THE OLIVE BRANCH

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Teacher's Guide

Educational Supplement
to the Youth Magazine
of Seeds of Peace
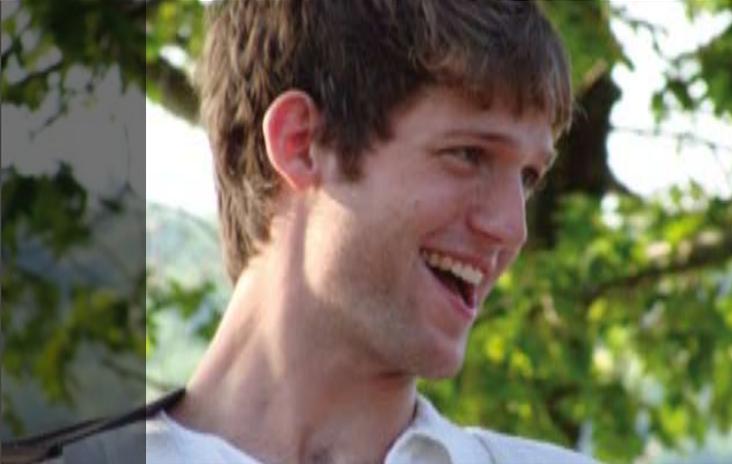
Tools for Educators

From the editors

Daniel Noah Moses & Inessa Shishmanyan

Welcome to the third issue of *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide*. If you are reading this, you probably value education. The editors and contributors to this Guide do, too. We believe that by working together in communities and across lines of conflict, educators will make the difference. We believe that education is essential if there is to be a better future.

To work for a better future, education must encourage respect for one another and for our diversity; it must encourage communication skills, leadership skills, civic engagement, cross-cultural understanding, and the peaceful transformation of conflict. To put it another way, we need to figure out better ways to live together on what often feels like a shrinking planet.

This Guide is part of a range of projects started in September 2007 with the support of USAID. These projects build on the foundation of the Seeds of Peace Delegation Leaders summer program—the intense program for adult educators from regions of conflict.

Together these USAID programs strengthen and enlarge the circle of Seeds of Peace Educators, while also reaching out to youth and to the broader public.

USAID-Supported Educational Projects for Palestinians & Israelis

Teaching Tolerance in Palestinian Schools: A Model Schools Initiative

The idea behind this, and its Israeli counterpart, is to nurture centers of Seeds of Peace activity—learning environments that encourage the values and skills embodied by Seeds of Peace.

On page 12, we feature an in-depth article about this project by faculty members. On page 16, American faculty member Deb Bicknell interviews her Palestinian colleagues, Oraib Waari and Jihad Sirhan.

Teaching Tolerance in Israeli Schools: A Model Schools Initiative

Look for an essay by Tali, an Israeli Model Schools participant, in the fourth issue of *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide*.

Workshops on Peaceful Learning Environments

With the support of USAID, Seeds of Peace has organized six workshops a year across the West Bank; in August 2009, we organized a workshop in Gaza. Faculty members include the core faculty of the Palestinian Model Schools Initiative, along with special guests. For example, Fatma Elshobokshy, the Delegation Leader summer program coordinator, and Ajay Noronha, Indian Delegation Leader (Session I, '08), traveled to Ramallah to do a film-making workshop for 25 Palestinian educators from across Jerusalem and the West Bank.

In this current issue, Fatma writes about the Camp experience that motivated her to make her visit; Ajay writes about his visit with Israeli and Palestinian Delegation Leaders.

Winter & Summer Camps for West Bank Children

For a short essay about the first camp, held in Jericho in January 2008, see Karen AbuZant's piece in the first issue of *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide*.

Cross-Border Educators' Workshops

These workshops are precious opportunities for Palestinian and Israeli (and sometimes Jordanian) Seeds of Peace educators to meet, to share experience and knowledge, to make friends, to be reenergized with hope.

Workshops have been held in Wadi Rum, Jordan, in Tiberius, and outside of Jerusalem. The second issue of *The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide* focuses on the workshop held in Tiberius in June 2009.

Seeds Café

Each month, Seeds of Peace organizes a forum in Jerusalem to present and discuss cultural and political issues relevant to Palestinians, Israelis and the international public. These cafés are a rare opportunity to engage in this kind of dialogue with such a range of people.

The Olive Branch & Olive Branch Teacher's Guide

The final project funded by USAID: two types of educational material. *The Olive Branch* is a magazine produced by "Seeds" (graduates of the Seeds of Peace Camp for teenagers in the US). *The Olive Branch Teachers Guides* are … well, take a look. As always, we welcome your comments, suggestions, ideas, and connections.

For additional information about the Delegation Leaders Program and its various projects for Seeds of Peace Educators, including older issues of *The Olive Branch and Teacher's Guide*, as well as wonderful short film about the Delegation Leaders summer program, visit our website at www.seedsofpeace.org.

TOP Delegation Leaders at the Seeds of Peace Camp. **BELOW** A Model Schools Initiative classroom in Hebron.

Camp

Collective memory & empathy at Camp

'"I think we need to do some affirmations," I said, in true camp counselor fashion. My sister and I were returning from a weekend in Tahoe. It had been a year since my father had died and we decided to spend some time together to honor and to reflect.

And we did. It left us, though, with incredible anxiety.

The car ride down the mountain was full of nervous energy and stress, driven by internal pressures to accomplish, to achieve. Living up to a father's expectations when those expectations are frozen in time, no longer able to adjust with the changes that dictate life, is ... well ... difficult.

"OK, what are you most proud of?" she asked me.

"My work at Seeds of Peace," I said without hesitation.

"Me too," she responded.

I am a better person for my experiences at Seeds of Peace. I am a better listener, a better friend, a better leader, a better citizen of this planet. And I realize (again) that this is all my father ever really asked of me: "Be a good person, Zoe. And lead others to be better people."

Seeds of Peace is the best way I know how to do this.* — Zoe (Counselor)

By **Fatma Elshobokshy**

I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THE summer of 2008. It was intense, full of emotion, hesitation, and challenges. When I started at the Seeds of Peace International Camp, I thought that being there wouldn't affect me.

But it did, because I am drawn to, and intrigued by, collective memory.

The mission of Seeds of Peace matches my passion for promoting coexistence among Arabs and Israelis. Through Seeds of Peace, people from conflict regions work together to explore their common humanity and to further cross-cultural understanding.

Therefore, when I accepted the position of Program Coordinator for the Delegation Leader program, I thought it would be a "piece of cake." I thought that the Camp mission did not apply to me because my life experiences had allowed me to live this mission *before* arriving at

Camp. I told myself: I am an Egyptian, an Arab and a Muslim, so I am aware of Arab culture. Likewise I am aware of Jewish culture because I received my BA in Hebrew Literature. In addition, I have lived in the US for the last four years, so I am able to interact with Jews and Israelis. I had just received my Masters in Intercultural Relations, so I've had experience with cross-cultural understanding.

My motivation to work with Seeds of Peace was simply to use my background to help both sides get the best experience out of Camp. I was also curious to watch how the three weeks at Camp might simulate coexistence—something that took me years to reach.

In short, I thought that while I would participate in the process, I would not discover anything new that would change my views.

Over the summer, I not only interacted with Israelis and Palestinians, but also listened to their everyday dialogue, which

Seeds of Peace facilitation: A perspective for educators

By **Danny Metzl**

FACILITATION IS THE SKILL OF AIDING, rendering, bringing from latent to forefront. Facilitation is usually much more than mere dialogue. Dialogue, which is so often lacking between conflicting societies and its peoples, is viewed as the primary goal to be reached, and, in most groups, it is viewed as a basis from which further growth can be achieved.

Most of the group work done by Seeds of Peace facilitators is of the encounter group type: Participants encounter their own and others' ideas, emotions, and behaviors, as well as the concepts and realities of conflict, peace, cultures, identities, roles, etc. of the conflicting societies.

This type of facilitation is a specific application of psychology. It does require some psychological skills, yet it does not require the full knowledge and skill training of a psychologist. It also requires facilitators' prior processing of the culture of conflict in the region and good first-hand knowledge of the history, the narratives and the on-going details of the conflict.

It requires a firm belief in peace as an

alternative to violent conflict and an equally firm belief that peace cannot be reached by psychological change alone.

For peace to replace conflict, actual concrete, physical changes have to take place in the region. Facilitated encounter experiences can bring about a process of "people's enpeacement," which is essential to the development of lasting peace, but cannot bring about peace by itself and should not be confused with peace.

First and foremost, group encounter fa-

had a huge impact on me. It was the first time I watched the two sides together arguing about their lives, their rights, and their own history.

It was often intense, full of emotion, and stress. The thing that touched me the most was that their frustration hindered them from being able to express their anger in words. I could feel the dissatisfaction on both sides, particularly from their body language.

It is surprising that I came to feel empathy for both sides. My initial empathy was more for the Palestinians, which arose from the process of collective memory. Collective memory is memory that is held by a group of people that is passed on from generation to generation.

Because I am Arab, I grew up feeling empathy toward the Palestinian situation, not toward the Israeli, although I did not directly interact with either group during my childhood.

Once I moved to the US and met Israelis for the first time, I could not feel empathy for them when the conflict was discussed. Sometimes I kept quiet and other times I just changed the subject. I thought to myself that I understood, but my heart couldn't feel it.

I believe this resulted from my collec-

tive memory, which blocked my feeling toward the other side and caused me to avoid discussion because it would challenge our history.

During my time at Camp, I had many opportunities to listen to the Palestinian and Israeli participants battling with each other. I was present for sessions during which participants shared their stories. I found myself emotionally torn. I listened to the Palestinian stories about the personal details of their suffering and felt the natural connection to them.

On the other hand, when the Israelis told their stories and I sensed their con-

stant fear of their surrounding neighbors, for the first time I felt something inside me shaking and moving my own humanity. I struggled to push that feeling aside until I chose to calm down and allow myself to experience it. Once I recognized it, I started to feel equal empathy for both sides.

At the end, I realized my assumption that I would be at Camp only to affect the participants' experience was wrong. Even though I had interacted with Israelis beforehand, I found myself challenged, and ultimately changed, by my experiences with Seeds of Peace. I came to realize it is possible to step outside one's collective memory in order to see the other as a human being and feel empathy.

In my opinion, feeling empathy will not change one's experiences in the conflict, but it might change how we handle the conflict.

I hope that my newfound empathy will move me to be an effective advocate for the transformation of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Fatma Elshobokshy worked as the 2008 & '09 Program Coordinator for the Seeds of Peace Delegation Leaders Program. She also works at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Facilitation is at the heart of the Seeds of Peace Camp experience—for Seeds and Delegation Leaders. Facilitation is also crucial for the programs we do after Camp, in home communities. Facilitation can be highly useful in educational settings. This is an introduction to facilitation for educators who are curious about our pedagogy (methods of teaching) and who might be interested in using these methods in their own classrooms or communities.

