

## **9 (track II/citizens)**

# **Sharing the Experience of Citizens' Diplomacy with Partners in Conflict**

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The two following chapters present a practical application of well-researched collaborative problem-solving methods to deal with the world's conflicts, including political, ethnic, religious or local. In the literature on these sometimes intractable issues, words such as "resolution," "reduction," "management," "regulation," "transformation," "dissolution," "settlement," and "containment" are all used to illustrate different preferred outcomes of problem-solving exercises. The methods of dealing with conflict consist of mainly two types:<sup>1</sup> resolution or transformation, and settlement or containment. This book is concerned with the former, stressing cooperation through information sharing, relationship building, and joint analysis to address the root causes of conflict. We are of the school that seeks resolution, because if underlying causes are not dealt with in a settlement, another conflict can spring up where the first one left off.

Track-two diplomacy has been developed mainly in the United States for this purpose. I have found that the term "track two" often has a different connotation in the South, however, referring to unofficial negotiations by a small political elite. "Citizens' diplomacy," as used in the title of this chapter, is the term preferred particularly by my Latin American colleagues,<sup>2</sup> prominent civil society activists who use these techniques to empower them both in generating advice for the elite and for engaging in grassroots-level dispute resolution.

The practices outlined in this section for conducting innovative problem solving workshops (IPSWs)<sup>3</sup> are offered as one model for working with unofficial citizen representatives of the parties as "Partners in Conflict." They are designed to facilitate resolution of a conflict based on transformation of the parties' perceptions and attitudes, and on addressing not only potential elements for settlement of the present dispute but also its underlying causes through a reconstruction of the relationship between the parties (Bloomfield, 1995). Complementary to classical diplomacy, second track or citizens' diplomacy is considered an effective means

especially for dealing with protracted communal conflicts—prolonged identity-driven disputes accompanied by fluctuating and sometimes high levels of violence. It is difficult to convey in writing the richness and validity of this type of program, and we are aware of no other attempt to present it in such detail.<sup>4</sup>

What brings us to share some of our learning experiences is a sense of urgency in the desire of those who have participated in the workshops to have written materials to build on in furthering the process of conflict resolution in their communities. Workshops have been held by and with Partners in Conflict from Middle Eastern civil society as well as from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America.

I have been eager to disseminate our IPSW model also for personal reasons. My experiences working in the 1980s with fellow Israelis and Palestinians at the Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem made it clear how vital this information could have been for maximizing the effectiveness of our work. During this time, and throughout the first *Intifada* (Palestinian uprising), we managed to maintain a sustained dialogue between the two parties, without any professional tools save our sensitivity, sense of equality and respect, and political judgment. I believe that in returning to Jerusalem now after developing facilitation skills in track-two diplomacy as developed in the United States, I am better able to help those who are committed to renewing or moving forward a difficult peace process. This chapter thus represents a lateral transfer of expertise from my work as a scholar-practitioner in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (South-South transfer of experiences), which has been enriched by my work elsewhere while based at the University of Maryland's Center for International Development and Conflict Management.

The term "Partners in Conflict" is intended to underline a common identity among participants in our workshops, such as a shared occupation or profession (e.g., academics, journalists), attributes (e.g., gender, religion), mutual concerns (e.g., environment, development), or common region (e.g., Caucasus, Middle East, Andean countries). This common identity must be based on dimensions different from those that are used to characterize the conflict (such as ethnicity, religion, language, and territory). When a peace accord has been reached and the participants are brought together to assist in its implementation and sustainability, we have referred to them as "Partners in Peace" (e.g., Israelis and Palestinians in the late 90's; Northern Ireland Catholics and Protestants).

The program of exercises for Partners in Conflict<sup>5</sup> (hereafter called "Partners") is for the purpose of building bridges across sometimes wide divides, by stressing commonalities. It is also meant to develop an "epistemic community"—a group of individuals who share collective understanding relating to their own issues and problems. Emphasizing commonalities and a shared identity while acknowledging basic differences encourages the establishment of a solid link between the two groups. An interesting example is bringing together people who live on each side of a border between countries in conflict. These individuals, in spite of their differences, share a certain frontier identity. Often ignored in the peace process,

which is negotiated by diplomats and politicians in the capitals, these citizens can play a major role in the consolidation of a lasting peace.<sup>6</sup>

Such "team building" requires not only technical input. It goes much deeper, exploring ways for Partners to transform their relationships with one another by awakening empathy and learning to move from adversarial to collaborative attitudes. It is not our purpose to erase the border between groups in conflict, as this would only make conflict resolution more difficult to achieve. As Rouhana (1995) argues, "The strength in the new relationship between the two teams is based on each team's unshakable group identity and commitments" (see also Kelman, 1993).

In the following pages we highlight a sample day-to-day curriculum that has been developed over a decade of experimentation. For each topic we explain the rationale and practical application of the IPSW approach. Often there is a degree of skepticism in trying alternative dispute-resolution methods, either from pragmatists who come from a *realpolitik* school of thought (e.g., Bercovitch, 1984; Zartman and Touval, 1985) or from those suspicious that it may be a "group therapy" approach, not seen as having much value outside North American culture). To overcome this skepticism, we suggest sharing the program's rationale to provide transparency and encourage full participation.

In broad terms, the program moves from the establishment of a working relationship among the Partners to the establishment of a cooperative problem solving attitude, through building skills for a creative thinking process and then applying them to the concrete issues at stake (Deutsch, 1998). Transitions from one stage to another cannot be rigidly structured, because the rate of participants' progress determines the rhythm of the workshop. Further, this ambitious menu could be devoured in an intensive two weeks; however, in the face of financial and temporal constraints, selection is usually required. We simply provide an optimal IPSW, leaving to the creativity of the organizers the task of adapting it according to their needs and experience. Those readers who are anxious to begin experimenting with the workshop without familiarizing themselves with the *know-how* of workshop planning, may go straight to the *show-how*, beginning with the section entitled Day 1.

## Preparations

The planning of a project in citizens' diplomacy starts with a needs assessment defining the issues at stake and the dynamics of the conflict to be addressed (see Gurr and Davies, this volume). Normally, this requires working with local partners (co-organizers or cofacilitators) and a visit to the area to engage in dialogue with stakeholders and potential participants. The facilitators may explain the IPSW and its value as part of a longer-term process, and even provide a short demonstration.

## Location

The meeting place for IPSW should have, if possible, an established tradition of peacemaking, lending an atmosphere that calls on the Partners to make

meaningful contributions to the workshop. This is preferable to a modern hotel, which often masks rather than reflects the country one is in. Success in the workshop is directly related to the participants' state of mind, and having the proper surrounding conditions is not a trivial matter.

Near Jerusalem, for example, the Tantur Ecumenical Institute has become a symbol of dialogue and tolerance. It is located next to a check post, one gate facing Jerusalem and the other looking to Bethlehem in the West Bank. It is enough to see the landscape from the roof of the building to obtain a sense of the urgency in seeking solutions to a sad surrounding picture. In Italy, Santa Anna di Stazzema, the site of the assassination of more than 500 women and children by retreating Nazi troops, has been transformed into a welcoming National Peace Park.

A live-in setting too can often provide an intensive workshop environment that a nonresidential setting cannot (Cohen et al., 1977). Joint accommodations for Partners can be a source of trust building, but they must be planned carefully. Explicit criteria other than the conflict itself should be advanced for selecting who will share accommodations with whom, such as by gender, profession, or even lottery. I am reminded of a summer camp in Italy for Israeli and Palestinian teenagers, and the excitement of a fourteen-year-old boy from Tel Aviv about the fact that upon arrival he had been put in the same room as a Palestinian child. "I am sure Shamir [at that time prime minister of Israel] never slept with a Palestinian in same room," he told us.

The main meeting space should normally be arranged in a circle of chairs, with easy access and moveability as required. A circle is nearly universally appreciated as nondivisive, and it can expand to include all or shrink to keep people together when others may be absent. The facilitators should be seated in the circle with everyone else. A flipchart should be available.

Meals and parties are also important times for trust building, as they provide a friendly and unstructured setting for discussion; they may also be designated for small-group meetings or planning sessions. The Partners should also have common areas where they can spend nonorganized free time together.

A commitment should be made to absolute confidentiality, and the workshop location should enable this to be honored. Conducting the workshop in the city of residence of the participants is a source of disruption, even if it is safe. A resort or distant university campus generates a positive predisposition for experimenting and learning. Being away from the conflict and the Partners' usual places of living and working is strongly recommended, at least for the initial stage.

### **Level of Conflict**

There has been much debate in the field about the best time to intervene in a conflict, and to what extent the conflict needs to have "matured" in order for these types of workshops to be effective. Does it need to be a manifest, rather than latent, conflict? Can the workshop be conducted before widespread violence erupts, or is it necessary to wait until hostilities become stalemated? This latter stage is the point at which parties to the conflict are likely to be most receptive, but preventive action

is always the better option. Protracted communal conflicts, like those in Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, or Israel/Palestine, are particularly suitable to this approach to conflict resolution. Our experience has been that IPSW can be used at different stages, with the objectives and techniques used adapted to the relevant conflict level. In more than one case unforeseen tragic events have occurred during the workshop, and it is better to plan in advance, based on a good needs assessment, how to respond to such crises.

While emphasis has been put on track-two diplomacy preceding official negotiations, it is also important to support track-one peacemaking with the more flexible collaborative problem-solving process. The Oslo accords between Israelis and Palestinians demonstrated the potential of such back-channel communication for stalemated official discussions (Kreisberg, 1996). The informal negotiations that preceded this agreement were eventually endorsed and worked out in detail through traditional diplomacy. At that time, peacebuilding efforts among members of the broader civil society were assumed to be no longer needed but were recognized as a priority once more after Yitzhak Rabin's assassination and threats to the lives of Hosni Mubarak and Yasser Arafat from extremists in their own societies (Kreisberg, 1996).

We have also experimented successfully with IPSW in border disputes that have been latent, as with our Ecuadorian/Peruvian Partners at the prenegotiation stage following their 1995 war, during track-one negotiation and postpeace accord. Even when violence is sporadic and of low intensity, it can help the cause of peace if the weaker side or "underdog" (very few conflicts are among contenders of equal weight) is at least recognized as a proper partner for informal dialogue and has an opportunity to respond to pressures from the other side.

The IPSW workshop can also be applied to "ethnic tensions" at a level below what is recognized as ethnic conflict. However, the Los Angeles riots and more frequent incidents of violence in Jerusalem are not separate issues so much as points on a spectrum. The methods described here are pertinent to both.

The degree of maturity of the conflict determines, in part, the selection of exercises. If no face-to-face contacts have occurred, for example, more work needs to be invested in ice-breaking and trust-building aspects in the initial stages. In the words of Patrick Regan (1996), "although characteristics of the conflict affect the probability of success, policy makers seeking to maximize this probability would do better to focus on how to intervene rather than when."

### **Types of Participants**

The IPSW training lends itself best to candidates from similar sectors of the competing groups. Their status may range from influential formal or informal policy advisors and public figures to professional groups (journalists, educators, young diplomats) and grassroots activists (representatives of human rights organizations, trade unions, students). An ideal participant for second-track diplomacy would be someone who is close enough to the center of power to have some sort of influence over decision makers, political elite, and/or public opinion,

without suffering the downside of being constrained by an official position in the governing structure (Rouhana and Kelman, 1994).

