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PEACE AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

JOURNAL



ALL PEOPLE. ALL VOICES. ALL MATTER.

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIR

THE POWER OF LISTENING DEEPLY



In today's world, the ability to listen deeply has become more crucial than ever. It's not just about passively hearing words; it's about actively engaging with another person's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. By cultivating this art of mindful listening, we unlock a treasure trove of benefits, both on a personal and societal level.

In this edition of the Journal, we are provided a window into the power of listening. The participants on the civil rights history tour hear

the stories of history and one another, and through their words and the images herein, we experience the power of deep listening. In the story about Indah Ayu, an international student from Indonesia, and her encounter with the PJI Principles, including listening deeply, we see the impact of these practices on her life and her plans for the future.

The Principles of PJI invite us to slow down and turn to wonder when things get difficult. From here, we can truly listen, create a space for honesty and vulnerability, and the possibility for understanding and grace.

Enjoy this issue of the Journal.

Sumner Hutcheson, III
PJI Board of Directors, Chair



All People. All Voices. All Matter.

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Photography
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Design and Layout
Ash Zaballero

On the Cover
Rachel C. Allen at the 6th annual Creating a Resilient Community Conference

Special thanks to our contributing writers.

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR PEACE

In this issue of the Journal we are grateful to share images and reflections of PJI's inaugural Civil Rights History Tour. As you will read in the writings and reflections of this special group of travelers, each individual came to face the history of our country, but also the history within themselves.

The remarkable landmarks, museums, monuments, and movements we saw demonstrated the power of telling our history as a means of facing truth, moving toward a higher consciousness, and building a more loving community. History is a pathway to reconciliation. Facing history is a way to heal the past and imagine a loving way forward.

The trip invited each one of us to walk through our pain, personally and collectively, to endure the hardship of facing squarely who we have been, how we have treated each other, with a stronger conviction to create the "Beloved Community." While this trip began as a "tour," by the end we realized it was a pilgrimage- a grand journey to seek truth, find hope, and set a vision.

As our brothers and sisters throughout the world face injustice, war, and endure unfathomable hardship and suffering, PJI commits to creating the conditions for peace here in our community, modeling unity and love, and advocating for peace and justice throughout the world.

Join us!



Rachel C. Allen
PJI Executive Director



WE INVEST NOW *for* GOOD



Become a member of the **WING** with a minimum investment of \$25,000 annually for a three year commitment.

The **WING** is a group of generous private investors who fund PJI. Their return on investment is measured by the number of people whose lives are transformed by living in peaceful, just, and resilient communities.

By committing multi-year support, **WING** members allow PJI to plan for the future, and lead the systemic work necessary to create the communities, in partnership with business and government, in which we all want to live. Members of the **WING** provide more than financial support.

These visionary investors who believe in and support the PJI vision allow us to focus on what matters most: *building the culture of peace and justice.*

Schedule a meeting with PJI to learn more.
Email us at contact@peacejusticeinstitute.org



BUILDING RESILIENCE IN SEMINOLE COUNTY

Recent history exposed our communities to the isolating and negative mental health impact of COVID-19, which had a seismic effect on our children, families, their teachers, and the community. Additionally, continuous exposure to gun violence and images of school shootings has created an environment of fear.

Resilience is built by understanding the impact of adversity, and creating protective factors including the buffering effects of stable, nurturing relationships to support children and families. Schools have the ability to teach resilience and create safe spaces for learning and growing.

Schools have contact with students almost every day, which means they can provide resources to create environments that mitigate the effects of adversity, and support children's brain development, learning, and positive behavior. Building resilience within the school community has a positive impact on student behavior, attendance, and academic achievement.

As part of the Seminole Resilient Community Project, a partnership between the Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools and the Peace and Justice Institute, over fifty resilience focused workshops were taught to teachers, school counselors,

"I found this summit to be very beneficial to our students. They were highly engaged when learning about ACEs and had great discussions about what that meant in their own lives. They spent a lot of time interacting with the Principles for How We Treat Each Other, which have made a difference in our classrooms. I would highly recommend this experience!"

Addie Roupe, Ed.D.
ELA/Reading Instructional Coach,
Millennium Middle School

“The Student Summit brought the Resilience Project full circle for Sanford Middle School. The students who participated were excited about the topics discussed, were proud of their input, and created a buzz around our campus about the things they were learning.”

Julianna L. Cirrincione
Behavioral Interventionist,
Sanford Middle School

psychologists, social workers, parents, students, and community members throughout the academic year. Middle and high school students focused on resilience at the Student Summits, featured at five schools, where a select group of students was chosen to engage in honest conversations promoting a healthy and accountable school culture. The day included intentional spaces for student reflection, discussion, and implementation planning.

During the Summits, students practiced skills including self-regulation and breathing techniques,

and gained knowledge about the science of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). Understanding their capacity for resilience, students learned the impact of trauma and toxic stress, as well as the positive impact that well-regulated, buffering adults have in their lives. PJI facilitators guided the students in understanding the difference between positive and negative stress, and ways to strengthen their personal resilience- understanding that biology is not destiny.

