

PJCS 210-01: Transforming Conflict and Violence
Goshen College
Fall 2008

Course Info

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Class Time/Location: TR 2:00-3:30; AD 20

Q. Why are we violent but not illiterate?
A. Because we were taught to read.
-- David Allan

Course Description

Conflict is a natural result of human interaction. When conflict turns violent, it is a powerfully negative force, wrecking havoc and destruction on those it touches. When conflict is embraced and handled with care, it can be an equally powerful source for positive change, within and between individuals as well as within and between systems. Violence, the negative response to conflict, is endemic in our culture.

This course will explore conflict and, more minimally, violence. It will explore the relationship between the two and examine some of the roots of the violence in our culture. It will look briefly at practical nonviolence and examine communication and conflict patterns and what is needed for positive transformation. Students will reflect on their own conflict styles, examine their personal temptations for violence and build enhanced personal skills and capacity for peacemaking.

College Outcomes:

The Goshen College faculty has committed itself to a process of learning outcomes. The following outcomes are relevant for this class. Throughout this course students will work towards developing:

1. Faith that is active and reflective
2. Intercultural openness with the ability to function effectively with people of other world views
3. The ability to communicate effectively in a variety of sign systems.
4. The ability to think actively and strategically
5. Personal integrity that fosters ability to resolve conflict and to promote justice
6. A healthy understanding of self and of others that is reflected in social relationships of interdependence and mutual accountability

Course Objectives

Students will:

1. Explore various frameworks for understanding interpersonal conflict and violence and the relationship between them.
2. Begin to understand the nature and roots of violence and explore ways of addressing that violence.
3. Engage in a process of self-reflection that will increase awareness about their own conflict style, beliefs about conflict and violence, personal strengths and assets in managing their relationships, personal challenges and temptations for violence, personal sources of power and the nature of their own cultural context.
4. Analyze and understand constructive and destructive conflict and the elements of each.
5. Understand the components of healthy, non-reactive communication, especially speaking and listening.
6. Increase personal skills of peacemaking including listening, speaking, negotiating and problem-solving.
7. Examine their own assumptions, values and commitments in relation to violence and nonviolence and to examine ways in which nonviolence can be a practical lifestyle choice.

Course Ground Rule

The primary course ground rule is that everyone respects each other. However strongly you may disagree with another person's viewpoint, treat them and their viewpoint with respect, responding in ways that do not use put-downs or insults. You are also expected to refrain from sharing what your classmates reveal about themselves and their conflicts with people outside of class. Such a basis of trust will enhance our ability to learn from our lives.

Disability Notice

Goshen College wants to help all students be as academically successful as possible. If you have a disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor or the Director of the Academic Support Center, Lois Martin, early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. In order to receive accommodations, documentation concerning your disability must be on file with the Academic Support Center, KU004, x7576, lmartin@goshen.edu. All information will be held in the strictest confidence. The Academic Support Center offers tutoring and writing assistance for all students. For further information please see www.goshen.edu/studentlife/asc.php.

Plagiarism Statement

Papers you submit in this course will be checked for plagiarized material copied from the web, other student papers, and selected on-line databases. Cases of plagiarism are reported to the Associate Dean. Penalties for plagiarism are listed in the college catalog and range from redoing the assignment to dismissal from the college.

Course Textbooks & Other Assigned Reading

It is recommended that you take short notes as you read your assignments. Generally, we will not discuss the readings in class but you are still responsible for the material and will find questions about the readings on the exams and quizzes. The texts are:

Gilmore, S.K. & Fraleigh, P.W. *Style Profile for Communication at Work*. Eugene, OR: Friendly Press (1992).
Johnson, Allan G. (Ed.). *Privilege, Power, and Difference* (2nd ed.). McGraw Hill (2006).
Rosenberg, Marshall B. *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* (2nd ed.). PuddleDancer Press (2005).
Schrock-Shenk, C. & Ressler, L. (Eds.). *Making Peace with Conflict: Practical Skills for Conflict Transformation*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press (1999).