The facilitation program at Camp has changed over the years. In 2006, Seeds of Peace established a 15-month facilitation course based in Jerusalem for Palestinians and Israelis interested in how to become facilitators. Since then, two cohorts of Palestinian and Israeli students have graduated. Students study, work at Camp, take part in regional activities with Seeds of Peace and with other organizations, and set up their own new, adult facilitation groups. Some graduates are already employed in the field.

cilitation requires a facilitator who deeply cares for human beings, who honors, respects and dignifies them. Such a person believes in the healing power of facing truths, and has empathy, open-mindedness and tolerance.

Professionally, facilitation is usually associated with various kinds of group dynamics, better known as "group work." From a psychological view point, a "working group" is composed of people who tend to their task, and who establish relationships, roles, norms, communication skills and codes.

The task of the Seeds of Peace facilitation groups is to gather information—assumptions (often referred to as "facts"), experiences, thoughts, feelings and

other internal and external stimuli—and process them. Processing is the task of each individual, of the subgroups and of the group as a whole. Processing means gathering stimuli, bringing them into conscious awareness, developing them into something meaningful to oneself and deciding how this new awareness will fit into one's life.

The groups with which the Seeds of Peace facilitators work concentrate upon processing stimuli which are associated with conflict and peace in general, and specifically with those in the Middle East, especially as they relate to participants' own lives.

The facilitator's role and task is to make processing possible. This is achieved by

providing a safe and trustful environment; by gently coaxing materials (such as thoughts, feelings, attitudes, generalizations, etc.) from the participants' lives to become stimuli for themselves and others; by leading the group to create norms of honor, respect, and dignity; by encouraging open, honest and direct dialogue and the expression of feelings; and by encouraging members to either draw conclusions, "take home" new ideas for further pondering, or take action.

Another major task of the facilitator is "to sew up the worlds," to connect the inner world of a person with his expressed, external self, with that which has oc-

Cooking *dialogue through food*

Daniel Noah Moses Ph.D. Managing Editor

Food brings people together. People around the world like to eat and they like to talk about what they eat. People give meaning to food. We eat particular foods because they mean something to us. We eat special foods for particular holidays and at specific times of the year. John Wallach, the founder of Seeds of Peace, said that "the enemy" has a face. Yes—and this so-called enemy also has a mouth and a stomach, and legs for dancing after the meal.

Over these last years, Delegation Leaders at the Seeds of Peace Camp in Maine have been cooking for one another, for the Seeds, for the counselors and facilitators, and for the local people who welcome them and spend time with them. Through this cooking and sharing and eating, we learn about one another.

"You are what you eat," goes an American proverb. If we eat the food our friends from around the world cook in the spirit of hospitality and love, it means something good.

Little by little, Seeds of Peace educators are creating a Seeds of Peace cookbook. You will find recipes and stories in each of the *Olive Branch Teacher's Guides*. And little by little, slowly, we figure out recipes for peace.

YOU COULD ASK YOUR STUDENTS

What is your favorite meal? What do you eat at weddings, at the most important holidays? What do you eat for breakfast? When do you sit for the longest meal? How do you slaughter animals for meat? Who cooks in your house? What are the rituals surrounding the meals? What are the meals like? How many times do you have to say, "no thank you, I'm full" until the host or hostess stops feeding you?

It is easy to take such questions for granted until one comes face-to-face with those who do these things differently.

As educators, how do we learn and teach about other cultures? It is important to ask your students: What is happening in these stories? What is the cultural context of these stories? Food provides us with one concrete way to bring other cultures into a tangible learning experience. It is important to make the food about more than tastes and smells—to also make it about personal stories, people's lives, cultures and humanity.

Fatta

Amany, Egyptian Delegation Leader (2009)

Fatta is dish made for both Christian and Muslim celebrations. It is primarily eaten in the morning, or after religious services.

1 kilo (2½ lbs) of beef (red), cubed
2 cubes or 1 tbsp of beef stock
2 onions
10 pieces of crunchy/dried pita bread (can be made by putting pita in the oven)
1 kilo of white rice
butter
2 tbsps of minced garlic

½ cup of white vinegar
salt
black pepper

1. Boil the meat cubes, beef stock, and one whole onion (peeled) with salt and black pepper for seasoning.
2. Cook the rice.
3. Fry the garlic. After fried, add the white vinegar.
4. Take the meat out of the water once cooked, save the broth.
5. Fry the cooked meat with the other onion (minced).
6. Place the pita bread in a bowl and mix with leftover broth until the pita bread becomes soft, but not soaked.
7. Add garlic and vinegar mixture to the pita bread. Place in a serving dish.
8. Put the cooked rice on top of the pita mixture.
9. Put the cooked meat on top of the rice and serve.

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Kilta with Tahina

Sumaya, Palestinian Delegation Leader (2009)

1 kilo (2½ lbs) of minced beef
pinch of parsley
pinch of salt
3-4 onions
2-3 green peppers
3-4 tomatoes
3-4 potatoes
tahina
lemon juice
black pepper
Middle East spices (packaged together)

1. Mince two medium-sized onions with the minced meat. Add in the Middle East spices, parsley, black pepper, and a pinch of salt. Place the mixture at the bottom of a baking pan.
2. Slice the potatoes, tomatoes, onions, and green peppers and add, in layers, on top of the meat layer.
3. Cover the pan with

Daniel, an Israeli Delegation Leader, says:
This is a Hasidic folk-tale. The name of the story is "A Spice That's Called Shabbat."

Once upon a time, a king visited one of his cities. He was invited to eat with the rabbi of the city, on Shabbat. The rabbi's wife prepared a stew.

The king ate it and was impressed—it was very tasty. He told his cook to get the recipe from the rabbi's wife, so the cook did exactly what the king asked. He wrote down the recipe, with all of the ingredients and how to prepare the stew.

After some time, the king asked his cook to prepare the same stew that he'd had at the rabbi's house. The king tasted the stew. It was good, but not as good as what he had eaten at the rabbi's house.

He called the cook and asked if the cook had done exactly what the rabbi's wife said to do. The cook explained that he had done exactly the same thing. The king went back to the rabbi's house. He asked the rabbi's wife if she'd forgotten a spice or some small detail. They compared recipes, but they were exactly same recipe. He again asked if some spice was missing.

Then the rabbi understood the problem. Turning to the king, he asked, "On what day did you eat the stew that your cook prepared?" The king did not remember the exact day—but he remembered it had been a day in the week. The rabbi smiled. THAT was the problem. The king's cook had missed the special ingredient: Shabbat.

This story illustrates how the food that we like is related to our emotions at the time that we eat it.

When Jews eat special food for Shabbat, the holy day gives it a special meaning. The food becomes tastier because you have time to eat it. You are not in a rush to work. You eat it calmly. When you eat it, when you celebrate Shabbat, when you do the blessings, you come to eat in another state of mind. This state of mind is the special ingredient that you add to the food.

For example, birthday cake will always taste different from a cake you eat on a day that is not your birthday. Or think of a wedding. If you are happy for the couple, the food will be tastier than if you eat the same dish at home alone.

The reader can find many examples of how the experience of eating can change. A meal that you eat with your family is so different from a meal that you eat alone.

aluminum foil and cook.
4. Water down the tahina by mixing it with diluted lemon juice and water. Then add on top of the cooked meat and vegetables and place back into the oven.
5. Let the dish boil for a little while until topping is browned.

Arab Vegetable Salad

2 tomatoes
2 cucumbers
parsley, chopped
mint, chopped
3 lettuce leaves
1½ lemons
2 big spoons of olive oil
salt

1. Chop all the vegetables into small pieces. Place in a big bowl and then add the parsley and lettuce.
2. In a separate bowl, prepare the dressing by taking the lemon juice and mixing it with the oil, salt and mint.
3. Dress the salad.

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Shakshouka

Orly, Israeli Delegation Leader (2008)

4 red onions, chopped into small bits
1 kilo tomato
8 eggs
1 can of mushrooms
chopped garlic
1 kilogram sweet pepper of different colors sliced
olive oil
Salt, black pepper, chili pepper, cumin
Tomato paste

1. In a pan we cook all the ingredients together except the eggs and add all the spices to it.
2. Mix the water with tomato paste and then add it to the rest of the ingredients in the pan to be cooked. Leave it to boil.
3. With a fork, make holes in the cooked

vegetables. Add the eggs into these holes. Cover it for 10 minutes.

(For a different version, see the first issue of The Olive Branch Teacher's Guide).

Cucumber & Yogurt Salad

3 cucumbers
½ cup yogurt
chopped green mint
salt

1. Chop the cucumbers into small cubes.
2. In a deep bowl we add to the cucumber, the yogurt, chopped mint and salt, and mix all together.
3. Serve cold.

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Jollof Rice (Ghana)

Pious Ali, Delegation Leader facilitator (2008)

Jollof Rice is among the best-known West African dishes, not only because it is delicious and easy to prepare, but because the ingredients are readily available in Western countries.

Its origin, however, remains a bone of contention between several West African nations.

There are many regional cooking variations—this version is my Grandmother's.

1 lb lean beef, lamb or chicken.
salt & ground white pepper, to taste
vegetable oil for frying
1 liter (1¾ pint) stock or water with 3 crushed stock cubes
3 large onions, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
2-3 chillies (hot peppers), finely chopped
4 large tomatoes, blanched, peeled and blended or mashed
3 tbsps tomato paste
8 oz each assorted chopped vegetables like carrots, green beans, and capsicums (sweet or bell peppers)

Raed, a Palestinian Delegation Leader, says:
The thing that I miss most during my time here in the US is Arabic coffee. To me, it became a tradition to have my strong Arabic—some people call it Turkish coffee—in the morning. In our region, people are known for their love of coffee. They usually drink it more than two or three times a day. In my family, on certain occasions, we prepare a very special coffee. We roast coffee beans and crush them. We then add a lot of special spices and boil it for three or more hours.

Hanaa, an Egyptian Delegation Leader, says:
Fool (brown beans) is the best breakfast in Egypt—it's a protein meal. The whole family gathers around for fool.
It can be prepared in lots of ways. Normally, you boil the beans for a while until tender. You always eat it with oil, cumin, lemon and salt. You can add tahina or hummus. Sometimes people like to eat it with onion.
Whenever you eat it, you feel sleepy. Yet everyone likes fool. Whenever you have big groups, you have fool.
You can eat it for other meals, but usually it's a breakfast dish. You eat and eat until you get full—you cannot stop in the middle of the meal.
I love fool.