When teaching the lessons of ACEs, Dr. Candice Jones, author and

“The neuroscience teaches us that prolonged adversity experienced by children can impact their brain development, learning, and behavior in school. Providing them knowledge about ACEs and the science of resilience teaches them they have power to overcome almost any adversity and make good choices that lead to a positive effect on their lives.”

Rachel C. Allen
Executive Director,
Peace and Justice Institute

board certified pediatrician, coached the students saying, “We’re going to empower ourselves to be able to deal with adversity, get through it, and thrive through it.” The Student Summits focused on how to flourish with positive experiences and manage the adversities.

I learned a lot about mental health, the brain, and ACES. It will help me in the future because I have the knowledge as I want to become a doctor.

High School Student

I learned breathing exercises that will help me calm down when I am angry.

Middle School Student

One thing that I learned is how everyone goes through different struggles and asking questions and just listening can be more helpful than giving advice.

High School Student

I learned about ACEs. This will be applied to my life by having a better understanding of others.

Middle School Student

I learned about ACEs. When hearing about someone going through hard times I will try my best to be a buffer for that person.

High School Student

I learned how to tell if stress is positive or toxic. I can apply it in my life by telling myself this stress is normal.

Middle School Student



SEMINOLE RESILIENT COMMUNITY PROJECT GOALS



Include parental education
and involvement

Promote the Five Protective
Factors within
the school culture

Develop communication
campaigns to build awareness
about the impacts of adversity
on mental health, reduce
stigma, and promote healing
interventions



Build strong relationships among
employees and with students
using a resilience perspective

Promote a positive school
climate of empathy, honesty and
emotional intelligence

Provide wellness programming
for staff



CHANGE ME CHANGE THE WORLD



PJI is the 2024 East Central Florida
Planning Council Diamond Award Winner
in Health & Equity.



FACING RACE:

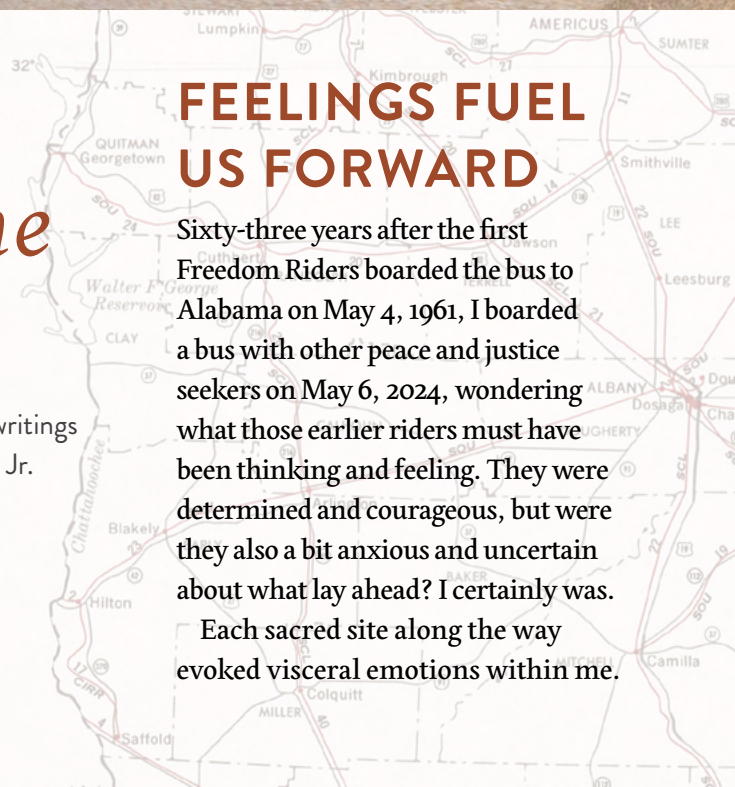
PJI's Pilgrimage to the American South

PJI launched a Civil Rights History Tour in May 2024. These are the writings and reflections of the travelers, and the photography of Willie J. Allen Jr. who accompanied the group. This pilgrimage will be led annually.

FEELINGS FUEL US FORWARD

Sixty-three years after the first Freedom Riders boarded the bus to Alabama on May 4, 1961, I boarded a bus with other peace and justice seekers on May 6, 2024, wondering what those earlier riders must have been thinking and feeling. They were determined and courageous, but were they also a bit anxious and uncertain about what lay ahead? I certainly was.

Each sacred site along the way evoked visceral emotions within me.





Our group was diverse, beautiful, and funny, and shared a mutual passion to understand and help improve our world. There was a lot to take in, intellectually and emotionally. I appreciate the time we had to share our reflections. The similarities between the not-too-distant past and today are noticeable and concerning.

Martha D. Kirby
Retired Past President of the University
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Orlando, FL

The Peace and Justice Institute afforded me the opportunity of a lifetime to witness and be a part of what I consider a life changing experience. The trip was a week of overwhelming emotions, both good and not so good, with questions, hurt, pain, peace, compassion, and love. I am so blessed and thankful to have been a part of a very special and resilient group made up of all walks of life and sharing personal stories, crying tears of hurt, sharing laughs for the soul, and loving each other in times of need. Because of this first-hand experience with PJI, I have begun my planning to make the trip happen for Sanford youth over the summer.