There will also be various handouts, including selections from:

Chasin, Laura. *How to break the argument habit*. *Christian Science Monitor*. October 26, 2004.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/1026/p08s01-coop.html> (August 17, 2005)

Claiborne, Shane. *Mad Jesus Skilz*. *God's Politics Blog* <http://blog.beliefnet.com/godspolitics/2007/01/shane-claiborne-mad-jesus-skilz.html> (January 8, 2008).

Coover, Virginia et. al. *Consensus Decision-Making*. In *Mediation and Facilitation Training Manual: Foundations for Constructive Conflict Transformation* (4th Edition), ed. Akron, PA: Mennonite Conciliation Service (MCS), 2000.

Cortright, David. *Gandhi and Beyond: nonviolence for an age of terrorism*. Paradigm Publishers (2006).

Fisher, Roger & Ury, William. *Getting To Yes*. In Barash, David (Ed.). *Approaches to Peace: A reader in peace studies*. Oxford University Press (2000), p. 70-76.

Hanneman, Evelyn. *Love's Revolution*, *Baptist Peacemaker*. Spring 2002, p.8.

Herbert, Bob. *Why Aren't We Shocked?* *New York Times*. October 16, 2006 <http://www.truthout.org/article/bob-herbert-why-arent-we-shocked>

King, Jr., Martin Luther. *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*. In Barash, David (Ed.). *Approaches to Peace: A reader in peace studies*. Oxford University Press (2000), p. 144-148.

Koontz, Ted. *An Open Letter on a Hard Question to a Jewish Friend*, *The Conrad Grebel Review*

Lewis, Jordana & Adler, Jerry. *Forgive and Let Live*. *Newsweek*, September 27, 2004, p.52.

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/55119>

Miller, Melissa A. *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*. In *Mediation and Facilitation Training Manual: Foundations for Constructive Conflict Transformation* (4th Edition). Akron, PA: Mennonite Conciliation Service (MCS), 2000.

O'Gorman, Angie, ed. *Defense through Disarmament: nonviolence and personal assault in The Universe Bends Toward Justice: A Reader on Christian Nonviolence in the U.S.* (New Society, 2000) 241-247.

Reimer, Kristin, ed. *Blessed are the Angry*. *Conciliation Quarterly* 19, no.4 (2000).

Rhodes, Robert. *Former Hostages Forgive Iraqi Captors*. *Mennonite Weekly Review*. December 18, 2006.

<http://www.mennoweekly.org/DEC/12-18-06/CPT12-18.html>

Samuel, Dorothy. *"The Violence in Ourselves."* In *Peace is the Way: Writings on Nonviolence from the Fellowship of Reconciliation*, ed. Walter Wink. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000.

Ueland, Brenda. *Tell Me More: On the fine art of listening*. *Utne Reader*, November, December 1992.

http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/ctahr2001/rrii/downloads/Tell_Me_More_Euland.pdf

Wink, Walter. *My Enemy, My Destiny*. *Weavings*, March/April 2006.

Yankelovich, Daniel. *Debate vs. Dialogue* <http://www.bluffton.edu/lionlamb/ct/vsdebate/> (January 8, 2008)

Yankelovich, Daniel. *The Magic of Dialogue*. <http://www.bluffton.edu/lionlamb/ct/magic/> (January 8, 2008)

Learning Experiences/Course Requirements (See addendums for each requirement)

- A. Attend and actively participate in all class sessions. Most readings and assignments are listed in the syllabus. Additional readings, homework, quizzes, etc. will be assigned along the way.
- B. *Reflections From Behind the Mirror* (self-reflection paper)
- C. Journaling & reflecting assignments
- D. Class presentation in groups of three
- E. Two exams (one mid-term and one final); one or more quizzes

Grading

1) Evaluation and final course grade will be based on the following learning experiences:

- A. Homework & participation 13%
- B. Self reflection paper 10%
- C. Journaling & Reflecting 26.5%
- D. Group presentation 14%
- E. Exams and quizzes 36.5%

2) Grading scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>% of the total weighted grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A Excellent	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B Very Good	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C Satisfactory	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D Unsatisfactory but passing	63-66	1.0
F Failing	Below 63	0

3) **Deadlines.** Unless otherwise specified, assignments due on a day class is scheduled are due at the beginning of the class period. Unless pre-arranged with me, late work will decrease your grade by one full grade for each week it is late. No work will be accepted after the last day of class.