Haya, an Israeli Delegation Leader, says:
My family comes from Egypt. We add eggs and parsley to the fool. In my family, after eating the fool, the women would sit together drinking coffee, laughing, sharing family stories. The husbands were sent to the balcony. They used to open the first two buttons of their pants and lie down peacefully and silently until the fatigue left them. Then the women would talk. I remember myself as a child, hearing the first time about divorce—about family affairs.

1 lb long-grain rice
lettuce and hard-boiled eggs to garnish

1. Cut meat, lamb, or chicken into cubes and season with salt and pepper. Cover and allow to stand for 1-2 hours.
2. Heat oil in frying pan and fry the meat pieces until brown. Remove meat from oil and add to the stock in a large, heavy-based saucepan. Simmer on low heat until meat begins to soften, then remove from heat.
3. Drain excess oil from fry pan, leaving enough oil to fry onions, garlic and chillies (hot peppers) until golden.
4. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, half the combined vegetables and (8 fl oz) of stock from the meat mixture. Stir well, adjust seasoning and simmer on low heat for 10 minutes.
5. Add this vegetable sauce to the meat mixture in the saucepan and simmer gently.
6. Finally, stir in the uncooked, long-grain rice. Adjust the seasoning again, cover and simmer slowly on low heat for about 15 minutes.
7. Arrange the remaining vegetables on top of the rice and continue to simmer until the rice absorbs all the stock, softens and cooks, and the meat is tender. It may be necessary to sprinkle additional water mix to help the rice cook. If so, use small amounts at a time of approximately (8 fl oz) lightly-salted water.
8. Serve hot, garnished with chopped lettuce, parsley or fresh coriander (cilantro) and hard-boiled eggs.

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Fatoush

Sonia, Israeli Delegation Leader (2009)

Arab culture has a wide range of delicious foods. Most of these foods require

long preparation times, but this particular dish does not.

Fatoush is a salad that can be prepared in 5-10 minutes; it is very nutritious and can be served at any time of the day.

It is highly recommended for vegetarians.

1 pita
2 tomatoes
3 cucumbers
1 small onion
parsley to taste
fresh mint
olive oil
salt
lemon juice
feta cheese

1. Cut the pita into small pieces and fry them in deep oil. Leave them aside to cool

2. Cut tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, parsley and mint into small pieces and mix well.

3. Add the salt, lemon juice and olive oil to the cut vegetables and mix them well.

4. Pile the fried pieces of pita on top of the vegetable salad.

5. Sprinkle the feta cheese on top of the fried pita.

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Olive Oil

Ismail, Palestinian Delegation Leader (2007 & 2009)

Olive oil is made of olive fruit. It is healthy, delicious and nutritious. There are different kinds of olive oil. They are different in color and taste.

Most Palestinian dishes contain olive oil. Most Palestinian breakfasts contain olive oil. It is used in hummus dishes, in vegetable salad, in *labaneh* (thick yogurt).

The most popular dish is *za'tar* (thyme) and olive oil. It is eaten with Arabic bread.

Rasha, an Egyptian Delegation Leader, says:
Although I'm from a Christian family, our tradition is to gather on Friday around breakfast. My husband, children and myself, spend Friday with my family. My father prepares us a very traditional Egyptian dish for breakfast consisting of smashed kidney beans with garlic and olive oil. Along with the beans we have scrambled eggs and Basterma (meat). This custom has continued in the family for decades.

Faten, a Palestinian Delegation Leader, says:
For us in Nablus, knafe is not something to buy in the store. We prepare it for ourselves at home. The knafe in the store is for visitors.
I remember when we were children, my uncle used to make knafe for the whole family—for his immediate family and for my father's family. The children used to watch him while he prepared.
First, he would melt butter on the tray. He colored the butter with orange dye, because knafe is supposed to be orange. I don't know why, but that's just the way it is.
He would then start with the dough. He would make the dough very soft, then put the first layer on a tray. We don't use the oven; we use coal. We put the coal outside, and when it becomes very hot, we bring it back inside. On one side, we warm ourselves, on the other side, we have a sweet treat.
After the layer of dough, he would spread the white cheese. It's a special cheese—a sweet cheese. We get this sweet cheese by taking salty cheese and cutting it into small pieces and putting them in water. Every 20 minutes, we change out the water. This takes the salt out, so the cheese becomes sweeter. If the cheese is salty, it's not good for knafe.
After the cheese, my uncle would put another layer of dough. He would check the dough from above and below to make sure that it had a good color, that it wasn't burned. When he decided that it was enough, he would bring an empty tray of the same size and put it upside down. He would keep checking. He would give it about 20 minutes.
When the knafe was hot, he would prepare the sugar syrup (kater). It was essential that both the knafe and the syrup be hot.
Within five minutes, the knafe would suck up all of the syrup. Then it would be ready to eat.
The process of cooking the knafe takes two hours. But eating it takes less than ten minutes …
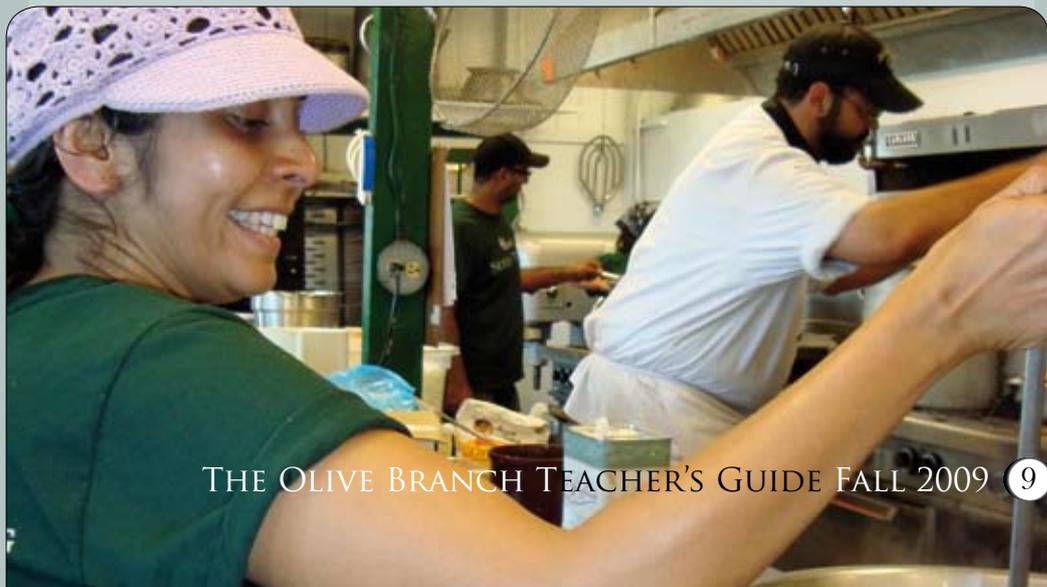
Programs *in the region*

Reflections | TEXT & PHOTOS BY AJAY NORONHA

A Delegation Leader from India travels to the Middle East

The Seeds of Peace Camp was an experience of a lifetime for me. Those three weeks of living, dialoguing, sharing, playing, crying, laughing with "the other" have stayed alive ever since. It almost seems like yesterday when my colleague Saroj Merani and I shepherded a bunch of Indian Seeds into the thickly-wooded campsite by the lake.

The disparate gathering of nationalities under those trees could not have been more volatile. Yet we all reached out to each other and scaled those seemingly insurmountable walls of distrust, anger and fear. Those we viewed with suspicion at first ended up becoming our friends. That is how I met some of the most beautiful people in the world.

During dialogue sessions, I remember being drawn into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I would frequently jump into the inner circle and be part of the ensuing discussion. I had never met anyone from the region before this and knew very little about the complexities of the situation there. The passion, distrust and helplessness was all too apparent, and the situation was clearly far worse than the "conflict" between India and Pakistan.

Yet behind the anger and those tears lay a resolute will to somehow find peace.

By the end of Camp, I felt an irresistible urge to go there, visit the region, and see things for myself. So, in April 2009, I lept at the

FROM TOP Delegation Leaders hold a dialogue session at Camp by the lake. | Ismail (2007 Palestinian Delegation Leader) directs his "actors." | At the Bethlehem checkpoint, re-entering Jerusalem.

opportunity to conduct a filmmaking workshop in Ramallah. This was my chance to meet all my Delegation Leader (DL) friends once again and experience life like they had so vividly and disturbingly described.

The workshop itself arose out of a desire expressed by a group of Palestinian educators who wanted to learn how to make educational films. They came from across the West Bank —from Hebron, Bethlehem, Jenin, Tulkarem and Ramallah.

Over three days, Fatma Elshobokshy (who also works with Seeds of Peace) and I helped them explore the magical world of film. It was an intensive hands-on workshop where the participants brainstormed ideas, wrote scripts, learned how to use a digital video camera and even edited their own films.

Not surprisingly, the "teachers" came up with very didactic themes for their workshop films: the ill-effects of smoking on family life, the importance of educating girls, the relevance of the olive tree in Palestinian life, etc. It ended up being a hectic, stressful, but fun-filled three days. I learned a lot myself, especially about staying positive in a seemingly hopeless situation with limited resources.

Meeting my Palestinian DL friends in the West Bank felt unreal. We never imagined we'd meet so soon after Camp. Plans were quickly made and invitations extended to visit their respective villages. Maysoon (DL '08), who also works with the UNHCR, arranged a visit to a refugee camp. Avi (DL '08), a supervisor at the Israeli Department of Education, invited me home for Pesach Seder. But the reality that all of us—Palestinians and Israelis—could never meet together saddened me. In fact, when Daniel invited me to "jump worlds," I did not

quite understand what he meant.

The enormity of that phrase dawned on me when I was being driven across a "checkpoint" on my way to the West Bank. I wasn't merely crossing a "checkpoint," or a border, but an immeasurable chasm between civilizations, histories and peoples. I began to think of myself as very lucky. Each side was eager to hear about my impressions of the other side and see the photographs I had taken.

And so begun my leaps across history and geography as I crisscrossed between Ramallah, Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Jaffa, Bethlehem, Haifa, Akko and the Dead Sea. At each place, one of the Palestinian or Israeli DLs took turns hosting me and showing me around.

Upon arrival in Ramallah, Walid (DL '07) who I had never met before, embraced me warmly and immediately took me home. Over 20 years ago, he had come to India to study economics! He practiced his rusty Hindi with me and we talked late into the night. It's a tough life here, he said, and he needs to work more than one job, sleeping barely 5-6 hours a day.

