Encouraging Peace Workers

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to offer suggestions for encouraging peace workers to continue their peacebuilding work. In this paper, the author argued that peace is important, but that it does not come about on its own, and it is challenging to achieve. Peace workers are needed to help people intentionally engage in peacebuilding efforts around the globe. The author contended that because peace must be worked toward intentionally, it is vital that current peace workers keep encouraged to continue the peacebuilding process, and that prospective peace workers be encouraged to join in the effort. Interviews were conducted to learn what motivates peace workers, the challenges that peace workers face, and the ways peace workers stay encouraged to continue their peacebuilding work. Based on the responses of interview participant and research about the encouragement currently offered to peace workers, the author offered suggestions about things that can be done to encourage peace workers to continue their peacebuilding work.

Keywords: peace, peacebuilding, peace workers, motivation, challenge

Encouraging Peace Workers

The gray, concrete building was pockmarked with bullet holes and gouges where mortars had hit. The school building itself was aging, and it was summer so the lights were off inside and there were no students at the school. An atmosphere of sadness pervaded. I thought about how the students who attended this elementary school during the academic year must feel as they arrived each day. I was also curious about how their parents felt knowing this was the place where their children were spending so much time. I wondered what kind of education the students received in such a place.

Located in Vukovar, Croatia, this school was attended exclusively by Serbian students. Before the wars in the 1990s, Vukovar was located in Yugoslavia, and had a mixed population, which included Serbs and Croats. Because the town was on the frontline of the wars, it was sieged and occupied first by Serbian troops, and then by Croatian troops. The town still has a mixed population, but even though the wars ended nearly two decades ago, there is still division between ethnicities in Vukovar. That is why Serbian students attend a different elementary than Croatian students. It is also why the Croatian government left this school unrepaired.

Seeing this school, my heart broke for the students, not only because the building was in disrepair, but because—more importantly—they must know even at such a young age that they were being discriminated against. They must have understood that life is not fair, and that they were considered less valuable, not even worth a bit of concrete and paint.

Peace can only happen if the cycle of conflict is broken. John M. Perkins (2006), a great Civil Rights leader in the U.S., put it this way: "And where would hating get me? Anyone can hate. This whole business of hating and hating back. It's what keeps the vicious circle of racism going" (p. 194).

Outline

In this paper I will argue that peace is important, but that it does not happen on its own and is challenging to achieve. Therefore, peace workers are needed, and it is vital that current and prospective peace workers keep encouraged to continue the peacebuilding process.

My purpose in writing this paper is to offer some suggestions for encouraging peace workers to continue their peacebuilding work. To lay the foundation for my argument, I will define the terms "peace" and "peacebuilding" as I use them in this paper, and share my own motivation for peacebuilding and discuss who can be a peace worker.

In Section 1, I will explain why peace is important, and why it must be intentionally built through peacebuilding, and why it is important for peace workers to stay encouraged to continue the work.

In Section 2, I will discuss what motivates peace workers, the challenges that peace workers face, and the ways peace workers stay encouraged to continue their peacebuilding work. In this section I will also share what I learned from interviewing current practitioners.

Finally, I will offer some suggestions about how peace workers can be encouraged to continue their work in peacebuilding.

Terms

Peace

I define peace as a state in which a person has the resources they need to live a fulfilling life, are not lacking any basic necessities or fearing for their safety, and have positive relationships with the people around them. Simply an absence of conflict or war is not enough to claim that there is peace. Miguel Barreto Henriques cited Johan Galtung's observation that "a world without war wouldn't be necessarily by definition, a world in peace. Galtung conceives

peace as a deep restructuration of human relations" (p. 118). Similarly, Myers (2011) argued that "the poor are poor largely because they live in networks of relationships that do not work for their well-being… their relationship with those they call "other" us experienced as exclusion" (p. 15). Poverty can be felt in economic or other terms, and it is a manifestation of broken relationships and a lack of peace.

The foundation of being fully human is that a person needs to feel safe and have access to the basic resources for life. Every person, without regard to race, creed, gender, socio-economic status, or any other factor, should have access to the resources they need to live a fulfilling life: education, health, food and water, job opportunities. Philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff (2008) concluded "I think of a social order as just insofar as its members enjoy the goods to which they have rights" (p. 10). When a person does not feel safe or lacks resources, they may resort to stealing, corruption, or war in order to obtain what they need. Thus, a lack of justice creates a situation in which conflict is imminent. In their article, *Peacebuilding: What Is in a Name?*, Barnett, Kim, O'Donnell, and Sitea (2007) argued that peace is the elimination of the causes of conflict:

> Peace is more than the elimination of armed conflict; after all, stability can be achieved by the balance or threat of force. Instead, it involves the creation of a positive peace, the elimination of the root causes of conflict so that actors no longer have the motive to use violence to settle their differences. (p. 35)

Beyond being sure that their basic necessities are met, people also need to have reasons to live: opportunities to use their talents, to be creative, and to enjoy life. I believe this defines our humanness. When people do not have these opportunities, they may be alive, but they are not fully living.

True peace goes beyond removing the fear of imminent war, even beyond just feeling safe or having one's basic needs met. When people's needs are met and they feel confident that they are safe, they do not need to worry about fighting others to obtain safety or resources. People are then free to be fully human by engaging in the creative and intellectual pursuits that only humans are capable of.

Finally, people's relationships with the others around them must be healthy. Citing a speech given by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Michael Battle (2009) wrote made the claim that people need each other in order to be fully human:

> A human being is a "glorious original" created for existing in a delicate network of relationships. The fundamental law of our being is interdependence, and if this network is interrupted, the whole network breaks. Tutu asserts that we are made for "relationships not alienation: for laughter not anger, for love not fear, for peace not war." (p. 66)

People need to treat others well in order to be well themselves. When people have positive and healthy relationships with others despite their differences, this is what I contend demonstrates true peace.

Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is defined differently by different groups. However, in this paper I define peacebuilding as the active and intentional process of building peace by overcoming division between people.

Barnett, Kim, O'Donnell, and Sitea (2007) noted that "Peacebuilding is generically understood as external interventions that are intended to reduce the risk that a state will erupt into or return to war" (p. 37). However, peacebuilding is far more than just preventing conflict. Dekha Ibrahim Abdi argued, "Peacebuilding covers all activities aimed at promoting peace and

overcoming violence in a society [and] is based on the conviction that violent conflicts do not automatically end with the signing of a peace accord or the deployment of peacekeeping forces" (p. 62). In fact, Peacebuilding Initiative (2007-2008) took this idea a step further, highlighting a commonly-used definition of peacebuilding:

> The term "peacebuilding" originated in the field of peace studies more than thirty years ago. In 1975 Johan Galtung coined the term in his pioneering work "Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peacebuilding." In this article, he posited that "peacebuilding has a structure different from, perhaps over and above, peacekeeping and ad hoc peacemaking... More specifically, structures must be found that remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur." These observations constitute the intellectual antecedents of today's notion of peacebuilding: an endeavor aiming to create sustainable peace by addressing the "root causes" of violent conflict and eliciting indigenous capacities for peaceful management and resolution of conflict.

Peacebuilding, therefore requires strategic, intentional effort to ensure just structures and systems, and to engage the people involved in a conflict to change how they think about each other. The result of this type of peacebuilding work is restored relationships between people who were previously in conflict. Eldin Villafañe (1995) acknowledged that "understanding our commonalities and differences is prerequisite to reconciliation." In other words, in order to change how we think about each other we have to truly get to know each other, not just believe stereotypes or things we have been told about each other. This take effort, so it has to be intentional.

In his book, *Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice: Navigating the Path to Peace*, Daniel G. Groody argued that true peace is right relationship between people. He explained that most of the teachings of the Catholic church fathers "sought to bring people back … to a sense of justice expressed in rightly ordered relationships" (2007, p. 75). Groody's point is that peace is built on a foundation of restoring relationships between people, and these relationships must be made right by creating a context in which people experience justice in their lives.

World Vision International (n.d.), agreed with Groody, stating that many organizations "define peacebuilding differently [but for us] peacebuilding contributes to child well-being by weaving a fabric of resilience throughout a community so that it [resolves its own conflicts, builds capacities to heal broken relationships, and nourishes more just systems and structures]." This idea of healing broken relationships and creating just communities is key to peacebuilding.

Adam Curle, a pioneer of peace studies, wrote, "As I define it, the process of peacemaking consists in making changes to relationships so that they may be brought to a point where development can occur" (1971, p. 15). Citing Curle, Tom Woodhouse (2010) said, "Peace was concerned then not with the containment of conflict, but pre-eminently with building relationships" (p. 3).

My Own Motivation for Peacebuilding

My motivation for pursuing peacebuilding work stems from my Christian faith. Christian scriptures are filled with teaching about how people should treat one another, as well as commands and promises related to peace. I have taken to heart the imperative in James 2:17, "faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead" (NIV). Living out my faith means that I am required to live as scripture advises, and therefore, I must "love my neighbor as myself" (Mark 12:31). There are several verses from the Bible that guide my pursuit of peacebuilding.

Pursuing Peace

- Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. … Seek peace and pursue it. – 1 Peter 3:8, 11

- Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. – 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 (NIV)

- Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. – Ephesians 4:3 (NLT)

- For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility. – Ephesians 2:14 (ESV)

- You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you…' (Matthew 5:43-44, NRSV)

- Let the peace of heart that comes from Christ be always present in your hearts and lives, for this is your responsibility and privilege as members of his body. And always be thankful. – Colossians 3:15 (TLB)

For me, these verses are calls to action. They require my participation, and ask me to live my faith by engaging in acts of peacebuilding. These verses require me to treat others well and to restore relationships that have been broken.

