

Chapter 9

The Universal Language of Sustaining Quality Peace and Resilience: Enhancing Learning and Harmony Across Cultures

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ABSTRACT

Humanity's traditional approach to social problems, inequities, and abuses has been a deficit approach, using force, largely reactive, taking recourse to legalistic action, protests, or demonstrations. Social problems, inequities, and abuses continue despite efforts at building peace and resilience. Experts say that society knows very little about what peace is, and what it is not, because it studies peace only in terms of war, violence, aggression, and conflict. They advise that power (love) accomplishes with ease what force (fear, separation – legalistic action, warfare, protests, etc.) even with extreme effort cannot. This chapter introduces the universal language of and the underlying processes for sustaining quality peace and resilience as the means for affecting the necessary change from the deficit approach to power-based approaches. Teaching and learning the language of sustaining quality peace and resilience at all levels of education will contribute to quality education and education equity significantly.

INTRODUCTION

About this Chapter and its Objectives

Education is a core building block of peace. It is a key enabler of resilience in modern society.

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The world has been beset with destructive conflict and its problems for eons. The United Nations (UN) was established with a mandate to address the diverse global challenges and build universal peace together with its Member States. Yet, peace has been elusive and problems, persisting and evolving.

In 2015, the UN adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as “an urgent call to shift the world onto a more sustainable path” (UNDP, 2022). However, Nature (2020) reported that the SDGs “were already off course” and that (the scare of) the COVID-19 pandemic has put them out of reach. One year later, in 2016, the UN also adopted a new approach of “Sustaining Peace and Resilience” and decided to turn it into a meta-policy for itself and its Member States. Nonetheless, the approach was also criticized for vagueness – for not being specific and being difficult to operationalize (de Coning, 2018) – and peace remains elusive. Inequality in education contributes significantly to the absence of peace and the many problems of society (UNICEF, 2015). Addressing equality in education, contributing to making the teaching and learning of science for second language teachers and learners easier may be done more effectively within the context of strengthening peacebuilding processes.

Clearly, this world needs something major to help society to cultivate and carve a truly sustainable path; keep it on the path and focused on the path; develop and adopt specific and coherent (meta-strategies and their) meta-policies; and develop and apply the essential occupational intelligences – competences and volitions to complete specific tasks to agreed standards (Schultz & Buys, 2013) – to sustain the SDGs and Peace and Resilience effectively. The UN is aware of this need: The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) is running a Global Policy Dialogue Series on “The Future of Trust in Government” that is intended “to help the world navigate towards a sustainable recovery”. Trust on government and education systems that address inequality in education in real terms and effectively will improve significantly.

Enduring-peace is about the way people think and behave; it is about their habits and their enduring-culture. It is about how well and how meaningfully they learn meaningful stuff. The author of this chapter reviewed and augmented the Institute of Economics and Peace’s (IEP’s) “Pillars of Peace” into “10 Pillars for Sustaining Quality Peace & Resilience” to make the criticized new approach of the UN specific, meaningful, and actionable. Sustaining quality peace and resilience requires that each citizen gets adequate opportunity and support to excel in the areas of their choice; when second-language teachers and learners get proper opportunities and support to excel in science when they have chosen science as a discipline they pursue. This chapter bases itself on the “10 Pillars for Sustaining Quality Peace & Resilience” to propose “The Language of Sustaining Quality Peace & Resilience”. Sustaining quality peace and resilience is action and must be accompanied with processes that ensure the desired way of thinking, learning, acting, behaving, habits, and the enduring culture. Building the “10 Pillars for Sustaining Quality Peace & Resilience” is based on building groups, organizations and society into sustainable civil learning communities – humane citizens of high achievement.

The processes of building sustainable civil learning communities themselves include processes like Appreciative Inquiry (AI) (Srivastva and Cooperrider, 1986; Watkins and Mohr, 2001) and Community Making and Peace (Peck, 1987) for the social healing necessary for cognitive and social coherence, high achievement, healthy relations and social cohesion. AI continues to be practiced, taught, and updated at Weatherhead School of Management, the HeartMath Institute and David L. Cooperrider Center for Appreciative Inquiry; and Community Making and Peace continues to be encouraged at the Foundation for Community Encouragement (FCE). The processes are also based on the Geodesic Learning Model and Mind Mapping Approaches (Leaf et al., 1997) that are based on how the brain learns and stress higher thinking and learning how to learn plus Self-Directed Learning (Goleman et al., 2002) that helps

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