4) **Writing Assignments.** Unless otherwise specified, writing assignments should be submitted electronically AND by hardcopy. They should be typed, stapled, double-spaced, and use Times New Roman font, 11 or 12 point, with 1" margins. A good paper -- one which fulfills the entire assignment and is written well -- will receive a "B." A grade of "A" is reserved for exceptional papers; those which are interestingly written, flesh out new insights, and push the reader to think about the subject in a new way.

The quality and appearance of your work should be professional. Poor writing and formatting will undermine the success of even the most thoughtful assignment. You should pay careful attention to the quality of your writing. Remember, a spell-check program is not endowed with powers of human reasoning; it will not pick up a correctly spelled word when it is used the wrong way. You must proofread your work carefully. And while we are all fallible and make mistakes, excessive typos, grammatical errors, and evidence of sloppy work will result in the lowering of your grade on an assignment. You may want to take advantage of the free help offered at the GC Writing Center.

Addendum A - Class Attendance, participation, homework (13%)

Because much of the learning in this class is the interactive process in the classroom, unexcused absences and arriving late to class (after I've marked attendance) will affect your grade. Each unexcused absence reduces your grade by 3% and two late arrivals = 1 unexcused absence (I give one grace for the first absence and late arrival). For an absence to be excused, you must contact me by phone or email **before** class and provide an excusable reason for your absence. It is your responsibility to contact me for any handouts you might have missed and to contact classmates for notes, etc.

Also, due to the interactive nature of the class, active participation is required. To receive participation credit, you will need to not only be present and attentive, but also thoughtfully and actively participate in class-wide discussions. This participation includes both the number of times you speak up in full class discussions as well as the thoughtfulness of your contributions. I'm aware that participating in full class discussions is uncomfortable for some, but this is an opportunity to grow beyond your comfort zones.

Use of electronics in classroom. Unless otherwise cleared with me, the use of electronics is prohibited in the classroom. Cell phones must be off and mp3 players, etc. should not be present. The only exception is that laptop computers may be used for taking notes. Using computers for other purposes during class will result in being marked absent for the class and the loss of computer using privileges in class

Homework. There will be periodic homework assignments (those listed in the course schedule include the "Getting to know you" responses, emailing your G-F scores, the NVC assignment, and the on-line course evaluation) which must be completed by the due date. Additionally, I would like you to attend as many campus or off-campus events that relate directly to transforming conflict and violence as you can. Here is a partial list of events:

A Partial List of Events Related to TCV

Monday, Sept 22; Convocation: "How To Be the Odd One Out & Completely at Home" - PJCS Prof. Joe Liechty; 10:00 am, Church-Chapel

Tuesday, Sept 23; "Peace: A History of Movements & Ideas" Author David Cortright, with additional commentary from Janne Nolan of the University of Pittsburgh and John Darby of the Kroc Institute. A reception and book signing will follow; 4:15 pm, C103 Hesburgh Center, Notre Dame.

Friday, Sept 26; *The John Howard Yoder Dialogues On Nonviolence, Religion & Peace: Forgiveness & Apology: The Amish, Yoder and Peacebuilding*; Donald Kraybill, Professor at Elizabethtown College, Pennsylvania. Lunch and dialogue will follow the lecture. 11: am; Hesburgh Center Auditorium; Notre Dame

Monday, Oct 6; Convocation: BASICS: A shift in judicial response"; 10:00 am, Church-Chapel

Monday Nov 17; Convocation: "Christian & Muslim Dialogue: Why & How" - James Krabill; 10:00 am, Church-Chapel

See more ND events at <http://kroc.nd.edu/events>

A class requirement is to attend and briefly reflect on at least 4 events, and you should attend at least 2 of these events before mid-term break (after break, credit will only be given for up to 2 additional events). Within 1 week of the event you attend, email to me a short reflection (it needn't be much more than a couple of paragraphs) identifying the event, the date it was held, and your brief assessment of the event (your learnings, reactions, what you liked or disliked, ...). Put "Event Reflection" in the subject of your email. It is your responsibility to make room for these events in your schedule and – if necessary -- to find additional or alternative events beyond those listed above.