Britt Henderson
City of Sanford Recreation Supervisor
at Westside Community Center and
Coordinator of My Brother's Keeper
Sandford, FL

I felt the heaviness of grief over the great travesty that tore apart the fibers of the flesh of my people and the fabric of the family in the Black community.

I felt anger about the fact that beautifully created humans were dehumanized and treated like trash to be thrashed and trampled on without care or concern for their body or soul.

I felt overwhelmed by the oppressive forces in operation—then and now.

As I reflected on what I saw, read, and heard along the way, I marveled at the resilience of a people who refused

to let racism or white supremacy break their spirit, or steal their will to dream for better.

I felt amazed at the resolve of people who “wouldn’t let nobody turn them around” as they bravely worked to bring peace, justice, and equity to this land so that all can be free.

As I pondered the pilgrimage, I was, and continue to be, in awe of people who would not yield to hopelessness. Perhaps they, like Brian Stevenson, recognized that, “Injustice prevails where

As a truth seeker, history enthusiast, Christ-follower, and lover of people, I bear witness to the horrors inflicted upon people of color. I face these realities and speak of them to expose the lies of white supremacy and to proclaim the innate worth of every human being. I am blessed to have shared this powerful experience with a diverse and beloved cohort of fellow truth seekers.

Rev. Dr. Nancy Graham Ogne
Pastor of the Hope Presbyterian
Church at Lake Nona
Orlando, FL

“I’m angry!” I burst,
pain and shame for my white life
Thank you for your truth

Charlotte Kendall
Poet and Community Activist
Orlando, FL

The impact of these sites would be agonizing to bear alone. Each at our own pace, together we walked the Edmund Pettus Bridge, listened to Dr. King preach in his family church, bore witness to the senseless bombing that martyred four little girls, and explored the powerful Legacy Museum, an immersive experience of the, until now, untold history of centuries of slavery that built America.

It’s important that these historical sites are seen, as there



hopelessness persists.” Instead, they tapped into hope, so injustice would not have an inch to live on.

Riding down the road on this journey freed me to feel gratitude in the midst of the grief that gripped me. I am grateful for those who are committed to telling the truth about the ugly history of enslavement, in all of its forms.

The words of Maya Angelou printed on the wall of The Legacy Museum’s Annex say it well, “History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage need not be lived again.”

The acknowledgement of feelings is important. Yet, I believe feelings should activate footwork. The emotions that evoked visceral feelings on the pilgrimage with PJI become fuel to propel me forward. I have been inspired to listen again, and again to the stories of history that I might learn, the lessons they have to teach. As all of creation continues to groan for peace, I commit myself anew to doing my part to move the

needle of progress toward building the “Beloved Community” that Dr. King envisioned, the Freedom Riders sought, and my ancestors dreamed of.

Rev. Erika Rembert Smith
Pastor of Washington Shores Presbyterian Church
Orlando, Florida

PILGRIMAGE: In Search of America’s Soul

Ostensibly, anyone who comes on a trip like this is interested in more than the mere history to which they will be exposed. Issues of legality and the abuse of the law arose repeatedly. Issues of personal morality were a constant theme as we asked ourselves “How could people do these things to other people?” as well as the more disturbing question just below the surface: “What might I have done had I been in their place?” Issues of social ethics were also a constant—while Dr. King spoke of a “Beloved Community,” what was the alternative being insisted by those who refused that calling? Issues of spirituality were implicit in every encounter. What do concepts of sin

mean in such contexts? What does redemption look like in the ashes of burned buses and the ruins of bombed churches and homes?

Perhaps the most vital aspect of this pilgrimage was the time spent in community to process what we had experienced. It was important that this was a racially mixed group. None of us were totally within our comfort zone. And yet, the support we came to feel from one another, the willingness to hear the grief and the anger of one another, the hopes that we dared to voice provided a depth to what will prove for many of us a life-changing experience. We truly needed one another and our sojourners rose to the occasion.

The Gifts We Return with, the Challenges We Face

My sense is that this group of pilgrims returns with new insights about a wide range of aspects of our lives that will no doubt take some time to process. Our pilgrimage raised questions about what it

means to be an American, what our history tells us about ourselves as a people, what our willingness to avoid, if not erase, hurtful chapters of that history says about us as well. It raised questions about what it means to be human in a time when culture wars would pit us against one another.

It also raises more personal questions for each of us who return to our various roles in our communities. Who are we as individuals in the face of these new understandings we bring home with us? To whom can we tell our stories? Who will listen? Who will shut us out? How can we marshal our more expansive understandings of our shared history, beginning with the experiential learning we have just completed, into constructive discourse that promotes peace and justice?

In the Equal Justice Initiative's (EJI) Legacy Museum in Montgomery, I encountered a quote from EJI founder Bryant Stevenson in the gift store. It

is no guarantee that they will exist forever. For example, what could have been a beautiful memorial across the street from Dr. King's Montgomery home now stands an ugly, concrete parking garage. The local Black community is not deterred. They experience the Civil Rights Trail as a global destination, where visitors from all over the world gather to see how their nonviolent movement changed the course of history.