Collaborative problem solving is not as strong an option for official diplomacy, because policy makers are generally too aware of their constituencies to risk going through an open-ended process of change, or to role-play or otherwise engage closely with adversaries. Exceptional cases do occur, but in general, the approach does not appeal to officials.<sup>7</sup> However, in the post-Cold War era, military and diplomatic forces in peacekeeping operations or in border areas with guerrillas or paramilitary forces need to utilize dispute-resolution techniques to placate the tensions endemic to such regions. Within this scope, collaborative problem solving is indispensable as a supplement to governmental mediation efforts.

The program is applicable to Partners in domestic as well as international or ethnopolitical disputes. Examples from our experience include convening the proponents and opponents of separating schools for speakers of the Kazakh and Russian languages; the World Bank's and Inter-American Development Bank's ambitious plan of education reform in Bolivia, opposed by the strong teachers' unions; the militant taxi drivers' and indigenous groups' strike in Ecuador against government gasoline price increases; and the debate between the government and the church in Peru on the use of contraceptives. Other interstate issues suitable for second-track workshops include control over common-pool resources such as rivers, aquifers and international waterways, and other ecological disputes.<sup>8</sup>

It is also possible to use these techniques for pedagogic purposes, attracting university students or other interest groups to normal classes or mock workshops. This is an excellent approach for broad-based skill building. Simulations require knowledge of the history of both societies and their conflict in order to generate serious and realistic solutions (Rouhana and Kelman, 1994). It may require more preparation to engage efficiently the participants in some aspects of role-playing, but this can be achieved within the structure of a regular class.<sup>9</sup>

The inclusion of a few "real" Partners in such simulations can add value for both sets of participants, with many points for cross-fertilization. At the University of Maryland, we have had exciting experiences involving our students in projects with their peers from Israel and Palestine, at College Park and in Jerusalem. In pluralistic societies one often finds local constituencies (in this case American Jews and Arabs) who identify with the actors of the distant conflict. This not only brings the dispute closer to home but also presents to the facilitator/teacher the challenge of developing empathy toward the perspectives of the other side as needed to bridge the gap between the Partners.<sup>10</sup>

### **Selection of Participants**

To make sure that the best candidates are chosen from a large pool, it is important to rely on objective criteria and to avoid personal preferences. Before the selection process, consider what would be the optimum group composition, including "mirror" types from the two sides and the best balance of age, experience, gender, etc. of potential participants. Care is needed with ethnopolitical conflicts

where there may be different cultural norms regarding roles of gender, age or occupation groups. Ensuring equal status and the ability of participants to meet over extended periods and under difficult circumstances are vitally important.

Particularly in cases where Partners are brought from areas of conflict to workshops held in affluent societies, additional motives for their traveling—such as sightseeing, shopping, and saving per diem stipends for families in precarious circumstances—cannot be ignored. To a large extent, these are legitimate secondary motives, and organizers may need to allow some free time for sightseeing, etc., before or after the workshop. At the same time, the facilitators must be sure that participants understand and are committed to the real purpose behind the workshop. They are not expected to attend a regular conference with papers and discussions, but they are expected to be open to new ideas, personal growth, and possible changes in their points of view. When selecting participants, it is difficult to evaluate attitudes and personalities via correspondence or telephone interviews. One “wrong” person can spoil an entire group. The best way to reduce this risk is through a personal, in-depth interview on location after a spoken and/or written presentation. Another advantage of face-to-face communication is that it is easier to obtain binding commitments from participants and to achieve personal relationships with them that will enhance facilitators' credibility (Cohen et al., 1977). If relevant organizations see third-party involvement in choosing participants as infringing their autonomy and insist on nominating the candidates, there should be careful discussion of criteria.

Rouhana and Kelman suggest several additional criteria for the choice of participants. First, those being selected should enjoy credibility in their own society or group. This allows them to pass on what they have learned to the communities they represent, thus giving the workshop legitimacy and impact. If Partners are to achieve such trustworthiness, they must share mainstream political views with their groups or societies. Within this range, it is advantageous to have a broad spectrum of outlooks, to enhance the realism of the workshop, while avoiding candidates who hold strong political or personal antagonisms toward each other. The organizers should strive to also secure participants whose knowledge, experience, and personal integrity will help them respect the other side (Rouhana and Kelman, 1994; Kelman, this volume; Cohen et al., 1977). While we find it more important to help rebuild the “negotiating middle,” workshops including more enlightened representatives of two more polarized parties may work within these criteria.

We have stressed the need to select candidates who are in a sense already Partners in spite of the divide between them, in that they share one attribute already. We have also been successful bringing together matched sets of Partners from different professions or vocations. For example, a group of ten Ecuadorians and ten Peruvians we convened to deal with their border dispute included two environmentalists, two human rights activists, two heads of business organizations, two journalists, and two leading members of universities. Fairly early in the workshop they started to work across their divide in “affinity groups,” which were later very valuable in the brainstorming and reentry stages of the project. The potential contribution of the Partners was recognized by both governments when five out of

the twenty members of “Group Maryland” were “co-opted” into the official negotiations. Once the peace accords were concluded, some returned to our track two efforts to build sustained support for the implementation of the agreements.

### **Number of Participants**

The ideal number depends on many factors. In general, a small group of between ten and twenty members works best, including equal numbers from each side - if numbers are unequal then it is best to have the “underdog” over-represented. If there are three or more parties, some other criteria for balance may be important. For instance, in an international waterway dispute over the Nile River basin, with ten riparian states, it may be better to have a higher number of participants representing the key players, with percentages allocated based on the importance of the resource to each country. The total number of participants should not be lower than eight or greater than thirty. If the participants are together for an optimal period (fifteen days to a month or more) the facilitators can work more intensively with a core group and enlarge the number of Partners for special activities.

Despite any differences in the number of representatives, the consensus-building nature of the process ensures that all parties carry equal weight. No solutions are to be imposed on the weaker parties. At the same time, when brainstorming for policy-relevant solutions, participants are encouraged to take into account power politics and the real asymmetry of forces outside the workshop which are normal in conflict situations.

### **Organizers/Facilitators**

The first generation of facilitators was raised in the United States and other Western countries. We are now increasingly finding facilitators from areas of conflict who are more familiar with the limits and possibilities in each case and with the specific regional cultures.

Criteria for facilitators include first, relevant personal expertise derived from practical experience. Second, they must be regarded as trustworthy (“honest brokers”) by both sides to the conflict (Rouhana and Kelman, 1994). Third, facilitators’ personal traits need to be considered, including need for control, need for structure, capacity for empathy, etc., since they will influence the management style of the workshop (Boardman and Horowitz, 1994).

Normally, facilitators, one or more as needed to ensure an adequate mix of relevant knowledge and experience, come from a third party. When anyone from a party to the conflict is included, the honest-broker criterion requires facilitators from both sides. They can often work better with each of the participating groups, as well as serving in specialized roles within the workshop, providing feedback and support to other facilitators, or serving as recorders. Facilitators may adopt a “process-content role division,” where one focuses on the content of the discussion and another pays more attention to the interactions of the group and its dynamics.



They may adopt an active-passive approach, whereby one acts in a traditional role and others in a more passive role, mainly identifying with the Partners and thus providing necessary feedback (Auvine et al., 1978; Polzer, 1996). A staged approach to IPSW may start with organizers/facilitators assigning responsibilities to cofacilitators, chosen as the most suitable and interested among the participants.

At minimum, local advisors from the area of conflict should be involved in preparing the program. I have seen facilitators ask participants to hold hands, or take deep breaths and stretch. This may be useful, but unless it fits the context of culturally relevant experience, it may be rejected outright as superficial and thus reflect negatively on the entire project.

On the other hand, each culture will have its own customs that are worth using; for instance, working with Partners from the Caucasus made us familiar with the institution of a *tamada*. This involves having a “toastmaster” walk around the room at a meal or celebration, speaking to a number of good causes and honoring different people. Such traditions can be valuable in providing messages of unity in diversity and for reducing tensions among participants.

It is preferable that facilitators be chosen who have lived in foreign countries for a time, preferably in the region of the participants, and that they speak a foreign language, even if the exercises are conducted in English. A facilitator who has not only been exposed to but interacted with other cultures tends to have a less limited perspective of the conflict at hand and to be perceived by participants as open-minded.

Even with support from cofacilitators, facilitators should keep their own diaries as they work, so that they can add their real-time thoughts to the ongoing process of evaluation. They should also be aware of participants' interactions, not only during the formal sessions but throughout other socializing opportunities. This is not a nine-to-five job. We have found that appointing one of our team members (preferably with similar ethnic background to the Partners) to be in charge of personal and social issues that come up during the workshop helps to improve relations among the Partners.

## **Duration**

This model IPSW fifteen-day workshop is offered as optimal but will need to be adapted to cultural contexts and real-life demands. We have been able to host Partners anywhere from two days to several months. Hence the model is offered as a manual, or cookbook, from which facilitators should prepare their own menu, selecting recipes according to their needs assessment, type of participants, level and stage of conflict, etc. A systematic review of all aspects can determine the time to spend on each phase: trust building, skill building, consensus building, and reentry. Usually, it is advisable to plan for two or three consecutive workshops in the period of a year or so—possibly one in a third party's country, followed by one in each of the Partners' states, or in a border area, with equal time between sides. Such cases allow us to use the first workshop to socialize the participants into the general ideas behind the IPSW and to prepare a specific agenda for dealing with the specific

conflict in subsequent workshops. To continue the first activity with subsequent face-to-face gathering is crucial for sustained commitment.

In this manual the days are not divided into sessions, since the timing must be decided according to the circumstances and types of participants, and must be sensitive to the progress being made. It may be necessary to improvise and slow down the process. The sequence of stages, such as moving from training steps to immersion in the participants' own conflict, is what counts.

Frequently a tendency exists among participants to pressure the facilitators to "come to the point" and deal with the specific conflictive issues that brought them together. While sympathizing with this sense of urgency, facilitators do need to secure feedback that indeed most are ready to use their acquired skills to deal effectively with their own disputes. In general, the period of training should cover about a third of the initial workshop. Ample time must be allocated for the Partners to absorb the material and social experiences, and to feel comfortable. Coffee and smoking breaks should be allowed every one and a half hours or so, since if participants have to break ranks and leave the room individually, this could disrupt their rapport and the intensity of their work.

### **Preparation of the Participants and Facilitators**

The participants should have a fairly good picture of what is expected of them when they arrive, and if more than one are from the same place, they should meet prior to the workshop, with the facilitators if possible. When such a visit has not been possible, we have at times been able to communicate with the help of video-conferencing equipment, arranged through the U.S. Information Service. On such occasions, we were able to speak *separately to each team* about technical details (location, weather, and degree of informality) and the role that the Partners would be expected to play, and to secure agreement on the ground rules. After having shared a draft program, we asked for suggestions and/or clarifications. It is important that if a visit is paid to meet with some of the Partners, the facilitators make every effort to meet with the other Partners as well (Rouhana and Kelman, 1994).