My first encounter with peacebuilding came in the summer of 2005, when I worked with a program in Croatia called Renewing Our Minds (ROM). The goal of ROM is to teach

leadership and peacebuilding skills to young people from regions that have experienced ethnic, religious, national, or other conflict. My work with ROM showed me that it is possible even for deeply entrenched conflicts to be restored through the building of good relationships between people from each side of the conflict. The following winter, I studied in Cape Town, South Africa, with a University of Washington program. There I learned about the post-Apartheid reconciliation process in the country by observing and participating in the work of several different local organizations that work with different demographics and in various aspects of the reconciliation process. These experiences convinced me that peacebuilding work is critical and that it is possible.

In 2009 I began working for World Vision, "a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice" (World Vision, n.d.). I did not initially see a connection between my interest in peacebuilding work and World Vision's work to end poverty and injustice, so I did not think that things like ensuring that communities have access to education and clean drinking water could be considered peacebuilding work. However, over time I have come to realize that there are many components to building peace. Peacebuilding is about restoring relationships, and in order to do this, all aspects of a society need to align.

Justice, a Foundation for Peace

- Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter - when you see the naked, to clothe them... – Isaiah 58:6-7a (NIV)

The surprising thing that helped me begin to realize the link between my call to peacebuilding and my work in poverty relief was a bumper sticker that read, "If you want peace, work for justice." I thought about the meaning of this seemingly obvious statement for months, and am still considering its implications. The quote is taken from a speech given by Pope Paul VI for the celebration of the   Day of Peace on January 1, 1972:

> It is difficult, but essential, to form a genuine idea of Peace. It is difficult for one who closes his eyes to his innate intuition of it, which tells him that Peace is something very human. This is the right way to come to the genuine discovery of Peace: if we look for its true source, we find that it is rooted in a sincere feeling for man. A Peace that is not the result of true respect for man is not true Peace. And what do we call this sincere feeling for man? We call it Justice. But is not Justice also an immobile goddess? Yes, it is so in the expressions of it which we call rights and duties, and which we arrange in our illustrious codes, that is, in laws and pacts which produce that stability of social, cultural and economic relationships which cannot be infringed. It is order, it is Peace. But if Justice, that is, what it is and what it should be, were to produce finer expressions beyond those now existing, what would happen?

This piece of Catholic social teaching is as relevant today as it was when Pope Paul VI said it more than 40 years ago, if not more so. And the responsibility to work for justice and to build peace is not applicable only for Catholics, or Christians in general, but for everyone who wants to live in a safe and peaceful world that offers the opportunity for a fulfilling life to all people.

Encouragement to Continue Difficult Work

- Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. – Galatians 6:9 (NIV)

- I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will

  have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. – John 16:33

Jesus told his followers to practice justice and to pursue peace. The verses above give clear

directives to resolve conflict by restoring relationships, and to pursue peacebuilding work even

when it is difficult. This is why I believe so strongly in the need to encourage peace workers to

continue to pursue peace even when challenges arise or they get worn out.

Who Can Be a Peace Worker

Though my own motivation for peacebuilding comes from my faith, I want to be clear

that peacebuilding work can and should be done by anyone who is interested. Having a particular

faith is not a prerequisite for creating a better world. Peace is a real felt need for many people in

this world, and they can certainly benefit from the peacebuilding efforts of everyone, whatever

the motivation.

Randy Butler, founder of the Institute for Sustainable Peace (ISP) explained why people

of all backgrounds and motivation should be involved in peacebuilding:

Many of the people involved [with ISP] are religious, but we don't want to disqualify

others from being involved. The principles are important. What you think about God and

what he thinks about you thinking about him is not my concern. Being non-religious in

our work gives greater access.

Peacebuilding is such important work that everyone should be involved. In his message at The

Justice Conference in February, 2014, Richard Stearns, President of World Vision U.S., said

injustice may not be our fault, but it is our responsibility. Each person has different knowledge,

life experience, and background, so each person has a unique perspective to offer.

Section 1: Foundation

The sun was shining brightly as we walked to the market to buy some fruit. We were chatting about the day's events. The lake was glittering. Cars passed by filled with vacationers on their way to the Adriatic coast. Suddenly, there was a loud boom, and I turned to see my friend crouching and covering her head with her hands. A truck had backfired, and while my brain had passed over this sound, hers had interpreted it as danger. She told me that it sounded just like the bombs that exploded in her town during the wars in Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Even though more than a decade had passed, the seed of fear that had been planted in her as a child had not been completely wiped away.

Peace is Important

My first underlying argument in this paper is that peace is important. When children are at school they should be able to spend their energy learning the material the teacher is presenting, not wondering if they are safe in the present or if they have a right to look forward to a good future. Students at the Serbian elementary school in Croatia should have the same right to believe that they can contribute to the world. They should be able to have dreams about the careers they will have. They should not have to worry that they will not receive the same quality of education as students who attend the Croatian schools, and they should not have to wonder if they will be passed over for jobs in the future just because of their ethnicity. These are just some examples of how people are impacted by living in contexts where there is conflict.

The Report of the United Nations High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (2013) listed "Build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all" as one of five transformative shifts the panel recommends if sustainable development is to be achieved around the world. The panel sees that all aspects of development will be improved

if a foundation of peace is built:

> Freedom from fear, conflict and violence is the most fundamental human right, and the
>
> essential foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies. At the same time,
>
> people the world over expect their governments to be honest, accountable, and responsive
>
> to their needs. We are calling for a fundamental shift – to recognize peace and good
>
> governance as core elements of wellbeing, not optional extras. This is a universal agenda,
>
> for all countries. Responsive and legitimate institutions should encourage the rule of law,
>
> property rights, freedom of speech and the media, open political choice, access to justice,
>
> and accountable government and public institutions. (Executive Summary)

Because peace is so important, it should be a "universal agenda for all countries," not an
"optional extra." The Panel further argues that peace is vital for the survival of humanity,
writing:

> Conflict can unravel years, even decades, of social and economic progress in a brief span
>
> of time. When it does, progress against poverty becomes daunting. By 2015, more than
>
> 50 percent of the total population in extreme poverty will reside in places affected by
>
> conflict and chronic violence. To end extreme poverty and empower families to pursue
>
> better lives requires peaceful and stable societies. … Physical insecurity, economic
>
> vulnerability and injustice provoke violence, and violence propels communities further
>
> into impoverishment. Safety and justice institutions are especially important for poor and
>
> marginalized communities. Security, along with justice, is consistently cited as an
>
> important priority by poor people in all countries. To ensure that no one is left behind in
>
> the vision for 2030, we must work collectively to ensure the most fundamental condition
>
> for human survival, peace. (p. 53)

Peace is not just a nice idea; it is critical to human survival and development. Peace is necessary for economic stability and social progress. In order to live full and whole lives, without constantly being afraid that conflict or war could start at any moment, people need to live in peaceful contexts, and this requires the restoration of relationships through peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding is Necessary

Although it is clear that peace is important, the reality is that achieving peace is very hard. After all, what incentive would the Croatian government have to invest in repairing and rebuilding a school for Serbian students? Christie and Montiel (2013) pointed out that "in the aftermath of a violent episode, intergroup tensions do not necessarily abate; instead feelings of distrust, victimhood, and motives for revenge can continue to dominate intergroup relations" (p. 508). This is why cycles of conflict are perpetuated through generations, as parents teach their children why they should not like the enemy group. Unless people can learn to think differently about each other and to see each other's burdens and successes as their own, they will have no reason to change their behavior.

My second underlying argument in this paper is that peace must be intentionally and strategically built. In a Voice of America broadcast, United States First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt (1951) said, "It isn't enough to talk of peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it." In a piece in the New York Times, author Colum McCann echoed this, writing, "Peace is indeed harder than war, and its constant fragility is part of its beauty. A bullet need happen only once, but for peace to work we need to be reminded of its existence again and again and again."

The idea that peace is not naturally-occurring is reflected in nature. In my high school chemistry class, we learned the second law of thermodynamics: "There is a universal tendency

for all systems to go from order to disorder." I believe this is true not only for the Earth, but also for relationships between the people who live on it. We need only look at the daily news headlines to see that the breakdown of peace is an issue faced daily by people all over the world. Yesterday's headlines featured stories about Bosnia and South Africa. Today, it is Syria and Ukraine. Peace can seem like a very big goal to achieve, and many people do not want to put in the effort to work for it. But for some people, the lack of peace in their communities impacts their ability to access even the very basic things needed for survival. These people deserve our attention. Those of us who live in relative peace have a responsibility to ensure that others also get to enjoy this state that is basic to the foundation of human living.

Effective peacebuilding work requires the intentional restoring and creating of healthy relationships. John M. Perkins described his interaction with a white Mississippi policeman who came to his tent meetings in Jackson, Mississippi, during the Civil Rights movement:

> He looked like the stereotypical Mississippi policeman, so I figured he was probably racist. It was hard for me to get past that. But he started supporting so much of what we were doing. He showed me a deep, deep respect and affirmed me as a human being. His coming there to me finally broke through. He became my friend, and undermined my attitude so that I could no longer look at all policemen as evil. He started a healing process that had me coming out of my own sin, out of my own malice. God used that white policeman to start a healing in me. (pp. 209-210)

Perkins assumed based on past experiences that the policeman would discriminate against him because of the color of his skin. However, the policeman went against the societal expectation for whites to oppress blacks, and chose to become Perkins' friend.