*** Incentive to venture off-campus: 1 off-campus event = 2 on-campus events*

Addendum B – Reflecting on the Mirror (Self Reflection Paper) (10%)

Rationale: A strong belief I bring to conflict and violence is that one's ability to positively transform both begins with self-awareness and an honest appraisal of all that one is and brings to the transformation process. My own growth and healing, my intervention in the conflicts of others, my contribution to the healing of victims of violence and my efforts to increase justice and shalom in this world must all be done "from the inside out" in order to be genuine and effective. I must be constantly aware and examining all that I am and bring: the strengths, the weaknesses, the challenges and temptations, the potential for violence and the potential for great good, the areas of needed growth and the areas of maturity. It is my hope that this class will be a time of deep reflection and introspection, a time when you can look into your conflict and relational mirror as honestly and clearly as you ever have and to apply the readings and class discussions to that mirror reflection.

Content: This paper is intended to provide a vehicle for this reflection and to allow me to get a glimpse into that reflection. I will treat them confidentially. Where applicable, apply course readings and class content to your own personal reflections.

Due Tuesday, September 30 at beginning of class (2,000 words minimum)

This paper should cover three areas:

- 1) *Experience and values*: What have been your experiences with interpersonal conflict? What effect have these experiences had on your life? What do you believe about conflict? What is the relationship of your faith to these beliefs and values? What questions remain for you?
- 2) *Conflict style*: What is your style, general approach, or typical pattern in responding to conflict? Report your Gilmore Fraleigh profile **scores** and reflect on the results. Do you agree/disagree with them? What are your strengths in communication & conflict? Your excesses? Do you see typical patterns in how you respond to conflict? In what areas would you like to grow and change (or manage your excesses)? How will you work at that?
- 3) *Other's perception*: How does someone who knows you well describe your conflict style? I would like you to either ask the other person for their perspective on a conflictive interaction the two of you have had, or get someone to write several paragraphs about you on this topic that you can then include in your paper. Then add your own comments about their reflections. Identify the other person in this section and do some comparative work. How does this person see you similarly to how you see yourself? Differently? How might you account for the differences?

Grading:

Each part will be evaluated for thoroughness in addressing the topics, willingness to engage in honest self-reflection, connection to relevant readings/class discussions, and overall clarity, writing style, grammar and punctuation. See "Grading" section, point 4 (page 3, above) for further instructions about paper presentation and grading.

Addendum C – Journaling & Reflecting (26.5%)

Rationale: While we will do a significant amount of in-class work on practical nonviolent skills and processes, this course also intends to have you reflect on conflict/violence and its transformation in your life, in the media, and in your readings. You will do this in a number of ways:

1. Relationship Challenge (RC) Assignment. The four short "Relationship Challenge" assignments require you to reflect on conflicts from your week. This is intended to have you use your own lives and relationships as laboratories for learning about conflict and its transformation. This means you will need to keep a mental note of your interactions with those around you. Where were the communication bumps, the differing perceptions, needs or values, the insensitive remark that stung? The relationship challenge does not need to be a major conflict but it needs to have been something that stretched you. It matters not whether you responded helpfully, unhelpfully, mixed or not at all – all are learning opportunities. Specific instructions will come with each week's assignment.

Your RC post should be thoughtful and at least 150-200 words. Your entry will be available to the entire class, and I expect you to read each other's entries. You are welcome and invited to respond to each other's entries. You are expected to follow the class ground rule of constructive, nonjudgmental dialogue and respecting each person's right to their own perspective. You are also expected to refrain from sharing anything posted on Moodle with people outside of this class.

