

The Peace Builders' Tool Kit: Some Ways to Build a Culture of Peace

Get Oriented: Read "Building a Culture of Peace" paper. Think it over. Take the steps mentioned. Create a vision, collect success stories, make your choice to be creative, frame your focus and commitment, and identify skills you need to learn and practice.

Focus Your Goal: State your goal in crisp, clear, compelling language. Is it peace in your family, neighborhood, city, faith community, state, nation, world?

Learn skills needed: Mediation, conflict resolution/management, consensus building, non-violent communication, non-violence.

Practice skills: Begin in known settings. As you gain skill, choose more challenging arenas. Think about consensus building, as an example. What if every faith community operated by consensus. Thousands of people would be trained and experienced in this peace building outlook and skill. It changes your life and your community....for the better. Suppose you taught your child's fourth grade class to operate by consensus and then you taught the teachers in that school how to operate this way and then it could spread to the district...the sky's the limit. Contact Faith at Work for the booklet *Decision Making by Consensus*.

Deepen your meditative peace practice: No one has done this better than Peace Pilgrim who walked 20,000 miles back and forth across the United States engaging people on how to make peace with self, others, and the world. Her *Steps Toward Inner Peace* is a classic. It's on the Peace Pilgrim website.

Foster restorative justice practices in your community: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission put this concept on the map. Marietta Jaeger describes it this way: *Real justice is not punishment, but restoration not necessarily to how things used to be, but to how they really should be.* Desmond Tutu's *No Future Without Forgiveness* should be a Bible for all peace builders. The good news is that restorative justice is catching on and can be encouraged. Googling can get you started.

Spread the Canadian way: The Canadian Commission for UNESCO works as advisor, activist and advocate to foster a culture of peace within Canada. You can download their *Building a Culture of Peace* kit to seed your own efforts.

Travel for Peace: SERVAS is an international hospitality organization of hosts and travelers who build international friendships as a vital ingredient of world peace. Their website tells you how to join as a host or traveler or both.

Create Your Own Seeds of Hope: Seeds of Hope is a camp experience that one couple started to bring Israeli and Palestinian youth together for fun, bonding and learning. You could do something similar.

Participate in a city or faith community partnership: Google *City Partnerships* for ideas.

Be a peace presence in a troubled spot: Christian Peacemakers is one of many groups that arrange such experiences which can be life changing for all involved.

Participate in interreligious dialogue and prayer: Experience with ecumenical exchange between Protestants and Catholics during the sixties involved a sequence of activities: first, guest speakers from another faith, then discussion groups on differences and commonalities, and finally prayer together. A depth resulted that caused lifelong bonds and common work. Now this needs to happen across world faiths. *Interreligious Prayer* by Thomas Ryan could get you started.

*This is the way of peace: overcome evil with good, falsehood with truth,
and hatred with love. Peace Pilgrim*

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