Categorizing people based on their differences is a natural characteristic of human interaction. The problem comes when these categorizations cause divisions and conflict. The example of Perkins and the policeman demonstrates that prejudice can be overcome when an intentional decision is made to break a cycle of conflict and build peace instead. It also provides a great example of the benefits that peacebuilding can bring. Perkins described his experience with this policeman as healing.

To ensure that conflicts are justly resolved and that future conflicts are prevented, it is vital to have people who are committed to building peace, who can help communities break the cycle of violence and discrimination that keeps them in conflict. In a speech in Alabama in 1963, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1963) said "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." Although some of us may not live with the daily experience of war or other systemic societal conflict, we are still responsible to play a role in helping to establish peace for people who do experience these types of conflict. Because of the simple fact that we are human, we are connected to all other humans, and this requires us to participate in building a peaceful world.

Midgley and Garred (2013) explained, "Participants in just over two thirds of [World Vision [International]'s 50 'Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts' workshops, that took place in 22 countries between 2003 and 2013] identified the need to actively seek reconciliation between communities as being key to sustainable peace" (p. 18). Relationships can only be restored with intentional work, the vocation of peace workers. Reflecting on her work with children who had experienced the wars in Croatia in the 1990s, psychologist Leah Curtin (1999) wrote, "If [children] are treated skillfully and nurtured, there is hope for their future. If, as adults, the

children embrace the *ideals* of peace and forgiveness and put aside the thirst for [vengeance], there is hope for everyone's future" (p. 82). Peace workers can have a great impact on changing the trajectory of a community through their efforts to help people understand the importance of intentionally breaking cycles of conflict and intentionally engage in activities that restore relationships and build peace.

Peace Workers Need to be Encouraged

Peace work is challenging. Therefore, peace workers will inevitably face difficult situations, and even the most committed peace worker might be led to wonder whether their work is worth continuing. When faced with a task as daunting as convincing a city and government to spend their money and energy on investing in the lives of people they view as enemies, it is understandable that a peace worker would get discouraged. I remember riding from the airport to the downtown core of Cape Town when I arrived in South Africa. I could see townships to the right of the freeway, but the driver told me there is no way to get from the townships into the city without access to transportation by vehicle. The physical infrastructure of the city divides its people, and the only way to change this would be for the people themselves to require their government to change the freeway system. Certainly, that would be no small feat. If a peace worker was to take on this challenge, they would have to commit to a long-term process of helping people to understand why it was important. John Paul Lederach, Professor of International Peacebuilding at the University of Notre Dame, contended that "building peace in today's conflicts calls for long-term commitment" (1997, p. xvi), and long-term commitment requires support and encouragement for peace workers.

Therefore, my third underlying argument in this paper is that it is vital to find ways to encourage current peace workers to continue their peacebuilding work. Additionally, many

hands make the work more manageable and give it greater impact, so it is important to for prospective peace workers to be encouraged by the work already being done and encouraged to join existing peacebuilding efforts and start new initiatives. I contend that it is more likely that new people will be willing to take up the important but difficult work of peacebuilding, if they know that they will be supported in their endeavors.

Section 2: Research

Methods

With the hope that the information I learned will be relevant to other peace workers, no matter their context, I interviewed ten peace workers who engage in peacebuilding in several different arenas. I asked them what motivated them to begin peacebuilding work, what challenges they face, and what keeps them motivates them to continue the work despite challenges. I categorized their responses and drew some conclusions about ways that peace workers can be encouraged to continue their peacebuilding efforts. These I offer as suggestions for people who want to participate in and expand the vital work of peacebuilding.

I first drafted a list of peace workers I knew and asked if I could interview them. Some of these people also gave me recommendations for others to interview. I interviewed people in various countries and contexts in order to get a broader understanding of the peace work being done around the world. Most of the people I contacted were receptive to help with my research, but it proved to be incredibly difficult to coordinate interviews given the demanding work schedules of these peace workers, as well as time zone differences. This only reinforced for me the difficulties peace workers face as they work in challenging situations without enough others doing peacebuilding work.

I understood that the motivation for seeking peace and the challenges of doing so may be different for each person and guessed that they would vary from context to context. I wanted to know what it was for each of the people I interviewed that sparked their interest in peacebuilding, as well as what challenges might prevent them from doing peacebuilding work. In the first two interviews, I asked the following questions:

1. What is your background in peacebuilding work? Why do you do it? What do you do? Who do you work with (population/organization(s))?

2. What are some of the challenges you face in your work?

3. What are some of the good outcomes you have seen as a result of your work?

4. What would you like to see done differently/improved in peacebuilding work?

After conducting my first two interviews, it became clear that it was not only important to understand motivation and challenges, but also what keeps people encouraged as they do peacebuilding work. I wanted to know what motivated them to continue their work day in and day out. Therefore, I added the following additional questions to the remaining eight interviews:

5. Would it be helpful to be able to network with other peace workers?

6. What motivates you to continue your peacebuilding work?

The responses from my interview participants have helped me to understand the similarities and differences in motivation and challenges for peace workers across cultural and physical contexts, as well as individual experiences. This understanding helped to shape the suggestions I offer at the end of the paper for encouraging peace workers.

Interview Participants

The people I interviewed for this project were Tom Nolet, Shadia Qubti, Samuil Petrovski, Tihomir Kukolja, Martha S. Weiss, Bill and Julie Clark, Olivia Pennikian, Brajna

Greenhalgh, Randy Butler, and Susan Partnow. Each peace worker shared their rationale for continuing their peacebuilding efforts, and from their responses I was able to draw out some common themes. Below, I have provided a brief description of the type of peacebuilding work each of my interview participants does, the demographic of people they work with, and the locations in which they work.

Tom Nolet – Hands For a Bridge, Seattle/Cape Town/Belfast. Nolet is a teacher at Roosevelt High School, a public school in Seattle, Washington. Tom helped to start and continues to teach with the Hands For a Bridge (HFB) program. He explained that "HFB … is a teacher-generated program that came from the type of conscious thinking that asks "How do you find ways of looking at the world?"" Jim Clowes, former director of the University of Washington Comparative History of Ideas program, invited Nolet to South Africa with the idea of creating a class using a just funding model, with the intent of inclusion and breaking down traditional barriers. HFB now is a year-round program that teaches students to critically engage in thinking about injustice, conflict, and how to overcome these. Students from Seattle, South Africa, and Northern Ireland also have opportunities to travel to each other's schools to participate in on-the-ground peacebuilding work.

Shadia Qubti – Musalaha, Israel/Palestine. Shadia Qubti works for Musalaha, a non-profit organization that, per their website (www.musalaha.org), "seeks to promote reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians as demonstrated in the life and teaching of Jesus." Musalaha works to "be an encouragement and advocate of reconciliation, first among Palestinian and Israeli believers and then beyond to our respective communities," and to facilitate "bridge building among different segments of Israeli and Palestinian societies according to biblical reconciliation principles."

Samuil Petrovski – Evangelical University Students, Serbia. Petrovski is the General Secretary of Evangelical University Students (EUS) in Serbia and Montenegro, part of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. One of the initiatives EUS has done is a Serbian/Albanian camp that began because of the personal friendship between Petrovski and his IFES counterpart, Zefjan Nikolla in Albania. Petrovski and Nikolla wanted to model through their friendship how to stop prejudice. Participants in the Serbian/Albanian camps were people from Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, and Kosovo. The camps were held in Ulcinj, near the border of Montenegro and Albania. Later, a Croatian/Serbian camp started because Petrovski's Croatian IFES counterpart, Momir Blazek, wanted a similar model in his country. This camp was held in Croatia at a camp facility on Zadar Island.

Tihomir Kukolja – Renewing Our Minds, Croatia. Kukolja is the director of Renewing Our Minds (ROM), a peacebuilding program that started in Croatia and was developed to meet a need for peacebuilding in the former Yugoslavia after the wars in the 1990s. ROM focuses its work on training young people about peacebuilding and leadership, and now has participants from many regions of the world.

Martha S. Weiss – Forum for Leadership and Reconciliation, Seattle/Croatia/etc. Weiss has directed women's ministry at churches, doing mediation between staff and helping people learn how to listen to one another. She has also trained Mothers of Preschoolers about conflict resolution skills and how to handle sibling rivalry. Weiss believes peacebuilding skills are important, especially for young people, so seeing that in action at ROM played a key role in her interest in continuing to be involved in peace and peacebuilding. After participating in the ROM leadership team several times, Weiss joined a group to start a non-profit organization to

support ROM and other similar initiatives. She now serves as president of the board of directors for this non-profit organization, the Forum for Leadership and Reconciliation.

Bill and Julie Clark – Peace Catalyst International, Seattle. While doing missionary work in northwest China, the Clarks saw conflict between Chinese and Uighur people in the area where they lived. Now back in the U.S., they are involved in peacebuilding between Christians and Muslims in Seattle through an organization called Peace Catalyst International.