2. Privilege, Power and Difference reflection questions. You will be given a list of questions to answer and reflect on as you read this text (this assignment will be more manageable if you don't wait to do your reflections until just before they're due). Not only will this assignment help you be accountable for this reading, but it will also provide you with a sense of what I want you to focus on and learn. Your responses to chapters 1-4 are due on **October 16** and the responses to chapters 5-9 are due on **November 4**. Both a paper copy and an electronic copy (using TurnItIn) should be submitted.

3. Journaling assignments. You will receive three other reflective writing assignments; two will focus on issues raised in class and one will have you reflect on a film of your choosing (I will supply a list to choose from). Your journal reflections should be 750 words minimum, and you will receive further instructions the week of each assignment. Both a paper copy and an electronic copy (using TurnItIn) should be submitted.

Apportionment of points:

- 8.0 % RC Assignments (4)
- 10.0 % PPD reflection questions (2)
- 8.5 % Other journaling assignments (3)
- 26.5 %

Addendum D – Groups projects/application exercises (14%)

Rationale: There is both a content and process rationale for this assignment. Content rationale: To explore an area of interest under the broader topic of "transforming conflict and violence" that we have not examined in depth in the course

and to educate the rest of the class about the topic. Process rationale: To work together as a team, observing and practicing collaborative skills and processes, and to grow in skills of effective communication with an audience.

Description: In groups of three (which I will form) you will choose a topic to explore together. You may want to pursue a topic that you have encountered in your readings or that has emerged in class that interests you. Or you may choose a topic that is relevant to the course but hasn't been covered at all; it could be a topic that connects with your major or with experiences you have had in your life. Be creative and come up with something of real interest to you. But do not choose a topic you have researched before. There are many options here. The list below of past topics is only meant to stimulate your thinking. You are free to choose a topic not listed here.

- anger management
- emotional intelligence and violence
- revenge
- war -- it's future; when is it just?
- forgiveness
- restorative justice
- use of nonviolence in a specific context
- is nonviolence effective?
- enneagram and personality types
- violence and the Old Testament (or Islam)
- cultural norms and conflict
- bullying and/or restorative discipline in schools
- violence reduction initiatives
- gender differences in conflict
- critique of consensus and other group decision-making tools
- killology; violent video games
- violence against women
- pornography and violence
- classism, racism, or Diversity Circles, etc.
- evil: why "good" people do evil acts

2) Project steps/Due dates

- a. Submit the topic you've selected and a paragraph about your rationale for choosing that topic by **October 23**.
- b. Research your topic by subdividing it among your group. Each person's research needs to include at least three sources, two of which must be non-internet sources. Sources can include books, journals, videos, interviews with experts or anyone else with insight into the issue, internet sources, visits to a site, etc.
- c. Each individual submits to me a research paper on their sub-topic by **November 13**. The paper should describe your findings along with a list of the resources you utilized, in accurate bibliographic format. Papers should be 1,500 words minimum and use a consistent citation of sources.
- d. Prepare a **15-20 minute** presentation. Time will be kept strictly in order to allow for some class discussion with each group. Your class presentation should be informative, *creative*, interesting and involve equal participation from all group members. You are both helping the class learn about an important topic or initiative and you are learning about teamwork, public speaking, time management and engaging an audience. Do some discernment about what to present. You cannot effectively present everything you have researched in 15-20 minutes. What is most helpful to teach the rest of us? What makes for a coherent group presentation that flows together well? What utilizes insights from the entire group? Your presentation should be ready by **Nov. 18**.
- e. Just before your class presentation, your group should submit to me:
 - i. a complete **outline** of your presentation, and
 - ii. a printout of PowerPoint slides, if you are using PowerPoint [as a handout; 6 slides per page]. Also, post your PowerPoint on a public drive for your classmates to access.
- f. On the first class day *following* your presentation, each individual should submit to me their honest reflections of the group process, how you and the group dealt with or avoided conflict, and any assessment of the presentation you wish to make [your presentation is graded before I read your reflection so you needn't fear that your honesty will adversely affect your grade]. 500 words minimum.

