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PEACE AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

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ALL PEOPLE. ALL VOICES. ALL MATTER.

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIR

WELCOME TO THE PEACE AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE



The Peace and Justice Institute (PJI) has promoted peace and justice for the past 15 years, as the two are interwoven in a shared vision: Peace creates the optimal environment where human potential and communities can flourish. It is the absence of violence and the nurturing of personal and professional well-being. Justice encompasses the equitable distribution of economic, political, legal, and social rights and opportunities for all individuals.

At PJI, we emphasize the powerful influence of resilience in social healing as alone we feel, but together, we heal from individual, interpersonal, institutional, and societal trauma.

Inclusive excellence is at the core of our collective culture. It is the recognition that a community or institution's social and economic success depends on how well it values, engages, includes, and cares for the diversity of its members in every aspect, layer, level, and role.

PJI has consistently sought new ways to understand and address the root causes of social injustice. We are dedicated to fostering solutions that bring about meaningful and sustainable change. In doing so, we always remain conscious of the importance of the voices represented at the table. We continuously ask ourselves: Whose voice is present, and whose voice is missing?

We invite you to share your voice and participate in the many opportunities to become involved in the PJI community. Together, we can learn from the past and understand the present to influence the future as stewards of a more just and peaceful world.

PJI is Us.

Learn more about PJI and how you can get involved at www.peacejusticeinstitute.org.

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PJI Board of Directors, Chair



All People. All Voices. All Matter.

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Ash Zaballero

Photography
Willie J. Allen Jr.
www.williejallenjr.com

Jack Rodgers
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THEORY OF CHANGE

The Peace and Justice Institute (PJI) educates individuals and supports families, organizations, and communities to achieve the vision of well-being for all people in collaborative, trusting homes, houses of worship, schools, businesses, organizations, and institutions that advance a culture of peace, justice, and social healing.



Me: Who am I

PJI's theory of change guides individuals to do the inner work, addressing "Who am I?" to learn about our identity, childhood traumas, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and histories that might keep us from being welcoming and compassionate toward ourselves and others. Personal healing is part of this phase, which introduces mindfulness practices, the skills of emotional intelligence, and the foundational practices of respect and community building, the Principles for How We Treat Each Other. This phase of personal development is an ongoing, lifetime process. However, even in early individual development, the impact is felt in behavior and personal well-being.

We: Who I am impacts how I treat you

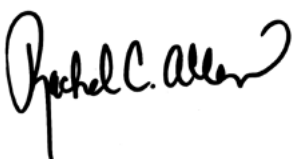
The individual moves to the "We", recognizing that who I am impacts how I treat you. In this phase of development, we explore our relationship with "the other," and learn the means of peaceful, nonviolent communication, and conflict transformation skills in order to build strong, interpersonal relationships required for a peaceful and resilient community. In this phase of development, individuals begin to face personal biases and privileges that impact our interpersonal relationships. Dialogue, personal story, and restorative practices are the pathway to forgiveness and healing in this phase of development, which strengthens individual and community wellness and supports more peaceful families, homes, and places of work.

Us: Waking up to our shared humanity

At this phase of development, we collectively work to build a community of inclusive excellence, where we honor and celebrate our inherent interdependence and the rich diversity of all beings, both human and nonhuman. At this phase of development, the science of resilience and trauma-informed practices serve to prevent community violence and bring about social healing, where individuals move beyond punishing one another for unwanted behaviors and toward the inner work of true self-discipline. Historical harms are faced collectively and resources are allocated to nurture healthy children and families, the building blocks of a thriving community.

Each one of us plays a role in building the culture of peace and justice.

Join us!



Rachel C. Allen
PJI Executive Director





THE CULTURE OF PEACE

by Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury

Former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations; Initiator of the UNSCR 1325 as the President of the UN Security Council; Chair of the nine-month-long negotiations by the UN General Assembly during 1998-1999 resulting in the consensus adoption of the Resolution on The Culture of Peace on 13 September 1999; and Founder of the Global Movement for The Culture of Peace (GMCoP).

Emergence of PJI as nonprofit

On 2 March 2023, civil society in Florida was rejoicing at the announcement by the Peace and Justice Institute (PJI) that it emerged as a nonprofit in its new incarnation, charting “the organization’s long-term vision of continued growth, innovation, and transformation”.

That was topped by Mayor Buddy Dyer’s proclamation of 2 March as the Peace and Justice Institute Day for Orlando. “It’s a true reflection of the important work we’ve put in over the years,” said Rachel C. Allen, PJI Executive Director since it was established as a part of Orlando’s Valencia College 15 years ago.

Transformed PJI’s laudatory ten-year vision envisages that “The Peace and Justice Institute will be a leading institute in the United States developing individuals, leaders, organizations, and communities to cultivate the culture of peace, resilience, and belonging where all people, all voices, all matter.”

Educating for peace and justice was commended by Mayor Dyer among PJI’s work over the years as a community entity.

I proudly recall that Ms. Allen’s creative and energizing leadership of PJI was recognized by the United Nations General Assembly President by inviting her to speak at the UN High-Level Forum on The Culture of Peace in New York in 2018. She earned the appreciative accolades of all, particularly the civil society activists. Her innovative workshop, PJI Academy for Teachers, “aimed at creating

more respectful, compassionate and loving citizens as a means of educating for the Culture of Peace throughout Central Florida”, had drawn wide-ranging appreciation.

PJI’s focus on building a culture of peace encouraged me, Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury to write this article for the inaugural issue of its Journal.

Essential need for peace

The quest for peace is the longest ongoing human endeavor, but it runs alongside many of the things that we do on a daily basis. Peace is integral to human existence – in everything we do, in everything we say and, in every thought we have, there is a place for peace. We should not isolate peace as something separate or distant. Peace is not just the end of war or conflict. Real peace also means the end of discrimination, prejudice, injustice, and inequality.

UN action on the culture of peace

Every year the international community commemorates the adoption by the United Nations of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, which is considered as a monumental document that transcends boundaries, cultures, societies, and nations. That inspirational action took place 24 years ago on 13 September 1999. It was an honor for me to Chair the nine-month-long negotiations that

led to the adoption of this historic norm-setting document through consensus by the United Nations General Assembly. That document asserts that inherent in the culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior, and ways of life.

The United Nations Charter arose out of the ashes of the Second World War II in 1945. The UN Declaration and Programme of Action on Culture of Peace emerged in 1999 in the aftermath of the Cold War. Apart from the Charter, the Declaration and Program of Action is the only document that has focused so comprehensively on peace.