Olivia Pennikian – Advocacy Director for World Vision Lebanon. In her work with World Vision Lebanon, Pennikian focuses on children as peacebuilders, particularly in Beirut, where the civil war started in Lebanon. Her work involves intentionally bringing people with different political or religious ideologies together around the common cause of protecting children.

Brajna Greenhalgh – PRONI, OSCE, UN, ROM, Serbia/Croatia/Wales Greenhalgh's family lived through war in Vukovar, Croatia. Her mother is Croatian and her father is Serbian. In 1997, she participated in mediation workshops between her (Serbian) high school and a Croatian high school. Greenhalgh also studied peace and reconciliation at a university in Sweden to qualify as a workshop facilitator and community center director at the Transnational Foundation for Future Research and Development. She has worked for the UN, Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE), Renewing Our Minds (ROM), and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), among others.

Randy Butler – Institute for Sustainable Peace, Houston/Sudan. Butler is a lawyer and mediator, and is the founder of the Institute for Sustainable Peace (ISP). ISP is an action/learning institute, that learns from the work they do, and then partners with a university or other group to do research. ISP brings together diverse group and helps them engage in dialogue

with the goal of building bridges of understanding, and collaborating to solve challenges in their communities. They do this primarily through a transformational leadership program and providing tools to help them realize their vision. ISP is involved in interfaith dialogue work in Houston, and has had significant influence in the nonviolence movement in Sudan.

Susan Partnow – The Compassionate Listening Project, Seattle. In 2003, Partnow founded a group called Global Citizen Journey, with the belief that social action happens from grassroots up. She has been involved in several movements to create peace and has worked internationally. She is now involved with The Compassionate Listening Project, teaching compassionate listening and restorative justice.

What Motivates Peace Workers

Every person has different motivations for doing things, but there are also many similarities between the ways in which individuals are motivated. Psychologist Abraham Harold Maslow (1943) found that although "in any particular culture an individual's conscious motivational content will usually be extremely different from the conscious motivational content of an individual in another society … people, even in different societies, are much more alike than we would think" (p. 390). For this reason, I argue that common themes can be drawn regarding what motivates people to pursue peacebuilding work.

Eric Sharfstein (2012) cited social psychologist Tory Higgins's research about human motivation:

> According to Higgins, there are three different ways to be effective. First is achieving a particular result… He calls this value effectiveness. The second is having influence over what happens [or] what he calls control effectiveness [in which] participants want to control a situation that is highly challenging and difficult to control. Finally, there is truth

effectiveness, which is seeking what we believe to be legitimate, correct or genuine. "…

all of us are motivated to know what is real. In disagreements around the globe over

politics and religion, humans are motivated to risk pain and even death to establish what

they believe is true."

As humans, we are motivated by achieving results, influencing situations, and seeking what we

believe is right. I am certainly motivated to pursue peacebuilding work because peace is right

and I want to influence others to think this way and to seek peace as a result. I also found this to

be the case for the peace workers I interviewed.

In my interviews with peace workers, there were three main motivations cited regarding

why they began doing peace work in the first place. First, my interview participants felt a calling

to do peacebuilding work. Second, they wanted to give back to their communities. Third, they

wanted to bring people together by restoring broken relationships. Although each of these peace

workers focuses on building peace in different places and among different groups of people, they

had similar reasons for getting involved in peacebuilding work, which I detail below.

Calling. The peace workers I interviewed who identified the feeling of a calling to do

peace work cited faith or internal idealism as reasons why they were drawn to peacebuilding

work. For example, T. Nolet told me that as a teacher, he is predisposed to peacebuilding

because educators are idealists; their work revolves around building human beings so that they

will have skills and strategies to address the needs they see in the world (personal

communication, August 8, 2013). Alternatively, T. Kukolja said that his motivation for

participating in peacebuilding is motivated by his faith:

Our national identity shouldn't be more important than our Christian identity. … [ROM]

participants are so loved and embraced…, they think the whole world should look like

this. …we are very relational, and Jesus is our platform. On this you can build

reconciliation and leadership development. If ROM was just reconciliation and leadership

development, I don't think we would be as successful. We really love the people we

serve, not because we want to impress them, but because that's really what it is. For

reconciliation work, this is so crucial. It is this loving, accepting atmosphere, the

emphasis is on the relational aspect. (personal communication, September 22, 2013)

For Kukolja and those who work with ROM programs, the work of building peace is an

outgrowth of their faith and their belief that pursuing peace is a way to put their faith into action.

Likewise, B. and J. Clark attributed their motivation for peacebuilding to their faith, explaining,

"Why peacebuilding? It's the theology of Ephesians 2: Jesus is the peacemaker, [breaking] down

the barrier between Jew and Gentile" (personal communication, September 20, 2013). In the

same vein, S. Petrovski also shared that his calling to be a peace builder came from his faith:

I believe in God who is a peace builder, who is the Prince of Peace. Jesus said blessed are

the peacemakers. We can see conflict, hate, and wars, which are the result of rebellion

against God. If you believe in God and want to follow Jesus seriously, we can give

direction to issues people struggle with. In the Balkans, nationalism is a big challenge.

Followers of Jesus need to be on the front line to challenge that. (personal

communication, September 13, 2013)

For Petrovski, too, his faith demands that he intentionally work to build peace where he sees that

there is conflict. If he does not engage the imperative that his faith teaching requires adherents by

working for peace, he does not feel that he is truly practicing the faith he confesses.

Along with the faith component, B. Greenhalgh told me that her calling to do peacebuilding work came from her faith and that it is something bigger than her own desire for peace:

I love God and I think we're called to a higher purpose. There is still war in the world. I believe I have a responsibility to do something about it. Because I love my neighbor and I can't just sit and do nothing. Doing nothing is as bad as doing the wrong thing. [I also do peacebuilding work] for the personal sense of fulfillment, achievement, and higher purpose. … I believe we all have a greater calling. … I was defined by [my experience of war] and it was a natural, logical path [for me to go into peacebuilding work]: this is an issue so let's address the issue. I had a calling greater than me, I need to make value out of my life. That's important. (personal communication, October 24, 2013)

For Greenhalgh, there is a responsibility to use her life to make a difference for others by working to create a peaceful world. R. Butler also connected his beliefs and his vocation, describing his motivation for peacebuilding as an intersection between his strengths and his faith:

Why? I felt a real sense of calling, a powerful call. It's important to do your best to find the intersection of your strengths, talents, and the needs of the world. Mine happened to be peacebuilding. I believe Jesus meant what he said when he said when he said blessed are the peacemakers, they shall be called the children of God. I think I was called to [peacebuilding work]. This is about helping people get along with each other, seeking the peace of the city. (personal communication, November 5, 2013)

A sense of calling to pursue peace is a major reason that people begin doing peacebuilding work. In particular, the calling to pursue peace requires action, especially when people feel that

engaging in peacebuilding work is a tangible way to demonstrate what they believe in, whether related to their faith or to a belief in doing something larger than oneself that benefits others.

Giving back. Peace workers who mentioned that they began doing peacebuilding work in order to give back to their communities explained that their work made them feel good, or that they felt like they should use their personal experience to help others or share what they had received. B. Greenhalgh explained that she felt it was important to share her own experiences to help create a better environment for others:

I felt it was important [to share my experiences because] my family has been through war. My mom is Croat, my dad is Serb. I believe in peace. I was a refugee, and it really impacted me. Having … the opportunity to influence others in a good way. Having opportunity to be an example. Having the opportunity to educate others… [This is what motivates me]. (personal communication, October 24, 2013)

This idea of sharing what one has learned in order to benefit others is connected with the previously described motivation of participating in something larger than oneself. Peacebuilding is about reconciling relationships, and doing things for others and putting others ahead of oneself is an important part of forgiving or reconciling, which are key aspects of building peace. S. Petrovski said he is motivated to do peacebuilding work because he experienced the bombing in Serbia as a young person in 1999. He said because of this, he feels the "need to do everything to build a good reconciliation and build peace," and explained how his personal experience connects with his peacebuilding work:

I became interested in peacebuilding after the war in former Yugoslavia because I realized that young people [of different ethnicities] hated each other. During communism we didn't talk about the past because the only talk was about brotherhood and unity.

The former Yugoslavia is a place where the three main religions meet (Islam, Christianity, Judaism). Every 50 years there is a war, and I wanted to do something to help break down the prejudice. I travelled in Bosnia and Croatia, meeting different people, changing prejudices, opening horizons, and I realized there is a lot of work that we had to do because we [speak] the same language, look the same, and just because we are different religions or nationalities doesn't mean we should kill each other. … We don't want our kids to repeat the same wars and prejudice that our parents accepted. (personal communication, September 13, 2013)

For Petrovski, seeing people in his region who had previously been citizens of the same country (Yugoslavia) in conflict with each other was unacceptable. Because of his own experience, he wanted to give back and use his talents as a peace worker to help rebuild these broken relationships.

S. Partnow also emphasized the importance of giving back to her community by sharing her personal experience:

We don't have to wait for the government, we can make a difference. Social action happens from grassroots up. In my personal life, I am the youngest of 3. I was always the underdog, so I had to create structure where power could be equalized and safe. In addition, I am Jewish and all my best friends growing up were Holocaust survivors. [I want to make the world] safe with justice and equality for everyone. When my mentor and friend Danaan Parry, founder of the Earthstewards Network, died, I resolved to carry on the work. (personal communication, November 22, 2013)

The motivations that Partnow described point to the impact that individuals can make by sharing what they have learned through their experiences and from the peacebuilding work of others.