Melissa Edrie Moore
Solutions Developer at Orlando Health
Orlando, FL

As I traveled through the exhibits and experiences during the PJI Civil Rights History Tour the song *Where Have All the Flowers Gone* kept playing in my head. The old anti-war song was written by Pete Seeger in 1955 with a refrain of "When will they ever learn, oh when will they ever learn." As a 72-year-old American Jewish woman the opportunity to go on this journey with a small group of people committed to Peace and Justice, though emotionally wrenching, was phenomenal. But if teaching the truth of our history is forbidden and access to basic human rights is persistently denied, will we continue to repeat the horrors of our past? Each kindness moves



us forward, but without leaders that believe in equal justice for all human beings our progress will be forever stifled. When will we ever learn? Please vote!

Mary Jacobs
Retired Child Development Specialist
Silver Spring, MD

As I reflect on our recent Civil Rights History Tour through Atlanta, Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham, I am filled with a profound sense of gratitude and inspiration. This journey was not only educational and deeply moving, but it also provided the unique opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals who share a passion for history, justice, and equality.

Although the tour of The Legacy Museum was deeply emotional, bringing forth tears and feelings of anger and resentment, I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to be part of this experience. It was my most memorable part of our pilgrimage. Meeting everyone and reflecting together by sharing stories and emotions helped me to work through my feelings. My bunkmate wrote me a lovely Haiku that I have placed in my office in a location that I can refer to often. The perspectives and

was the perfect ending for that very difficult encounter in the museum. It read, "Hopelessness is the enemy of justice and injustice prevails where hopelessness persists. Hope is our superpower." Amidst all the mixed feelings with which I come away from this pilgrimage, it is this wisdom that I take with me on the journey ahead.

Rev. Dr. Harry S. Coverston
Assistant Priest of the St. Richard's Episcopal Church
Winter Park, FL

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

As I was rearranging and reshelving some books I came across *The Future Has A Past* by J. California Cooper. In the author's note, Cooper writes "Let us think of the future as a house we are building. A brick or plank a day." The book's title and that sentiment sum up my thoughts about the Civil Rights Tour.

During the tour, we had an opportunity to see and hear about

significant events in the Civil Rights Movement. Our visits to various museums, history centers, galleries, and churches were moving, thought provoking, inspirational, and upsetting. I could sense the spirits of the people, and the spirit of the movement as we crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, sat in the 16th Street Baptist Church, and listened to Mrs. Valda Harris Montgomery talk about the Freedom Riders who visited her childhood home.

Our collective future has a comprehensive past that does not consist solely of stories of triumph, resilience, and innovation. Some of the bricks and planks that brought us to where we are today include the atrocities of involuntary relocation, slavery, segregation, and oppression. In order to realize our full potential we must be open to receiving the whole truth... not just "his story" that only proclaims America's greatness, but also the narratives that make known America's shortcomings. When we acknowledge, tell, and





FOR THE HANGED AND BEATEN,
FOR THE SHOT, DROWNED, AND BURNED,
FOR THE TORTURED, TORMENTED, AND TERRORIZED,
FOR THOSE ABANDONED BY THE RULE OF LAW.

WE WILL REMEMBER.
WITH HOPE BECAUSE HOPELESSNESS IS THE ENEMY OF JUSTICE.
WITH COURAGE BECAUSE PEACE REQUIRES BRAVERY.
WITH PERSISTENCE BECAUSE JUSTICE IS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE.
WITH FAITH BECAUSE WE SHALL OVERCOME.

passion for civil rights added depth and richness to our discussions, making this journey even more meaningful.

Nicole J. Osburn
*City of Sanford Community Relations and Neighborhood Engagement Director
Sanford, Florida*

I have been on several Holocaust memorial tours to Poland, the Czech Republic, and Germany where I walked through the cities, towns, buildings, and concentration camps where millions of Jewish men, women, and children lost their lives. The experience is etched in my memory—never to be forgotten.

In Jewish tradition, the anniversary of a loved one's death is observed by lighting a special long-burning candle in memory of the deceased. For victims of the Holocaust, we do not know the date or place of their death and so one date was designated by the United Nations General Assembly and another by the State of Israel as Holocaust Remembrance Days. We remember those who were murdered by lighting a candle in their memory on those days.

Ever since hearing Bryan Stevenson speak at a conference in 2017, I have wanted to experience EJI's museum and once again see firsthand the struggle for equality by traversing

accept the whole truth, when we combine our superpowers of hope, imagination, and action, then we can build a future that is sturdy enough to sustain us all.

Barbara Coleman-Foster
*Co-Chair of the City of Sanford Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee
Sanford, FL*

INVITING THE QUESTION

The recent PJI Civil Rights History Tour brought up many questions. I would like to offer some thoughts on one of those compelling questions that arose during our week together.