Even if you aren't a photographer/filmmaker, the difference between the Palestinian side and Israel is quite clear. The West Bank is teeming with people, apartment blocks with plastic water tanks and frenetic construction activity all over. The Dheisheh Refugee Camp outside Bethlehem I visited seemed a lot better than many of the poorer and "disturbed" parts of India. But the stories of injustice and suffering were just as depressing.

The images on both sides often seemed similar—a plea for the return of a loved one taken hostage or an homage to someone killed in the conflict. I was surprised to see heavily armed troops patrolling the streets on both sides, but the Palestinian soldiers seemed friendly and were happy to meet an Indian, unlike the Israelis, who were more guarded. But that,

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Graffiti in a Palestinian refugee camp. | By the Mediterranean Sea at Akko. | At the Rosh Hanikra beach with Carmit (2008 Israeli Delegation Leader) and a flag of Hamas-held IDF soldier Gilad Shalit. | Pesach Seder with Avi (2008 Israeli Delegation Leader).

Tools

peace games

Steven Brion-Meisels, **Linda Brion-Meisels**, **Deb Bicknell** with support from Jihad Sirhan, Oraib Waari, James Noonan & Casey Corcoran

Supporting peaceful learning environments in the West Bank
Reflections from a cooperative Seeds of Peace/Peace Games project

SEEDS OF PEACE HAS LONG WORKED TO PROMOTE DIALOGUE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT in regions around the world that have experienced conflict. Although most of the work done by Seeds of Peace has focused on young people (including its Camp program in Maine), there is a growing awareness that successful change for young people requires support for adults—parents, educators and civic leaders in their local communities as well as in government leadership.

This organizational commitment led to the development of the Delegation Leaders Program. In turn, efforts to build the Delegation Leaders program led to a set of projects made possible with the support of USAID. The USAID funding included Model Schools Initiatives in both Palestinian and Israeli schools, and workshops on "peaceful learning environments" across the West Bank. This article focuses on work done by a team of Palestinian and US educators in several West Bank communities from February 2008 through June 2009 to support the Model Schools Initiative.

The goal these coordinated projects supported is to "cultivate an environment of tolerance, dialogue and civic engagement in Palestinian and Israeli schools and youth organizations." Peace Games was contracted to work with the Palestinian schools to help them build "peaceful learning environments" with a focus on a set of specific skills that focused on communication, multiple perspectives, conflict resolution and civic engagement.

Our work has included seminars, school visits and individual support for school leaders in many West Bank communities, including East Jerusalem, in and around Jenin, Nablus, Tulkarem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, and Hebron.

Palestinian school principal
"Our project was designed to help raise children to be leaders of our community, and to help our society in the future. Our recycling project started with the children, and then they talked with their parents who then became supporters. For 5 months, we used civic education classroom and after school time with 26 9th-grade students who worked in four teams. Next year, we will work with new 7th- and 8th-grade students. Students are ready to cooperate with teachers and help the community. They have power and energy. To discover this power and energy and move it in positive directions—this is the role of the teacher."

Promoting peaceful learning environments: Our frameworks

AS WE BEGAN OUR WORK WITH Palestinian educators, we carried three connected but distinct frameworks.

The first developed as a result of a 17-year collaboration called The Peaceable Schools and Communities Project.[1] This framework suggests that promoting peaceful learning environments requires four actions: starting with the self (respect for and celebration of cultural diversity), understanding the roots of violence and peace, democratic practice (working with instead of doing to), and transformational leadership. Our framework has been used with several thousand educators and community workers to help them build and sustain school and community contexts that integrate peacemaking and social justice.

In our work with Palestinian educators, we incorporated all four compo-

Aboriginal activist:
"If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

nents of the framework into our planning, workshops and site visits.

The second framework is rooted in programs that focus on experiential education and youth development.[2] This framework focuses on the importance of engaging learners actively in designing and implementing their own learning.

The framework contributes in special ways to youth development work, but it also has important applications for work with adult learners. In our work with Palestinian educators, we used experi-

ential education activities and pedagogy as a backbone for our workshops, and we also worked with educators to apply these strategies in their own, local, cultural contexts.

The third framework is based in work done by Peace Games—which uses experiential education strategies in school contexts to help young children develop the skills of peacemaking: communication, cooperation, conflict resolution and civic engagement.[3] This framework sees children as peacemakers rather than problems, focuses on the strengths and assets that children bring to the school, and emphasizes the importance of teaching children the skills of peacemaking as an antidote to cultural messages that glorify violence. Peace Games provided core classroom activities for our work. USAID supported the work.

1 For more on this model, see Brion-Meisels et al. (2007).

2 For more on this framework, see Dewey (1916), Freire (1998), Nakkula & Toshalis (2006).

3 For more information about Peace Games and our work, please visit our website: www.peacegames.org.

Working across cultures

AS WE BEGAN THE PROJECT, WE were deeply aware of our limitations as well as the resources we brought. Our team worked solely with Palestinian schools and communities.[1] As we began to read, reflect, plan and prepare, we carried with us a few key themes and guidelines.

First, we believed that peacemaking and conflict resolution without a commitment to cultural understanding and social justice are problematic, and in fact can promote new cycles of violence.

We wanted to use our skills to promote democratic partnership with our colleagues—rather than expert-driven, lecture-type presentations. For example, we partnered with our Palestinian colleagues in the development and presentation of the workshops, created structures that emphasized small-group work and team-building, and work in Arabic rather than English.

We also wanted to help Palestinian educators learn how to promote self-governance and decision-making with their students rather than simply control over behavior (including peer violence).

For example, we helped workshop participants explore the roots of vio-

Zoughbi Elias Zoughbi
"In any foreign country, you are always an outsider. No matter what your attitude and position regarding this conflict or that, you are a foreigner. And no matter what you do, no matter what you represent, no matter what your ideology, philosophy or principles, you can be part of the struggle, but the struggle is not yours."[2]

lence and peacemaking, create strategies for classroom meetings and peaceful discipline, and helped create frameworks that emphasized prevention rather than reaction to school climate problems.

Second, we believed that important differences between American and Middle Eastern peacemaking and conflict resolution approaches need to be respected and understood. These include, for example, the role of village elders as peacemakers, the value of collective rather than individualistic approaches to conflict resolution, the politics of conflict resolution in communities that have experienced decades of political strife and military rule, and the role of emotional components like pride, anger and trauma in peacemaking.

Third, we began to identify ways in which US-based and Middle Eastern peacemaking strategies share values, principles and practices.

For example, the *Quran* and *Haddith* provide teachings and practices related to *"ta-aruf"*—the Islamic commitment to respect for the humanity of others.

Peacemakers in both cultures rely on multiple perspectives, patience, communication, and mediation. They practice what Karen Armstrong has called "the compassionate ethic."[3]

Fourth, we understood the need for cultural competence as an important part of our own toolbox. We read, talked, listened and tried to remain open to the questions that we would encounter. We tried to remain humble, and to approach this work as visitors—in the spirit of what Lederach and colleagues describe in their *Handbook of International Peacebuilding* (2002).

Finally, we carried a belief (sometimes a hope) that new integrations of US-based peacemaking strategies could be useful for our colleagues in the West Bank. We had each worked in cross-cultural settings, and had spent time listening to colleagues, so we had confidence that our approach to the work had possibilities for contributions.

1 A separate team worked with Israeli educators, along approximately the same timeline.

2 In Lederach and Jenner (2002)

3 For more on these ideas, see Armstrong (2006), Abu-Nimer (2003), DeRosa and Johnson (2002).

Building a team

OUR WORK WAS ONLY POSSIBLE because of the leadership and skills provided by a cross-cultural team based in the region.

Daniel Moses provided immense cross-cultural wisdom and was also the key organizer with the various constituents—from USAID to the Seeds of Peace offices to local educators in the six West Bank communities.

Inessa Shishmanyan provided administrative support for this work, as well as wisdom in the field of cross-cultural peace building.

Nabil Kayali, founder and director of the Bridge Academies in East Jerusalem, was a critical ally and coach, especially in his ability to bridge Islamic teaching with the kinds of experiential and democratic pedagogies on which we relied.

Nadr Aljoni became a crucial outreach worker for the project; his knowledge of Palestinian culture, as well as his ability to work well with a broad range of individuals and communities, opened important doors and made the work possible. Each of these individuals brought their special contributions to the collaboration.

The key partners for our work as US educators were Jihad Sirhan and Oraib Waari. As a principal at the Jerusalem Bridge Academy, Jihad Sirhan's commitment to democratic practice was critical in our efforts to create effective learning

Adam Curle
"I would advise [the peace builder] to be open, proceed very gradually, and wait for the development of relationships. You will need mutual understanding, trust and confidence with the people who are involved in the situation into which you are moving. Building relationships with people who are already active in the field is key."[1]

environments for the participants, as well as in bridging traditional Palestinian educational practices with these new approaches. She welcomed us into her school, created peer mediation teams, and helped the training team adapt our frameworks to local realities.

As a high school teacher in East Jerusalem, Oraib Waari brought special skills related to classroom applications. Her deep commitment to dialogue (as evidenced by her annual work leading Palestinian-Israeli dialogue groups), was both a resource and an inspiration. In addition, she brought a genius for using cooperative games to teach peacemaking skills, and generously helped the Americans navigate bi-lingual facilitation.

The US team was itself a blend of experiences and backgrounds. Linda and Steven Brion-Meisels brought a combined 80 years of experience in classroom and school-climate work, as well as the Peaceable Schools framework that connects peacemaking with social justice.

Deb Bicknell brought 20 years of experience adapting experiential education

1 In Lederach and Jenner (2002)

pedagogies to work with youth in urban and rural communities.

Casey Corcoran and James Noonan brought a decade of experience using cooperative games in classrooms, primarily through their work at Peace Games.

Because this team was created specifically for this project, it was important to spend time understanding our individual resources so that we could create a comprehensive and culturally competent approach to the Model Schools Initiative.

Our teaching team spent intense time learning about each other, planning our work together, exchanging ideas and perspectives, and creating a leadership structure that was both democratic and empowering. In this effort, we relied especially on the Peaceable Schools framework. We explored the roots of our work in our own experiences, our approaches to social justice work, and our understanding of the challenges that faced Palestinian teachers.

We worked with each other: we listened, shared power, evaluated our strategies, and changed our plans to meet new needs and opportunities. And we tried to practice transformational leadership: we rooted our work in the fertile ground of allies, walked beside each other on this important journey, took risks and supported each other when we made mistakes, and kept focused on our common goals: to help Palestinian colleagues promote and sustain peaceful learning environments.[2]

2 In these areas, we drew deeply on transformational leadership work done by Ulric Johnson and Joyce Shabazz – members of the Peaceable Schools and Communities group.

Our work with Palestinian educators

THE MODEL SCHOOLS INITIATIVE was designed to expand the circle of Palestinian and Israeli educators and community leaders who are committed, competent and connected in their efforts to promote peaceful learning environments.

