is analyzed through prognosis process that identifies where the conflict is going, what may happen and what the possible futures or outcomes may be. The final step is therapy where proposals, ideas, suggestions for how to transform the conflict creatively, non-violently and constructively, to secure the needs of all actors/parties to the conflict are made

Galtung also suggests that we can get to "peace," by conducting thousands of dialogues, and refusing to surrender to the logic of violence. Human weaknesses are often seen in the violence case. The weaknesses are reducing the number of actors to two: A and B, reducing explanatory factors to 1: the bad side, reducing attitudes to white/black, good/evil, presenting a Manicheistic vision of the struggle : good vs evil, reducing the 'Other' : dehumanization, demonization, personifying the conflict: Iraq to Saddam Hussein or terrorism to Osama bin Laden, reducing methods of struggle dealing with conflict to violence triangle and reducing the possible outcomes: win/lose. Galtung introduces the following diagram to describe ways to deal with conflict:

Transcend Method

(Dr. J. Galtung)



Point A is where A wins and fulfills its goal, point B is where B wins and satisfies its goal, point C is where solution is postponed because neither A nor B is ready to end the conflict, Point D is where A and B reaches a compromise that neither of them are satisfied and Point E is more than a “win/win” situation where basic human needs (physical well-being, liberty and identity) are respected.

The third story occurs in a classroom where the students are arguing about what they want to perform for the class play. Half of the class wants to play “Urashima Taro,” a Japanese version of Rip Van Winkle in which a tortoise is saved by Urashima Taro and in return invites him to the kingdom deep in ocean and the other half wants to play the “Ugly Duckling.” The transcend method is applied in the story as the following:

1. A wins: the students will perform the “Ugly Duckling.”
2. B wins: the students will perform “Urashima Taro.”
3. C=0: No play project.
4. D=Compromise: Do a bit of both plays.
5. E=Transcendence: Create a new play that would satisfy everyone.

Conclusion

In this way, conflict resolution is accomplished through problem-solving negotiations. In the present society, one often comes across win-lose negotiation. The goal of this type of negotiation is to gain an advantage over the other person. The purpose is to win. On the other hand, the goal of a problem- solving negotiation is to negotiate in a way that gains benefits for all. It creates a win-win situation that improves the relationship and the ability to work together. Once one learns the skills to be peacemakers, it will help everyone to feel better and attain peace within themselves. It is

believed that interpersonal peace will bring forth inter-group peace and this in turn will hopefully bring peace to the world.

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Bridge to Understanding
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	Person 1	Person 2
Wants		
Feeling		
Reason		
Understanding of Each Other		
Resolution Options		
Agreement		