In cases of asymmetries between Partners' levels of international experience, negotiation skills, or language fluency (the workshop may be held in a common foreign language, such as English, Russian or French), the organizers should empower the weaker side with some previous training. Separate intraparty meetings may be required in situations of extreme hostility and violence, to build trust before the intergroup work.

We have frequently been asked if it is appropriate for the participants to meet government representatives (such as foreign ministry officers) for a preliminary briefing. We have tended to discourage this, unless we know it is an option available to both sides and that the officials will share information about related track-one negotiations without requiring the Partners to restrict themselves to the official positions. Nonetheless, often the authorities not only need to know about

the workshop but also may deter their own nationals from participating without prior authorization.

The organizing team and facilitators must prepare a well-thought-out program with an explicit agenda to share with the potential candidates. Any relevant feedback should be incorporated before the workshop begins. As Auvine instructed, "Know exactly what you want to accomplish and make sure everything on your agenda relates to that goal" (Auvine et al., 1978). He also offers a checklist of seven ground rules for the construction of an agenda. *First*, select content that is relevant for the group; *second*, present material in a logical order; *third*, plan the time and know what exercises to drop if the time runs short, or to include if there is time left over; *fourth*, plan the workshop's agenda so that there is a variety in pace; *fifth*, use different types of exercises involving all the senses; *sixth*, have a clearly defined beginning and end for the workshop as a whole and for every session; and *seventh*, do not forget to give the middle a meaning (Auvine et al., 1978).

Cofacilitators from parties involved in the dispute should be included in the planning of workshop activities earlier than other participants, since their feedback is usually crucial in setting up the program in a way that meets the needs and expectations of the participants.

### **Planning the Evaluation Process**

Among the important issues to consider in project design are the standards by which a project is evaluated, who does the evaluation, and the extent to which it is a central part of implementation. The ARIA group (Rothman and Friedman, this volume) has developed interactive software that can help organizers check the internal consistency of goals between the facilitators, organizers, participants and funders.<sup>11</sup> In a nutshell, action evaluation is meant to provide real-time, ongoing evaluation during the project, following criteria developed jointly by the participants and facilitators, helping Partners take ownership of the process.

Unless an alternative has been decided on, there should be fifteen to twenty minutes at the end of each day for a short evaluation and debriefing. Responses to an instrument such as the "One-Minute Evaluation" (box 9.1) should be analyzed every night by the organizers and the most interesting comments reviewed the next morning.

#### **Box 9.1 One-Minute Evaluation**

1. What is the most useful/meaningful thing learned during this session?

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2. What questions remain uppermost in your mind as we end this session?

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## **Workshop Day 1: Getting to Know the Place and Each Other**

This first day is about orientation. The Partners should be made familiar and comfortable with their surroundings and the procedures of the workshop. Participants should be shown about the premises and given some basic information. Visits as a whole group can be made to interesting nearby sites, or there can be a reception for the group at other institutions.

Being introduced as a group to others can generate interesting team-building dynamics among Partners. At this point, participants are perceived by others as a unified foreign team, whatever the cleavages among them. They are often identified by locals through a common attribute (e.g., the Middle Easterners, the Caucasians). The president of the University of Maryland, planning to give a short speech to Israeli and Palestinian students, told me that he could not find a clear physical distinction among them and asked if it was proper to mention this. Clearly, it was positive for the Partners to be recognized by their commonalities. In another workshop where Arab, Jewish, and African Americans worked together to encourage dialogue between their Israeli and Palestinian peers, they became the delegation from the University of Maryland, welcomed in Jerusalem as “the Americans,” something they stressed afterward.

This may also be a time for uninational meetings, particularly if the participants from one or the other party did not have the opportunity to meet as a group previously. There may be strong grievances and deep mistrust toward the other side, and it may be important for the facilitators to hold a session with each side separately in order to give an opportunity to communicate such concerns and learn how best to address them during the workshop.

In addition to an inspirational introduction to the site, practical information should be provided about house rules, routines, facilities, etc., so that in the following days the participants can concentrate on the substance of the program.

The remainder of the first day should be open to allow for adaptation to the new environment. This generates opportunities for groups of different origins to come together informally, sharing meals, overcoming jet lag, reading material provided to them, talking with the organizers about the program, etc. This is important because once the workshop is fully under way, the atmosphere may become more intense as details about resolving the conflict are thrashed out, and lighter moments may not be so frequent.

## **Day 2: Getting to Know Each Other and the Program**

### **Objective and Rationale of Trust Building**

The introductory segment needs to be used by participants to familiarize themselves with each other's names, to discover similarities across the divide, and to set a participatory tone by encourage all participants to interact. Building trust is essential for a constructive workshop environment. This requires a breakdown of negative images, so that participants can enter into a critical dialogue.

There are many techniques available for the introduction of participants. Some traditional methods, such as simply stating names and affiliations, seem to be rituals to which people are not inclined to listen closely. Small nametags are not visible enough and may be perceived cross-culturally as a commercial gimmick. Instead of nametags, displaying a person's name on a large sign attached to a table tends to attract more attention. Even with some creativity, there is a limit to what formal introductions can do. The exercises below are designed to break the ice more effectively and to allow the partners to begin to see some commonalities between them. Depending on the amount of time available, what is culturally appropriate, and the dynamics of the group, several of these ice-breakers should be used.<sup>12</sup> Some exercises are more appropriate for informal settings such as a relaxed dinner; others can be conducted within the classroom. Rather than telling the participants that they are about to conduct an "ice-breaker," since the word itself is a reminder of frozen or cold relationships, it is best to introduce it as "Getting to Know Each Other."

Regardless of the combination of exercises chosen, it is important to establish early the role of the facilitators as a tool for the Partners to ease any communication difficulties between them.<sup>13</sup> It should be made clear that the facilitators are not there to run the show but that the Partners themselves are responsible for doing the work and achieving results. The facilitators' own presentations in front of the group are critical for a healthy workshop environment. The facilitators should introduce themselves not only as "experts," with relevant experience that may validate their roles, but also as "people," in order to lay the foundations for an egalitarian atmosphere in the workshop (Auvine et al., 1978). One creative way to arrange the seating not according to the sides of the conflict, a natural tendency in the initial stages, is to suggest to the participants to find their place in the circle according to their birthday (ask who has been born during the current month, help order them according to the date and then ask the rest to find out by themselves where to sit, by talking to the others).

### **Getting to Know Each Other (Ice-breaker Exercises)**

#### *Interviews*

We can start the day by asking each individual to interview another participant whom he did not previously know and then have each pair present each other to the group. (This suggestion presents less abrupt means of creating familiarity among the participants than asking individuals to introduce a member of the other team.) For the interview it has been suggested to ask: Who is he or she? Where does he or she work? What is one thing that it is not apparent about him or her? and What skill or ability does he or she bring to the workshop?

#### *Introducing Your Neighbor (A Variation on the Theme)*

The participants should be paired by number and asked to introduce themselves to their neighbors for a few minutes and prepare introductions of them for the group. Facilitators can provide some guidelines for the introductions, including characteristics relevant to the workshop. For example: What is it in his or her life

story that brought him or her to take an interest in conflict resolution? What position has he or she held in a governmental or nongovernmental organization? What are some pertinent activities in his/her home country?

*Name Histories (A Personal Favorite)*

This is best conducted over a meal or in another informal setting. We ask the Partners in turn to tell us all they know about the origins of their first and family names, and nicknames as well, if they so desire.<sup>14</sup> The best manner of applying this methodology is to ask if first names relate to a historic or religious figure, or an important relative, if the Partner was given a nickname and if he/she enjoys being called by it. The family name may have an interesting background, often related to a trade, place, or perhaps another fascinating story. Usually, even when some of the participants did know each other previously, in a superficial manner, they never had the chance to explore this part of their identity. A facilitator should take notes and provide some comments, stressing linkages and common trends between the names' backgrounds. More than once, one finds that the participants do indeed have shared names, based on common linguistic origins, as is prevalent in Semitic languages. Once the facilitators have completed the tour around the room, including the hosts, the Partners themselves should be encouraged to ask each other questions and contribute to an analysis of the revealed patterns.

This activity can bring out some interesting commonalities. In a gathering of Middle Easterners, we found out that the names of all nineteen participants, whether they were in Farsi, Turkish, Arabic, or Hebrew, had a historical or literal meaning behind them, often describing virtues that the holders of the name were proud to emulate in their own lives (the Just, the Compassionate, the Generous, the Happy, the Grateful, the Blessed).

*Ups and Downs (Another Personal Favorite)*

This activity requires that participants who share an announced attribute (e.g., women) stand up, while the rest of the group remains seated and applauds. Then the inverse occurs. We usually spend fifteen to twenty minutes finding out many unknown shared qualities or characteristics, such as first-generation university graduates, places of birth, religions, numbers of siblings (up to twelve or fourteen sometimes), marital status, number of children, languages, travels abroad, etc. Those who are left standing together with an impressive accomplishment (such as speaking eight languages) should get a round of applause. Facilitators can opt for stressing a certain order that will give more salience to the "underdog." This can be done by praising those with the higher numbers of siblings (calling for those who are the only child to stand up; one brother/sister, two, three, up to five, up to ten) or newcomers (asking for those who are three or more generations in the country to stand up, two, first generation; or third or more university graduates, two or first generation to rise). In the end, we ask the participants if there are any questions they would like to pose to the group. Sometimes they are interested to learn who is a vegetarian, or left-handed, but in other cases the search for common denominators includes painful experiences such as a relative lost in the war/confrontation, or

having been a prisoner. In each instance, the facilitators need to think how to ask sensitive questions while at the same time maximizing the power of this exercise.

On one occasion, after going through some initial ups and downs, we asked Partners from Palestinian and Israeli universities to stand up if they had been born in a village or agricultural settlement. Then we asked those born in a city to rise, and then an additional question for those born in Jerusalem. We found ourselves clapping for a small group of young Israelis and Palestinians who felt united in their recognition by the others. To what extent this little moment helped for the later brainstorming session on the future of Jerusalem is hard to say, but it definitely created a productive atmosphere for subsequent discussions on the subject.

After completing this exercise, some time should be spent speaking about the importance of recognizing overlapping identities, and how in a situation of violence people tend to be defined only by one attribute that separates them (almost always nationality or ethnicity). When the Partners start to communicate with each other in the workshop, they soon find that they share much more than they had assumed, so that it becomes difficult always to pigeonhole each other into a dichotomy of one collective against another. In most nonviolent environments, we are inclined to recognize several important dimensions of our identities. To illustrate the variety of overlapping loyalties that people tend to develop in pluralistic societies, a definition of diversity such as that used by our diversity program at the University of Maryland might be circulated and discussed:

Diversity is "otherness," or those human qualities that are different from our own and outside the groups to which we belong, yet are present in other individuals and groups. It is important to distinguish between the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity. Primary dimensions are the following: age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities/qualities, race, and sexual orientation. The secondary dimensions of diversity are those that can be changed and include but are not limited to: educational background, geographic locations, income marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, and work experience.