What is the culture of peace?

Simply put, the Culture of Peace as a concept, as a motivation means that every one of us needs to consciously make peace and nonviolence a part of our daily existence. We should not isolate peace as something separate or distant. We should know how to relate to one another without being aggressive, without being violent, without being disrespectful, without neglect, without prejudice. It is important to realize that the absence of peace takes away the opportunities that we need to better ourselves, to prepare ourselves, to empower ourselves to face the challenges of our lives, individually and collectively. It is also a positive, dynamic participatory process wherein “dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation.”

In 1996, I was appointed as the Ambassador of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York. And I recognized that the culture of peace is a marvelous, global concept that humanity needs to embrace. The Culture of Peace has remained one of the key items for the United Nations General Assembly since 1997. In that year, the Assembly proclaimed the year 2000 as the “International Year for the Culture of Peace.” In 1998, it proclaimed the period of 2001-2010 as the “International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World”.

Ever-increasing militarism

For the last two decades and a half, my focus has been on advancing the culture of peace which aims at making peace and nonviolence a part of our own self, our own values, our own personality. This has now become more pertinent amid the ever-increasing militarism, militarization, and weaponization that is destroying both our planet and our people.

The essence of the culture of peace is found in its twin features of self-transformation and global solidarity. These two elements – individual and global, individual to global – constitute the core of the culture of peace. Everybody can talk about and create the culture of peace because it lives in our communities and in each one of us. To advance the culture of peace to create a better world with communities at the center, we do not have to become peace studies experts or street protesters to make a difference. We just

Simply put, the Culture of Peace as a concept, as a motivation means that every one of us needs to consciously make peace and nonviolence a part of our daily existence.

have to leave our own mark on this world as peaceful and non-violent individuals. The objective of the culture of peace is the empowerment of people.

How to promote the culture of peace?

Younger people often ask me what we should keep in mind as we promote the culture of peace. It is essential to remember that the culture of peace requires a change of our hearts, of our mindset. A lot can be achieved in promoting the culture of peace through individual resolve and action. This is the only way we shall achieve a just and sustainable peace in the world.

Never has it been more important for us to learn about the world and understand its diversity. The task of educating children and young people to find non-aggressive means to relate with one another is of primary importance.

Education for the culture of peace

All educational institutions need to offer opportunities that prepare students not only to live fulfilling lives but also to be responsible and productive citizens of the world. For that, educators need to introduce holistic and empowering curricula that cultivate the culture of peace in each and every young mind. The UN Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace pays special attention to the individual’s self-transformation. If our minds could be likened to a computer, then education provides the software with which to “reboot” our priorities and actions away from violence, towards the culture of peace.

Early childhood development

For this, I believe that early childhood affords a unique opportunity for us to sow the seeds of transition from the culture of war to the culture of peace. The events that a child experiences early in life, the education that this child receives, and the community activities and socio-cultural mindset in which a child is immersed all contribute to how values, attitudes, traditions, modes of behavior, and ways of life develop. We need to use this window of opportunity to instill the rudiments that each individual needs to become agents of peace and non-violence from an early life.

It should be recalled that the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (1999) called for two concrete actions focusing on young children and emphasizing child participation:

- Ensure that children, from an early age, benefit from

education on the values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life to enable them to resolve any dispute peacefully and in a spirit of respect for human dignity and of tolerance and non-discrimination.

- Involve children in activities designed to instill in them the values and goals of a culture of peace.

Education on human rights and the culture of peace and non-violence, promotion of women's equality, as well as global citizenship as part of the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development is integrated in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 4.7. It also calls on the international community to ensure that all learners acquire those by the year 2030.

Implementation of the culture of peace programme by UN

Often, I am asked how the UN is doing in the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly in 1999. I believe that the Organization should own it fully and internalize its implementation throughout the UN system. Also, the Secretary-General should prioritize the culture of peace as a part of his leadership agenda. He should make good use of this workable tool that the UN possess to advance the objective of sustainable peace. Not using the tool of the culture of peace is behaving like a person who needs a car to go to work and has a car... but with a minimal interest in knowing how to drive it.

Women – equal half of humanity

One soul-stirring inspiration that I have experienced from my work for peace, development and human rights is that we should never forget that when women – half of world's eight billion people - are marginalized, there is no chance for our world to get sustainable peace in the real sense. It is my strong belief that unless women are engaged in advancing the culture of peace at equal levels at all times with men, sustainable peace would continue to elude us.

My work has taken me to the farthest corners of the world, and I have seen time and again the centrality of women's equality in our lives.

Women bring a new breadth, quality, and balance of vision to a common effort of moving away from the cult of war towards the culture of peace. I believe wholeheartedly that women's equality makes our planet safe and secure.

UNSCR 1325 on women and peace and security

All of you are aware of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women and peace and security. The core message of 1325 is an integral part of my intellectual existence and my humble contribution to a better world for each one of us. To trace back, more than 23 years ago, on the International Women's Day in 2000, as the President of the Security Council, I initiated an

agreed statement that formally brought to global attention the positive role and contribution women have always been making towards preventing wars and building peace. The Council recognized in that significant, norm-setting statement that "peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men" and affirmed the value of full and equal participation of women at all decision-making levels.

That conceptual and political breakthrough finally resulted in the adoption of the Resolution 1325 on 31st of October of the same year with Namibia at the helm of the Council Presidency, after tough negotiations for eight months. The unexplained silence of the Security Council for 55 long years on women's positive role was broken forever on the 8th of March 2000.

A much-awaited door of opportunity for women

Adoption of 1325 opened a much-awaited door of opportunity for women who have shown time and again that they bring a qualitative improvement in structuring peace and in post-conflict architecture. When women participate in peace negotiations and in the crafting of a peace agreement, they have the broader and long-term interest of society in mind.

Three women receive Nobel Peace Prize in 2011

We recall that in choosing the three women laureates for the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, the citation referred to 1325 saying that "It underlined the need for women to become participants on an equal footing with men in peace processes and in peace work in general." It also asserted that "We cannot achieve democracy and lasting peace in the world unless women obtain the same opportunities as men to influence developments at all levels of society." UNSCR 1325 is the only UN resolution so specifically noted in any citation of the Nobel Prize.

Much, nevertheless, remains to be done.

