

Eastern Mennonite University/Center for Justice & Peacebuilding
Summer Peacebuilding Institute
Philosophy & Praxis of Forgiveness and Reconciliation
PAX 563
Session II: May 15-23, 2008

Instructor

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Course Description

This course will explore the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation, their various components, and the place they occupy in the spectrum of the various social science conflict-handling mechanisms. It will examine the concepts from different philosophical, cultural and disciplinary perspectives and look at how they have been used for healing interpersonal relationships as well as addressing large-scale social (political, inter-ethnic or international) conflicts. Although the main emphasis will be on social conflicts, the personal, psychological, spiritual and ecological dimensions of forgiveness and reconciliation and their interrelationships with one another will be explored. The course will involve lectures, discussion, group work, student presentations, and writing assignments.

Course Objectives

- * To expose participants to the multi-dimensionality and depth of the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation and the role they play in peacemaking and peacebuilding as seen from different perspectives and experiences;
- * To provide participants an opportunity for reflection on how the concepts might apply to their own lives and relationships;
- * To develop projects (working plans) that will show how to apply the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation in specific group conflict situations that the participants have identified.

Requirements (for everyone in the class)

Please read the following before the class begins:

Assefa, Hizkias, "The Meaning of Reconciliation," in Peacebuilding: A Field Guide, Luc Reychler and T. Paffenholz, Boulder: Lynn Reiner, 2001; or at http://www.gppac.net/documents/pbp/part1/2_reconc.htm

Curle, Adam., Tools For Transformation, A Personal Study, London: Hawthorne Press, 1990 ; pp. 72-194 (excerpt available at <http://www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/courses>)

Requirements (for students taking the course for graduate credit)

Completion of all assigned reading materials, active class participation, journaling of personal reflections on what you are learning in the course and how you are applying the concepts learned at a personal level. Develop a project on the application of reconciliation in a chosen area of social conflict; an oral presentation of reflections and projects; and a 20 page double-spaced final paper.

Evaluation

The components of the course grade are as follows:

Class participation and simulation	40%
Journals (content and presentation)	15%
Final Paper	45%

Sequence of Topics and Readings

Not all the topics in this course will take equal amounts of time. The emphasis of the course will be on social conflict. The readings will also overlap; for example, a reading assigned for inter-personal level of conflict might also deal with social conflicts since the concepts are interrelated. The star signs before some of the readings indicate the minimum required reading that has to be done for the various sections of the course.

I. Introduction

Assefa, Hizkias, "The Meaning of Reconciliation," in Peacebuilding: A Field Guide, Luc Reychler and T. Paffenholz, Boulder: Lynn Reiner, 2001; or at http://www.gppac.net/documents/pbp/part1/2_reconc.htm

Assefa, Hizkias. *Peace and Reconciliation as a Paradigm: A Philosophy of Peace and its Implications on Conflict, Governance and Economic Growth in Africa*, ACIS Press, Nairobi, Kenya: 2000. (translated into French, Spanish, Portuguese and Kirundi) (will be available for reading and/or copying in class)

Curle, Adam. Tools For Transformation, A Personal Study, London: Hawthorne Press, 1990 ; pp. 72-195 (excerpt available at <http://www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/courses>)

II. Reconciliation from Religious and Cultural Angles

Fitipaldi, "Zen-mind, Christian-mind, Empty-mind", *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Winter 1982: 69-84 (in Course Reader)

Hurley, M, Reconciliation in Religion and Society: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Institute of Irish Studies, Queens University of Belfast, 1994 (in Course Reader)

Two presentations on Buddhist and Moslem Perspectives

III. Reconciliation in interpersonal relations

Video: Power of Forgiveness

Eileen Borris, The Healing Power of Forgiveness (Occasional Paper Number 10, Institute for Multi-track Diplomacy, October 2003. <http://imtd.org/imtd/OP10.pdf> (in Course Reader)

Augsburger, David W. *The New Freedom of Forgiveness*. Chicago: Moody Press, 2000 (available for purchase in the EMU Bookstore)

Charles Hauss, What are Apology and Forgiveness
http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/apology_forgiveness/ (in Course Reader)

Forgiveness – How to let go of grudges and bitterness
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/forgiveness/MH00131> (in Course Reader)

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IV. Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Large Scale Social Conflicts

Video – TRC South Africa

Roe, M (2007). Intergroup Forgiveness in Settings of Political Violence: Complexities, Ambiguities, and Potentialities. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace, Psychology, 13* (1), 3-9, Retrieved March 19, 2008, from
<http://www.leaonline.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1080/10781910701226394>

Marcia Byrom Hartwell, Perceptions of Justice, Political Process of Forgiveness and Revenge in Conflict Transitions, *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, March 1st, 2006
<http://www.jha.ac/articles/a187.pdf>

Borer, T. (March 2001). Reconciliation in South Africa: Defining Success. *Kroc Institute Occasional Paper, 20:OP:1*, Retrieved 3/15/2008, from Borer, T. (March 2001).
http://kroc.nd.edu/ocpapers/op_20_1b.PDF (in Course Reader)

Staub, B., Pearlman, L., Gubin, A., & Hagengimana, A. (2005). Healing and Reconciliation, Forgiving and the Prevention of Violence After Genocide or Mass Killing: An Intervention and its Experimental Evaluation in Rwanda. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, Vol. 24, No. 3, 297-334*, Retrieved March 19, 2008, from
<http://www.theworld.com/~gubin/Rwandafiles/Staub,%20Pearlman,%20Gubin%20and%20Hagengimana.pdf>

Evalsson, A. (2005). Grass-Roots Understandings of Reconciliation in South Africa. *Crossroads, Vol. 5, no. 3*, Retrieved March 15, 2008, from
http://www.webasa.org/Pubblicazioni/Evaldsson_2005_3.pdf

“Brokenness, Forgiveness, Healing, and Peace in Ireland”, in Helmick, Raymond G., and Rodney L Petersen, eds., *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict Transformation*. Radnor, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001, pp. 329 – 360. (in Course Reader)

V. Reconciliation in International Relations

Helmick, Raymond G., and Rodney L Petersen, eds., Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict Transformation. Radnor, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001. (available for purchase in EMU Bookstore)

Ackermann, A., Reconciliation as a Peace-Building Process in Postwar Europe: The Franco-German Case, *Peace and Change*, Vol. 19, No. 3, July 1994. pp. 229 – 250. (in Course Reader)

VI. Reconciliation with Nature

Robert, C., & Schmucker, J. (April 28, 2006). Reconciliation with Nature as a Foundation Between People(s). *Presented at Congress "Collective Intelligence in Large Group Conflicts-Challenges and Solutions"*, Retrieved March 17, 2008, from <http://www.xn--miljkonstellasjoner-y7b.no/Presentation%20Wuerzburg%2028%20April%202006.pdf>. (available in Course Reader)

Rose, D.B., NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services, Sharing Kinship with Nature: How Reconciliation is Transforming the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service*, Retrieved March 15, 2008, from http://www2.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/PDFs/Sharing_Kinship.pdf

“How Have Traditional Religions Viewed Nature” in Roger Gotlieb, This Sacred Earth: Religions, Nature and Environment, New York: Routledge, 1995, pp 55 – 180 (available in the EMU Library)

VII. Cases

Assefa, Hizkias., Coexistence and Reconciliation in the Northern Region of Ghana, in Mohammed Abu-Nimer, ed., Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory and Practice, New York: Lexington, 2001 (available in the EMU Library)

Peacebuilding and Reconciliation case from Nigeria.

Assefa, Hizkias., The Mediator Speaks

Student Presentations