While this definition calls for respect of differences, facilitators should stress the unifying elements and the value of attaching importance to more than one of these identities, such as gender, across the ethnic divide. For the participants it is perfectly all right to express a strong unifying identity (normally national or ethnic); at the same time it is also all right to explore other shared identities with the Partners that cross the divide. In principle, questions for "ups and downs" can include any of the parameters in the definition, but facilitators must remain sensitive to the Partners' cultures. For example, asking heterosexuals or homosexuals to stand up is not appropriate in most contexts. Discussion of explicit criteria behind the exercise is recommended to explain why certain qualities are not used, at least for the present (Auvine et al., 1978).

#### *First Jobs*

Another simple but user-friendly ice-breaker is to ask participants to share what were their first jobs. Offering one of the facilitators' experiences first and

going round the room generates a warm climate and often stresses a commonality of humble origins or creative occupations.

#### *Cultural Treasure Hunting*

This icebreaker allows fifteen to twenty minutes for each person to wander around the room, talking to the others, and drawing out commonalities (hobbies, musical preferences or playing abilities, month of birthday). A gratifying outcome of the use of this exercise occurred when a Palestinian participant discovered he shared the same birthday as an Israeli woman. The resulting bond became very special, with the woman later offering the man home hospitality over a couple of days when he had to postpone his flight back home because of sudden heart problems. A second illustration of the success of this technique came out of a workshop near Quito, wherein two leaders of indigenous groups on both sides of the Peruvian/Ecuadorian disputed area met for the first time. When the two presented their seventh shared commonality, they said, "We both feel that if, instead of the central governments, we were to have been asked to resolve the conflict, we would have done it long ago and at a much lesser price."

#### *Name and Hobby*

Fun for young people: we stand in a circle, and the first person gives his/her first name and illustrates with a movement his/her hobby (basketball, piano, reading, etc.). The second repeats the name and hobby of the first and adds his/her name and hobby, the third includes the previous two and adds his/her own. The more we move on, the more difficult it is to remember; the other participants help the introducing person to remind him/her with their signs and body language. It is a nice, unplanned team effort.

#### *Jokes*

In some extroverted cultures it may be worth suggesting an evening sharing jokes, humor being potentially a powerful means to overcome inhibitions and deal with stereotypes. In the Latin American context, I was amazed to see the degree of openness and self-exposure involved in the national, ethnic and gender jokes shared.

### **Presentation of the Program**

#### *Objective and Rationale*

The introduction to the program should be detailed and include discussion, making sure the ground rules are fully comprehended and accepted. Sharing the rationale behind the agenda is crucial for setting the right mood behind each activity, and it should be repeated as often as necessary. The need to be engaged in a learning mode prior to beginning the actual problem solving must be stressed. The approach to introducing the subject ought to promote a predisposition in the participants to open up to new ideas in the field, as well as to personal growth. At this stage, a few minutes should be put aside to acquaint the Partners with the basics



of collaborative problem solving, the rules for consensus, and the adaptation of dissenters (all are explained below).

#### *Why Do It?*

The Partners may be wondering what they will gain from this workshop. We suggest listing the following five expected short-term outcomes. Firstly, they will be learning new skills which can be advantageous in private and/or public life. Secondly, links will be strengthened with others across conflict lines. Thirdly, the experimentation with problem solving will lead to the search for solutions, which ideally can be conveyed to policy makers and/or to the public at large. Fourthly, at a more intimate level, this may lead to personal transformation and new perceptions or attitudes toward the present adversary and toward conflict in general. Fifthly, the follow-up after reentry allows options for new activities that may open up new possibilities in professional lives and voluntary activities.

In general, a useful way to present the material is to request cooperation from the Partners for learning beneficial life skills and in giving the facilitators feedback on whether this process could be made to work in their own societies and environments, and on whether they want to, or may be able to, use this in their own right as educators or facilitators. For purposes of evaluating the achievements of the workshop at the concluding stage (day fifteen) we can also encourage the Partners to write for themselves their revised expectations from the workshop, now that the "deal" is clearer in their mind. An even better way to get the participants involved in the process is through the use of "action evaluation," a method conceived by Ross and Rothman (1999; Rothman and Friedman, this volume), where the goals are interactively determined and articulated together with the participants, as they evolve during the workshop and longer-term follow-up activities.

This may also be a time to say a few inspirational words, making all aware of the uniqueness of the opportunity as well as its timeliness. Though culturally bounded, and perhaps superfluous in some low-context societies, it is always good to find some metaphors or expressions in the local language or traditions that can help the facilitators to reach out from the beginning.

#### *A Note on Facilitation*

One should not explain all the logic of the exercises before they are done, so as to prevent the participants being influenced by expectations and to allow them to discover how they act on their own. A post-facto examination is necessary, since we are working with people who are potential multipliers of these techniques. The premium time for this is briefly at the end of each day. In terms of personal transformation, introspection and self-assessment is left to individuals, although they may be encouraged to reflect out loud at a summing-up and evaluation session at the end of the entire program.

Often, participants will ask when discussion of their own conflict will begin. Only once the whole group is impatient is it time to move to the next phase. We avoid focusing prematurely on the Partners' conflict, by making the transition gradual. Facilitators can give examples from their experiences in other workshops.

If it is not yet time to start the search for consensus on innovative solutions, one way of bringing the discussion home is by asking participants to give examples from their own conflict while still in the trust-building or skills-building stages of the IPSW. The idea here is to avoid premature closure, or exposing Partners to more challenging situations without first obtaining deeper knowledge of the principles and techniques of conflict resolution. The move from conceptual understanding of the field to working together toward solutions can begin as soon as the facilitators sense it is appropriate.

When the threat of violence at home is high, it is essential to tackle the issue a priori, so an unforeseen act (terrorist bombing, massive killings by soldiers) will not wreck the entire exercise. Not long ago, we had a workshop with Egyptians, Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians in the Sinai the same day that Israeli bulldozers began to turn the earth to build at Har Homa on the Palestinians' Jebel Abu Ghnaiem land. We were all concerned about an outbreak of violence, particularly a Palestinian professor from Bir Zeit University. We discussed how we would react were anything to happen, and this professor monitored the news during every break. Nothing dramatic occurred, and the workshop continued. A few weeks later I witnessed, as a participant in a Middle East second-track meeting in Helsinki, just the opposite take place. A few hours after beginning we heard the news about a bombing in a Tel Aviv cafe. We Israelis took in the news from all possible sources, including calling our families. Some participants wanted the meeting to continue, business as usual; others suggested that an Egyptian former diplomat and myself prepare a text expressing concern and based on commonly agreed principles. However, the atmosphere was too confrontational, and it was enough that one participant opposed such moves to prevent us going ahead. The lesson learned is that when the likelihood of disrupting acts is high, it makes sense to prepare the Partners up front for such an eventuality, rather than be shocked and disheartened by it and have the entire exercise made unproductive. The need to learn how to share the grief of the other when violence and terror occur in real-time situations needs to be incorporated into the IPSW (as discussed more fully below under the section on "acknowledgment and healing").

Finally, the facilitators should also consider the possibility of granting a certificate or diploma of participation or successful conclusion of the IPSW to the participants, if this works as an incentive and is appropriate to the nature of the workshop. Such an action brings a sense of cooperative pride, can help in fostering a sense of achievement that can be shared by all the participants, and breeds a feeling of togetherness.

### **Introducing Facilitation**

Depersonalizing the facilitators' own roles in the workshop can be helped by introductory remarks on the role of facilitation, stressing widely recognized standards for such functions. It is worth explaining the different levels of third-party intervention, which range from early neutral evaluation to conciliation, facilitation, mediation, nonbinding arbitration, and, for official processes only, to power

mediation, settlement conferences, and binding arbitration. It should be explained that facilitators are expected to play a much more proactive role than the traditional function of chairperson or moderator. I sometimes recycle a story learned from Bill Ury in the context of creative thinking but adapted to the role of the facilitator.

An old Bedouin at the verge of departing from this world calls his three sons and tells them of his will to leave to the older half of his camels, one-third to the middle and one-ninth to the youngest among them. They promise to respect his wish, but when he dies the counting of the camels totals seventeen, and they get into a futile argument and fail to divide the possessions as promised. At this time, a wise camel driver comes along and inquires as to the nature of the dispute. He then tells the sons: "Take my camel." First, the sons feel embarrassed about dispossessing the poor camel driver of his camel, but he insists, and then something unexpected takes place. The older takes his half (nine), the second his third (six) and the younger his ninth (two)—totaling seventeen. The experienced old "facilitator" takes off with his camel and tells the sons: "Perhaps you can now solve problems by yourself."

Partners should be encouraged to pay close attention to the methods of facilitation. When the Partners are back in their own countries, if they want to organize similar IPSWs, using the arts of facilitation will be necessary, and it is best that they try them as fully and early as possible. This includes motivating participation, eliciting alternatives, welcoming different points of view, setting an example of sensitive listening, maintaining an equal-time principle for the participants who wish to speak, summarizing ideas while stressing common ground, initiating and ending meetings on a positive note, etc. It is useful to have a handout on facilitation ready, since many participants consider themselves as potentially filling such a role. Occasionally, if there is good progress during the workshop, we have encouraged Partners to take over a session and cofacilitate with others. This experiment provides a team-building effort and consolidates the skills learned.

Facilitation may be very proactive, and perhaps it is best to be up front about it. Facilitators coming from other areas of conflict where negotiations have been successful (such as in South Africa and, for a while at least, the Israeli/Palestinian conflict) may bring added legitimacy and may use it to take more active leadership in moving Partners ahead more quickly. I sometimes apologize in advance for what may amount, at times, to hyperactive behavior on my part. If we build trust, such well-intentioned excesses can be understood by the participants and forgiven.

Humor and entertainment may be used by facilitators and are often beneficial in several ways, such as tension release, face saving, and as a means to reduce threat levels. However, the facilitators must be careful with the use of humor. Timing, ethical considerations, and power balance, as well as one's own limitations need to be considered (Wimmer, 1994).

Debriefing is a unique opportunity for the facilitator to make transparent to the partners the meaning of each exercise performed. Given the experiential nature of the workshop and the tendency to avoid lengthy introductory lectures, the purpose here is to get the help of the participants in making explicit the implicit learning that

may or may not have fully clicked in everybody's minds. We want them to take ownership of the process both in terms of being able to replicate the activity back home as well as in becoming convinced that we are using adequate vehicles to build trust, skills and eventually consensus.

Last but not least, facilitators should help simplify the process by which Partners bring insights and skills developed over the course of the workshop back to their communities. Toward this end, facilitators should make explanations easily understood, so that Partners will have the ability to conduct their own workshops.

This is best done when two cofacilitators, one from each party, can do the job. Such cofacilitation is a phenomenon that has taken off with some Israeli Jewish and Arab facilitators who have decided to use their experience together. The legitimacy they have in pressing for tangible results for the workshop is much higher, though it may take a while to establish their record as honest brokers.

A valuable way to end the day is for participants to fill out a One-Minute Evaluation form (box 9.1) and to be asked for any last thoughts or questions. This form may be presented at the start or end of each following day, providing a constant participatory evaluation process that is of utmost importance to the success of the workshop. While the friendships, attitude changes, and insights that the Partners may gain from this experiment are important both for themselves and for the promotion of a conflict resolution perspective, the evaluation forms contribute to the practical success of the workshop itself. They do so by giving the facilitators information on what was effective and what was not during the day's exercises, and on what should be added, changed or cut altogether. Although this evaluation and adaptation step is not listed again at the end of each day's activities, it should nonetheless be remembered as an integral daily part of any successful workshop.