Elie Wiesel, the Holocaust survivor, scholar, and humanitarian, did not believe in collective guilt. His Jewish tradition instead speaks of a call to heal, to be "... the repairer of the breach" (Isaiah 58:12 ESV). In the aftermath of WWII and the Holocaust, Wiesel thought that perpetuating a cycle of blame, shame, and guilt

on the generations of Germans born after this time would not be healthy. However, he did believe society has a responsibility "... for the way it remembers the past. And for what it does with the memory of the past." While some may not completely agree with this perspective, can we apply any of Wiesel's wisdom to the history of slavery and segregation in the U.S.? Can we, as individuals or as a country, put shame, blame, and guilt aside in order to make space for remembering, teaching, learning, healing, and repair? Those of us on the tour faced this question in locations like Montgomery, AL, where statues of Confederate President Jefferson Davis and James Marion Sims (unfortunately called the "Father of Gynecology") stand on the grounds of the state capital. There are no plaques explaining that Confederate states were fighting to maintain slavery, or that Sims had severely distorted racist ideas and experimented on enslaved women without their consent. How do we tell the complete story of slavery and segregation in places where one



the Civil Rights Trail. Fast forward seven years, I was thrilled when PJI announced its inaugural Civil Right History Tour. I was joined on this journey of discovery by 15 of the most amazing individuals who enabled me to see and learn through a diverse set of eyes and lived experiences.

After visiting significant sites, monuments, and museums, and spending a full and difficult day in Montgomery at The Legacy Museum, which explores the history and legacy of slavery in America; The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, the nation's first memorial dedicated to the victims of racial terror lynchings; and the Freedom Monument Sculpture Park, which explores the lived experiences of enslaved people in America through art; I realized that, unlike victims of the Holocaust, there is not a national or international day of remembrance for the 13 million African people who were kidnapped and trafficked into slavery.

Until such a day exists to remember all of the victims of slavery and its aftermath, every April and June when I light a candle on the anniversary of my parent's deaths, I will light a second candle to those who lost their lives to slavery due to man's inhumanity to man.

Pam Kancher
Past Executive Director of the Holocaust Education & Memorial Center, Member of the Peace and Justice Institute Board
Winter Park, FL

skewed perspective has dominated the conversation for decades? Do we remove statues and place them in museums? Do we leave the statues where they are and add information that articulates a more complete truth? Do we need completely new spaces?

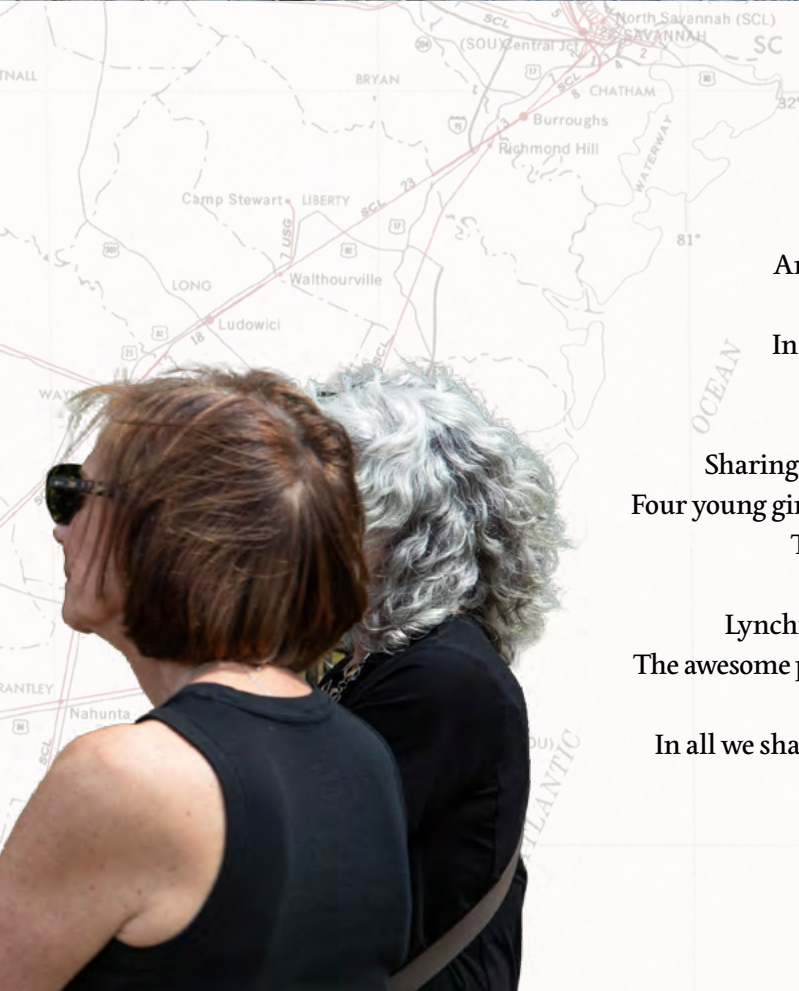
Our visit to EJI in Montgomery offered solutions. They created three profound spaces—a museum, memorial, and sculpture park—that express a carefully researched account of human beings unjustly enslaved, and of a people suffering under segregation and mass incarceration. EJI also has other projects that seek to tell the rest of the story in contrast to the skewed version found, for example, at the Alabama state capitol. However, I noticed this has the potential to create a situation where the skewed stories told through Confederate statues, and the long ignored history told by EJI sometimes speak only to camps that rarely connect. EJI and other organizations are providing solutions by erecting public historical markers that give

a voice to people lynched between Reconstruction and the 1950's. For example, Orlando now has two EJI markers that tell the stories of Julius "July" Perry and Arthur Henry. The Tallahatchie County courthouse in Sumner, MS, where Emmet Till's murderers were acquitted, has a Confederate statue on one side and a historical marker from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in honor of Till on the other.

