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בית הספר לשלום
נווה שלום
ד.נ. שמשון 99761
טל. 02-9916282 פקס. 02-9992697

International Training Course for Facilitating Groups in Conflict

July 6-18, 2010

Course Description:

The aim of this course is to train participants to work as facilitators of groups in conflict using a unique model for facilitation developed at the internationally recognized conflict management program at School for Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam in Israel. Participants will also experience the facilitation method by being a participant in a facilitated group, learn the theory that drives this method of facilitation and practice facilitating groups in conflict using the method.

While the course uses the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the primary lens through which participants engage with, the theoretical modes of working with groups in conflict can be widely applied so that the participants can draw from their own personal experiences and apply what they've learned to other conflicts.

This course is highly interactive, integrating three distinct components: (1) experiential group process, an experiential-based workshop in which participants go through the dynamic process of being an actual group in conflict; (2) theoretical knowledge, learning about various theoretical models of group facilitation, paying particular attention to working with participants involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and (3) practical training, preparing participants to begin facilitating groups in conflict.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will learn to *explain* the unique facilitation method at the School for Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam.
2. Participants will learn to *identify* the differences between the SFP's unique facilitation method and other methods.
3. Participants will learn to *understand* basic theoretical concepts of group facilitation.
4. Participants will learn to *analyze* the process for facilitating groups using this model.
5. Participants will learn to *relate* how this model may be used for facilitating national groups engaged in deep-seated conflicts.

6. Participants will learn to *construct* a plan for how to implement an encounter between groups in conflict.
7. Participants will learn to *conduct* mock facilitation between parties in conflict.
8. Participants will learn to *critically reflect* on the facilitation process and improve communication skills.
9. Participants will *become more aware* of bias and treatment of others.
10. Participants will *explore* ways this facilitation model may be used in other parts of life experiences.

Course Components:

Part A: Dialogue - an experiential intensive inter-group workshop (4 days, 8 hours a day)

Part B: Analysis - a view of the groups' process

Part C: Learning - lectures on group process theories in the context of conflict groups

Part D: Peer facilitation - acquiring skills through practical experience

Part E: Encounter with the Israeli reality – a tour

A: Dialogue

The aim of the encounters we facilitate is to develop the awareness of the participants to the ethnic/social relations and the ethnic/social conflicts in their society and their role in these, as well as to enable the participants to explore and evolve their identity through interaction with the other.

In addition, the encounters explore the relationship between power groups and cultural groups in society through the experience in a small group setting.

Two facilitators will facilitate this part. The role of the facilitators is to help the participants achieve the goal of the encounter. We do this by analyzing and clarifying the processes occurring between the sub groups in the encounter, and by linking these processes to the wider reality, through ongoing dialogue with the participants. In the process, four basic assumptions are always at the forefront of our approach:

(1) The conceptions and beliefs upon which a person's identity and behavior are constructed are stable and deep-seated. We are generally unaware of them, and they are generally resistant to change. Statements, opinions, and stereotypes are only the outward indications of these conceptions. Thus we aspire in the encounter to enable the participants to behave freely, as closely as possible in line with reality, so that through this behavior they can examine and comprehend their deeply held conceptions and attempt to deal with them. One of the principal conceptions is a feeling of superiority or inferiority.

(2) The encounter is between two or more social groups rather than between individuals. We see the group as something essential, as more than the sum of the individuals who comprise it; we believe that the interactions between individuals are shaped by their national/cultural group affiliation, and that they relate to themselves and to others as representatives of these groups. Hence we treat individuals as spokespersons for the groups to which they belong, and we treat the group as representing the collective unconscious of its members.

(3) The third assumption is that the group is a microcosm of reality –despite the fact that the encounter takes place in small groups and between individuals from each ethnic group. We also assume that all the elements existing in the larger society may be found in some form within each one of us.

(4) We treat the group in the meeting as an open group which is linked to, comes from, and returns to the external reality. Thus we try to understand what goes on in the group in the context of events happening outside, and we hope that the changes we observe in the participants during the meeting may later have an influence on their surroundings and on the society in which they live.

B: Analysis

In this part the participants will analyze the workshop using their personal experience as reference. This gives helps the trainees develop their ability to understand group processes.

C: Learning

The group will learn together from the following topics:

- Theories of group process
- Developmental stages in groups
- Developmental theories of ethnic and racial identities
- The working method of the SFP – rationale and practice
- Co- facilitation in multi-ethnic groups
- Uni-national work
- Group dynamics in an acute conflict
- Language as a factor in intergroup relations
- When there is more than one conflict: Gender and nationality

D: Peer facilitation

Each trainee will facilitate the peer group and receive feedback both from the staff and from the group of trainees.

E: An encounter with the Israeli reality

In this part the participants will learn about Neve Shalom /Wahat al Salam and visit Jewish and Arab places in Israel in order to better understand the conflict in the region.

For Registration and questions:

Ahmad Hijazi: ahmad@nswas.info

Ruan Suleiman: intern.sfp@nswas.info