4) Grading. Your research and presentation will be evaluated in the following way:

- 30% Research paper and bibliography
- 30% - Quality of your group's presentation – content, preparation, creativity, flow as a unified presentation, engagement of audience, shared leadership, time management, etc.
- 30% - Your individual presentation style and content: organization, voice projection, eye contact, confidence, etc
- 10% - Your individual reflection paper

Addendum E– Exams & quizzes (36.5%)

There will be two exams (midterm worth 12% of total grade and a cumulative final worth 22%) and one or more unannounced quizzes. The mid-term exam will be on **Thursday, October 16**. The final exam will cover the entire year and be given on **Thursday, December 11 at 1:00 pm**. Sorry, no early exams will be given except for extraordinary reasons (wanting to begin your vacation early is not even close to "extraordinary").

Tentative Course Schedule with Reading/Project Assignments

MPWC = Making Peace With Conflict * NCV = Nonviolent Communication * PPD = Privilege, Power, and Difference * GF = Gilmore Fraleigh Style Profile Booklet

Session	Topic	Reading (finish before class)	Assignments Due
1 – Sept 2	Intro		
2 – Sept 4	Conflict & theology	Syllabus, MPWC ch. 1, PPD intro	“Getting to know you” responses
3 – Sept 9	Basic Conflict theory	MPWC 7	<u>RC Assignment 1</u>
4 – Sept 11	Conflict styles	Entire GF, PPD 1	Complete and bring GF pgs. 8-13 Email your scores to me before midnite 9/10
5 – Sept 16	“	PPD 2	Thomas-Killman worksheet. <u>RC Assignment 2</u>
6 – Sept 18	Goals in conflict	NVC 1, 2	
7 – Sept 23	Conflict skills	NVC 3, 4, 5 (do exercises at end of each chapter)	<u>RC Assignment 3</u>
8 – Sept 25	“	MPWC 5, NVC 6 (do exercises at end of chapter)	
9 – Sept 30	“	MPWC 2, 4, Ueland,* PPD 3	<u>Reflecting on the Mirror</u>
10 – Oct 2	“	NVC 7-9	NVC worksheet
11 – Oct 7	Negotiation	MPWC 8, PPD 4 Fisher & Ury	<u>RC Assignment 4</u>
12 – Oct 9	Enemy-making and the “other”	Chasin,* Wink, MPWC 6, Yankelovich (2),* CS Monitor cartoon	(Research groups announced)
13 – Oct 14	Fear; Anger	NVC 10, Samuel, Reimer	
14 – Oct 16	Mid-term Exam		<u>PPD reflection questions (part 1)*</u>
Oct 18-22	<i>Mid-term Break</i>		
15 – Oct 23	Culture & power	MPWC 3 & 11, PPD 5-6	Group presentation proposal
16 – Oct 28	Race	PPD 7, MPWC 12	<u>Journal 1 – talking with “the other”</u>
17 – Oct 30	Gender	PPD 8, MPWC 13	
18 – Nov 4	“	PPD 9, Herbert*	<u>PPD reflection questions (part 2*)</u>
Nov 6	<i>No class</i>		
19 – Nov 11	Violence & theology	MPWC 9, Cortright (Ch. 1), Claiborne*	(announce presentation order)
20 – Nov 13	Escalating conflict & violence	MPWC 17, NVC 11, Koontz, O’Gorman, Cortright (religion and pacifism)	<u>Research Paper</u>
21 – Nov 18	<i>Group presentations begin</i>	NVC 12-13 MPWC 16, Coover	
22 – Nov 20	<i>Group presentations continue</i>	Cortright (ch. 3), King	<u>Journal 2 – reflections on a film</u>
23 – Nov 25	<i>Group presentations continue</i>	Cortright (ch.6)	
Nov 27	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>		
24 – Dec 2	<i>Group presentations continue</i>		<u>Journal 3 – reflection on pacifism/ non-violence</u>
25 – Dec 4	Wrap-up	MPWC 10, Hanneman, Miller, Lewis & Adler,* Rhodes*	Complete online course evaluation.
Dec 11, Thurs 1:00 PM	Final Exam		

* Hot link in list of assigned reading