A reentry workshop, when the Partners meet for a second time or more, still requires some Day 2 ice-breakers, and allowance for airing the many grievances that may have accumulated in the interim. We can have a session in which people can speak their minds, most likely in an adversarial manner. It might be programmed as "Status of the Peace Process" or, as was done in a reentry workshop after the outbreak of the Al Aqsa *Intifada* in 2001, as "What Went Wrong" (WWW).

### **Day 3: Conflict Resolution in Theory and Practice**

Once the Partners are fully immersed in the spirit of the location, have warmed up to one another, and understand the rules of the IPSW, the facilitators can proceed to a systematic presentation of the methods to be used and map it within the general area of alternative or appropriate dispute resolution (ADR). Exceptionally, given the experiential nature of our work, at this time, as we move toward skills building, we need to make a persuasive presentation of our underlying philosophy as well as the concrete product toward which the workshop is directed.

## Introductory Lecture

### *Rationale and Methodology*

This presentation should be structured according to the facilitators' own approach. As a rule of thumb, more time should be spent on prognosis (possibilities for resolution) than on diagnosis (historical roots of the conflict). Playing back the video of the long history of fighting is not going to change the script, and while it is important at times to let participants express their adversarial feelings, the process that we are about to experiment with is essentially forward looking. The lecture need not be brief, and Partners should be encouraged to raise questions or comments. One can elicit interaction by making reference to common preconceptions or controversial statements they may have heard.

### *Outline of a Sample Lecture*

Information on the dynamics of complex conflicts, and the history, process and applications of collaborative problem solving can be drawn from several of the chapters in this volume. Some points that I feel are important to include are:

1. Conflict can be seen as a constructive or destructive driving force, mostly depending on how it is managed. The term "transformation" should be distinguished from resolution, management, reduction, and termination (though in the workshop we may use them as synonyms). "Transformation" is most suitable for our IPSW method, since the expectation is to influence an attitudinal change and provide tools to help both sides cope with the tensions and problems arising along the road to reconciliation..
2. To help Partners understand how conflict can be viewed constructively, when culturally suitable, I have used sex as an analogy to conflict. Exceptionally, some individuals can sublimate or refrain from sex, but both sex and conflict are natural phenomena. Rather than repress them, the aspiration should be to make best use of them. A nonviolent outcome is preferable and is best when one channels it in an effort to obtain maximal progress toward satisfaction for both parties.
3. Asymmetry in power relations is a factor that needs to be recognized, and in conflict the temptation to act unilaterally is powerful. Such independent, one-sided behavior, however, may end in unstable outcomes: the stronger party may win a war but have difficulty in gaining peace. A lion cannot easily kill a fly; the weak have their own weapons and can make life for an oppressor untenable by means of terror, uprisings, and obstructionism. The fragile nature of coalitions among states and nations induces changes in configurations over time, and a single powerful country can eventually be forced to confront a group of individually weaker, but collectively stronger, actors. Hence, impartial reasoning requires that we put ourselves in the shoes of the "other." Bill Ury has often quoted Gandhi as stating that practicing "an eye for an eye. . . we all go blind."
4. Facilitators should present their own normative approach to conflict resolution. While advocating nonviolence as a priority goal, I would admit

that war may sometimes be legitimate, such as in the case of self-defense or rebellion against tyranny, but it should be used only as a last resort, when all attempts to negotiate or apply nonviolent strategies have failed. And what about litigation, bringing the other side to a court of justice? Even if we respect the outcome to be fair—and this is not always the case—the nature of the system is that we either win or lose. We call it adjudication, and it may tell us “You are right,” but it also means, for the other, “You are wrong” and that your minimal expectations cannot be met. So it is better to try alternatives to both power politics and litigation (Davies, this volume). This appeal is surely justified when we try to reduce levels of conflict in our workplace, neighborhood and family. If we are bound to live together, we know that inflicting pain through one-sided impositions is not a good recipe for a durable friendship. My own conviction is that appropriate dispute resolution is not a panacea but is worth trying first, and for the long term, as it may often take time to bear fruit.

5. Do we need a third party to intervene? Agreed, the preference is that both parties in conflict should find ways of overcoming the conflict on their own by educating themselves on methods such as “principled negotiation.”<sup>15</sup> However, it is not easy for parties that are in the escalation phase of a dispute, and often before or after a fight, to cool down by themselves. In many cases, a third party is needed to help them move to a resolution. Depending on the authority and resources of this third party, he/she can decide for the parties (arbitration), assist the parties to reach a compromise (mediation), or provide the two sides with the tools and skills that will enable them to invent jointly new options to deal with the immediate dispute and others as they appear in the future (facilitation). The first two may be more appropriate when dealing with single-issue, interest-based disputes; the third is recommended for dealing with identity-driven, complex conflicts. Often tangible and nontangible traits are part and parcel of the conflict, and a formalistic solution may not touch upon the more in-depth needs or help to improve the larger relationship.
6. Facilitators may conceive of their roles differently. Some emphasize the enormity of the problem, suggesting ways to learn how “to live with the conflict.” Others confine themselves to generating “dialogue groups” to continue over time, with the objective of reducing misperceptions and building personal trust. Our approach is more ambitious, since it moves on from this into consensus building toward action. The expected relative advantages provided by this interactive problem-solving approach, can be summarized as follows:
  - a. Many problems are not necessarily zero-sum but can be developed into win-win solutions.
  - b. Often we do not recognize the real needs hidden behind publicly stated positions.

- c. Good will, sensitivity, and learned intuition are all necessary ingredients for finding common ground. But professionalization and a good knowledge of available techniques can make a real difference.
  - d. More formal ways of negotiating do not allow for full expression of creativity, exploring new ideas and putting ourselves in the shoes of the other.
7. As a corollary of this last point, mention should be made of the growing importance of track-two diplomacy with the end of the Cold War and the persistence of ethnopolitical conflicts that have deep roots and require the addressing of needs for recognition, security, perceived survival, dignity, or well-being (Gurr and Davies, this volume). These identity-driven hostilities are often exacerbated by irresponsible leadership, seeking legitimacy or power through playing on the fears of their own people, creating extremists even among intellectuals, academics, and professionals. Often, the bloody acts of fanatics and fundamentalists paralyze the diplomatic process; deep-rooted animosities call both for peacemaking among leaders and for broader joint reconciliation efforts.<sup>16</sup>

Track-two diplomacy has also increased as a result of the process of globalization, which has expanded cross-border and international interaction, while also making involvement in international affairs more accessible to individual citizens and more relevant to their daily lives. There is an intrinsic difference between track-two and “back channel” negotiations, often run in parallel or in preparation for official negotiations. The latter is mostly conducted by emissaries of the governments, often security/intelligence agents or messengers with no authority to discuss issues. Track two, on the other hand, is conducted by nonofficial individuals, with the objective of generating new options, putting themselves in the shoes of the other, testing the limits of the possible. They may report back to officials in their respective governments, bring the new shared ideas to their peers within civil society, or try to affect public opinion through the media and other informal channels.

## **The Image of the Other**

### *Objectives and Rationale*

How one party to a conflict views the other side is a critical factor, affecting the way they deal with each other on all levels. Too often, different cultures or ways of life are seen as mutually exclusive, defined by contact with each other, and this polarity tends to reduce a conflict to “us” versus “them” terms. Ethnic prejudice and other forms of discrimination, based on gender, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation, language, and so on, have the same root. Polarization is more extreme when the image of the “other” is tainted by the use of violence, confirming the presumption that “they” are unreasonable and incapable of change (Cohen, 1994). This session should focus on showing how possible solutions are missed or undermined due to prejudice, fear or even hatred of the “other.” Focusing on the universality of this problem helps Partners to understand that their conflicts are not

unique and are thus more likely to be solved as others have been. In most cases, there will be a resolution. The main issue here is using history to learn from previous conflicts and cases: not “if” but “when,” how and at what price. Our goal is to find ways of bringing the resolution closer, and thus reducing the cost in human suffering. The mechanisms of demonization of the enemy lead to “a scapegoating of him, the creating of a stereotypic picture. It tends to be one-dimensional, certainly not three-dimensional or fully based on reality” (Moses, 1996).

*Exercise: “The Faces of the Enemy”*

Sam Keen’s *The Faces of the Enemy* video, book, and guidelines for discussions<sup>17</sup>, made during the last years of the Cold War, is a remarkable tool for creating awareness of the image of the adversary.<sup>18</sup> It can be used as a starting point for a discussion of propaganda and demonization.

The *Faces of the Enemy* lays out many tools for structured discussions on the image of the other. Facilitators can choose from a menu of points and questions. If pressed for time, I would suggest a discussion based on two of his questions: “Do we need enemies? If we didn’t have them would we have to invent them to have somebody to blame for our problems?” and: “Why do we automatically suspect people who are different from us? Is the unknown always evil, dangerous, fearful?”

*Exercise: Creating Your Own Exercise on Demonization*

If one is not able to obtain *The Faces of the Enemy*, one can construct one’s own activity by finding demonizing cartoons or film clips in libraries, newspapers or, most easily, on the Internet. The cartoons do not need to be relevant to the particular conflict (it may actually be beneficial if they are not related, so that the partners can look at them more clinically), but they should clearly illustrate how one side demonizes the other. The partners can break up into groups to analyze the material and present the stereotypes found. The facilitator should elicit some observations, showing, for instance that each side more often than not demonizes the same things in the other

*De-escalating Exercise*

This is an important skill to develop. We can start with the Partners’ sharing their past or present experience of a conflict situation that got out of hand (e.g., *Intifada Al Aqsa*), when misperception of the other’s intentions and domestic politics resulted in tragic unintended consequences. Often there is not much time to look for optimal solutions, and one way to start down the ladder is by small gestures, often initiated unilaterally by the stronger side. The other could respond with another symbolic measure, and eventually these one-time gestures could become permanent rituals. But, as Kenneth Boulding used to say, “It is easier to do harm than to do good,” and Partners are reminded with dismay of their own sad experiences. In the discussion, provide illustrations of spiraling up (“You force me to do it,” “I am only defending myself”) and de-escalation (“We are both engaged



in a self-destructive cycle,” “What can I do to decrease the level of fear that would not be perceived as a sign of weakness?”).

A proven method of de-escalating the disconsolation inherent in such a discussion, while at the same time keeping to the topic, is provided by a beautifully illustrated book by Dr. Seuss called *The Butter Battle Book*. This children's story is of two friendly neighboring nations, whose disagreement over which side of the bread should be buttered escalates to a potentially nuclear confrontation. It is a parody that affords neither a happy nor an unhappy ending. The Partners themselves can go around the circle reading each a page of the story; then give ten minutes for putting on paper what they can imagine for one last extra page to the book, providing de-escalation scenarios. We end the session by again going around and each reading his/her suggestion for a “happy end.”<sup>19</sup> We find out that preventing a situation from becoming extremely violent requires, among other things: investigating incidents to clarify what actually happened; forming a group of people from across the divide, a group that could be representative of people of good will from all parties involved; religious figures calling for dialogue under their auspices; controlling rumors to correct misunderstandings; third-party shuttling between opposing sides; asking sides to make pledges that such incidents will not recur; asking sides to offer reparation, restitution or compensation; and setting up agreed mechanisms to pre-empt a new crisis (Fisher et al., 2000).