During the fall of 2007, Nabil Kayali worked with Daniel Moses at Seeds of Peace to identify interested Palestinian schools.

In February 2008, four members of the team worked with educators from several West Bank communities in an outreach workshop that introduced five key components of a peaceful learning environment: multiple perspectives, effective communication, decision-making and problem-solving, peaceful conflict resolution, and civic engagement.

In June 2008, five members of the training team worked with approximately 25 principals and teachers from the Yamoun Boy's Basic School (outside Jenin), a community center in Jenin, two public schools in Bena Na'im (near Hebron), two (private) Bridge Schools in East Jerusalem, and several UNRWA schools from Jerusalem and its environs.

As a part of the June (2008) workshops, six school teams created action plans to help promote peaceful learning environments and civic engagement, including three-, six- and 12-month benchmarks. Following the workshop, an e-mail listserve was created and maintained by Peace Games; this *Teacher's Guide* was

Palestinian principal
"My team and I faced many obstacles. But the workshops gave us ideas to build on a plan I had before the workshops. We were successful. The Prime Minister honored our project, and it is in a book of examples for other schools."

distributed to 1,000 educators in Israel and the West Bank to provide concrete materials for classroom integration.

In February 2009, two members of the training team visited the six schools to assess progress on the previous summer's action plans, to provide support, and to identify needs for the final training in June 2009.

All of the workshops used consistent structures and activities designed to teach and adapt experiential educational pedagogies in ways that support peaceful learning environments.

In addition to the academic goals of the 2009 workshop, time was spent allowing school teams to share the outcomes of their action plans and to discuss the applicability of their projects in other settings.

The workshops included:
• **Games and activities.** Cooperative games and other experiential education strategies were used as a way to build community, strengthen core skills related to the USAID goals, and provide opportunities to practice experiential education classroom strategies.

• **Skill-building sessions.** Participants were offered focused sessions on specific skills needed to create peaceful communities, including the topics of communication, creating and leading workshops, and classroom climate.
• **Small group discussions.**[1] The small groups helped participants identify key classroom and school challenges, discuss them, and create strategies for addressing them back home.
• **Presentations.** A theoretical framework for understanding the pedagogy of experiential education was offered, and strategies for employing this pedagogy in the classroom were modeled—with a focus on de-briefing cooperative games.
• **Action planning.** In June 2008, participants were organized into six teams by virtue of the schools in which they worked, and the workshop built towards identification of team outcomes for the upcoming academic year, a point person, and action plans for each team.

During the '09 workshop, school/community teams presented and discussed the projects they completed during the 2008-2009 academic year. Discussions allowed other participants to explore how these projects might be relevant to their own communities. In addition, the teams had time to review, amend and expand action plans for the year ahead.
• **Networking.** The workshops offered opportunities for participants to create and strengthen support systems that they can continue to use after the end of the USAID project.

1 Participants identified, discussed and shared strategies for dealing with three important challenges: peer violence, apathy and hopelessness among students, and school-family connections.

Challenges and opportunities

Challenges that crossed cultural differences

During both the formal workshop sessions and informal conversations, we learned a great deal about the educational, clinical and bureaucratic challenges that our Palestinian colleagues face.

In many ways, these challenges are quite similar to under-resourced school settings within the US.

Some of these challenges are cultural: families for whom new pedagogic strategies are disconcerting and problematic, hierarchical authority relationships that can make student dialogue and democratic practices both new and difficult to implement, family and village rivalries that spill into the school, and cultural practices that model violence even while they preach respect and solidarity.

Our colleagues also face the predictable challenges of economically impoverished communities in the US and abroad. These include 40 students in a classroom and the lack of basic materials; high levels of unemployment that contribute to domestic violence, depression and substance abuse; lack of support services for children and families who

Palestinian teacher
"What you are teaching us is not real. We have 40 students in one room and our schools are often surrounded by tanks. Our children suffer much trauma. I have notes from students about their own funerals."

reel from these social stresses; under-trained teachers and bureaucratic systems that can be inefficient.

In addition, many of the students see no compelling need to learn or study, because employment prospects are bleak and military violence is a constant threat.

Challenges rooted in the local context

We also learned about the very specific challenges faced by Palestinian educators in this particular historical and political context. Although we were careful to adhere to the boundaries and agreements of our contract, which called for us to focus on the classroom skills of the Palestinian educators rather than broad cross-border or political issues, it was impossible to ignore the realities around us.

Military checkpoints are everywhere: they can transform a 10-mile commute into a 2-3 hour odyssey. Pass systems, settlements, barbed wire, and the 25-foot barrier, all separate individuals and families even within the West Bank itself.

In addition to these daily problems, students live with violence close at hand—including the death, imprisonment, and deportation of family members and colleagues.

(Since 2001, there have been legal and military obstacles against most cross-border contacts, with dire results for cross-cultural understanding and communication.)

These factors contribute to a sense that many young Palestinians feel no motivation to study or learn. Life can be dangerous and unpredictable; the future seems bleak, and for many young people education seems largely irrelevant.

In the face of these immense challenges, our Palestinian colleagues shared their efforts to teach academic and social skills, provide young people with opportunities for leadership and civic engagement, support non-violence and understanding, and create local communities that help provide their children with a safe, healthy and peaceful future.

What we accomplished and learned

THE MODEL SCHOOLS INITIATIVE accomplished important outcomes in a short period of time. Close to 40 educators in six West Bank communities learned about, practiced and began to adapt the core skills of peaceful learning environments.

They also identified aspects of their own personal, cultural and professional experiences that they can use to promote peaceful learning environments.

They explored some of the roots of students' violent behavior from psychological, social and cultural perspectives—and equally importantly, they identified the roots of peacemaking in their own personal, cultural and professional backgrounds.

The six teams from 2008 created and began to implement action plans in their own communities. Projects included school discipline codes, student mediation programs, student governance projects, curriculum integrations and community service learning projects.

During the next year, more than 1,000 students in the six communities benefitted from these projects.

In June 2009, the teams described their projects:

School safety and violence prevention (Yamoun Basic Boys School, outside of Jenin)

Principal Faisal Jaradat designed an action plan to target the increase of student violence—in part, in response to the pressures of community life (unemployment, individual and community trauma). He and his team recruited and trained a core group of student playground peacemakers whose role was to intervene in and mediate problems before they escalated into physical fights (including weapons) on the playground or in the community.

In February of 2009, and again in June, he reported a significant decrease in school violence as a result of his project.

Classroom democracy, school safety & civic engagement (Bena Na'im)

Assistant Principal Mohammed Manasra and his team focused on three projects.

They used strategies from the June 2008 workshop to help students and teachers develop classroom guidelines for in-school behavior and academic achievement.

They helped teachers use cooperative games in classrooms and on the playground to support conflict resolution and communication skills.

Their most ambitious effort involved the development of a community service project where a team of 28 students identified community problems, chose one as a focus (pollution), and worked

Palestinian teacher
"When I read traditional Muslim literature, say from the 16th and 17th centuries, I find amazing things to support the kind of educational approaches we are learning in these workshops. We may have to adapt traditional teachings, but there are no contradictions. We have this treasure, but we don't use it."

with community leaders to implement a community-wide recycling project.

The project addressed a critical need of this village outside Hebron, because there are few recycling programs in the area.

School safety and violence prevention (Bena Na'im)

Principal Omar Khadour and his team focused on issues of school safety, conflict resolution and student mediation.

His efforts to reduce school violence included professional development, individual student counseling, classroom work, training student peacemakers, family and community outreach.

The outreach focused on a community event that used cooperative games to strengthen school-family connections and provide a safe outlet for students' concerns following the war in Gaza.

Student leadership (UNRWA Basic School)

The principal and his team developed a student government that is responsible for a number of school and community initiatives, including work on community problems, civic engagement projects, peer mediation and the development of media resources.

One outcome of these efforts included a handbook that outlined rights and responsibilities for students.

The handbook resulted from months of conversations, outreach and planning that connected students, faculty, families and community leaders.

The principal shared this story about the project he coordinated during the 2008-2009 school year:

"The code of conduct has generated a much better sense of community. And parents understand that discipline is not revenge; it is a way to have a safe environment and a good quality of education for students. Parents thought it might be a trick, but we helped them understand that all developing countries want good learning and teaching. The inclusion of all parents helped them understand the importance of this work."

Student leadership & civic engagement (Shu'afat/UNRWA)

Mua'yad Salahadine, a high school

history teacher, and colleagues expanded and strengthened a five-year effort to develop a student parliament at the school. Shu'afat Refugee Camp has faced significant problems related to substance abuse and youth violence, and the student parliament has helped to foster some important changes in young people's behaviors.

This specific expansion of the project focused on increasing student input into the functioning of the parliament, development of outreach and educational materials (including a brochure, video and internet connection), and educational activities (including a student-produced play about the work that also helped raise funds to support their project).

Students helped identify candidates for the student parliament, identify school and community issues on which the parliament might focus, elect representatives for the parliament, and develop structures for their meetings.

Peer mediation and school climate (Bridge Academy, East Jerusalem)

Led by their principal Jihad Sirhan, teachers began to identify strategies to incorporate what they learned in the June 2008 workshop into their daily practice as teachers and administrators.

They held staff meetings, incorporated cooperative games in the curriculum, identified and celebrated student leadership, and began to develop ideas for service projects.

They also offered workshops to colleagues in their own and other Bridge Academy schools.

In February 2009, two members of the training team led a four-hour workshop on peer mediation with 15 students in the upper grades.

The team's report in June 2009 suggested that their efforts had reduced conflicts on the playground, provided important learning opportunities for the mediators, improved school climate, and opened new avenues for student leadership.

Our work also helped to strengthen regional networks. For example:
• A *Teacher's Guide* distributed to Palestinian and Israeli educators included a section based on our workshops: the section included games, guidelines and resources for classroom peacemaking.
• An on-line network was created; despite challenges of technology and language, this network helped connect participants during the two years of the initiative.
• Materials from the workshops are currently being translated into Arabic, so that the workshop participants can use them in their own communities.
• Principals and teachers committed to gathering to share their work locally and regionally after USAID funding ends.

Palestinian principal
"The way I treat people has changed. I have become more patient. I can see other points of view and put mine aside to listen … I have a better connection with students. They can put themselves in others' shoes, they help each other and they study as groups … A piece of advice for new teachers doing this: being successful is not easy. Know it is hard, but know that you can do it and you will. You will taste the rewards later and this taste is so delicious."

Perhaps the most lasting outcome of our work has been the change in how our Palestinian colleagues understand and talk about their role as teachers.

