

Transforming Power Exercise

This exercise follows Sharing: A Conflict I Solved Nonviolently in the Basic Workshop

Purpose

To demonstrate the concept of Transforming Power.

Time

30 minutes

Materials

Sticky notes, pencils, TP mandala, a pinwheel

Instructions

1. Ask participants to remember their story from Sharing: A Conflict I Solved Nonviolently. Identify the pivotal moment. What made it turn nonviolent?
2. Pass out one or two sticky notes per person and pencils.
3. Ask participants to write a phrase or sentence that states what made the event turn nonviolent.
4. The facilitator leading this exercise explains: “Non-violence is saying ‘no’ to violence. It says that we are choosing to stand and say that using violence is not okay. There is another power— Transforming Power—that is available to us. This power is in us—in everyone—and it is a force for good. It says that I am valuable and that the people I am in conflict with are valuable. I can choose to be open to this power and to allow it to work in me and through me. And when I am able to do that, my words and actions will not be violent.”
5. “There are some things we can do that can help us to be open to Transforming Power.” Place the pieces of the mandala on the floor, with several feet between them. Read each piece aloud as you place it on the floor.
6. Ask participants to think about the pivotal moment of their story and what piece of the mandala it relates to best.
7. Ask participants to stand near that piece of the mandala and in their groups, explain to each other how their moment relates to the piece of the mandala.
8. Ask one or two people from each group to explain how their pivotal moment relates to the mandala piece.
9. After at least one person from each group has reported, ask participants to place their sticky notes on the mandala piece and place the mandala pieces on the wall.
10. Explain that the mandala pieces are all interdependent. They are like a pinwheel. Spin the pinwheel. When one wing of the pinwheel starts, the others follow. If we take one of the wings out, the wheel doesn’t turn as well. We need to be working toward doing all pieces of the mandala. Wind, like Transforming Power, is everywhere. We can let the wind blow through us.

Processing Questions:

What came up for you in this exercise?

What did you learn?