This complex history is everywhere among our divided country. Unselfish and courageous people must willingly stand on the common ground of our sacred humanity and talk to each other, no matter how uncomfortable it gets. This is what happened on the PJI Civil Rights History Tour. A diverse group traveled together to face our history.

Paul Chapman
PJI Facilitator and Professor of Peace Studies at
Valencia College
Winter Park, FL





CONNECTION

Sixteen was the number,
And, in the beginning, I knew only three.
As we traveled together for five days
And experienced the pain and emotional trauma
of the Civil Rights Era
In Atlanta, Georgia, and Selma, Montgomery and
Birmingham, Alabama,
We bonded and became “family,”
Sharing our feelings and our reactions to what had happened:
Four young girls killed in the 16th Street Baptist Church on Children’s Day
Trauma on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma
The Freedom Riders
Lynching—more than 30 in Orange County, Florida, alone
The awesome people who resisted, made a difference, often dying violently.
CONNECTION.
In all we shared, we became “family,” A connection I will never forget!

Bickley Wilson
Founder and President of ArtReach Orlando
Winter Park, FL



INTOLERABLE

Slavery, America's heritage,
Shameful, wicked truth
Dragon, we must unite to slay
The fervor of its flame
Lingers in our laws
Our labels, our shame

Slavery, lest we address
The trauma, the anger,
Outrage, distress
Move forthright
And not regress

Slavery, ensconced
A nation divided
A wound infected
That will not heal

*Valada Flewellyn, 2024
Poet, Author, and Storyteller
Orlando, FL*

THE JOURNEY *of an* INTERNATIONAL STUDENT *with the* PEACE AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

by PJI Staff and Victoria Garcia-Morales
Valencia College Journalism Student

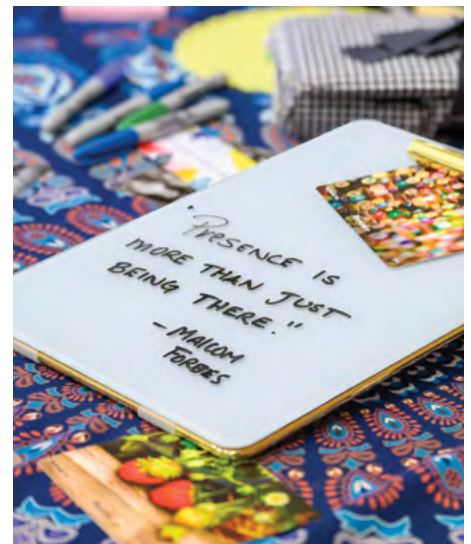


Thirty-one-year-old business major Indah Ayu from Lombok, Indonesia was granted the opportunity to study at Valencia College through the U.S. Department of State's Community College Initiative (CCI) with a scholarship to spend one academic year in Orlando. "I am very grateful for this once in a lifetime experience," Ayu shared.

During her time in Orlando she was introduced to the Peace and

Justice Institute and the Principles for How We Treat Each Other. Engaging with PJI left a positive impact on Ayu.

Inspired by PJI and the Principles, Ayu developed the Find Your Moment event for fellow students, held at Valencia College's West Campus. Meditation, journaling, dialogue, haiku poetry, and painting stones were the activities she presented at the event. The time allowed students to



Learning about the Principles has allowed me to be present in the moment, value people’s time, and listen to the people around me. The Principle “Speak your truth” is important especially in a diverse community, and it has been a privilege utilizing my freedom of speech. I encourage people to do the same.

relax their minds with calming activities, build new friendships, and network with others.

“Volunteering leads to networking; this event would not have been possible without giving back to the community,” Ayu shared. While CCI requires 75 hours of community service, Indah Ayu reached 100 service hours. “It is a great opportunity to learn about



diverse cultures, and to give my contribution to the United States,” Ayu stated.

On May 8, 2024 Indah Ayu returned to her home country of Indonesia. Ayu’s next step in life is to pursue a career in human resources influenced by

PJI’s Principles for How We Treat Each Other. Ayu hopes to educate children in her community by sharing her journey in the United States. “It is important to respect, appreciate, and meet in the middle of all differences; it is not easy, but not impossible,” Ayu expressed.