Principal Faisal Jaradat put it this way: "My team and I faced many obstacles. But the workshops gave us ideas to build on a plan I had before the workshops. We were successful; the Prime Minister honored our project and it is in a book of examples for other schools. All the world is a village, and we here in Palestine have some good traditions as well as some bad. We can change some of the bad traditions and still keep the good ones."

We did not create these professional attitudes or commitments; they were already present. We affirmed beliefs that our Palestinian colleagues held very deeply, even though they needed support in articulating these ideas in their own communities.

We helped strengthen the foundations and frameworks with which they will continue this work in the future, integrating their own cultural values with these "new" (perhaps newly-packaged)

approaches to democratic education and peaceful learning environments.

In the process, the US team also affirmed our belief that cross-cultural learning is possible, productive and transformative for all involved. In fact, it is essential that if we are to build a foundation for peace that supports social justice.

The strategies and frameworks that we used in the West Bank are only one set of tools in what needs to be an increasingly diverse peacemaking toolkit. They are only useful if they are used well.

Two simple adages may help bring this idea home. Practitioners of social change often remind us: "If the only tool you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail."

Everything is not a nail, so it is critical that we have more than one tool to build new structures for peaceable learning environments, as well as a more peaceful and just world.

Second, every carpenter knows that the same hammer can be used to destroy as well as to build. Tools are used by people. Like other tools, peacemaking and conflict resolution strategies are constructive only when they are used to help promote social justice.

Our responsibility as US-based peacemakers and educators is to use our tools not to suppress or control the forces of social change, but to promote—peacefully, carefully, respectfully and with modesty—continued progress toward a peace that includes social justice.

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Jihad Sirhan is principal of the Bridge Academy in East Jerusalem. Oraib Waari is a teacher in East Jerusalem who also facilitates Israeli-Palestinian dialogue groups.

Deb Bicknell is an independent consultant and trainer who has worked for 20 years in youth development and community organizing.

Linda Brion-Meisels is professor of Psychology and Education at Lesley University in Cambridge, Mass.

Steven Brion-Meisels has worked at the Peace Games Institute for the past nine years, along with Casey Corcoran and James Noonan.

Linda and Steven are founding members of the Peaceable Schools and Communities project, a collaboration of educators and activists who have worked together since '92.

Walking the Talk
Two educators speak about their experiences

SINCE JUNE 2007, AT A WORKSHOP IN JENIN, I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK with a group of impressive educators through the Seeds of Peace Model Schools Initiative. This Initiative works with Palestinian educators to create more peaceful classrooms and school environments. Through this experience, I had the honor to work with Oraib Waari and Jihad Sirhan, two Palestinian colleagues.

THEY ARE A FANTASTIC TEAM. Ms. Sirhan is the principal of the Bridge School in Beit Hanina, Jerusalem; Ms. Waari is an English teacher and a facilitator. Both of them are core Seeds of Peace faculty members.

Over the last three years, they have done workshops across the West Bank. They have so much to share about how to introduce training and curriculum that teach students invaluable lessons in creative thinking, in communication

skills, in team-work, in examining issues from multiple perspectives.

What follows are some snippets from those conversations, highlighting both their experiences and their advice for teachers who are interested in getting involved in this type of work.

Deb: What attracted you to this type of work?
Oraib: At first I was just a regular teacher, and then a friend invited me to go to Turkey to a cross-cultural work-

shop. I really enjoyed it and learned a lot. I stayed in touch with the facilitator and just started having conversations with people and thinking about this type of thing.

In 2005, I was invited to participate in the Seeds of Peace Arab Educators program and then came back to the Region and began doing some workshops when I got back.

Jihad: I was invited to attend the Seeds of Peace Arab Educators program. Be-

fore this program I was just going along living my life and teaching, I really knew nothing about this type of thing.

From the very beginning, though, I could imagine myself putting all of this into practice. I promised myself after the program that I would change my school.

I started with my students right away. In the beginning it was very hard for them and me—there were times I wanted to stop, but didn't.

Some of the teachers also put up barriers, but after the first semester they could tell that my students were totally different.

On the last day of school, one of my students gave me a letter of thanks that I will never forget. It made me cry. Now, three years later, I am principal of my school so it is easier to implement all of this.

Why do you think this type of work is important?

Oraib: I think this type of work is really important. It is really important to hear the narrative of the other, it helps you to hear the other voice, it is our duty to express our voice … sitting together may be part of the solution or it may not, but it is important to hear both sides of the conversation.

Jihad: Because I want this country to live in peace—I want to stop the conflict through the schools.

What skills and/or attitudes do you think it takes to do this type of work?

Oraib: Tolerance is key. You need to have cool nerves, to be open, to absorb and not always show your emotion. You need to be open-minded, to want to know and understand others.

Jihad: Teachers need help. They need resources and mentors, to be a part of a community in order to do this work. It is important to find others who you can share your new ideas with.

What changes have you noticed in yourself?

Oraib: I can understand other people better. I can put myself in another's shoes now. I can understand more.

Jihad: The way that I treat people has changed—I have become more patient, I can see other points of view and put mine aside to listen. I have a real desire to help others.

What changes have you noticed with your students?

Oraib: The students really seem to respect me more—they are more willing. I can communicate better, even when I am mad or in a tough spot.

Jihad: They/we have more of a connection. We can talk about problems with

MODEL SCHOOLS COLLEAGUES Jihad Sirhan (left) and Oraib Waari.

each other. They can put themselves in another's shoes, they help each other, and they study as groups.

What do you want other educators in Palestine and Israel to know about your experience?

Oraib: Use these materials in your class, don't use violence. You are a model for the students—you will never affect or influence others unless you change yourself.

Jihad: That students are human beings, so don't order them. They need sharing and they want to feel important. A piece of advice for new teachers doing this: being successful is not easy.

Know it is hard, but know that you can do it and you will. You will taste the rewards later and this taste is so delicious.

Do you think American educators are different than you?

Oraib: No, I don't think American educators are so different. They're the same.

Jihad: Yes, they look at their classes differently. It is harder here I think, but teachers here are really interested. They are hungry for these types of teaching methods.

What made you apply this learning in your classroom? What did it take?

Oraib: Feeling I am doing something good—seeing the effect of my work on others, being complimented … these all motivated me.

Jihad: Seeing the moments I have touched somebody, seeing that they believed me. I knew this not just by words, but also by their feelings. It takes focusing on the positive and not just the negative.

What are the challenges of being a woman peacemaker/educator? Are they different from men's challenges?

Oraib: I'm not sure if it is different between men and women—it might be. Men can be/might be more closed to this. If you're strong, you can do whatever you want though—blocks push me to continue and move forward. They just motivate me to work harder.

Jihad: I think it might be easier because I am a woman. It may be harder for men, not because they don't want to understand.

Anything else you want to share?

Oraib: Sometimes it can be hard to really express yourself and what you believe. It is important to help people to express themselves and to teach others to not be afraid to be open to other's ideas, to get out of the "bottle."

You must gain trust and we must work to build peaceable environments for our children, teaching people how to communicate with all, then maybe communities will be more at peace. Let people see the good in you, express yourself —really try and look at every situation and whenever you can be yourself, be yourself.

Jihad: I am here to talk about my experiences and to share what happened as a result. It is important to talk about your experiences. The students and teachers know that I care about them. They thank me and I can see that they feel this.

Deb Bicknell works at a non-profit organization in Maine that focuses on supporting community change. She also does consulting with organizations and businesses including work with Seeds of Peace.

Tools *music*

By **Guy Mendilow**

Teaching through music

Using the joy of music to foster cooperation & communication

For a long time, I had difficulty making a choice between community responsibility and music. On the one hand, I felt that it was important to work towards a more just and equal society, while on the other hand, my love was music. I was sure that what we needed were people, especially in the younger generation, who could "think outside the box," (creatively) and who could be leaders.

But how do we inspire such independent, creative thinking? And what was my place in that inspiration? The further I examined successful communication and self-confidence, and the more I worked as a music performer and educator, the more I saw that art, and music in particular, can play an important role in teaching these important skills.

Eventually, I combined my interests of leadership education and music: not just to perform and teach music, but to teach leadership through music.

This article is intended for educators asking similar questions: What are some new and innovative ways to teach young people effective communication? And how can we help foster the self-esteem and confidence they need to be future leaders?

I am not arguing that music, by itself, is the solution. However, I suggest that music can make a unique contribution towards teachers' efforts to improve communication and leadership in their classrooms.

This article explores why musical improvisation can be helpful in the classroom and in life, and will offer some practical examples that teachers can try, as well as giving teachers some suggestions about ways to create their own new games.

I. Improvisation as a tool for communication & cooperation

Music offers some opportunities that may be helpful to classroom teachers; this article discusses improvised music, or music made by a group of students who are creating something new without any previous planning or practice.

Improvised music can help groups of people listen to and communicate with each other, connecting in ways that continue after the music-making

experience. People who improvise often will tell you that the secret of success in group improvisation is listening. This is listening in a deep sense—requiring and improving the ability to tune-in, listen and cooperate with the other members of the group. This is because good improvisation is a process in which individual participants work closely together in a joint project. It is a thrilling, exciting process of in-the-moment creativity and discovery.

When I improvise music with someone else, "He doesn't know where I'm going, I don't know where he's going, yet we anticipate, sense, lead and follow each other" (Nachmanovitch 94). Improvisers must be ready to find their way through musical twists and turns together, and for this to happen, they must be open to the many types of information exchanged back and forth, from sounds to gestures and eye contact.

Group members must, in other words, adjust to one another, carefully watching, sensing, listening and changing their own behavior.

Here is an example of a simple improvisation game:

Drum Jam

Students' age: 13-adult

Size of group: A maximum of 15. When groups are larger, try splitting the group into two and leading each group in turn.

Requirements:
• A drum, or simple stick percussion instrument, for each student. If drums are not available, instruments can be improvised from everyday items. For example, a large plastic water bottle, a pot or a bucket can make an excellent drum.
• Teacher's comfort playing simple, repetitive patterns on the drum.
• A sense of rhythm and beat.

Goals for the students:
• Be able to play short patterns on the drum.
• Remember the patterns that each student plays.
• As a group, be able to echo and play back patterns played by others.
• Be able to work together, playing one drum pattern on top of others.
• Be able to lead the group, signaling "loud," "soft," "start," and "stop."

1. Sit in a circle. Hand out drums or improvised instruments. The teacher leads brief echo (play back) game, creating a simple pattern of four beats at a medium speed. The group echoes the beat and plays the four beats back. The teacher creates a few more patterns, encouraging the group to echo the patterns correctly. Keep patterns four-beats long in order to establish a pattern length.

After a while, decide on one pattern and repeat it. Use verbal instructions as little as possible. Try to lead without talking at all, just using body language to communicate to the participants how to echo your beat—quick or slow, soft or loud.

