

Foreword

Over the past few decades, a number of overlapping fields of study and practice have emerged in the quest for just and peaceful societies. This is illustrated by developments at the Center for Justice & Peacebuilding (CJP) where I teach, and where Jarem received his master's degree.

Initially the CJP began as a “conflict-transformation” program aimed at widening and deepening the concept of conflict resolution. Then it expanded to include restorative justice, which is in many respects a peacebuilding approach to justice issues. But our graduate students, who are practitioners from all over the globe, come to us facing issues of trauma (often traumatized themselves), development, and a variety of organizational dynamics. So our program expanded to include these fields as well. We began to recognize that these fields of study fit together into a whole; each had something important to contribute and was, in fact, a subfield under a larger peacebuilding umbrella.¹ Our founding director, John Paul Lederach, termed this overall vision “justpeace.”

Each of these approaches or subfields addresses some critical part required to build a peaceful world. But each of these fields has its own history and perspectives, and often

1. See, for example, Schirch, *Little Book of Strategic Peacebuilding*.

these are not integrated. In 2007, one of our graduate students, Matthew Hartman, decided that it was high time the various components of this overall peacebuilding field talk to each other. A “palaver” or dialogue that he organized brought faculty who worked in these fields together for several days to explore our points of connection and dissonance. One of our discoveries was that conflict transformation and related fields were strong on theories but had very little explicit focus on values. Restorative justice, on the other hand, was big on values. Moreover, even restorative justice needed to explore its values more explicitly.

To be honest, my own recognition of the importance of values was somewhat belated. In the early 1980s when some of us were formulating the basic concept and principles of restorative justice, we were primarily trying to communicate what we were doing in practice. The conceptual framework, then, grew out of practice and was intended more to communicate than theorize. We assumed values were important, but we didn’t talk much about them. Increasingly, however, I have become convinced that naming, exploring, and being guided by explicit values is absolutely essential.

I have long been concerned about the tendency of all interventions, no matter how well intended, to go astray. As I frequently tell my classes, all interventions, no matter how well intended, have unintended consequences. Faced with these tendencies, then, it is important that our practice be guided by explicit principles. But increasingly I have become aware—and again based on observed practice—that even principles are not enough; we can espouse wonderful prin-

ciples and yet do some terrible things if our principles and our practices are not consciously grounded in values.

This is true not only for restorative justice but for all of peacebuilding. That is why Jarem's work is so important. Interestingly, as he says in his introduction, this work began by listening to these various components of peacebuilding that are brought together in our program. What he found was that we did share a common set of values that were, however, more implicit than explicit. But he went beyond naming those values, putting them into a holistic framework of paired values in which one value counters the possible excesses or abuses of another. The value of interconnectedness is important, for instance, but by itself can lead to excessive stress on the community and universality. By pairing it with "particularity" (a profound acknowledgement of the importance of the individual and the context), a balance is found. It is a dynamic relationship that acknowledges the importance of both individual identity and solidarity with one another. This is a more sophisticated and nuanced approach to values than is normally taken.

Coincidentally, perhaps, on the day that I reviewed this manuscript I also read two other manuscripts from our graduates, both exploring some aspect of the values that underlie restorative justice. Both suggested, as Jarem does, that restorative justice and peacebuilding in general are much more than a way to intervene in situations of wrongdoing or conflict; rather, justpeace is a way of life. What this suggests is that the values and principles of justpeace can provide us a vision of how we want to live together as well as specific suggestions about how we do so.

At any rate, as the field of justpeacebuilding continues to grow, a discussion of values is essential. This book makes a huge contribution to this dialogue.

Howard Zehr
Professor of Restorative Justice
Center for Justice & Peacebuilding
Eastern Mennonite University
Harrisonburg, Virginia

SAMPLE