PRINCIPLES FOR HOW WE TREAT EACH OTHER

Our Practice of Respect and Community Building

1. **Create a hospitable and accountable community.** We all arrive in isolation and need the generosity of friendly welcomes. Bring all of yourself to the work in this community. Welcome others to this place and this work, and presume that you are welcomed as well. Hospitality is the essence of restoring community.
2. **Listen deeply.** Listen intently to what is said; listen to the feelings beneath the words. Strive to achieve a balance between listening and reflecting, speaking and acting.
3. **Create an advice free zone.** Replace advice with curiosity as we work together for peace and justice. Each of us is here to discover our own truths. We are not here to set someone else straight, to “fix” what we perceive as broken in another member of the group.
4. **Practice asking honest and open questions.** A great question is ambiguous, personal and provokes anxiety.
5. **Give space for unpopular answers.** Answer questions honestly, even if the answer seems unpopular. Be present to listen not debate, correct, or interpret.
6. **Respect silence.** Silence is a rare gift in our busy world. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words. This applies to the speaker, as well – be comfortable leaving your words to resound in the silence, without refining or elaborating on what you have said.
7. **Suspend judgment.** Set aside your judgments. By creating a space between judgments and reactions, we can listen to the other, and to ourselves, more fully.
8. **Identify assumptions.** Our assumptions are usually invisible to us, yet they undergird our worldview. By identifying our assumptions, we can then set them aside and open our viewpoints to greater possibilities.
9. **Speak your truth.** You are invited to say what is in your heart, trusting that your voice will be heard and your contribution respected. Own your truth by remembering to speak only for yourself. Using the first person “I” rather than “you” or “everyone” clearly communicates the personal nature of your expression.
10. **When things get difficult, turn to wonder.** If you find yourself disagreeing with another, becoming judgmental, or shutting down in defense, try turning to wonder: “I wonder what brought them to this place?” “I wonder what my reaction teaches me?” “I wonder what they are feeling right now?”
11. **Practice slowing down.** Simply the speed of modern life can cause violent damage to the soul. By intentionally practicing slowing down we strengthen our ability to extend nonviolence to others—and to ourselves.
12. **All voices have value.** Hold the moments when a person speaks as precious because these are the moments when a person is willing to stand for something, is trusting the group, and is offering something they see as valuable.
13. **Maintain confidentiality.** Create a safe space by respecting the confidential nature and content of discussions held in the group. Allow what is said in the group to remain there.

Prepared by the Peace and Justice Institute with considerable help from the works of Peter Block, Parker Palmer, the Dialogue Group and the Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education.



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Restorative Practices: *Cultivating Healthy Relationships*

by Beth Smull

International Institute for Restorative Practice



On April 12, 2024 I had the privilege to present a workshop on restorative practices at the Peace and Justice Institute’s 6th annual Creating a Resilient Community Conference: People, Place, and Purpose. The workshop brought together participants from schools, nonprofits, and community groups ranging from high school age students to retirees. All came together to explore ways to use restorative practices in support of healthy relationships.

We began the workshop with a question: “How do people expect to be treated?” Answers included, “respectfully,” “fairly,” and “like a human being.” In his paper *The Science of Human Dignity*, John H. Bailie, Ph.D. suggests being treated like a human means being treated

with dignity, simply because we exist. We treat people with dignity when we acknowledge three universal human needs: belonging, voice, and agency (Bailie, 2018). People want to feel included, be heard, and sense that they have some control over their life situation.

Restorative practices is the science of relationships and community. As part of the Social Sciences, restorative practices examines and studies ways in which individuals build, maintain and restore relationships intrapersonally (related to self), interpersonally (relations between people), and within communities (International Institute for Restorative Practices, 2024).

We went on to process the following questions in the workshop:

- » *How do we foster a sense of belonging in our sphere of influence?*
- » *How do we create opportunity for voice in our sphere of influence?*
- » *How do we create opportunities for people to exercise their agency in our sphere of influence?*
- » *How do we center relationships in our sphere of influence?*
- » *Is it necessary to communicate or share the above with those we serve? Why or why not?*

The positive energy was contagious as participants reflected on the questions and moved around the room to share answers. The importance of relationships was highlighted in the conversations. While many

Restorative practices are often considered something you do when harm occurs. While responding to harm is an essential aspect of restorative practices, most efforts worldwide focus on prevention strategies. It is important to build relationships and community so that when things go wrong, as they inevitably will, there is an existing structure of community and strong relationships to repair and restore.

healthier, more productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior and their communities when we do things in relationship. And, doing things with people, rather than to them, or for them, or not at all impacts the relationships (International Institute for Restorative Practices, 2021). The workshop led participants to consider whether they are doing things “With,

In the authoritarian or “To” window, there are high levels of accountability, boundaries, and expectations, but few to no systems of support. Individuals may reflect on their relationship to self and recognize that in the “To” window, we set unrealistic expectations for ourselves, setting deadlines we cannot meet, taking projects on because we’re afraid to say no, and denying ourselves necessary support to reach our goals. In relationships with others, this is a punitive approach, where direction is given without support, which often leads to resentment, frustration, or even a power imbalance in the relationship.

The opposite of the “To” window is the permissive window, or the “For” window. Here, there is support given without any accountability, boundaries, or expectations. In interpersonal relationships, this can look like a supportive person who ultimately enables self and others. This may be a way to appease others, or express sympathy, thinking others have too much on their plate, so they take on additional tasks. This can lead to burnout and missed opportunities for growth.

The window that is both low on accountability and low on support is called the absent or “Not” window. This is the window where



acknowledged they are building positive relationships in their work and schools, the dialogue focused on how to be more intentional when centering belonging, voice, and agency in their sphere of influences.

Restorative practices considers that human beings are happier,

To, For, or Not,” in relationship to self and others.

The Engagement Window, as seen to the right, encourages self-reflection to consider “To, For, Not, and With” in relation to self, our relationships with others, and community level relationships.