Women's political leadership

Empowering women's political leadership will have ripple effects on every level of society. When politically empowered, women bring important and different skills and perspectives to the policy making table in comparison to their male counterparts. I underscore often that when women join politics, they want to DO something, when men join politics, they want to BE something.

Patriarchy and misogyny are humanity's dual scourges pulling back the humanity away from our aspiration for a better world to live in freedom, equality, and justice. Gender inequality is an established, proven, and undisputed reality—it is all pervasive. It is a real threat to human progress!

The United Nations has recognized time and again that unfortunately overall progress towards gender equality has been unacceptably slow, with stagnation and even regression in some areas. Women's rights and equality are under threat from a "backlash" of conservatism and fundamentalism around the world.



Woman Secretary-General for UN

That global reality is dramatically evidenced in the fact that the UN itself despite being the biggest champion of women's equality has failed to elect a woman secretary-general. Yet to reverse the historical injustice of having the post occupied by men for its entire seven-decades of its existence.

Proud to be a feminist

Before closing, let me assert that feminism is a component of a modern view on global politics.

Feminism ensures a smart policy which is inclusive, uses all potentials and leaves no one behind.

I am proud to be a feminist. All of us need to be. That is how we make our planet a better place to live for all.

Three priority areas for implementing 1325

I am asked again and again what could be done for the true implementation of 1325 to make a difference. In my considered judgment, I have identified three areas of priority for the next five years.

1. *Mobilizing Men for Implementing 1325:* We need to recognize that women's equality and their rights are not only women's issues, but those are also relevant for humanity as a whole – for all of us.

We, all of us – women and men, particularly men, should always remember that without peace, development is impossible, and without development, peace is not achievable, but without women, neither peace nor development is conceivable.

2. *Women and girls a must for climate justice:* Our planet absolutely requires the full and equal participation of women and girls, in all their diversity. Without gender equality, there is no climate justice. Gender equality is the crucial missing link in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 5 relating to empowerment of women and girls.

Women's and girls' participation in all decision-making processes is a top priority in addressing the climate crisis. Without gender equality today, a sustainable, more equal future remains beyond our reach. Let us give power and

platforms to the next generation of Earth champions. As has been said recently, "Our best countermeasure to the threat multiplier of climate change is the benefit multiplier of gender equality."

3. *Direct involvement of civil society:* Another missing element is the greater, regular, genuine, and participatory involvement of civil society in implementing 1325 both at national and global levels. The role and contribution of civil society is critical. At the global level, the UN secretariat should make it a point to consult civil society regularly.

Concluding remarks

I would repeat for the umpteenth time what former Secretary-General of the United Nations and Nobel Peace laureate Kofi Annan had said, "Over the years we have come to realize that it is not enough to send peacekeeping forces to separate warring parties. It is not enough to engage in peace-building efforts after societies have been ravaged by conflict. It is not enough to conduct preventive diplomacy. All of this is essential work, but we want enduring results. We need, in short, the culture of peace."

I continue to emphasize that The Culture of Peace is not a quick fix. It is a movement, not a revolution!

Let me end by reiterating that, "If we are serious about peace, we must take women seriously."

Let us – yes, all of us – embrace the culture of peace for the good of humanity, for the sustainability of our planet and for making our world a better place to live.

One voice creates a ripple – many ripples make a wave – collectively, our voices for the culture of peace can transform the world.

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Listen to an interview with Ambassador Chowdhury and Hui International discussing UN Resolution 1325 and The Culture of Peace



LIVING THE PRINCIPLES:

The Holistic Power of the Principles for How We Treat Each Other

by Lua Hancock
Coach and Consultant

Several years ago, when serving as the vice president of campus life and student success at Stetson University, I was introduced to the Peace and Justice Institute's Principles for How We Treat Each Other. They provided an excellent framework for the deep and meaningful work that my staff and the student groups that we worked with were doing on campus. College campuses are often a microcosm of the issues being faced by the greater community. We were experiencing a global pandemic impacting physical, mental, and occupational health which was having different levels of impact based on economic and racial lines. We were living in a global racial reckoning and being forced to address individual and systemic issues. The Principles offered me, and hopefully others, a roadmap for how to approach my thoughts, words, and actions. In turn, they offered my team a map for how to approach our collective work, including how we pace ourselves, hold space for all voices, create genuine hospitality, and turn to wonder.

The Principles have also been used in powerful ways in other programs and organizations, for example, in the PJI Teachers Academy. As shared in a 2020 article in the PJI Journal, "As it relates to the Principles as a Guide, the PJI Teachers Academy shows participants that the core of promoting peace and justice is starting

with one's self, which might be the program's most important contribution to creating more inclusive, respectful, compassionate, and loving classrooms and citizens."

Now as I'm working as a coach and consultant, I assist organizations and individuals needing values clarification. Specifically, the alignment of their values with projects, time, and budgets. Recently, I assisted the Peace and Justice Institute with hosting the 5th annual Creating a Resilient Community: From Trauma to Healing Conference. I was so impressed at how the PJI staff used trauma-informed and resiliency practices, which they are teaching in the community in their own daily operations. Consequently, in the conference planning work, I began to utilize the Principles in an expanded way—as a tool and roadmap for planning and evaluation.

For example, the team considered—if we believe in the Principle that: "All voices have value," then how would we create equitable space for both positional leaders in our community and people with lived experience in the topics shared? And, knowing there is value as we: "Practice slowing down," how would this influence the cadence of the conference and even our internal work and meetings planning the conference?

Additionally, as we evaluated the conference, the

"The Principles offered me, and hopefully others, a roadmap for how to approach my thoughts, words, and actions."

team referred to the Principles once again as a standard to measure our success. For example, how did we ensure that we lived the value of the first Principle: "Create a hospitable and accountable community"? We reviewed the feedback that praised the welcoming registration process, the diverse food selections that met various dietary needs, and the personalized introductions of the workshop speakers as indications that we aligned with our value of hospitality. Conference feedback also indicated ways we could strengthen hospitality by sharing more advanced details about parking and making announcements about simple things like where the restrooms are located.

This conference evaluation is used as an example to show how the Principles for How We Treat Each Other can be used for reflective practice and accountability, as well as for organizational and programmatic planning and assessment. Many of us are doing heavy work in a world that desperately needs new paradigms and change. Many people would say that they agree with the Principles, but we can all also point to ways that our individual and collective behavior is not coherent with what we say we believe. Using the Principles organizationally can offer a pathway for us to consider aligning our work with our wishes for our individual and collective humanity.