Because each person has different experiences, talents, and skills than others, each person can contribute something to the peacebuilding process that no one else can.

Another important point that S. Qubti brought up is the fact that each peace worker's contribution can have the double impact of influencing others to engage in peace work both as participants and also as peace workers themselves. She explained that her own experience of others' peacebuilding efforts made her want to get involved: "I do [peacebuilding work] because I was a participant and I saw that it worked. It's important for me to give back" (personal communication, September 1, 2013). By giving back to their communities and sharing their own experiences and passion for peacebuilding, peace workers can truly play a big role in creating peace in the world.

Bringing people together. The desire to bring people together through peace work was mentioned by the peace workers I interviewed with the goal of breaking down prejudice and building good relationships between people. Good relationships are the very essence of peace, so facilitating opportunities for people on either side of a conflict to come together is foundational to peacebuilding. T. Nolet shared that "Hands For a Bridge is about kids coming together and seeing themselves in each other; ultimately people will see the need to be together instead of separate" (personal communication, August 8, 2013). He said that HFB has helped to create the need for Isilimela and Bellville high schools to be together and for the students and their communities to be in each other's lives: "Bridging happens in different ways, even within the HFB class itself, [because of] being with people you would not otherwise be with." Peace workers' roles in bringing people together is vital because when there is a conflict, especially a longstanding conflict, it can only be overcome when people on each side intentionally come

together to repent and forgive one another. Peace workers are the link between the sides and can even act as a neutral party, facilitating opportunities for the groups in conflict to start a dialogue.

B. and J. Clark said they saw a need to bring people together because of "the political situation in America and the anti-Muslim sentiment even in churches" (personal communication, September 20, 2013). When they returned to the U.S. after living abroad for many years, they found the Islamophobia they encountered in the U.S. disturbing. They explained, "We wanted to help break down stereotypes within our Christian community." Their peacebuilding strategy is to "make friends and … introduce them to other friends." In this way, the Clarks are intentionally creating opportunities for people who may otherwise never meet to get to know each other. This, in turn, reduces fear or prejudice that may come from the unknown or from stereotyping particular groups of people.

Peace workers also model how people should treat one another. M. Weiss talked about how ROM brings together current and emerging leaders, setting an example for dialogue across perceived divides:

> ROM [tries to create] a level playing field. Speakers have one-on-one time with
> participants, and spend time serving participants. To be able to approach someone of the
> caliber of a speaker builds great trust; it is great modeling. (personal communication,
> September 22, 2013)

Seeing peace workers value each participant as an important contributor to the peacebuilding process can help participants understand that they should also see one another, and even people from the group they are in conflict with, as important and valuable contributors in the process of building peace.

Challenges Peace Workers Face

I was curious about what challenges peace workers face that interfere with their motivation to continue to do peacebuilding work. The peace workers I interviewed mentioned five main challenges to their work: a dangerous physical or emotional context, lack of buy-in, burnout, lack of funding or partners, and lack of time. Each of these things inhibits the impact a peace worker can have, and limits their ability to achieve their desired outcome of building genuine peace within a community.

Dangerous physical or emotional context. Peace workers face many challenges in their work. One of these challenges is that they can face physical or emotional danger when working with people who are currently in conflict or have just experienced conflict. Often, these conflicts involve war or violence, and community members have experienced emotional, psychological, or physical trauma. The physical contexts are often difficult, with damaged infrastructure and even the risk of gunfire and shelling if the conflict is ongoing, or the danger of mine explosions in post-conflict settings. For example, even though the wars in Bosnia and Croatia ended nearly two decades ago, there are still signs warning people to stay away from areas where mines are still known to be present. Poor infrastructure can also be dangerous, as T. Nolet pointed out. When his group of students was in Cape Town, South Africa, in February 2006 there were electricity blackouts (personal communication, August 8, 2013). I was also living in Cape Town at this time, and I remember that one evening all the electricity in the downtown core went out, including street lights. The lack of reliable infrastructure can certainly pose a safety hazard and hinder peacebuilding efforts.

Other participants focused on the emotional or psychological hazards that challenge peace workers. S. Petrovski explained that the Serbian/Albanian friendship camp was

challenging because participants would stay in groups separated by nationality, and even provoke each other with jokes about nationality. He also said that the hotel staff separated the Serbians and Albanians in different dining rooms because it was not considered culturally acceptable for people from each of the nationalities to be together. (personal communication, September 13, 2013). O. Pennikian concurred, explaining that it is challenging to build peace when working in a fragile context in which political leaders or others who are not interested in building peace create situations that hinder peacebuilding efforts. She said it can be frustrating to see the work set back by external factors:

> You're trying to change the culture or community, but operating in a context where there is a political or religious leader who makes a speech and everything changes. Whatever World Vision Lebanon does [to build peace], there are always external factors [that we cannot control]. (personal communication, October 2, 2013)

Certainly, peacebuilding does not take place in a vacuum. There will always be people and groups who are against building peace, so peace workers must be prepared to face detractors and be ready to backtrack if work they have already done to build peace is undone.

R. Butler focused on the feeling of "going against the tide" by doing peacebuilding work. He explained "In the U.S. it feels like the tide is still going out toward increasing polarization and mean-spirited debate" (personal communication, November 5, 2013). Peacebuilding work is counter-cultural. If peace was the natural tendency for humans, there would be no conflict and peace workers would not be needed. However, because humans are more inclined to be in conflict, peace workers are needed to do the counter-cultural work of intentionally bringing together people who see each other as enemies. This "going against the tide" often puts peace

workers at risk because people on either side of a conflict can be upset that they are challenging the status quo.

T. Kukolja also pointed out that it can be difficult for peace workers not to be perceived as siding with one group or another:

> We constantly have to be aware of the sensitive relationships between some ethnic groups. For example, …we used to put [participant] names and country flags up as décor, but we stopped because some participants were offended when we put the name of another country that they did not recognize as a separate country. …We have to be careful and intentional not to create potential problems. … I am constantly aware [of how my actions might be perceived], because … it may be seen as if I am favoring a particular group. … Even with people who have been to ROM sometimes these national issues don't always go away. (personal communication, September 22, 2013)

People who are upset that peace workers challenge the status quo by advocating that enemies forgive one another and build good relationships can perceive that a peace worker is attacking their beliefs. This can, therefore, create a very difficult emotional or psychological atmosphere that can prevent peace workers from succeeding in their endeavors to bring people together.

Lack of buy-in. Peace workers face the difficult task of changing people's entrenched mindsets about who they perceive as good or bad, an enemy or a friend. In order to achieve any accomplishments in peacebuilding, the groups in conflict must buy in and agree to participate in the process of resolving the conflict. Without the participation of the people involved in the conflict, peace workers can have no success, but the challenge for peace workers is to convince the parties in conflict of the need for building peace.

T. Nolet shared that families of students from Bellville high school [a predominantly

white school in South Africa] "initially had a hard time trying to wrap their brains around letting their kids go to Langa [a township high school]" (personal communication, August 8, 2013). It was totally against cultural norms for whites to go to townships and because of this, teachers at another white high school chose not to participate. He said "It is emotionally tough for Roosevelt students to see the divide. The program is about race, and even in Northern Ireland, Roosevelt [High School students] of color encounter intolerance. Everyone is locked into their worldview and has biases about skin color and class…" When people choose not to participate in peacebuilding work, it is not as effective because fewer people are invested in wanting to make a change. S. Petrovski has also had difficulty getting parents, students, and people in the larger society to buy in to EUS's peacebuilding work. He said, "A lot of people have prejudices, so it can be challenging to find participants for the camps. Parents didn't want to send their kids" (personal communication, September 13, 2013).

Another outcome of people's unwillingness to buy in to peacebuilding work is that peace workers themselves can lose members of their own support systems if those people do not agree with their peacebuilding endeavors. B. Greenhalgh mentioned in her interview that she had lost friends because of her peacebuilding work. She said the some people did not want to get involved in the work or be friends with her because of their parents' beliefs or how they were raised. Some were afraid to talk to people from the other side or felt threatened. "Not everybody saw the value in it… If you think differently from people around you, you always have trouble. There is lots of conflict and opposition" (personal communication, October 24, 2013). She also identified her age and gender as problematic, as well as the fact that she is Eastern European, not Western. All of these things proved challenging for her in being considered credible, and therefore, getting people to buy in to her peacebuilding efforts.

S. Partnow also identified lack of buy-in from potential participants as a challenge to her

peacebuilding work:

> A colleague and I have been trying to teach local communities, but it's challenging.
>
> Communities always have conflict. I want them to realize this and welcome it as an
>
> opportunity to learn and grow. Communities don't want to think about conflict until
>
> they're in the middle of it, but it's hard to find the best way to resolve when you are
>
> in the middle of it. … I tried to build bridges between Jewish and Palestinian people here
>
> [in the U.S.], but it didn't take off.

This exemplifies the challenge of trying to get buy-in when going against cultural norms in

trying to build peace.