It may have been a heavy morning and afternoon, and the participants should spend a little extra time digesting the information. If they require some fresh air for a late afternoon or early evening outing, this is a good time to call it a day.

### **Day 4: Dealing with Our Own Conflicts**

When we start training ourselves in conflict resolution skills, it is important to underline that we do not want to change the ideologies, identities or basic values of the Partners. Our work is at two levels: firstly, to find a more balanced way to view the image of the “other,” renewing our attitudinal prism by taking into account how, in the process of socialization, we have been strongly influenced by common stereotypes and prejudices. Secondly, we aim for an improvement in the channels of communication. Bad news travels fast, and with a loudspeaker; good news needs to be retransmitted time and time again. In order to reduce misperceptions, we need to educate ourselves how best to articulate the message, how not to be distracted by the surroundings and how to listen effectively and elicit a sincere and clear response. Before going into the relevant exercises, some attention on setting a relaxed and confident tone is appropriate.

#### **Confidence-Building Measures**

##### *Objectives and Rationale*

While the atmosphere is normally calm and polite when dealing with conflicts at large, the closer the Partners come to their own issues the more tension enters the room and begins to affect the stakeholders. Anxiety should be met creatively.

Before moving into these more sour moments, the facilitators can suggest to the participants that they adopt some relaxation or confidence-building measures based on acknowledged positive gestures toward each other. We can discuss examples, such as President Sadat's decision to come to Jerusalem as a statement to the Israeli public about his peaceful intentions. This and other stories are skillfully analyzed by Mitchell (2000).

#### *Possible Exercise*

A recommendation culled from the field of marital counseling is that each team may be offered a bouquet of flowers of a different color. For every "good deed" enacted by one side throughout the workshop, the other party should offer a flower. This way, it may be that after a week one group may have obtained a large number of flowers of the color of the other group, or vice versa. This is perhaps too romantic for some cultures, but the principle of providing confidence-building measures during the workshop may help the participants to generate more effective reciprocal empathy toward each other when engaging in reflective analysis or brainstorming at a later stage. In a deeper sense, signaling conciliatory intentions increases flexibility in the process, and it can be done through acknowledging specific interests of the other party, willingness to change, showing the flag of the other, using a vocabulary that includes politically correct language of the other party, volunteering to conduct an activity, etc.<sup>20</sup>

### **Focusing on Our Own Conflict**

#### *Objectives and Rationale*

The Partners must now start to come to terms with their own conflict. This is a difficult session, as the Partners will be extremely sensitive to perceived biases in the presentation. Nevertheless, this is the time to start airing these conflicting points of view. I have often drawn a cone shape to illustrate how misperception of the real problems behind conflicts arises from an attitudinal prism structured from the belief system (values, ideology, religion), social constructs (prejudice, stereotypes, images), and (mis)communication. We do not directly work with the belief system but on building skills to overcome obstructions from distorted social constructs and miscommunication. The focus is now on dealing with the image of the "other" that we perceive as enemy, creating awareness for prejudice and stereotype reduction, and sensitivity toward the personal suffering that the conflict generates among participants themselves.

#### *Exercise*

To start the discussion, a documentary or interesting speaker on the conflict should be presented.<sup>21</sup> Most protracted conflicts have generated films and documentaries, and the Partners can be encouraged to bring videos produced by their own governments or groups. Biases can be balanced by showing videos from both sides. One can also ask Partners on both sides to present their communities' views of the conflict. We must be clear in asking the speakers to introduce only

official or generalized positions, rather than their own personal views. This avoids putting them on record, possibly in a confrontational mode, and perhaps hindering their ability to change their opinions or attitudes at a later time.

An unstructured discussion should follow, in which the mood, fatigue, and general predispositions of the participants will determine when they may begin confronting each other over their shared problems. Within the limits of previously agreed ground rules appropriate to the culture, the discussion should be allowed to flow and run freely. It may often lead to escalation and confrontational interchanges, unless these have been proscribed. If it does, our hope is that the participants will begin to notice and realize how futile this type of exchange can be. If there are participants who show a predisposition to act as peacemakers, they may be encouraged to take an active role in reaching out to other, more adamant and difficult Partners.

### **Dealing with Our Stereotypes**

#### *Objective and Rationale*

Stereotyping is a common phenomenon. We all have a tendency to generate prejudicial perceptions of the groups that we consider threats, particularly to our security needs. These deep-rooted images are part of the nontangible dimensions of the conflict, and without raising awareness they are difficult to change. As we develop a new image of the other party as similar or equal to us in important ways, we should also expect to find that they have had a low opinion of us. The following exercise can be used to generate an awareness of the Partners' own limitations in judging the intentions, ulterior motives and designs of the other party. As a whole, the atmosphere produced from this session is usually tense but somewhat comical, with laughter often erupting as each side hears the perceptions held by the other.

#### *Exercise: Mirror, Mirror on the Wall—Our Own Stereotypes*

The group is divided into teams. Each party divides into an A team and a B team. The facilitators ask team A in both parties to provide a list of negative stereotypes of the other party. Rather than think about their own images, they are asked to look for the lowest denominator of prejudice and even bigotry in their own societies, to identify prevailing attitudes (focusing, at this stage, on negative aspects and terms).<sup>22</sup> B teams are asked to conjecture what perceptions of their own people might be listed by the other party's team A. After ten to fifteen minutes, the information can be shared. The A teams count the number of stereotypes and analyze the similarities and differences. Many interesting findings are likely to be revealed, including some shared images of the other. The same is done for B teams with a discussion on the high or low correlation between As and Bs.

The teams then return to their smaller groups but this time focus on positive stereotypes. This usually entails a discussion on whether it is possible to describe positive stereotypes, or if the term is used only for negative aspects. The same analysis should be done, but this time a comparison of good and bad stereotypes should be included. Often in a conflict situation the negative images accumulate far

more than the positive. Does a shorter list of the latter in one group imply an asymmetry in the conflict? Does the weaker party tend to have more negative images attributed to it than the dominant party? Do we tend to project more negative images of ourselves as reflected in the eyes of the other (B teams) than the list provided by the other (A teams) would indicate?

*A note to facilitators:* In some cases, particularly in high-context cultures where strong wording about the other can result in long-standing uneasiness during the workshop and beyond, an alternative format can be explored, in which the sides are asked to imagine the traits of an “ideal” neighbor, implying that the imagined qualities do not reflect the current situation.

*Exercise: Images of the Other*

An alternate exercise (Blake, Shepard and Mouton, 1964) has the two groups write a brief description of themselves and their relationships with the other group. They are also asked to jot down how they perceive the other and its behavior. Each can be summed up in five or ten points. Usually the participants find it easier to develop the image of the other rather than that of themselves and are made aware that they are not so sure about their own conduct. In the next phase, the groups’ self-images as well as their observations about the other are made public. This allows for a comparison, which many times will show astonishing differences. The Partners may ask questions of the other group to ensure they understand correctly, and then discuss the different images. Sharp accusations may be voiced at this stage, and should be kept within agreed ground rules.

A self-diagnosis phase follows, with each group asking itself why its opponents perceive them as they do. Once a thorough discussion is conducted within each group, all meet again to share their diagnoses. It is hoped that this will lead to a more open and insightful debate, followed by a change in each group’s perceptions of themselves and the other party. Even if all the issues raised are not resolved, the participants are still given a more critical view of their perceptions. This may be summed up with a presentation on the problems arising from perceptions and how they can be worked through to lessen or change their negative impacts.

At this stage, there may be a strong residue of hostility if only, or mainly, negative representations were drawn out. Focusing on a discussion of mirror images or similarities can minimize this. There is no need to pretend that this stage must have a happy ending, particularly in light of the phase that follows. These mirror images show the enemy as the coward and us as the brave. Often, the side that perceives itself as the weaker and as seeking to redress the status quo has sharper and more negative images of the other. For example, while Ecuadorians historically have more grievances about Peruvians, the latter have more critical attitudes toward Chileans, whom Peruvians generally consider to be aggressors. Nations can select their main “enemy” and minimize the importance of others.

*A note to facilitators:* Debriefing can maximize the effectiveness of this exercise. First, it allows participants to internalize the main lessons of the exercise, making some of the implicit findings more explicit to all. Second, it provides

participants with a clear-cut bottom line. An exercise in Ecuador on “feminist” and “macho” Latinos showed not only the prevailing stereotypes but also the feelings that were partially shared by participants themselves.

### **Discrimination and Prejudice—A Personal View**

#### *Objective and Rationale*

Partners are asked to personalize their view of the conflict. Fear for personal safety and security can be a much more powerful driving force than nationwide goals. Fears are easily projected onto groups seen as competing for scarce resources, especially those with less familiar cultures, leading to dehumanizing of the other side and polarized “us versus them” thinking, with each group defining itself by affirming attributes not shared by the problematic other. Personalizing the conflict helps the Partners to more clearly see the human beings on the other side.

#### *Exercise*

The Partners are encouraged to share personal experiences, or those of friends or family, in which an element of discrimination, racism, bigotry, prejudice or negative stereotyping occurred. This is a time for sad news, perhaps mild cases of racial or national discrimination, or in protracted communal conflict, oftentimes cases of atrocities, prison experiences, torture, and death. When there is an asymmetry in the power relations between the disputants, that will usually be reflected in asymmetry of suffering.

If both sides have stories to share a more evenhanded evening will follow, but balance cannot be created artificially. In a workshop on “Coping with Terror and Violence: Learning to Share the Grief of the Other” that took place in Bethlehem, we heard numerous personal and family stories from our Arab participants and specially invited guest relatives of the “martyrs.” “Fortunately” (and I use this word with some irony), we did have a couple of cases on the Jewish side. For example, one involved a former airplane hostage from Entebbe, Uganda, whose hospitalized mother had been murdered by Idi Amin when he (Amin) was told of the successful rescue operation performed by the Israelis.

In addition to describing the incidents, the participants should be asked to recall if there was any attempt to deal with the events after the fact. More often than not, people let it pass, unattended, leaving bitter feelings to smolder. These wounds are cumulative and usually kept raw by aggravating remarks about the victim's people. In some cases we have had “better” stories of acts of violence that led to offers, by some among the victimizers, of help and partial redress for the injustice committed. In case participants are slow to open up, the facilitators or local organizers can be prepared to share some of their own stories. For example, I have a short CNN news tape of my family involved in supporting the Palestinian family of a former domestic helper, father of four, who was killed by Israeli Border Police while working a small plot of land in his village.

This exercise can be used to generate discussion about human suffering and to analyze its effects on ethno-political conflicts; the cycle of violence generates

feelings that can easily become stronger than those engendered by the original causes of the conflict. At this stage there may also be an opportunity to deal with issues of accepting responsibility for the actions of one's own community, rather than continuing to deny and to attribute only negatives to the other party.