Find the Principles for How We Treat Each Other in multiple world languages here.

THE GIFT OF THE PRINCIPLES

by Scott Pasch

PJI Facilitator and PhD Candidate at the University of Albany

The Principles for How We Treat Each Other are so simple and obvious, and yet so powerful because even though they seem intuitive and should be part of everyone's nature, they require active acknowledgement and practice to become part of one's everyday interactions with others and oneself.

These practices have given me a framework to not only ensure that I am teaching lessons with the clear intent and objective of making sure that students recognize the value of all voices, how to suspend judgment, how to listen deeply, and more, but also to help me make honest connections with students to better understand their needs.

The Principles have helped me communicate effectively with my family. With my teen I have learned to give space for unpopular answers, and avoid giving advice; instead, I listen deeply and reflect as her voice has value. By doing this, I have seen that she is more willing to share and will go far deeper into her thoughts and feelings than she did when I peppered her with questions or tried to give her advice that she didn't ask for. I have learned to slow down with my spouse and not react so quickly which tended to involve me interrupting her, and not creating a space where she felt her voice had value.

For myself, I have explored and shared experiences related to my multicultural selves that I am proud of, as well as parts that were painful or that I hesitated to share openly with others. In sharing these stories, I learned not only about myself, but I was also gifted with the stories of others that helped broaden my understanding of the human condition. Practicing the Principles in my daily has changed my life for the better.



NATURE AND OUR JOURNEY TO WELLBEING: “YOUR PRESCRIPTION IS READY FOR PICK UP!”

by Sofiya Asedrem and Britney Pierce

In the United States, more than 61% of the population has experienced at least one Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE), such as abuse, neglect, divorce, and facing racism or discrimination (CDC, 2021). 16% have experienced four or more of these adverse experiences which affect long term physical and mental health (CDC, 2021).

“Today, more and more workers are worried about making ends meet, dealing with chronic stress, and struggling to balance the demands of work and personal lives,” according to Vivek H. Murthy, Surgeon General of the USA (Office of the Surgeon General, 2022).

This information points to the need for us to collectively address our varying levels of stress and trauma, and embark on a journey of healing as our path to improving our mental health and wellbeing. While mental illness is a medical condition that generally requires help from a professional, thankfully there are many tangible things we can do today to increase our wellbeing.

PRESCRIPTION FOR HEALING & WELLBEING

The simple recommendations below can help reduce stress hormones, inflammation, and enhance our personal and collective wellbeing:



Mental Health



Nature



Mindfulness
and Meditation



Movement
and Exercise



Supportive
Relationships



Nutrition



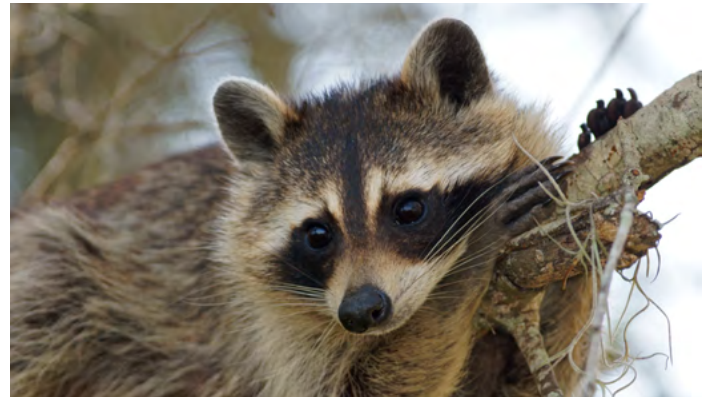
Sleep



A recent study reviewing hundreds of scientific papers found that human interaction with nature has many positive effects on wellbeing due to restorative effects from being in nature, such as stress relief (Huynh, L. T. M., et al., 2022).

Science has proven a great way to foster mindfulness is to cultivate it in nature. The Prescription for Healing and Wellbeing advocates for mindfulness as a way to reduce the negative effects of stress.

Lucky for us, Central Florida is home to an abundance of native and natural biodiversity including wildlife, plant species, and complex forest systems. Our team has compiled a few of their favorite locations to visit as restorative practices.



An Invitation to the Outdoors

Free Nature Options in Central Florida

Big Tree Park in Longwood, FL

Explore this 0.3-mile walk on an accessible boardwalk through a forest of ancient trees in Spring Hammock Preserve.

Orlando Wetlands in Christmas, FL

This excursion offers wildlife viewing, hiking, biking (non-motorized), horseback riding, and guided tours. A highlight is a free tram tour available September to May.

Mead Botanical Garden in Winter Park, FL

This free and approachable botanical garden offers a tranquil boardwalk, a sandy walk along Howell Creek, picturesque picnic tables and pavilions, and abundant birdlife.

Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive, in Apopka, FL

On your visit, you can tune into an online audio tour that provides an overview of the history and restoration of the region, as well as a wildlife habitat that includes hundreds of bird species and an abundant alligator population.

Black Bear Wilderness Trail Area in Sanford, FL

This is a remote trail over rough uneven terrain. Several boardwalks provide passage over wet areas, and if you're quiet you may be fortunate enough to observe species such as River Otter, American Alligator, and maybe even a Black Bear.

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DIALOGUE FOR A HEALTHY DEMOCRACY

by Tyler Branz, M.A., JD

Professor of Political Science at Valencia College



In 1941, Franklin Roosevelt addressed Congress and spoke of his “four freedoms:” freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.¹ It was an attempt to direct the United States’ war effort and deliver “hope in the following years to war-weary people because they knew they were fighting for freedom.”²

Some of these ideals were already in the U.S. Constitution, but all four were cemented with others in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, a dialogue turned fundamental policy for the fledgling United Nations. The Declaration drafting committee was paneled by a wide variety of people from all parts of the world, including delegates from China, Chile, the USSR, Lebanon, Canada, and Eleanor Roosevelt from the United States.³

Ideals can make pillars for policy, but drafting and delivering that policy can be rife with debate, finger-pointing, arguments, court injunctions, and perhaps even legislative neglect. While the four freedoms represented what a post-war democratic world could look like, enacting policy that cements those ideals may be an ongoing venture.

Since 2006, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has published an annual index on the state of democracies

throughout the world and attempts to quantify the major categories of any healthy democracy through their full reports. The full index catalogs every world nation as full, flawed, hybrid, and authoritarian.⁴ Although aggregately considered “flawed,” the United States achieves fairly high scores among the categories used by the EIU to classify each nation. Using these categories as a roadmap, consider how the United States at all levels of government can allow dialogue on policy issues while also promoting a healthy democracy.