In situations of conflict that have been going on for a very long time, like those in the

Middle East, peace workers face an even greater challenge in getting people to buy in to their

peacebuilding efforts. S. Qubti also said that it is difficult to get buy-in from people for

Musalaha's programs because the conflict in the Middle East has gone on for so long that they

do not think anything is going to change (personal communication, September 1, 2013). She

mentioned that in other contexts (such as the conflicts in South Africa, Ireland/Northern Ireland,

and the former Yugoslavia), there came a point when people had to make an intentional decision

to buy in to peacebuilding efforts and start getting along. She said she hopes that day will come

soon for Israel/Palestine. O. Pennikian, too, cited protracted conflict as a barrier to getting people

to buy in to peacebuilding work:

> The problem is so ongoing (there have been 35 years of chronic conflict in Lebanon), so
>
> this becomes part of the norm and people accept it. They believe that things will never
>
> change: this is just how it is. … Young people are peace builders and want to make

change, but they also have a lot of prejudice they need to change. It's part of the culture.

An added challenge is that there are Palestinian and Syrian refugees. People think we

should help the Lebanese first, not the refugees. The Lebanese feel discriminated against

because [they feel that] the refugees get priority. There are so many layers of conflict, it

is really quite intense. (personal communication, October 2, 2013)

Multiple layers of conflict make it even more challenging to get people to join in peacebuilding.

Burnout. Peace workers face burnout because difficult environments and day-to-day

challenges of trying to get people to participate in building peace and changing systemic injustice

can be extremely tedious and frustrating. At the 2013 Justice Conference, Gary Haugen,

President of International Justice Mission described the process as "long and boring" because for

all the hours of hard work put in, the desired results can be elusive. As I interviewed people who

do the difficult work of building peace by overcoming conflict and helping people change the

ways they think about others, sometimes even putting themselves in danger, it became apparent

that it can be exhausting to put in so much effort without often seeing much progress being

made.

S. Qubti highlighted the fact that not many people are doing peacebuilding work in

Israel/Palestine, and those who are have not made much difference in the overall conflict

(personal communication, September 1, 2013). She said that of 200 organizations she researched,

only 10 actually bring Israeli and Palestinian people together. I could see her passion for

peacebuilding in her region, but I could also see that she is getting tired after working with

Musalaha for 10 years and still seeing so much conflict in the region. Her passion for pursuing

peace has caused her to work really hard, and now she is a bit burned out, but does not see a lot

of new people who would take her place if she stopped doing peacebuilding work. S. Partnow

agreed, "It takes energy; the world is going to tell you you're crazy" (personal communication,

November 22, 2013). The challenge for peace workers is to stay energized to continue their

peacebuilding work even when they face criticism or do no see the hoped for results.

       Lack of funding or partners. Lack of resources was also cited as a challenge that peace

workers face. T. Nolet told me that some past HFB mpartnerships had broken down because the

partner groups had different interests (personal communication, August 8, 2013). S. Petrovski

said that the funding from partners was not always provided reliably from year to year, and when

it was not provided, the peace camps could not be held (personal communication, September 13,

2013). B. and J. Clark also cited funding as a limiting factor in their work:

> One of the big challenges is for the churches and individuals who support and fund us, is
>
> for them to see that [peacebuilding] is a valid expression of the … good news of Jesus.
>
> We've had a number of churches stop support because [they think peacebuilding] is not a
>
> strategic, cutting edge thing. Being U.S.-based also challenges churches' stereotypes for
>
> missionaries … so we've probably lost one quarter to one third of our support. (personal
>
> communication, September 20, 2013)

When partners or funders lose interest in the peacebuilding work they previously supported, or

they are simply no longer able to participate, peace workers have to find other ways to sustain

their work or risk having to stop entirely.

       M. Weiss also identified the challenge of trying to expand peacebuilding work to have a

greater impact:

> Finding the sponsors and the foundations and the grants to be able to do it [is important].
>
> We don't have a huge budget, and that can prevent us from doing the things we want to
>
> do, [whether that means] going deep by [focusing our work in the Balkans and having

advanced ROM programs with specific issues, or going wide by expanding to other areas and working with other partners. (personal communication, September 22, 2013)

R. Butler also discussed the challenge of finding partners and funding to sustain peacebuilding work:

> The biggest challenge is funding. It's not only knowing how to do the work, but [also] having the resources to do it. At ISP, we are only just becoming sustainable ourselves. … We have yet to receive grants from the government, USAID, or the UN. We did apply for a grant from the U.S. Institute for Peace, but we got turned down. (personal communication, November 5, 2013)

Sometimes even if new partners or funders cannot be found or if current partners stop participating, the work can continue as-is, but it is not possible to add other aspects that could involve more people, provide greater impact, or make it possible to achieve results more quickly.

> On the other hand, even if willing partners are found, sometimes partnerships turn out not to be possible. O. Pennikian explained that in some cases the timing does not work out or there simply is not enough manpower to make partnership happen:

> For NGOs, it's not that people don't want to coordinate, but that takes extra work, and it's hard to match timing. There should be more coordinating with different organizations. (personal communication, October 2, 2013)

Many organizations could probably benefit from partnership, but in order to create a partnership and coordinate efforts, time and resources would have to be invested doing that instead of doing the direct peacebuilding work each organization was already engaged in.

> Finally, S. Partnow added that lack of resources can be draining for peace workers' energy:

I have realized my own personal energy and what it takes to sustain the work. … How do

you keep sustaining it? That's the part I feel sobered by. It takes a lot of resources. … I

got worn out and haven't found the right partner, but I'm hopeful. (personal

communication, November 22, 2013)

Without the right resources, peacebuilding work cannot be effective, and this severely hinders

what can be accomplished, and even whether peace workers continue their efforts at all.

Lack of time. The final challenge listed by the peace workers I interviewed was not

having enough time to invest in the work that they would really like to do. T. Kukolja explained,

"ROM is very relational, but what we miss is hands-on work. I'd like to see [ROM host] more

workshops that correspond to what we are teaching. We sacrifice some things due to time"

(personal communication, September 22, 2013). R. Butler also shared ISP's time challenges:

What we have found is absolutely essential is taking time to build real relationships

[which give] people safety to have the hard conversations. That is the one thing I would

recommend: don't shortchange that process. I see it in my mediation work, people just

want to negotiate issues because it's way more difficult [to spend time building

relationships]. … When you have intractable [conflicts, it takes even more time].

(personal communication, November 5, 2013)

However, not taking the time to invest in building relationships will cause peacebuilding work to

be unsuccessful in the end. Relationship building is not a quick process, and cannot be achieved

simply by executing a project plan. It requires diligent long-term effort. Therefore, time is a

critical resource for peacebuilding work if peace is actually going to be achieved.

Keeping Peace Workers Motivated

Given the difficulty of peace work, and the many different motivations, experiences,

challenges, and contexts of peace workers, I was curious whether there were any universal things

that keep peace workers motivated. Citing Tory Higgins' research about human motivation,

Sharfstein (2012) wrote:

> For Higgins, the most profound insight about motivation is how the three ways to be
>
> effective—value, control and truth—interact. By understanding how these ways of being
>
> effective work together, he believes we can better motivate ourselves and others.

Indeed, a great deal can be learned about how to keep people motivated by understanding what

motivated them in the first place, as well as how to mitigate the things that challenge or break

down that motivation.

In the syllabus for their course Nurturing Resilience for Sustained Peacebuilding, Dr.

Alice J. Petersen and Dr. Bill Lowrey, past Director of Peacebuilding for World Vision

International, wrote, "Resilience is the capacity to rebound, recover and adapt after experiencing

significant shocks and be able to retain, strengthen and sustain one's purpose while maintaining

core values and integrity" (2013, p. 1). Resilience, or the ability to bounce back after

experiencing challenges, is key to continued motivation. This is why it is important for peace

workers to be able to identify the things that can help keep them motivated to continue their

difficult peacebuilding work.

My interview participants cited four things that help them stay motivated. First was

having opportunities to connect with and learn from other peace workers was mentioned as a

way to be encouraged and find ways to make worker better. In addition, interview participants

said that they enjoyed inviting new people to join their efforts. Another thing that peace workers

said they found encouraging was seeing the desired change happen. Finally, interview

participants said that being reminded of their calling to do peacebuilding work kept them motivated to continue.

Connecting with and learning from other peace workers. Peace workers need to work together if they want to have the greatest possible impact in bringing people from opposite sides of a conflict together. When ideas and best practices can be shared and there are more hands to do the work, the task is more manageable.

I asked if S. Qubti thought that seeing positive outcomes from peacebuilding work in other locations would be encouraging to people in Israel/Palestine. She said she thought this would be helpful because it would give people a different perspective and an opportunity to see what worked in other situations (personal communication, September 1, 2013). S. Petrovski agreed, saying, "It is helpful to hear from [others] about their different experiences, and get encouragement from other groups and partners. We could [also share our experience by publishing] stories about these camps" (personal communication, September 13, 2013). T. Kukolja also thought it would be helpful to be able to network with other peace workers and talk about possible new initiatives. "We don't want to do it alone," he said, "We want to partner with people who ... share enough in common so we can do something together and support each other" (personal communication, September 22, 2013). Building on this sentiment, R. Butler said that peace workers need to get beyond just doing their own individual work in their own context:

> I would love to see more networking that is actually networking, not just conferences
> with speeches. There needs to be a collaborative design process for practitioners to come
> together, talk about their models and outcomes. We need to become a learning
> community. We don't always understand why we do what we do. What does success
> really look like? What are the quantitative/qualitative outcomes we are looking for? ISP

is influencers. We want to have impact, and have initiatives spin off through the people

who come to dialogue. We want to connect people and establish mutual trust to envision

and collaborate. (personal communication, November 5, 2013)

Collaboration and sharing ideas to reach the common goal of building peace can actually

increase the effectiveness of individual efforts and in combination these efforts can significantly

increase the likelihood of successful peace efforts within a community or country. B. Greenhalgh

also explained how this kind of support network can offer opportunities for collaboration that can

make peacebuilding work more effective:

We need each other. I may have questions for which others have answers and I may have

answers to others' questions. There is power in unity and fellowship in working together.