*A note to facilitators:* Facilitators should assess if it might be premature to evoke such strong reflections of the Partners' own conflict and consider bringing them up at a later stage, during the exercises on "healing." On the other hand, when teaching students from a country without a significant level of conflict, if the class is diverse enough, we often find ethnic tensions reflected in stories of discrimination or prejudice. Rather than simulate a case study, it is best for them to talk about their own life experience.

## **Intercultural Communications**

### *Objective and Rationale*

Partners should understand and develop skills to address the difficulties raised by intercultural communication, even when the Partners in many ways share the same cultural milieus.

### *Introductory Remarks*

In addressing the barriers generated by distinct languages and cultural traditions, we should place them in the wider context of the way we talk and listen. How to improve the way we express ourselves is addressed below; the receptivity issue is integrated both in the "active listening" exercises suggested for the reflexive stage and in a section on understanding body language during the adversarial stage (see chapter 10).

As a short demonstration of intercultural barriers to communication, ask each group to prepare in a few minutes five hand, head or body gestures and see how many of them are recognized by the other side. This can also alert Partners to avoid the mistake of downplaying the significance of cultural differences in their case.

The demonstration can serve as a bridge to a brief exploration of two contrasting paradigms of communication: one is common in individualistic societies (such as the United States, Israel), associated with predominantly verbal and explicit, or low-context communication styles; the second is predominant in more collectivist, interdependent societies, characterized by a nonverbal and implicit, or high-context style (Cohen, 1997b). Based on a thorough analysis of these cultural differences, Cohen provides ten recommendations for international negotiators, which are also instructive for citizen diplomats—box 9.2 (see also Moore and Woodrow, this volume, for more detailed guidance in cross-cultural work).

Even where cultural differences are of minimal concern, it is important to educate ourselves to develop the elements of an optimal communication process: effective expression by the speaker, accurate reception by the listener, and the feedback required in a group setting to ensure a high quality of dialogue.

**Box 9.2 Ten Principles**

1. Prepare for a negotiation by studying your opponents' culture and history and not just the issue at hand. Best of all, learn the language. Immerse yourself in the historical relationship between your nations. It may explain more than you expect.
2. Try to establish a warm, personal relationship with your interlocutors. If possible, get to know them even before negotiations get under way. Cultivating contacts and acquaintances is time well spent.
3. Do not assume that what you mean by a message—verbal or nonverbal—is what representatives of the other side will understand by it. They will interpret it in the light of their cultural and linguistic background, not yours. By the same token, they may be unaware that things look different from your perspective.
4. Be alert to indirect formulations and nonverbal gestures. High-context societies put a lot of weight on them. You may have to read between the lines to understand what your partners are hinting at. Assume they will not come right out with it. Be careful in your own words and body language. Your partners may read more into them than you intend. Do not express criticism in public. Do not lose your temper. Anything that leads to loss of face is likely to be counterproductive.
5. Do not overestimate the power of advocacy. Your interlocutors are unlikely to shift their positions simply in response to good arguments. Pressure may bring short-term results but risks damaging the relationship. Facts and circumstances speak louder than words and are easier to comply with.
6. Adapt your strategy to your opponent's cultural needs. On matters of inviolable principle, attempt to accommodate their instinct for prior agreement with your preference for progress on practical matters. Where haggling is called for, leave yourself plenty of leeway. Start high, bargain doggedly and hold back a trump card for the final round.
7. Flexibility is not a virtue against intransigent opponents. If they are concerned to discover your real bottom line, repeated concessions will confuse rather than clarify the issue. Nor is there merit in innovation for its own sake. Avoid the temptation to compromise with yourself.
8. Be patient. Haste will almost certainly mean unnecessary concessions. Resist the temptation to labor under artificial time constraints; they will work to your disadvantage. Allow your opponents to decide in their own good time. Their bureaucratic requirements cannot be short-circuited.
9. Be aware of the emphasis placed by your opponents on matters of status and face. Outward forms and appearances may be as important as substance. For face-conscious negotiators, an agreement must be presentable as an honorable outcome. On the other hand, symbolic gains may compensate them for substantive losses.
10. Do not be surprised if negotiation continues beyond the apparent conclusion of an agreement. Implementation is unlikely to be automatic and often requires continuing discussion. To assist compliance, it may help to build a system of graduated, performance-based incentives into the original contract.

*Exercise 1*

The facilitators can ask participants to represent their own cultures or to play another, having first identified its key values and cultural norms for behavior. A

skilled assistant, prepared to role-play a fictional culture with highly contrasting but still positive values and behavioral norms, can dramatize the miscommunication and confusion that arises from lack of awareness of the nonuniversality of our cultural assumptions. Sensitivity is required in order to avoid offending anyone through exaggeration or ridicule.

*Exercise 2*

An alternative is to use a film developed by Edward Stewart, a pioneer in this area, showing an American businessman arriving in a South or Central Asian country, committing gaffes in his impatient dealings and relationship with a local partner. Identifying their misunderstandings can be fun, and it is useful to track the departures from the recommendations in box 9.2.

This may be followed by a “Cultures in Conflict” game of role-playing two or more different types of culture, based on a set of prepared “culture cards.” These cards specify contrasting behavioral traits relating to personality, privacy, conversation topics, approaches to the opposite sex, behavior at home and outside, body language, etc., so cards can be assigned to small groups in any combination to define contrasting cultures. Participants are unaware of the nature of the traits of the other group(s) with whom they have to communicate, and they will quickly appreciate the profound misunderstandings that can arise.

The “values continuum” (box 9.3) can be used to analyze the cultural learning that took place in this exercise, or it can be used to compare the Partners’ cultures, by placing each culture along a continuum between each set of contrasting values.<sup>23</sup>

**Box 9.3 Values Continuum**

Control .....	Adaptation
Confrontation .....	Harmony
Individualism .....	Interdependence
Conscience as guide .....	Norms as guide
Resources expanding .....	Resources limited
Explicitness .....	Subtlety, respect
Change, progress .....	Continuity
Action, doing .....	Experience, being
Future oriented .....	Past oriented
Youth valued .....	Age valued
Problem solving .....	Relationship building
Competition .....	Consensus
Equality .....	Hierarchy
Linear limited time .....	Circular open time
Mechanical world .....	Spiritual/organic
Analysis, reason .....	Synthesis, wisdom
Truth is relative .....	Truth is absolute
Informality .....	Formality
Trust institutions .....	Trust relationships
Constrained contact .....	Intense contact
Constrained expression .....	Expansive expression



## The Way We Express Ourselves

### *Nonviolent Communication—Objective and Rationale*

Marshal Rosenberg (1983) has developed an interactive model for learning to express and listen effectively, with an emphasis on “empowering evaluations.”<sup>24</sup> The accent here is on providing a more objective, empathic, compassionate way for the parties to understand each other. His exercises encourage us to focus on four sets of issues, which are useful to adapt and role-play:

1. *What we observe:* Change expressions that confuse observation and evaluation (e.g., “You are too generous”) to examples separating observation and evaluation (e.g., “When you give all your lunch money to others, I think you are too generous”). Also, change failure by generalization (e.g., “Blacks don’t cut their grass or repair their houses”) to more specific instances about person and place (e.g., “I have not seen the black family at 1679 Ross Street cut their lawn or fix the shingles of their roof”). Another example: replace “White people can’t dance,” with “Remember the white couple in the club last night? Both were poor dancers.” Rather than stating, “All men are pigs,” say “The man who lives next door cheats on his wife.”
2. *What we feel:* Rather than criticizing others or their behavior (“You are wrong”), use the words “I feel” to focus on and share your own experiences (“I feel that I am right”). Rather than expressing only feelings (“I feel uncared for”), add words that tell more about why you think they occur (“When you don’t call for a week I feel hurt, because I interpret it as you not caring for me”). Express how you experience the behavior of others impacting you rather than criticize the behavior itself.
3. *What we value:* Our feelings result not only from what we observe, but also from how we react to what is important to our cultural and personal values. Different people (and cultures) attach different values to the same acts or expressions. One method of clarifying our values is by adding to an observation a “because I” statement. This method transforms the sentence from “You always yell at me when we disagree” to “It’s hard for me to discuss things when you yell, because I think you’re angry at me and don’t want to hear what I have to say.” To “This country is so disorganized,” we should add, “I have a hard time figuring out how things work here because I come from a place where structure and punctuality are important.”
4. *What we are requesting:* This fourth piece of information elucidates what we are requesting as a positive action. Expressions such as “I want you to respect my right” or “I want some understanding” work better than negatives (“I want you to stop attacking me”) but still are not sufficient. It is more effective to give voice to what you *do* want if you are specific. It is a good idea to express feelings (“I would like you to be honest with me”) if they are accompanied by an appeal (“I would like you to tell me what I’ve been doing that you don’t like”).

*Nonviolent Communication Exercise*

Participants are divided into four groups, and for twenty minutes each group should prepare four or more wrong and right statements about the conflict from their personal experiences. Each group can take one of the categories or compete for the best examples for all four. We then read the statements, sharing them with the other groups, who are asked to pick statements that best highlight the different categories. This gives them tools to talk about the conflict without exacerbating relations through misunderstandings.

*Hot Buttons Exercise*

Susan Potziba has suggested that some phrases or slogans that we inadvertently use have a very negative connotation to the other (e.g., comparing Israeli behavior to “Nazi” behavior; using the term “terrorists” when referring to Palestinians; using “Orientals” for people from East Asia). Usage of such terms immediately blocks the comprehension of the rest of the sentence or discourse, and people are best advised to refrain from using them. The exercise requires the individuals (or team) to write down over ten minutes a list of such explosive expressions when used by the adversary, and perhaps also expressions that are embarrassing when used by their own peers against the other party. The negative catchwords should then be shared in the group, usually discovering some that were not originally considered as such. The Partners should then be invited to make a commitment to avoid hurting each other by pressing such “hot buttons.”

At the end of the day, reflect for a few minutes on the events that have occurred, taking care to defuse whatever tensions remain, to avoid carrying over any hostile attitudes to the following day.

## **Day 5: Experimenting with Conflict Resolution**

An option at this stage is to consider alternative approaches to collaborative problem solving within the broader field of ADR.

### **Mediation**

*Objective and Rationale*

Mediation training may be introduced, briefly in theory and then in practice through simulations, as a way of demonstrating how integrative problem-solving methods can also be used to help decision makers come to a mutually acceptable agreement. It is best to focus on a scenario that is realistic for the participants, such as one relating to perceived discrimination in the workplace. If possible a mediation practitioner should be brought in to run this session. Sometimes we ask participants to bring examples from their own personal lives, or a couple of participants may be asked to role-play a prepared scenario, giving them ample room for improvisation.

Simple (nonpower) mediation is widely used for resolving single-issue disputes with two or few parties involved. In the context of complex, protracted

conflicts or distributional disputes involving larger numbers of groups or stakeholders, or stakeholders without experience in methods of face-to-face negotiations or in working with each other, it will usually be better to use second track collaborative problem-solving methods such as IPSW first, or in parallel with official mediation. Protracted conflicts tend to multiply the issues under dispute, involve disjoined conglomerates on both sides and asymmetries in power relations, with violence resulting in widely shared feelings of victimization on both sides, and failed initiatives. These issues must be addressed before official mediation can be effective.