Electoral Processes and Pluralism

...there is nothing mysterious about the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy.

Elections in the United States are generally free and fair, with little evidence of fraud⁵, even when considering the significant distrust in electoral institutions by many voters due to widely-spread misinformation and disinformation.⁶ Even Republican-backed law enforcement units investigating voter fraud “provided no indication of systemic problems” after the 2022 midterms.⁷ The United States has had consistent elections for federal offices every two years since 1791, even during wartime; the smoothness of these procedures is critical for American life.

Representation matters, in the legislatures and in the Congress. Policy is not reflective of the public if districts are manipulated to keep political parties in power, or to place voters into non-competitive districts based on race, ethnicity, nationality, or income.¹¹

But voters are still wary, with around 63% feeling “very/somewhat confident” in the accuracy of U.S. elections, up from 59% in 2020. That data, however, shows that although neither 2020 nor 2022 had any substantial issues of fraud, partisanship separates voters on this issue more now than ever.⁸ In spite of these differences, citizens should continue to understand the immense effect participation has on the integrity and transition of American elections; tolerating and allowing all facets of thought to compete for influence in government improves a pluralistic and, overall, democratic society.

DIALOGUE

How does the Constitution enshrine pluralism in our society? How do compromise and moderation help in achieving basic government functions? How could transparency and honesty improve voter outlooks on electoral procedure?

Functioning of Government

The Congress, of course, must rightly keep itself informed at all times.

Healthy democracies rest on the mechanisms of many institutions, including proper representation of voters and residents in their houses of government. And with a federal system in the United States, policy not only derives from the U.S. Congress and the national government, but the state legislatures and local governments as well. However, representation in many states is skewed towards one political party or the other due to rampant gerrymandering. Gerrymandering occurs when state legislatures redraw district maps every ten years (using census data) to account for changes in population. The Reapportionment Cases of the 1960s require state legislatures to abide by the rule “one person, one vote;” state and congressional districts must have about the same number of people.⁹

In Wisconsin, during the 2018 midterm elections, “Democrats won every major statewide office,

including governor and attorney general, races where gerrymandering isn’t in play. But they have not been able to overcome heavily gerrymandered state legislative districts since Republicans won control of the statehouse during the midterm elections in 2010.”¹⁰ No political party should have control over manipulating democratic representation, and reformists suggest a solution in independent redistricting commissions; these commissions would strive to create non-partisan district maps, but could most likely only be established through state constitutional amendments and not the U.S. Constitution.

Representation matters, in the legislatures and in the Congress. Policy is not reflective of the public if districts are manipulated to keep political parties in power, or to place voters into non-competitive districts based on race, ethnicity, nationality, or income.¹¹ Every district should be competitive in every election cycle. Democracy rests on healthy representation and gerrymandering dilutes that representation.

DIALOGUE

Can you name your House representative and US Senator? Can you name your state legislators? How familiar are you with your county and city government? What services are provided and what services or amenities can you do without? Why do you think we have some government services that you may never use?

Political Participation

“...by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to full support of all those resolute peoples, everywhere, who are resisting aggression.”

High voter turnout not only indicates a healthy democracy, it nourishes one. Elections in 2020 and 2022 saw fairly high turnout¹², with many voters opting to vote early or by mail (a method made essential for some during the COVID-19 pandemic). Young voters especially

The vastly diverse experiences of American citizens and residents grow into a plethora of viewpoints, and those viewpoints must be allowed to compete at the ballot box, and elected officials should be open to hear these viewpoints, and to compromise and moderate policy based on those opinions.

add to this high turnout as Generation Z voters are turning up at about double the rate of Generation X and Millennial generations turned out at the same age.¹³ A stronger and healthier democracy, however, roots itself in pluralism. The vastly diverse experiences of American citizens and residents grow into a plethora of viewpoints, and those viewpoints must be allowed to compete at the ballot box, and elected officials should be open to hear these viewpoints, and to compromise and moderate policy based on those opinions.

The right to vote and participate should be as highly valued as First Amendment protections like the freedom of religion or the freedom of speech. No regulation from the federal or state governments should hamper or dilute an individual's right to vote or participate; any regulation doing so adversely affects trust in government, electoral integrity, and a person's connection to their community.

Florida's Amendment 4 from 2018 sought to return the right to vote to returning citizens (freed from incarceration) and even House member Grace Meng (D-NY 6) petitions to lower the voting age to 16 with HJ Res. 16¹⁴: "16- and 17-year-olds are legally permitted to work, drive and they also pay federal income taxes. They are contributing members of our society [and] it is right and fair to allow them to vote in our elections."¹⁵

Be sure to visit your local county office of elections for more information on registration and election dates.

DIALOGUE

Why would some members of the community want the ability to vote? What issues affect non-voters more than voters, or vice versa? Do elected officials consider voter and non-voter concerns equally?

Political Culture

It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation.

Many issues shape elections, participation in government, and the want or dislike for government policy. Almost a third of Americans are concerned generally about the economy, up from 10% during November 2020 (presumably lower due to pandemic concerns) but down from 46% leading up to the 2022 midterm elections.¹⁶ Non-economic topics like same-sex marriage show 71% in favor, staying at a record high since 2022.¹⁷ Global warming concerns are expressed by around 65% of Americans who "worry a great deal/fair amount."¹⁸ Limits to the exposure of LGBTQ+ experiences, K-12 book bans, lawsuits on affirmative action protections, and restrictions on equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts by colleges and universities, have further highlighted a need for dialogue on many Twenty-First Century public policy issues, especially those concerning public education.

Healthy American democracy requires free public education guaranteed for all. As Joshua Weishart of the Brennan Center for Justice indicates, "Courts are virtually unanimous in concluding that the primary legal purpose of public education is to democratize schoolchildren. Fifteen state constitutions and myriad state statutes say rather explicitly that public education is 'essential to the preservation of rights and liberties of the people' or necessary to maintain a [republican form of] government."¹⁹ Further, as far back as the 1860s, University of South Carolina Professor of Law Derek Black maintains in his research that "[m]anipulations in education, second perhaps only to voting, posed a fundamental threat to... republican forms of government."¹⁹

Public education creates better citizens through literature, writing, science, music, critical thinking, and civics; better citizens who will grow to maintain a fair and just society for future generations.