2. Using a flat palm (rather than a pointed finger), the teacher points to a student. The student plays a pattern. The group repeats and echoes.

Go back and forth between people, coming back to students for a second or third time. When a student remembers the pattern she/he played, praise their good memory. This will encourage other participants to remember one pattern and to return to it each time you point to them.

The important thing as a teacher is to

stick to one pattern—but it is best to allow the participants to "arrive" at this on their own, rather than telling them to do so. Using the same flat palm gesture, keep pointing to individuals that have already played as you go around the circle, to reinforce their memory and keep the group's attention. (They must pay attention because you might call on anyone at any time!)

3. Using a flat palm, the teacher gestures toward a participant (choose someone with good beat) and uses a 'stop' hand motion to the rest of the group to stop them from echoing. The teacher points to the same participant and that participant plays her/his pattern alone.

With your hand, motion to that person to keep playing the same beat pattern.

Choose another participant (again, one with a strong beat!) and point to them, bringing them in, and motion to the two students to bring their patterns together.

Using your hands, gesture to the two playing students to watch and listen to one another.

After a minute, point to a third student, signal them to add their pattern to the others, and gesture to the three playing students to watch and listen to one another.

Gradually add other students, layering the drum patterns. Do not be afraid to take students out if their pattern does not work—some patterns are good for the base and some are good for extra decoration. Bring these in later!

The teacher can use words if needed: "Listen carefully to each other. If your pattern doesn't work, change it so it fits. Keep feeling the beat inside you. What's that beat we had at the beginning? Stick to it!"

4. Once several participants are playing, try some simple conducting (leading or directing the musicians):

• Use eye contact and body language to let participants know whom you are directing.
• By raising your flat hand, you can communicate an increase or decrease in volume.
• Make up a clear hand signal that will mean "stop."
• To add someone to the playing group, count to four on the beat (you can use fingers to count, instead of speaking). On the fourth beat, raise your arms and shoulders high and inhale. Then exhale with a strong "phew" and bring your hand back down, pointing to that person as he or she starts drumming. Be very big and animated!

How to conduct:
• Conduct individual students, telling them to play louder or softer.
• Conduct any part of the group or the whole group.
• Tell any part of the group to stop or start again.

Once all are playing, experiment with different things. Try taking just one student out and leaving only a few in. Gradually add people back in.

5. As the teacher who is conducting the class, find an ending for the drum song that your class has made.

6. Brief discussion with the students: What worked? What can we improve next time?

7. Lead the group in practicing by conducting a stop and a start, and an increase and decrease in volume, as you just did. Then invite a guest conductor from the group to take over your job.

8. Repeat with different students conducting the class.

II. Lessons from this game

As this game shows, improvised music is larger than each of its different parts. Each person adds to the final piece of music, but it does not come just from any one player. "Nor does the work come from a compromise or halfway point … but from a third place that isn't necessarily like what either one of us would do individually. It is … not a matter of meeting halfway. It is a matter of developing something new to both of us" (Nachmanovitch 94-5).

Cooking is a useful comparison. Each one of our patterns in this game is simple and repetitive, like an ingredient, like a potato or an onion. Try eating only onions, or only potatoes, and you'll quickly be bored. But if you put the onion and the potato together, and add some spices, it is the start of something new and delicious.

In creating this new music, each player must listen to, and work with, the group. To succeed, I must listen to you and fit my part to yours. You must do the same with me. And the next participant must listen to your part and to my part and then add her part, making changes so that it fits, and so on with other players. If the players stop listening to one another, the rhythm will quickly turn into chaos.

Just as each ingredient is necessary for the soup, each player's part is important to the group. The music could not be what it is without each person's contribution, making each participant an equally valuable player. Also, successful improvisation is a process of cooperation. Working together requires musical group members to accept and support the ideas of other members while also making their own contribution. Improvisation can be seen not only as a community activity, but also as a celebration of individuals' different contributions.

It is important to remember that communication in musical improvisation is

Tools *social change*

By **Deb Bicknell** Portland, Maine

This summer, I spent time at the Seeds of Peace Camp talking with youth and adult educators about how to make change

For many of us, when we experience a life-changing event or are faced with pain and hardship, we are filled with inspiration or outrage and we find within us a sincere desire to make change. We sit with those feelings, talk about them perhaps, wonder and imagine. Yet at times the world can seem so big, problems or obstacles utterly insurmountable. Deciding to take the issue or topic that you are most inspired by or outraged by at this moment and breaking it down to explore the components of how to make a change can be a helpful way to move from dreaming to doing.

There are numerous models for doing this, for making change within communities—service learning, various community organizing models, action or strategic planning models, etc.

No one way is the "right" way. Most models share similar components. Below are some steps for creating change with some additional thoughts about each phase.

Whether you are a teacher, a young person, a community member—whoever you are, whatever "hat you wear" at the moment, if you feel inspired to create positive change in the world and you are wondering how to go about doing so, I hope these ideas might be a catalyst for you to step out into the world and do just that.

1. Identify the issue

First it is helpful to identify the issue you are focusing on. For example, maybe your community has a problem with violence at school. Be as specific as possible when identifying the issue(s) you want to work on or are inspired/outraged by.

In all stages of creating change, being specific can be a real tool for creating the kinds of change you want to see happen. For example, if you believe that violence is a big issue in your school, think about what kind of violence you are talking about, when it happens, where it happens, etc.

It is also helpful to discover what others in your community think about this issue—do they agree that it is an issue?

Assessing what issues are important in a community can be a very valuable process: What do others think need to be changed and why? Is there some sort of consensus or group decision about what the needs of the community are and what ought to be addressed first? Who are you asking to help with your assessment?

Make sure to ask as many different people and types of community members as possible in order to get a well-rounded perspective on your communities needs.

Using assessment tools like surveys, focus groups, interviewing individuals and/or groups can be helpful in this process. Whether or not you are doing a larger community assessment, or are working on an issue that is personally meaningful to you, be sure to clearly identify the issue and be sure you can speak to what your evidence is for this and how you gathered this information.

2. What is your vision?

Once you have identified the issue you will be working on and what the key need is, the next step is to imagine your long term vision. If we are talking about violence at school, perhaps your vision is that your school will be a place where all students feel comfortable and safe both emotionally and physically.

It is important to write down your intention/goal, being sure to write it down in the affirmative. For example: "Our school is a safe and peaceful environment for all students, staff and parents."

Writing your goal in the affirmative helps us to focus on what we do want to create instead of what we don't want to create.

3. Think creatively

Often times, the things we want to change are long term, systemic problems. Even if they are not, creating lasting positive change can take lots of creative thinking and imagining. Once you have a sense of the big picture of what you hope to create, allow yourself (and invite others) to imagine how to get there.

Let's stay with the violence in schools example. We know we want to create a peaceful school environment. Invite yourself and others in your community to share any and all ideas about how that might be created and what that might look like (appreciation certificates given to students and staff, a student of the day award, etc.). In other words, how would you know that you had created a place where all students and staff felt safe and peaceful? What elements would be included? What does it look like? Sound like? What are the external factors?

This is a good time to really think about why this problem exists, to explore potential root causes of the issue. Why, in your estimation, does this issue exist in your school at this time?

This gives you an opportunity to decide whether or not you want to address a root cause of the problem, or want to work on an element of the problem that is more immediate and less systemic and long term. Both approaches can be beneficial in different ways.

Be sure also to invite many different types of people to give input about their creative solutions—don't exclude anyone because you think they might not know enough or might be too young or for any other reason.

Interestingly, some of the most creative and ingenious ideas come from the least expected places. Plus, the more creative ideas you have, the more good ideas you have to chose from. Take all ideas seriously and never put anyone down for their idea seeming too outrageous, or by suggesting that will never work—this phase is not the time for culling ideas that might not be doable.

That comes next …

4. Choose one idea

Once you have spent time thinking creatively about solutions and have gathered these ideas, now is the time for narrowing down what you and/or the group who is working on this issue wants to do about it.

This is the moment of "choosing an idea"—picking the idea that you think best begins the process of creating your vision—remembering again to be as

specific as possible. Once you have an idea of where you are headed remember that this is a step along the way and you don't have to tackle it all (nor can you) at once—the thousand mile journey begins with that first step and decision of where and how to step.

The selection of an idea can be done anonymously, if need be, in order to keep personalities and politics out of the decision as much as possible. If you are a small group, or all feel comfortable, there are a number of ways to decide as a group. These might include a hand vote, sticker voting (with sticky dots), or any other way you can find that works to come to a group decision.

It works best if more than one person can decide on the idea or plan because usually it takes more than one person to complete a plan efficiently, and if people like the plan, or feel invested, or in agreement with it, from the beginning, the more support there will be for the project in the long run.

5. Plan it out

Continuing our example of creating peaceful environments in schools, let's say that after a good brainstorming session, the group decides to pick the idea of creating a peer education program to provide peer-to-peer education on how to reduce violence in their schools.

The next step in working toward creating that change is to make a plan of how exactly this will happen. This is another stage where it's good to be specific and also very task- and action-oriented.

If you are creating a peer education program for example, asking the group to identify what needs to be done first, second, and third etc. is the best place to start. Also identifying who is responsible for doing each task and being clear about when the group hopes each task will be done can be very advantageous to staying on course.

Be sure to know how you will reach your goal/idea. Each step ought to be

doable—the tasks action oriented and realistic—in order to set the group and each person up for little successes along the way.

6. Name allies & resources

As you are creating your plan, think about what you will need to do next—the tasks and steps. This, however, is only one part of the plan. As important as the "what" and the "how" is the "who": the people who will both be doing the work, as well as others who are your supporters and allies.

Using the example of creating a peer education program in your school, imagine the other people who might be important, like the principal, if he or she is not already involved. Name all of the people and resources that you have available to you right now. Think big and try to push yourself to "think outside of the box."

It can be helpful to write down all of the things that you need—a kind of wish list—and then write next to each item somebody or some group of people who might be able to help with each item or need.

7. Evaluate

Evaluation of the change you are hoping to make is often a step that people want to skip or don't think about unless they are involved in some kind of more formal change efforts. It is really important, even at the beginning when you are envisioning your dreams and plans, to imagine and note how you will know when you have accomplished your goal.

What needs to happen in order for you to know that you are successful? This is another place where being specific can be helpful. Using tools such as surveys before, during and after the change efforts, or other types of evaluation resources like in-depth interviews, can be useful in gathering information to help evaluate your change.

8. Celebrate & sustain

Celebrating successes is one of the most important aspects of creating change. Noticing and marking accomplishments helps people to keep motivated and feel good about the changes that are occurring.