The relational focus of restorative practices allows for application in any field of study because it addresses one’s humanity— the way people interact and connect with one another.

disconnection or ignoring happens. In relation to self, this can be as simple as not paying attention to basic needs, and ignoring potential warning signs about our physical or mental health. This can happen by not drinking enough water and not getting enough sleep. In interpersonal relationships, it may be avoidance of another person or of a conflict.

The final window is the restorative or “With” window. Here is where there is a balance of both accountability and expectations, along with support and encouragement. When there is a restorative relationship with self, this includes setting expectations and goals and giving grace and support when needed. In relationships



with others there is accountability and expectations that are matched with encouragement to meet those expectations. The people that have made a difference in our lives, and those we respect, most likely operate in the “With” window.

These windows are not fixed positions, we will move from one window to the next, and at times that may be necessary and wise. When someone’s safety is at risk, a person might move into the “To” window and become highly directive

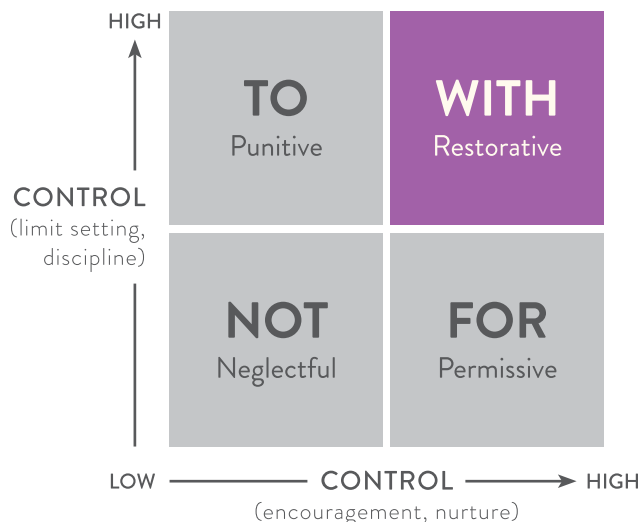
without support in order to assure safety at that moment. Someone may enter the “Not” window and choose to temporarily ignore an email or phone call if they are not calm and regulated, or if engaging risks making the situation worse. The goal is to be reflective about where we are and always work toward making our way back to the “With” window.

The engagement window offered a powerful tool to examine how we might support our own wellbeing, and the wellbeing of others, through positive relationships, the foundation for restorative practices.

For more information on restorative practices, visit www.iirp.edu.

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Adapted by Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel from Glaser, 1969

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PEACE NEWS



New Florida Law Requires Asian American and Pacific Islander History Lessons in Florida Schools

After a two-year effort by Mimi Chan, director of Make Us Visible Florida, Asian American Pacific Islander history will now be a required part of the curriculum in Florida public schools as signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis' House Bill 1537.

Source: *Click Orlando*



LGBTQ+ Rights Advanced in Europe and Asia

In Taiwan, same-sex couples can now adopt children. Nepal saw its first registry of a same-sex marriage after its Supreme Court mandated it. Thailand's parliament is considering a bill that would allow same-sex marriage. Hong Kong's top court ordered the creation of a legal framework that would meet "basic social requirements" for same-sex couples, for example around insurance or inheritance. Japan's Supreme Court ruled that transgender people do not need to undergo surgical sterilization in order to legally change their gender.

Over in Europe, the Czech Republic is considering a bill to legalize same-sex marriage, and this year it will become legal in Estonia, the first Baltic country where that's the case. This month, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Poland must introduce civil unions or same-sex marriage.

Source: *Greater Good Science Center*



Nations Agree on Language for Historic Treaty to Protect Ocean Life

"Today the world came together to protect the ocean for the benefit of our children and grandchildren," said Monica Medina, an assistant secretary of state. "We leave here with the ability to create protected areas in the high seas and achieve the ambitious goal of conserving 30 percent of the ocean by 2030."

Source: *New York Times*

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Amazon Deforestation at Six-Year-Low in Brazil

Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon fell by 66% last month compared to July 2022 and is now at its lowest rate in six years, according to preliminary data released by Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

Nearly 193 square miles of rainforest were cleared in July, a significant fall from the 574 square miles cleared last July.

There has been a sharp decline in deforestation since Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was inaugurated as president in January. Lula has pledged to end deforestation, which had increased rapidly under his predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro.

Source: CNN



Positive Groundbreaking Postpartum Treatment

The Food and Drug Administration approved a first-of-its-kind pill to treat postpartum depression. The news represents a potential breakthrough in the treatment of a condition that in recent years has become one of the leading causes of maternal mortality in the United States.

Research shows that as many as 1 in 7 women will experience depression after childbirth but that only half of those receive treatment. Given those challenges, experts have heralded the FDA's approval of zuranolone, which will be available under the brand name Zurzuvae, for once-daily use over 14 days.

Source: Washington Post



The Land Back Movement Unravels Manifest Destiny

Across Indian Country, tribal nations are buying back their land one parcel at a time. In the past two decades there have been at least 100 tribal land recoveries involving some 73 state or federally recognized tribes, an intertribal coalition, and 6 Indigenous-owned land trusts. Altogether, these recoveries have secured over 420,000 acres for Native peoples.

Source: Sierra Club



Murals from Freedom Park, where civil rights protesters gathered in 1965 before courageously crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge.


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