DIALOGUE

Why are some books banned and not others? Are the books being banned obscene? Should schoolchildren have the opportunity to hear stories and experiences of people from other walks of life? Why do states have more regulatory power over education than the President or the Congress?

Civil Liberties

Equality of opportunity for youth and for others. Jobs for those who can work. Security for those who need it. The ending of special privilege for the few. The preservation of civil liberties for all.

As the EIU report details, the “sudden removal of abortion as a constitutional right” hurt gender equality and citizen control indicators. The United Nations, in their investigation of the issue, have found “[m]illions of women and girls across the United States [suffering] an alarming deterioration in access to sexual and reproductive healthcare.” Bans on reproductive health for women could “lead to violations of women’s rights to privacy, bodily integrity and autonomy, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, equality and non-discrimination, and freedom from

torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and gender-based violence.”²⁰

A healthy democracy involves everybody. It is a system of social governance that allows citizens and residents, through constitutional rights, to live their lives and love their families without fear, without want, with the freedom to speak to power, and the freedom to worship or think as they see fit.

DIALOGUE

Are the rights of some more protected than others? Should all forms of speech be tolerated? How does the free press build a marketplace of ideas? Why do you think James Madison felt the First Amendment to be so important for a fledgling nation?

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LOVE IS THE MEDICINE

by Grettel Zubiaur
Attorney and Counselor at Law

On November 8, 2022, Jose Hurtado, Grandfather Iron Eagle, arrived at the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport from Tokyo, Japan, where he was visiting to contribute with the Dr. Masaru Emoto Foundation, a nonprofit organization that spreads messages of love and peace globally. Despite arriving in the United States, the country he calls home, vibrating with feelings of love and peace, his welcome by Department of Homeland Security (DHS), was that of an outsider, an outcast, and of a perceived criminal.

Through the Dr. Masaru Emoto Foundation, Iron Eagle has experienced and seen the results of studies that show that molecules of water are affected when exposed to medicine music, the music Iron Eagle shares with the organization and the world. The songs he sings were passed down to him by his ancestors and are infused with messages of the Red Road: peace, love, inclusivity, and living harmoniously with nature and others. Iron Eagle believes that, like water molecules are changed by the vibration of music, the vibration of love, humanity can be changed too, “Love is the vibration, it is the frequency, it is the medicine for everyone. When we do things from this

vibration, this frequency, the outcome is that we bring people together.” His experience at the Atlanta Airport reinforced his belief that we are still very much in need of love.

As Iron Eagle passed through customs at the airport, happy to be home, he was interrogated regarding his trip to Japan by a DHS agent. Iron Eagle knew the questions were more intrusive than customary, but willingly and respectfully provided answers. After this encounter, he picked up his luggage to catch his connecting flight to Florida and was immediately stopped by another DHS agent who asked to check his belongings. Despite Iron Eagle asking the reason for the search, he did not receive a response.

Because Iron Eagle, an indigenous man of the first nations, had nothing to hide and saw this as an interaction with another fellow human being, he allowed agents to check his belongings. “When I see myself and the color of my skin, the way I talk, and the language I speak, I am a little different than others. People only see the outside part of me, they do not see who I am from the inside out. So, when I interact and see others, I go beyond looking at their physical body, and I



notice another human being, just like me, looking and finding their purpose in life.”

During the search, one DHS agent turned to five. As they continued their fishing expedition, the agents made clear, through their actions, that they perceived Iron Eagle as a criminal. Through the encounter, all items

“Love is the vibration, it is the frequency, it is the medicine for everyone. When we do things from this vibration, this frequency, the outcome is that we bring people together.”

in Iron Eagle’s possession were searched, mishandled, and tested for traces of narcotics - including sealed items Iron Eagle purchased at the Tokyo Airport for which he showed the agents proof of purchase. The more the agents searched, the more they made jokes and laughed amongst themselves despite finding nothing inappropriate or illegal in Iron Eagle’s possession.

As they searched, the agents interrogated Iron Eagle further regarding his travels. When he answered questions, such as who paid for his flight, he received incredulous looks from the agents, as if they could not believe that someone like him could pay for an international flight. Iron Eagle has always felt welcomed

and respected in the countries he visits, sharing messages of peace and love, including during his multiple trips to Japan. In the United States though, his home, he felt discriminated against, ostracized, and disappointed, “We give officers the opportunity to be of service. Justice is for all, and it is a constitutional right. Through this

experience I see a lack of education and knowledge, but also that some things are done for a purpose and a reason, and some officers know better but do not do the best they can.”

Iron Eagle’s sacred, spiritual items, which he carries in his medicine bag were also tested for traces of narcotics, even though Iron Eagle shared their personal and spiritual significance with the agents. “The medicine bag was first made by our mothers, aunties, grandmas, the first bag they made for us, they placed the umbilical cord, of great spiritual value... in our own medicine bag, we place things that may not be important to others, but items that have great value to us. It can be wood, a crystal, it can be anything significant.” The spiritual items he carries in his medicine bag are oftentimes used by Iron Eagle during spiritual healing ceremonies.

After over an hour of searching his belongings in a public area, the agents found nothing improper or illegal



in Iron Eagle's possession and left Iron Eagle to pick up the mess they made of his belongings. An apology was never extended.

Iron Eagle is no stranger to having his spiritual items and tools mishandled and confiscated at airports. "Many items have been taken from me without ever being given a reason why. Sometimes I see in people's faces that they are curious about the items—like they want to have them." These items include flutes, medicine drums, crystals, and feathers. Iron Eagle recalls the only time a spiritual tool was not confiscated after getting this type of attention during a search was when a Native American agent saw how the item was being mishandled and convinced the agents conducting the search that the item was a respected spiritual tool and could not be confiscated. Unfortunately, there were no indigenous agents in sight in the Atlanta Airport, although the five agents conducting the search were of diverse races and backgrounds.

Despite Iron Eagle's experiences with oppression and discrimination, he believes that change is possible through education. In his petition for redress to DHS, he pleads agents be educated regarding indigenous ways. His message to the officers is to, "Educate themselves, and never forget they are human beings too. They have families, they have children, they have brothers, sisters, wives, and parents; the same as we do. Having a badge and weapon does not give them the right to control,

manipulate or overpower other people. Their purpose is to be of service for the people."

While some believe that nothing can be done to improve the system, Iron Eagle believes that "We can do a lot." As someone whose life has changed since walking the Red Road, and finding Iron Eagle's Ceremonial Center, I can say from first-hand experience that Iron Eagle does in fact "do a lot."