We're not meant to operate alone and have all the answers by ourselves. Collective

knowledge and learning from each other gives us power in unity. There is a scripture that

says when two or more work together Jesus is right there with them. [Collaborating with

other peace workers also] keeps us from arrogance. (personal communication, October

24, 2013)

It is extremely helpful to have other people review and test theories and program plans so they

can point out things that can be improved and also help come up with new ideas. This can make

projects more effective or efficient, and it also gives peace workers confidence in carrying out

projects, because others also believe that they are worth doing. M. Weiss added that she would

like to find out what other groups are doing so peacebuilding can be done more strategically:

I would love to meet with board members of other faith-based NGOs, to see how they do

fundraising, marketing, what they're doing. We want to be sure we know what others are

doing so we don't duplicate. Having some sort of network like that is invaluable… I took

a class at United Way for board members of NGOs [and] it was nice to realize we're not

the only ones [who have a particular] problem or situation. It's encouraging that we're

not alone. (personal communication, September 22, 2013)

Having opportunities to connect with other peace workers provides not only ideas for ways to

improve work or avoid duplication of effort, but give peace workers a support network to

encourage them. Sometimes just knowing that there are people who do understand and support

peace workers' counter-cultural work to bring people together across division can help a peace

worker stay motivated to continue despite burnout or lack of buy-in or resources.

      Inviting others to participate. When people choose to engage in peacebuilding, this

inevitably affects other people around them. Family and friends, and even strangers, may wonder

why they are behaving counter-culturally by engaging with people that their society tells them

they are not suppose to. T. Nolet said that HFB students are participants, but so are their parents:

They have to invest, too. Parents are the ones who really have to face the history. The

parents are the ones who have the high fears of the townships. They never took those

exits from the freeway [to the townships] because doing that would mean death. Parents

have to allow their kids go to places they would never have gone, … so they are shifting

and changing. (personal communication, August 8, 2013)

Buy-in has to come from parents in order for students to participate in HFB's peacebuilding

programs, and parents and families are also influenced by what the participating students learn

and the ways their behavior changes. S. Qubti also explained that when young people participate

in Musalaha's activities this brings in others from their family, as well (personal communication,

September 1, 2013). S. Petrovski also said that when Serbian students returned home after the

peace camps, they told their families and friends that they had met great Albanians (personal

communication, September 13, 2013). When participants in peacebuilding work invite others in

through their own testimonies and the way that they interact can have huge impact in achieving

success in peacebuilding. Because of this type of ripple effect, many more people can be

influenced to start intentionally trying to break cycles of conflict by building positive

relationships with people they may have previously considered enemies.

Another way that people can be invited to join in peacebuilding efforts is more indirect,

but also valuable. O. Pennikian explained how people can be invited to participate through

avenues like media:

We have peace marathons, planting seeds to bring people together … [It is effort and]

hard work. [We] need to keep the motivation going. …. A lot of times, we don't really

get the story out about how people are working together; that doesn't make it into the

media. … We need to make this visible to the broader public, to give more hope,

encourage this kind of thing. It is always helpful to have outside ideas, what things have

been done, to get inspired. For peacebuilding work you need inspiration and motivation.

There should be a coordination nationally, to connect between what World Vision

Lebanon and other organizations are doing, to help communities know what is happening

in all parts of the country. (personal communication, October 2, 2013)

Beyond personal invitation from a friend or family member, people who may not personally

know anyone who does peacebuilding work can and should be invited to join in by having the

chance to read about peacebuilding work through media stories, or to get involved in events or

activities that are publicized. Inviting more people to join peacebuilding efforts makes

peacebuilding more accepted and less counter-cultural, and the more people get involved the

greater likelihood that peace can be achieved.

Seeing the desired change happen. To illustrate the positive impact of seeing the desired change happen, T. Nolet shared a story:

A profound thing happened 2 years ago at a church in Gugulethu. One of the South African HFB teachers, Moss, met us in parking lot at Isilimela with Bellville parents and students. Moss said, "Tom, would you ever have believed that this could happen?" White parents from Bellville were going into a church in a township. HFB students are participants, but so are their parents. To have Afrikaans people in a Xhosa church… coming together like this will save us. … HFB is bigger than what I really think about. I don't know what these kids really take away, but often it seems to affect them pretty profoundly, along with their parents and teachers. (personal communication, August 8, 2013)

Seeing positive results of the investment they have made in building peace in a community is very encouraging for peace workers. It makes them feel that they should keep investing in peacebuilding work because they believe that more success can be achieved. S. Petrovski has also been encouraged by seeing positive results of his work demonstrated in the change in behavior of the young people who participated in the Serbian/Albania friendship camps:

Prejudice is changing in the minds of some young people. Friendships have been formed, and some good initiatives have been done after that. At the Serbian/Albania camp, students heard a talk by Zefjan about nationalism and afterward people changed their behavior. People kept in touch and visited each other after this, seeing each other on different occasions. This was very uncommon at the time, and still isn't very common. These were not organized events, but students took the initiative to do this themselves,

even though they needed visas to cross the national borders, and visas were difficult to

get at that time. (personal communication, September 13, 2013)

Seeing that the desired outcome of Serbians and Albanians becoming friends with each other at

camp was not just limited to that place and time, but was sustained through time and across

national boundaries was proof that this peacebuilding effort was successful and worth

continuing. T. Kukolja also shared a story to illustrate the impact of seeing lives changed for the

better through ROM's work:

> The success and results are great. People's lives are being changed, transformed. … What
>
> keeps me motivated is seeing the fruits of our work and I hope that over the next few
>
> years we will be able to build a firm foundation so this work can continue even without
>
> me. These are the two things that keep me being involved. The highlights, I live for it. I
>
> have seen many good outcomes. … Many participants come with strong nationalist
>
> perspectives … but in the end they leave with changed perspectives. … On a trip a year
>
> ago, we visited about 200 people around the Balkans [because] we wanted to see for
>
> those who attended ROM 6 years ago, was this just a nice memory, or still impacting
>
> them? People … said that ROM was defining for them and gave them new direction.
>
> (personal communication, September 22, 2013)

Hearing from ROM participants years after their participation that what they learned was still

impacting them and their communities was good confirmation that this type of peacebuilding

work was also worthwhile and that there was value in continuing to do it. M. Weiss, who also

participated in the trip that T. Kukolja described said that reading the thank you notes from ROM

participants encouraged her to continue he peacebuilding work:

One Albanian ROM participant said: "I never thought I could sit at the same table with a

Serbian, because of what I've been taught. I learned not to make assumptions about

people." A Serbian participant said, "Looking around I see the seeds of transformation

throughout the Balkans and beyond. And I personally have been hugely impacted, first of

all on an inner level, to practice forgiveness and reconciliation in my personal

relationships. Also, I have been challenged to take outward action, to look at my

community in Serbia with new eyes to see the needs and to think about how I can joining

them in addressing those needs." Knowing that FLR is impacting participants of the

programs it supports motivates me to continue. (personal communication, September 22,

2013)

When participants themselves articulate that peacebuilding work has been successful and that

they are thankful for it, this is very good motivation for peace workers to want to continue their

work. O. Pennikian agreed that seeing change is what keeps her engaged:

Obviously I like to see change. The reason I am working is to see a change in my

community. … I cannot see a change without peacebuilding. So [the] desire to see change

is what motivates me. … You can't see real long-term sustainable change [unless you]

bring people together. Seeing people changing their attitudes and perspectives is

encouraging. Here is an example I am very happy about. Once when we were organizing

a summer camp, we debated for months whether to invite Palestinians or not. There were

some arguments, but at the end we decided to invite them. But the Palestinians were

scared and didn't want to come. However, we work with partners who trust

World Vision, so at the end the Palestinian children came to the camp and kids from both

sides were leaders. Their parents came. It was very successful… there was not a single

clash due to nationality. Now they have established friendships and overcome fears.

The breaking down of prejudice and fears makes a great difference in the lives of all people in a

community. B. and J. Clark also described how encouraging it is to see "the walls of prejudice

and stereotypes fall [because] love is growing and stereotypes are being broken down: it's

encouraging to break through the fear barrier" (personal communication, September 20, 2013).

Calling. Coming full circle, the final encouragement these peace workers highlighted in

my interviews was the knowledge that they were fulfilling the calling that drew them to

peacebuilding work in the first place. B. Clark explained, "I find Jesus present in the midst of the

peacemaking and when I encounter him like that through his spirit that's the highest. I don't need

any other motivation than that" (personal communication, September 20, 2013). J. Clark felt the

same way:

I was thinking of the Lord's prayer "let your kingdom come and your will be done on

earth as it is in heaven." That's the motivation, that's our goal, that motivates me. His

kingdom come his will be done on earth. (personal communication, September 20, 2013)

The calling that draws people to peacebuilding work, often related to a moral imperative or a

desire to give back to their communities, also keeps them engaged in the work even when it is

difficult. R. Butler also added that a sense of vocation motivates him to continue his

peacebuilding work:

There is an intersection of passion and sense of duty that I need to use my talents. … Sort

of like medical researchers, I see some progress and make changes [when needed]. I

don't just give up [on my call to peacebuilding] because of a failed experiment. (personal

communication, November 5, 2013)

This sense of calling to pursue peace even in the face of challenges is something that can be built

on to remind peace workers about why they do the work they do, and to keep them encouraged.