Be sure to cheer each other on, encouraging yourself and others as each one of your steps is completed. Celebrating publicly through a community event can also be really helpful as it can also draw support and attention to the project that can help with long-term sustainability.

Another aspect of celebrating can be to formally thank people who have helped to create change—this both makes people feel good, but it also gives

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Make a Plan. Make a Change!

Your Group Name:

1. Identify the Issue
- Describe the problem or issue you are trying to address.
- How do you know there is a need? What's your evidence?

The need/issue we see is...

2. What is Your Vision
- What do you want things to be like?
- Phrase this in terms of what you want, not what you don't want.
- Think big picture & long-term.

Our vision is...

3. Think Creatively
- Brainstorm about ways to reach that vision!
- Make sure everyone has a chance to contribute.
- Why does the problem exist? What would help address those "whys?"
- What policy changes could help you reach your vision?

Use another piece of paper so you have plenty of space to get all your ideas out!

4. Choose One Idea
- Name your goal.
- Be specific & action oriented.
- Remember you don't have to solve it all at once!

We will...

5. Plan It Out
- How will you reach your goal?
- This is about breaking it down—naming specific steps, who will do them and when.

Use the second page (or back if this is printed double sided) to plan out your specific steps.

6. Name Allies & Resources
- In your school?
- In your town?
- Other organizations?
- Tools you can use?

We can get help from...

7. Evaluate
- How will you know your plan is working?
- How will you know you are benefitting the community?

We will measure our impact by...

8. Celebrate & Sustain
- What/how will you celebrate along the way?
- How will you celebrate with your community? (The media, your legislators, etc.)
- How will your group stay focused and committed to your plan?

We will celebrate & stay motivated by...

Created by the Maine Youth Action Network, 2009. www.myan.org

more positive attention to the change and the fact that you and your community are doing something to make the world a better place … and although we might not all agree on what that looks like, we all feel good about the idea of trying.

Very often during the change process, people encounter "bumps in the road," obstacles they imagined or did not imagine they might find. It is essential to not just hit these bumps, but to meet them and then ride right over them in the best way possible. This may mean needing to revise your plan. Often people get side-tracked and/or discouraged if they start their plan and obstacles arise or they feel overwhelmed.

Abandoning a plan too soon is one of the biggest downfalls I see in people and communities trying to make change. Making mistakes and "falling down" is part of the process, and like the Chinese proverb states "fall down seven, get up eight;" the key is to "get back up."

Getting back up can include reassessing your needs or your plan, asking and acquiring more help, or just remembering to congratulate yourself and others before moving forward again.

One of the most important truths about making change is that change is inevitable. What is not inevitable is what kinds of change will happen and who will benefit or not benefit from these changes. Being part of creating change in your own life or in your community is noble and worthwhile.

Although change can often take time and a lot of work, remembering to think both long and short term is important. It is essential to stay positive and believe in your vision.

You and your allies can keep you moving forward one step (or two) at a time.

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mostly nonverbal. Rhythm, melody and harmony, and body movement are the shared messages, letting people work together even if they do not speak the same language. Such nonverbal communication also does not have the problems that come from normal speech, like misunderstandings; this is important for individuals who often disagree or compete with each other.

A few additional observations may be useful to teachers wishing to try such games. One of the unique parts of group music making is that the music is a reward on its own. The pleasure of good music can motivate students. When it succeeds, the music is thrilling. And once participants begin to experience the joy of the group's music making, they usually want to make it succeed and do well. The learning, communication and cooperation become a way of reaching this musical goal, so teachers do not need to tell the students that the goal of the experience is the strengthening of cooperative communication skills. Let their goal be the excitement and fun of good music.

Secondly, it is important to understand that the individual drum parts repeat themselves because predictability (expecting that someone will do something before he or she does it) is important for players to work together. While change is valuable, it is difficult to work in an environment that is constantly different. It can become random, unorganized and chaotic, and players will become confused and not know how to work with the music or each other. Repetition of simple drum patterns is a helpful solution. Also, it is important to realize that improvisation can be frightening to those who are new to it.

For beginners, successful music improvisation games give just a few limited choices. Limits are important because they create a sense of safety. Participants are not asked to do "just anything." As my own teacher says, controlling choices is the difference between improvisation that is scary and improvisation that is exciting. Limits also inspire creativ-

ity because they free participants from asking "what next?" out of many, many options; instead, limits allow the player's energy to be directed towards the way one makes the few moves allowed, not which move to make.

"If you have all the colors available, you are sometimes almost too free. With one dimension constrained, play becomes freer in other dimensions" (Nachmanovitch 85).

In this game, players can only repeat patterns of four beats—not any number of beats.

Finally, each musical improvisation is a chance to talk as a class about what worked and what could be improved. If simple recording equipment is available, it is useful to record each improvisation, then listen to it and look for areas of strength and improvement. Not only does this help students realize areas of strength and weakness, it also acts as a focusing tool: When you are recorded, everything you do "counts." This can be particularly helpful for groups that become distracted.

III. Conclusion

Experience with musical improvisation, when continued over a long time, can affect other parts of a person's life.

As one practices listening and work-ing with other people in these musical ways, a person's thoughts about other group members might change: they can become important contributors; we can cooperate with them; and it can be useful to listen to them.

However, music should not be alone in working to create such cooperative communication. Other activities, such as sports, outdoor activities and coop-erative classroom games, also provide opportunities for learning these skills.

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PHOTO CREDIT: SARAH BIGNEY

cured "here and now" in the group (with another person, subgroup, entire group or facilitators) and in the daily "out of the room" real world. This is both an integration of the materials—the stimuli—and an integration of one's life.

The facilitator is keenly aware of respecting a participant's defenses, yet works to challenge previously held positions and invites the participants to reach their own conclusions.

The facilitator searches for previously unknown, suppressed, or denied materials, and searches also for opportunities for "the corrective experience," (the opportunity to correct or readjust something with other members, with him/herself or with the "real" world).

The facilitator will invite participants to alleviate their burdens, at times merely by venting and sharing, and at other times by processing.

The facilitator deals mostly with group process and members' processing. She/he rarely deals with content, does not "correct" introduced materials, and keeps her/his views, opinions, and needs out of the group.

It is the facilitator's responsibility to see to it that each participant has an opportunity to grow, and to make sure that no participant leaves the group in worse shape than when he/she began the encounter. The facilitator must challenge yet "do no damage!"

The group work spirals, while often dealing with the same or similar materials from different points of view or levels of "maturity." Skills, bonds, understandings, and sensitivities grow throughout the process. Connections are formed between emotions, assumptions, relationships, stances and people, both as individuals and as groups. Learning, change, growth and application to life is the name of the game. As the group progresses over time, it becomes more and more capable of handling its task directly and efficiently.

The facilitator is also responsible for the design of the proper setting for each particular group. The facilitator reminds the groups of the pre-established theme (peace & conflict, for example), the unique members of the group, the subgroups, and the time allotted, and helps establish realistic goals to be reached.

She/he then designs the means to reach these goals and systematically leads the group, to learning and growth, while aiding the members in reaching their personal goals.

All of this must occur while respecting the other participants' difficulties. It is not easy; a natural part of the leading process is the opposition of the group to the facilitator.

As reflection, self analysis, expression of feelings and experiences, and personal changes can be painful, the group often opposes and resists the facilitator in her/his attempts to bring out these difficult but important parts of the experience.

The facilitator must come to the group as "clean" as possible, meaning that she/he has already worked through and personally processed most of the materials likely to arise during the group's work.

This is achieved by a long training period which offers opportunities to face the conflicting participants, their stances, attitudes, emotions, behavior, assumptions, etc.

The training period also enhances the facilitator's sensitivities, skills and knowledge so that she/he is prepared for the task. "Cleanliness" is maintained by supervision of both the facilitator and the work group's performance.

A further development of this technique is presently evolving. It is the development of a new profession—the "Peace Facilitator." Such a profession will be based upon these facilitation, mediation and coaching skills, as well as the knowledge and skills used by organizational consultants as they attempt to change an organization's culture. The notion is to apply all of these skills to structured attempts at changing the culture of conflicting societies.

The Peace Facilitator profession will, of necessity, deal with analyzing national, bi-national and international situations and processes, and with seizing relevant windows of opportunity. It must develop small inter-connected structures, such as encounter groups, discussion groups, exhibitions, demonstrations etc., which will ultimately lead to a massive change in the status quo of a conflict.

Work with children and youth peace education is extremely important and should be systematically developed, in parallel to facilitation, to be effective in bringing about and maintaining peace. Societies with a culture of conflict probably need to introduce a systematic kindergarten-to-university peace studies program to replace the dominant culture of conflict.

An example of such a program is the de-Nazification programs used in post-World War II Germany. Facilitation is one of the skills that can be used by such a school system to achieve the described goal, but it cannot be the sole tool. The emphasis of the Peace Facilitator is the society at large.

All changes happen in the mind and are then acted out in reality. If we want to improve reality, we must effect the minds and hearts of the people. Imagination, determination, a systematic approach, analyzing, processing and acting are the keys to effecting change via facilitation.

Danny Metzl is Co-Director of the Seeds of Peace facilitation courses, along with his colleague Farhat Agbaria. The two facilitated at the Seeds of Peace cross-border educators' workshop on facilitation in Wadi Rum in January 2008. Participants included Palestinian, Israeli, and Jordanian Delegation Leaders and Palestinian and Israeli participants in the Seeds of Peace facilitation course.

I soon realized is just a front, a deterrent. Behind the armor, they were just as welcoming and hospitable.

In fact, the most heartening thing about this trip was meeting a wide range of people on both sides who, more than anything else, wanted peace.

At the Pesach Seder at Avi's family home, it was my privilege to be seated at the head of the table, right next to Avi. Here, I partook of an important family ritual commemorating the Israelite exodus from Egypt. It felt like home —togetherness, prayers, good food, wine and song.

I stayed with Avi in his home and learned more about the complexities of life in these parts.

Later, I traveled further north, up to Akko where I was surprised to find Arabs and Jews living together. Similarly in the ancient city of Jaffa, I got a glimpse of how life used to be not so long ago.

As I traveled around, I was struck by how completely enmeshed people's lives are, their histories and their places of worship. I wondered how they'd ever be able to carve the land up into two. Wouldn't it be easier to learn to live together with mutual respect, peace and understanding? But I also know that this is easier said than done.

By the end of my trip, I began to feel that we're still going to need Seeds of Peace for some more time to come, that until both sides accept each other as equals in this conflict, be it India-Pakistan or Israel-Palestine, there is not going to be enduring peace.

Until then, we as Delegation Leaders will need to continue planting more Seeds and nurture them carefully.

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**Cultivating the Environment
for Seeds to Flourish**