Grandfather Iron Eagle, as he is called by those who follow the Red Road, is a respected elder of great spiritual wisdom who leads Native American dances, weddings, and healing ceremonies. He believes, "Through the teachings of the Red Road, I have the opportunity to be helpful to others and to be of service."

Iron Eagle also started his Center to protect the teachings and practices of the Red Road and to help others "to practice the best we can the principles of the Red Road, some of which are love, sharing, forgiveness, truthfulness, compassion, gratitude... principles the Red Road teaches us to follow every day, the best we can." Iron Eagle explains that the Red Road is an indigenous way of life and that its basic principle teaches, "If we do not have mother earth, we do not have life. This principle is the same in all tribes from Alaska to the Patagonia." While Iron Eagle's lineage is from the Chiricahua Apache tribe, he has spent substantial time living and sharing the Red Road with many other tribes.

In the Center, Tanahuachi Kiva, which means "first teacher is inside ourselves, it is our hearts," everyone



is welcome, “all colors, all genders, all languages, all nations.” Iron Eagle, through his teachings, encourages everyone to heal themselves first, as that energy can lead to the healing of others and the world, a principle he himself practices, “My first purpose is to be happy and do everything because I am happy.”

While some believe that walking the Red Road and practicing its teachings is exclusive to indigenous people, Iron Eagle believes that the Red Road is for everyone. He explains that the Medicine Wheel, an indigenous symbol, and tool which holds great knowledge, represents “all nations, all colors, and all people.” “If we do not pray for everyone, we do not follow the teachings of the Red Road, because the teaching of the Red Road includes all four colors. If we do not pray for all we are not honoring all our relations.”

The foundation of love and peace is also present in all ceremonies held at the Center. Iron Eagle shared that the Sun Dance, held yearly at the Center, “provides people an opportunity to form a better relationship with themselves and others, and to practice tolerance, to practice empathy. One of the most important things for me is to bring people together, unite people, no matter what country, what color, what language because when we dance, we are spirits.” Iron Eagle has been a Sun Dancer for 30 years.

The Peace Dance, which is danced during the night for four days, is also held yearly at the Center. Clayton “Clay” Kent, who has walked the Red Road for 15 years and holds Peace Dance and Sun Dance with Iron Eagle, shared, “The Peace Dance helps dancers feel internal peace by silencing their mind. When internal peace is felt, we heal ourselves, our surroundings, and all our relations. When we dance around the fire and feel peaceful and loving we raise the energy and vibration of the earth.” Clay also expressed that part of what makes Iron Eagle special is that “he brings joy, tenderness, and laughter to his teachings of the Red Road.”

Iron Eagle does not see experiences of oppression like the one he faced at the Atlanta Airport as a deterrent to share the Red Road and its messages of peace and love with his community and the world. In fact, he uses them as motivation to continue to see the good in each of us. His message for all, “Love yourself first. Love and respect yourself. Be thankful for everything you have—for everything. Then share and make yourself of service. And before somebody tries to put ideas about somebody else in you, go inside and see that from the inside out, we are all equal. Our blood is the same color. We bleed the same way—like everyone. We are human beings. We are sacred beings. We are noble men and noble women.”



The Return of Sacred Dance

Facing the often painful truths of the past is a necessary pain because it helps us confront the difference between history as truth and history as myth, according to Reverend Steven Charleston, a member of the Choctaw Nation and a leading voice for justice for Indigenous peoples. In his book, *Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder's Meditations on Hope and Courage*, Charleston asserts the value of truth as central to indigenous culture, "The importance of truth arose from a simple but profound understanding of what constitutes a civilization: no human system will endure unless it is built on truth." The social contract of the Native American cultures made speaking the truth the highest virtue.

An important aspect of truth telling is acknowledging the missing histories, the stories and truths overlooked and untold in our history books. This is an important practice to move us toward reconciliation and social healing.

The spiritual resilience of North America's indigenous people is reflected in the history of overcoming immense persecution and attempted cultural genocide. With the violent and militarized takeover of the land, traditional indigenous practices were banned, sacred objects taken and destroyed, children forcefully removed from families and placed in boarding homes, families were scattered into diaspora, and languages were forbidden. Since the 1500's, 115 languages have become extinct in the United States.

With this, understanding the significance of the Sun Dance being performed in Florida today means understanding the history of attempted cultural genocide



by the US government toward the indigenous people of this land. Through the Religious Crimes Code of 1883, Congress banned all native dancing and ceremonies, including the Sun Dance, potlatches, and the practices of medicine persons. The code gave Indian Agents the authority to use force and imprisonment to stop cultural practices considered immoral or subversive to federal government-mandated assimilation policies.

The Commission of Indian Affairs issued anti-dancing directives well into the 1920s. The effect of this law was to drive Indian religious ceremonies such as the Sun Dance underground. The code was one of various methods that the U.S. employed in an attempt to eliminate the cultural identity of American Indian tribes. Many political, cultural, and spiritual leaders were imprisoned over the years as a result of anti-Indian racism. This piece of legislation was not repealed until 1978 when the U.S. Congress passed the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA), to protect basic civil liberties, and preserve the traditional religious rights and cultural practices of Native Americans. Likewise, while Native Americans inhabited this land for thousands of years, it was not until 1924 that the federal government granted them citizenship and the right to vote.

While reconciling the past is far from complete, progress is being made. Deb Haaland, one of the first Native American women to serve in Congress, made history when she became the first Native American to serve as a cabinet secretary, namely the Secretary of the Interior. She is a member of the Pueblo of Laguna and a 35th generation New Mexican.

As Secretary, she issued a memorandum directing her department to coordinate an investigation into the Federal Indian boarding school system, a policy intentionally targeted at American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children to assimilate them

and, consequently, take their territories. The landmark Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report, issued in 2022, shows that between 1819 and 1969, the U.S. ran or supported 408 boarding schools, where children endured “rampant physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.” The report currently records more than 500 deaths of Native children—and the department’s investigation continues. “This report, as I see it, is only a first step to acknowledge the experiences of Federal Indian boarding school children,” the study’s author, Bryan Newland, states.

Facing this painful history, part of our nation's truth, while difficult, creates the possibility for reconciliation and social healing. Today in the United States, 1.1% of the U.S. population identifies as American Indian and Alaska Native according to the 2020 U.S. Census. There are 574 federally recognized Indigenous nations, and 175 languages spoken by nearly three million people, descendants of the fifteen million Native people who once inhabited this land. More Native Americans hold elected positions in the U.S. government than ever before.