#### *Exercise*

A good scenario for demonstrating mediation concerns a policeman who has been decorated for a recent act of bravery but is going to court to sue a journalist who covered the story. In the process of gathering information, the journalist had learned that the policeman is a homosexual, and this added news value got the story to the front page. The journalist's defense was that the information was accurate and that his purpose had been noble, namely, to show the entire city that the gay community includes dedicated and heroic policemen, and by so doing to help destroy negative stereotypes. Yet, the life of this particular plaintiff was ruined: his peers no longer liked to work with him; they mocked him, and eventually he had to take a leave of absence and may possibly be obliged to resign. As the mediator goes through the different stages of resolving the conflict<sup>25</sup>, she/he may organize a "fishbowl" with the rest of the participants, encouraging them to provide questions to the parties or suggestions to the mediator.

#### *Other Exercises*

The facilitators might also, if time permits, familiarize the participants with other methods used, from elite interaction through first-track diplomacy, down to peer mediation with children. For instance, they might discuss the nature of mediation efforts with Croatian, Bosnian and Serb leaders in Dayton, Ohio (what is the impact of deadlines, or pressure from a power-mediator, on the parties?); or Jimmy Carter's experience with Egyptian and Israeli representatives at Camp David; or "notebook diplomacy" as used recently in Haiti (carrying a text via laptop from one side to the other for refinement can be an efficient way of reaching an accord).<sup>26</sup> Other ongoing issues of diplomacy in crisis situations may be discussed.

Introducing the concept of peer mediation with children in schools, with locally trained children as presenters, if available, may have an extraordinary inspirational power. If they can do it, why can't adults? A good discussion can bring up the notion of adapting this tool to the professional circles of the Partners.

Alternatively, highlighting an elicitive approach, the participants can also search within their own cultures for traditional mechanisms of mediation and problem solving. How have Japanese, Arab or other traditional societies, been effective in regulating levels of conflict using time-honored customs involving the family, the workplace, or elders?

## **Our Shared Vision: An Exercise in Foreseeing the Future**

### *Objective and Rationale*

This exercise is designed to create a positive foundation from which Partners can work toward a desired future, at the same time clarifying the dangers of allowing events to continue as they have in the past. The goal is to generate a creative tension by highlighting a plausible positive scenario for the future and then a plausible negative scenario, as a motivating force toward resolution of immediate disputes.

### *Exercise*

Collective vision building involves asking the Partners to look ahead twenty to thirty years (older Partners prefer to go for a longer period ahead) and to share with the group the best realistic scenarios for their regions or the communities in conflict. Some time should be spent encouraging the participants to be forthcoming and creative, going around the room and eliciting responses from everybody. The atmosphere tends to be rather pastoral and constructive. Clearly, it is easier to find common denominators two decades ahead.<sup>27</sup> Younger participants tend to place themselves and their career objectives within the wider picture, while older groups normally envisage the future that they wish for their children. Realistic optimism is encouraged here, taking into account both constraints and possible future opportunities for peace building, sustained structural reform, social change and economic growth. Facilitators may also have to provide a reality check when participants stray too far into fantasy, as when a woman from one of the poorest countries in the world visualized each of the Partners' families as having a Mercedes-Benz. As a whole, this exercise tends to generate harmonious and inspired discussion, and the elements of a shared vision (perhaps more than one) should be registered on a flip chart and summarized in a handout for the Partners.

Next comes an anticlimactic moment, as the facilitators ask the participants to switch gears and now think of the worst plausible scenarios of twenty years hence. There is normally a reluctance to do so.<sup>28</sup> Some assert that things cannot be worse than they are, but others disagree. The atmosphere grows heavier as the Partners are reminded where they are coming from. They speak about higher levels of conflict, economic stagnation, increasing dependence on humanitarian aid, guerrilla warfare, terror, massive loss of life, hunger and mass starvation, chaos, the emergence of new latent ethnic conflict, and other such disheartening scenes.<sup>29</sup> These should also be written on the flip chart and summarized in a handout.

The aim of the exercise is to see if it is possible to integrate or agree on alternate plausible positive scenarios in one "vision statement" reflecting a coherent collective wisdom of the group. We should encourage a working group or individual Partners to take on this challenge as other agenda items allow. This represents a shared aspiration of the group, and care should be taken to capture a statement that resonates as describing something both achievable and worth investing substantial time and energy to realize.

It is easier to agree on more remote common aims projected twenty years ahead than on ideas to be implemented now. For this tougher task we can use the technique of "backcasting," or backtracking. This brings the thinking about preferred scenarios down to ten years ahead, then five, and serves then as a basis to prepare the agenda for discussions in subsequent days. It is important that the participants themselves table the priority issues to be addressed in the workshop and set a joint agenda.

A common observation has been that Partners come to understand that while "keeping cards close to the chest" may make sense in a zero-sum competition, it may be that both can use the same card to complete their "hands." In a long-term shared vision we are talking about a team who would like jointly to maximize their future gains (good-news vision) playing together against adverse circumstances (bad-news vision). In the Israeli/Palestinian case, for example, if a cooperative two-state solution is the shared vision, it does make more sense to signal it now, allowing the Palestinian side to perceive the light at the end of the tunnel. At the same time, the demilitarized and peaceful nature envisaged for the state, the legitimization and acceptance of Israel as a partner, allows the two parties to feel more relaxed when discussing the tougher and more intricate steps to be taken toward the common goal.

We have now concluded the "prenegotiation" phase of the IPSW and look forward to the main integrative problem-solving exercise, where the Partners attempt to address creatively the issues in dispute and identify potential solutions. The next section of the workshop reviews alternative methods for reaching consensus, then provides a detailed account of our preferred methodology. Spending adequate time building skills pays off as we get into the workshop's "real" purpose.

## Notes

1. They are seen by some as mutually exclusive (Bloomfield, 1995: 154), but there have been attempts to construct an integrative model (e.g., Fisher and Keashly, 1991).
2. The negative reaction to track two was exacerbated when this term was used in U.S. anti-Cuban legislation and for covert operations in Chile aimed at undermining Salvador Allende's regime.
3. Shorter versions of the IPSW are available in Spanish and Russian (see Kaufman, 1998).
4. Michael Banks and Chris Mitchell's (1997) "Handbook on the Analytical Problem Solving Approach" is useful more as a conceptual and educational tool, focusing less on concrete and experiential aspects. Ambassador John McDonald has also introduced the general approach in several publications, including his "Guidelines for Newcomers to Track Two Diplomacy."
5. The term is borrowed from the work of my friend Abbe Loewenthal on U.S.-Latin American relations.
6. For instance, the Association of Universities of the South of Ecuador and North of Peru (AUSENP) has been involved in a program on citizen's diplomacy for local conflict resolution, the awarding of a binational peace prize, joint research projects, etc.

7. After learning from Larry Susskind about his work with government and unofficial representatives in an environmental dispute in Ecuador and “parallel informal negotiations” in climate change negotiations I am becoming convinced that you can have a “track 1½,” mixing participants from both. In our third workshop of Ecuadorian/Peruvian civil society leaders, one participant from each foreign office was invited in a “personal capacity,” and the other participants felt sufficiently comfortable with their presence.

8. We are currently working with upstream and downstream states on the Salween River, with Chinese, Burmese and Thai participants. For a full research strategy on transboundary water disputes, see Kaufman, Oppenheimer, Wolf and Dinar, 1997: 37-48.

9. Over the last few years I have had the pleasure of team-teaching a course on “Conflict Resolution: The Israeli/Palestinian Experiment” with Professor Manual Hassassian, of the University of Bethlehem. This course has become a powerful testing ground both for exploring the issues and motivating students to move away from adversarial attitudes and search for common ground.

10. For an analysis of such an interactive process with Partners and students, see Leslie Gottert, “An Evaluation of the Israeli-Palestinian Building Bridges: A Christian, Jewish and Moslem Trialogue” (CIDCM, University of Maryland, 1995).

11. The Action Evaluation Research Institute has developed a software program ([www.aepro.org](http://www.aepro.org)) that allows organizers of conflict resolution activities to connect interactively with the ARIA group for guidance on the evaluation process. The first analysis is free, then the ARIA group can become involved at different levels of consultancy throughout the project.

12. As Fisher notes, it is important during the introduction section for the participants “to articulate their value base, since cultural differences in assumptions, expectations, and preferences abound in the practice domain of conflict resolution” (Fisher 1994).

13. Dialogue promotes a “mutual confirmation and thereby serves a fundamental need of parties to a conflict to be recognized as individuals with values and unique (and valued) identities.” Montville defines trust as “one party’s willingness to risk increasing his or her vulnerability to another (or others) whose behavior is beyond one’s control; thus, the party is confident that the other will not exploit the party’s vulnerability. Further, the party’s short-term losses that follow if the other does violate the party’s trust usually exceed the short-term benefits of mutually upholding the trust” (Ross and LaCroix, 1996: 315).

14. A Filipino peace activist who had just tested its transcultural applicability in Sri Lanka gave me this idea. I replicated it immediately with a group in the Peruvian military.

15. “Principled negotiation” as a method for parties in conflict has been developed by Roger Fisher and Bill Ury (1991); it provides the parties with ideas how to move from rigid positions into the exploration of underlying interests, looking for integrative options which give better outcomes than unilateral actions or positional bargaining.

16. During World War I the number of civilian casualties was only 5 percent; it went up to 50 percent in World War II and reached 90 percent in the 1990s.

17. The study guide may be used in connection with Sam Keen’s (1986) PBS documentary film *Faces of the Enemy*, available from Catticus Corporation, 2600 Tenth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710, tel. 415-548-0854.

18. On the image of the enemy, see Jervis, 1976; Volkan, 1988; Spillman and Spillman, 1991; and Moses, 1997.

19. A specially designed class on Dr. Seuss’s *Butter Battle Book* has been designed by Carrie Shaw for the “Partners in Conflict in the Transcaucasus” program and is available upon request from this author at CIDCM.

20. Lewicki, 1994: 194 provides a list of conciliatory signs.
21. For the Israeli/Palestinian conflict we have used the PBS documentary *Arab and Jew*, narrated by David Shipler, author of the book of the same name.
22. Well educated Partners, or Partners from high-context cultures, may often not feel comfortable expressing negative stereotypes of the other. We can ask them to recollect the abuses used by the lowest strata in their own society.
23. This set of contrasting values was provided to me by John Davies.
24. For a full description of these techniques, see Rosenberg (1983).
25. Simple mediation requires first building trust among the parties; setting the agenda; asking in-depth questions; reframing the issues; meeting with the parties separately to explore options in confidence; bringing them together to discuss options that may satisfy the concerns of both parties; confirming agreement in principle; and finally drafting an agreement.
26. A variation on the "single-text procedure" (Susskind and Cruikshank, 1992: 124).
27. "By thinking of the longer term, it is possible to exchange a small loss now for a large gain in the future" (Susskind and Cruikshank, 1992: 88).
28. The option of reversing the order and starting with the "bad news" scenario has the advantage of ending the session with a positive note. But participants may be reluctant to begin by contemplating a future situation worse than the already depressing present.
29. This was the worst scenario of participants from the Caucasus.