Recommendations

My intent throughout this research project was to find out what draws people to do

peacebuilding work, what challenges they face, and what keeps them involved in peacebuilding

work despite the challenges. I wanted to learn these things with the hope of being able to make

some recommendations for ways to encourage current peace workers to stay engaged in the work

they are doing and to encourage prospective peace workers to join the cause. If more people are

involved in efforts to build peace, more impact will be made in reducing violence, building

positive relationships between groups that were formerly in conflict, and preventing future

conflict. Ultimately, my hope is that peace workers will be successful in their peacebuilding

efforts. Toward this aim, I will offer recommendations for ways to keep peace workers

encouraged.

The peace workers I interviewed said they became involved in peacebuilding work

because they felt a calling to do so, wanted to give back to their communities, or wanted to bring

people together. They emphasized the importance of making relationships and communities

better. Some who had experienced war said they did not want younger generations to experience

what they had. Others said building peace was the right thing to do, so they had to do it.

However, in doing their respective work to build peace, they reported facing many challenges

that prevented them from helping people come together to restore relationships. These included

both contextual and emotional challenges, such as unsafe situations, and lack of willingness by others to participate, lack of resources, and lack of enough time.

Regardless of the challenging situations each of my interview participants has faced in their peacebuilding work, each of them has continued to do this work. When I asked them what has kept them engaged, they reiterated that connecting with others was crucial, as was feeling that they were fulfilling a purpose they were called to. They also said that seeing the impact of their work was very helpful, because it reminded them why they started doing peacebuilding work in the first place and encouraged them that their work does improve people's lives. Knowing that their work had a positive impact on people and that it really did contribute to resolving and preventing future conflict motivated them to continue.

In light of my research findings, I propose the following three recommendations for encouraging peace workers to stay motivated in their work:

Opportunities to Connect

Based on my research findings it is very valuable for peace workers to connect with each other. Therefore, my first recommendation is that opportunities should be intentionally created for peace workers to connect with one another. The goal of peacebuilding work is to bring people together and build relationships, so it makes sense that it would be beneficial for peace workers themselves to connect with other peace workers as part of the relationship-building process. It may even be helpful to have a group that coordinates a mentorship program for peace workers. Many peace networks and conferences already exist, so peace workers should be encouraged to join these existing structures or create their own if necessary. In my research I came across many conferences for peace workers, from international events offered by The Hague to local activities. However, these events focused on training peace workers, not on

helping them get to know one another. In order to keep peace workers encouraged to continue their work, it is important that they have opportunities not just to learn about the latest research or to get certain training, but instead to share their experiences, discuss projects or approaches that have been successful, to share frustrations and ideas, to discuss and share ways to invite new people to participate, and to collaborate and encourage to each other. This kind of emphasis could have exponential impact because peace workers would feel supported by their participation in a global network of people who believe in what they are trying to achieve.

In my attempts to schedule interviews with peace workers I learned how busy many of them are. Because of their own demanding schedules, many peace workers may not be aware of what other peace builders are doing. But it could be extremely helpful for peace workers to see from different perspectives and to be encouraged by the efforts of others who have an understanding of what they are trying to accomplish. I argue that the time that might be taken away from direct peacebuilding work in order to connect with other peace workers would pay dividends and would absolutely be worth the investment. Although peace work will continue to be difficult, these things could mitigate some of the obstacles to achieving desired results, thereby encouraging peace workers to keep up their peacebuilding efforts.

Some specific suggestions for ways to connect peace workers are online forums, social media groups, email distribution lists, and even in-person meetings. Peace workers would need to share these resources with one another to build the network. A directory of each person and the work they are doing could also be compiled. Someone, or more likely, a group of people would need to take responsibility for managing any groups, lists, directories, or arranging meetings. Time and effort put in to administrative tasks like compiling and sharing this

information could prove extremely valuable to peacebuilding efforts by providing support for

peace workers.

Opportunities to Learn About Impact

My second recommendation is that it would be helpful to have a central location to

document the impact of peacebuilding work being done around the world and the impact it has

had. Many organizations, including the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (2011) and the

Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (n.d.), offer strategies for measuring

the results of peacebuilding and many organizations publish their own impact reports; however,

there is not a consolidated source that houses this information across organizations or contexts. If

a peace worker (or anyone else) wants to know what impacts are being made through

peacebuilding work around the world, much effort is required to research various individual

organizations or peace workers and the results of their work. I contend that it would be beneficial

for peace workers to be easily able to access this information. Peace workers can be encouraged

by sharing the impact of their own work, as well as by seeing the results of other people's work.

As demonstrated in my interviews, people are more motivated to continue if they can see that the

work they do is achieving the desired result of building peace in a community.

Because the scope of peacebuilding work is so broad, it may be necessary to have local,

regional, and international resources with consolidated information about the results of

peacebuilding work at each level. The resources could take the shape of anything from a local

community bulletin board or newsletter to online resources like websites, blogs, forums, or social

media avenues. Stories about successful peacebuilding impact could even be shared at in-person

meetings. A person or group would need to be designated to manage each resource, collect

information from peace workers, and distribute information or make somehow make it accessible

to others. Seeing the overall impact of peacebuilding work in a particular community or even around the globe could be very encouraging for peace workers. Particularly, peace workers who may not see a great deal of impact in their own work might be sustained by knowing that they are part of a larger group of peace workers that has a large impact. In peacebuilding, the overall impact is greater than the sum of its parts.

Opportunities to be Reminded of Purpose

Finally, I argue that it is helpful for peace workers to be reminded about why they began doing peacebuilding work in the first place. My third recommendation is that there should be a person or group that intentionally makes the effort to keep peace workers connected with their original calling to do peacebuilding work. Certainly each peace worker should have individuals in their life who can fill the role of encouraging them and keeping them focused on the reason they do peacebuilding work, but it would also be helpful to have a unified voice that plays this role for the larger network of peace workers.

Reconnecting with purpose helps to reinforce the importance of the work and what it means to the individual. It also helps the peace worker identify whether they are on the right track regarding the impact they would like to have. For example, if someone began doing peacebuilding work in order to help children in their community have equal access to education, but the programming they are currently involved with does not have this goal, it will be helpful for that peace worker to evaluate their work with their purpose in mind to determine if they need to go in a different direction. Seeing the desired result of peacebuilding work was cited by the peace workers I interviewed as something that keeps them motivated to continue, so if the work one is doing is not going to achieve the desired impact, this could be very discouraging. Peace

workers need to stay encouraged that they can achieve the desired impact of their peacebuilding work in order to stay engaged in doing that work.

Being reminded of the original purpose or calling to do peacebuilding work also helps peace workers to overcome obstacles or difficult situations because they know that they are doing what they are supposed to be doing, and that in itself makes the effort worthwhile. Personally, because my peacebuilding work is motivated by my faith, I continue to pursue it because I know that my calling and purpose is to build peace as a tangible way to live out my beliefs. Knowing that I am living in accordance with who I know I am supposed to be keeps me encouraged even when I do not always see the results I hope for.

Conclusion

It was during the summer of 2006 that I first saw the Serbian elementary school in Vukovar, Croatia, that was covered with the scars of war. My team was there to patch the holes in the concrete and cover over them with colorful mosaics, so instead of gloom students would met with cheeriness when they returned to school in the fall. This project was coordinated by a German organization, and several other organizations, including our group from ROM, participated. The day that our team was at the school we made several mosaics, but much of the school's exterior was still gray and gloomy when we left.

I had the opportunity to return a few months later to see the finished result and it made my heart sing. The top of the mural had been painted in a bright light blue color, with wispy white clouds. Along the bottom, was tan paint covered with grass made from mosaic tiles. All over the walls were splashed friendly mosaic creatures: a butterfly, a giraffe, birds, and even an elephant with wings. Students were scheduled to return for classes in just a few weeks. I was so glad that they would find lovingly created art in place of the shell marks and bullet holes, at least

on the lower part of the walls. The groups who put the mural together did not have the equipment to be able to reach the upper level of the building, so there was still a reminder of the war, and there was still work to be done.

To me this symbolizes the ongoing process of peacebuilding work. There will always be more work to do, and more relationships to mend. But that does not mean that the impact that peace workers do have is not worthwhile. Rather, it emphasizes the need for peace workers to remain engaged and continue to pursue peace despite challenges. As Nelson Mandela (1993) said in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize, "Let the strivings of us all, prove Martin Luther King Jr. to have been correct, when he said that humanity can no longer be tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war." My hope is that peace workers will be encouraged to keep doing the very important and restorative work of building peace by connecting with one another, sharing their own successes, and holding fast to the underlying purpose behind why they choose to pursue peace.

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Thanks

The experience of researching and writing this thesis has given me a deeper and broader understanding of the dynamic field of peacebuilding. I appreciate that peace workers are constantly working to improve their impact and adjusting to meet ever-changing needs in the areas in which they work. I also have a new appreciation for the demands on peace workers' time and energy. I am grateful that these people choose to spend their lives in service to a world and its people who are in great need, and I am honored that they chose to share some of their limited time participating in my research.

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Peace.