The perseverance and resilience of North America’s indigenous people is legendary. American Indian culture and ideas have shaped U.S. culture. We honor Native American societies as cultural gems from which we continue to learn.

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PEACE NEWS



Yoga Yields ‘Precious’ Benefits

The UN General Assembly adopted a unanimous resolution declaring June 21 the International Day of Yoga in December 2014. Since then, millions of people have participated in the yearly celebration worldwide. This year’s observance, organized by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN in collaboration with the Secretariat, occurred under the theme, Yoga for Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam (“the world is one family”).

“[Yoga] unites body and mind, humanity and nature, and millions of people across the globe for whom it is a source of strength, harmony, and peace.”

Source: UN News



Greenhouse Gas to See Reduction

United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) announced the launch of a new satellite-based system designed to detect methane emissions, a potent greenhouse gas. Experts have long said that massive amounts of the gas routinely escape from oil and gas installations around the world. Colourless and odourless, methane is responsible for more than 25 per cent of the global warming the Earth is experiencing today. UNEP will use the satellite detection to notify governments and companies of methane leaks, helping them to take action.

Source: UNEP

Celebrating Peace News Locally, Nationally, and Internationally.

Rise of Indigenous Films and TV Shows

The summer of 2022 has marked a watershed moment for Indigenous representation in US pop culture, which for decades has slighted or misrepresented Indigenous people, if it acknowledged their existence at all. “This is just shattering so many excuses for so long that have erased Native people,” said Crystal Echo Hawk, a member of the Pawnee Nation and the president and CEO of IllumiNative, an Indigenous women-led research and advocacy organization.

Source: The Gaurdian



More Youth Empowerment

As never before, the United Nations (UN) is now pledging to develop multi-stakeholder partnerships with the 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24—some 16 percent of the global population—as meaningful stakeholders in our shared environmental future. By 2030—the target date for the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the number of youth is projected to have grown by 7 percent, to 1.3 billion.

A central principle of the UN’s 2030 Agenda is the assurance that “no one will be left behind,” especially not young people. Long term sustainability, the UN now says, must include solutions to the complex challenges global youth face daily: unemployment, political marginalization, affordable housing, and health and education access. All of those things are subject to environmental impact.

Source: Forbes



CREATING A
Resilient
COMMUNITY
NETWORK

A collective impact movement collaborating across sectors to transform Central Florida into a region of prevention, hope, healing, and resilience for all.

OUR HISTORY

In 2019, local leaders asked us to convene a conference that would educate the community about the human and societal impacts of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma, and toxic stress. Since then, there has been enormous interest in keeping the momentum going around this work in Central Florida. Bimonthly meetings have been held since 2019 and we have grown into a network of 600+ individuals from 300+ organizations in all sectors of Central Florida.

OUR GOALS

- Create Shared Understanding about the Science of Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences and Interventions for Healing
 - Expand the Resilience Network's Sector Representation, Accountability & Community Leadership
- Learn, Collaborate & Deepen Connections as a Community Network
- Leverage Our Impact Through Research, Data, Policy, and Advocacy

SECTORS

Education | Government | Health & Wellness | Nonprofit
Faith | Public Safety | Criminal Justice | Business | Child Welfare

WHAT WE DO



Bi-monthly Meetings



Film Screenings



Workshops



Common Read



Digital Social Platform



Annual Conference



Join the Resilience Network by scanning the QR code and completing a brief form.

Contact: resilience@peacejusticeinstitute.org

10 STEPS TO BECOMING TRAUMA-INFORMED

1 **Recognize the impact of trauma and toxic stress on yourself and other individuals as demonstrated by NEAR science:** neurobiology, epigenetics, adverse childhood experiences, and resilience. Be mindful of cultural and historical factors that impact the population you serve including clientele, employees, parents, and children. Be aware of risk factors, behaviors, signs, and triggers so you are better able to self regulate, recognize others' cues, and respond appropriately. Examples of impact may include increased community violence, increased turnover, increased absenteeism, or decreased productivity.

2 **Engage in ongoing training and learning opportunities** to educate yourself and those around you on the topics of PACES, trauma, toxic stress, resilience, peace, restorative practices belonging, and healing. Invest in the skill development of individuals at all levels of your organization.

3 **Become familiar with the stages of development** in implementing a trauma informed-approach, beginning with trauma affected, then trauma aware, trauma sensitive, trauma responsive, and trauma-informed. Another framework of relevance is PACEs Connections' "Path to a Just Society."

4 **Use the six guiding principles** to inform interaction with individuals at your business or organization. The principles include: safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment and choice; and cultural, historical, and gender Issues.

5 **Work to heal trauma by nurturing relationships, implementing restorative processes, and building positive experiences.** Support holistic wellbeing and mental health of everyone in your ecosystem. Provide a sense of meaning and purpose to yourself and those around you.

6 **Be mindful of and proactive in addressing different types of exposure** such as secondary traumatic stress, revictimization, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout. There are many resource kits available to help individuals and organizations better understand and address these types of exposure. Seek professional support when needed.

Some proactive approaches may include: formal debriefing sessions, internal support groups, employee assistance programs, corporate wellness programs/committees, and flexible hours.

7 **Focus on a shift in language and culture.** Move from deficit to strength-based mindsets and vocabulary. This positive shift can help us to move away from harm, shame, blame, and guilt—and toward more dignity, compassion, empathy, and healing. Instead of asking "what's wrong with you" think—what's right with you? View individuals as "survivors" or "thrivers" instead of "damaged" or "victims." Use person-centered language such as "person living with ____" or "working to recover from ____" instead of "mentally ill."

8 **Take time to slow down and debrief at critical points of stress or change.** This will help you and everyone around you develop successful, positive coping mechanisms and avoid a negative workplace or organizational environment.

9 **Partner with like-minded local, national, and global organizations,** to strengthen collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and resources. Examples: Join the Resilience Network in Central Florida. Join PACEs Connection—a free, global social network that supports communities to accelerate the PACEs science movement, and promote trauma-informed, resilience building practices and policies in all communities and institutions.

10 **Recognize that this work is an ongoing process.** Collect data to assess progress and shortcomings. Schedule time to reevaluate your strategy on an ongoing basis.



PJI Summer Teachers Academy Session II Facilitators Alumni. Learn more at [PJITA.eventbrite.com](https://www.pjita.eventbrite.com).



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