

# Conflict Transformation:

## MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF DISASTER ON THE SOCIAL FABRIC OF A COMMUNITY

BY RUTH YODER WENGER

6

Ruth Yoder Wenger is Coordinator for STAR NYC (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience NYC) at NYDIS, which was developed at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA, in collaboration with Church World Service to train religious leaders and care providers in trauma and conflict transformation. She represents Mennonite Disaster Service on the NYDIS board of directors and is on the Planning & Training Committee. She is pastor of North Bronx Mennonite Church and Moderator of the New York City Council of Mennonite Churches.

### Forward

*Editor's Note: Because this Chapter falls in both the mitigation/preparedness and recovery phases, we have included it here. The Chapter deals with the topic of Peacebuilding, which supports the development of networks of relationships at all levels of society to help people meet their needs, protect their rights, and constructively address conflict and crisis.*

Peacebuilding creates the capacity within communities to meet human needs and human rights without obstructing the needs and rights of others. Whether ameliorating conflict during a time of disaster, or preparing for disaster and the conflicts it may bring, leaders can help their communities focus on meeting needs and protecting human rights in a way that recognizes interdependence, fosters relationships of partnership rather than domination, and limits all forms of violence.

### Background

**Communities who know how to handle trauma and conflict in healthy ways will be much more resilient than those who do not.** The more proactively peacebuilding is integrated into preparation for disaster, the less reactively it will need to be applied during and following a disaster. Individuals within communities can learn ways of coping with traumatic stress that do not lead to violence “acted in” against themselves (e.g., substance abuse, depression, denial) or “acted out” against others (e.g., domestic abuse, high risk behavior, blaming).

**Religious leaders responding to disaster can play a crucial role** in shaping the community's response and in supporting the community's ability to survive and thrive. Religious leaders can help to understand common responses to trauma, practice effective trauma interventions, and reflect on the meaning of the trauma in ways that **promote healing and resilience rather than more violence and trauma.**

**Disasters which are perceived as human-originated** hold especially high potential for conflict resulting in more violence because of the very normal human sense of balance and fairness. **Unhealed, unaddressed trauma can distort and misdirect the desire for balance into a demand for revenge or retribution, by which violence once more victimizes; the “new” victims seek “balance” through revenge and retribution; and the cycle of violence continues.**

**In preparing for disaster, communities can build their own capacity to respond, through education, training, and development.** Religious leaders who are aware of the role of trauma in the cycle of violence can help their communities prevent violence among themselves and/or toward others. Understanding how unmet human needs and human rights violations can fuel conflict and lead to a cycle of violence can help in addressing and correcting root causes of conflict. **Education for religious leaders is crucial for supporting resilience and promoting recovery within themselves, their members, and their communities.**



If trauma is experienced primarily as a challenge to be reckoned with, new insights can emerge, along with new energies that lead through healing to growth and transformation.

## Rationale for Peacebuilding<sup>1</sup>

**Disaster traumatizes individuals, groups and communities.** The conflicts that result can be waged in ways that challenge and transform, or in ways that damage and create more victims.

This chapter starts from the premise that **trauma will lead to changes in a system**, whether within an individual, among members of a group, or among communities. The trauma itself does not determine the direction of the changes. **The direction of the changes is determined by the way the trauma is interpreted** by the individual, the group, or the community.

Someone has said that if trauma is experienced and interpreted primarily as a **threat**, it leads to **aggression and violence**. If trauma is experienced primarily as a **loss**, it leads to **depression and despair**. If trauma is experienced primarily as a **challenge** to be reckoned with, new insights can emerge, along with new energies that lead through healing to **growth and transformation**.

While many traumas present elements of all three – threat, loss, and challenge – the **caregivers and religious leaders of a community can influence the direction of change** by helping their members process their responses in ways that lessen the possibility of violence.

**Unaddressed, unhealed trauma can contribute to an ongoing cycle of violence**, especially if the trauma event is seen as originating in human intention. Victims of violence, if not supported in finding their way toward healing and transformation, will almost inevitably create new victims. They will “re-enact” the violence they have experienced, either projecting it outside themselves and onto others, or directing it inward toward themselves, moving into hopelessness, an inability to cope and move on, or self-destructive behaviors.

Religious leaders can help their communities make interpretations and choices that promote well-being for all their members, through resolving conflict non-violently and supporting sustainable peace.

## Definitions

- **Conflict transformation seeks to prevent, reduce, transform, and support recovery from violence in all forms** - even structural violence that has not yet led to massive civil unrest. Both structural and direct forms of violence disrupt or deny people’s efforts to meet their human needs.

- **The field of peacebuilding is like an umbrella, offering processes and frameworks to increase collaboration between people working to build peace in different aspects of society.** **Preventing violence** may require a whole range of approaches, depending on the capacities and skills of a community and its leaders:

### A. Waging Conflict Non-Violently:

Nonviolent activists seek to gain support for a group’s needs and rights, increasing a group’s power to address these issues, and ripen the conditions needed to transform relationships.

**B. Reducing Violence:** Efforts to reduce direct violence aim to contain perpetrators of violence, prevent and relieve the immediate suffering of victims of violence, and create a safe space for other peacebuilding activities.

**C. Transforming Relationships:** The fields of conflict transformation, restorative and transitional justice, and trauma healing use an array of processes to build relationships that address trauma, transform conflict, and do justice. These processes give people opportunities to create long-term sustainable solutions to address their needs.



Community and religious leaders who have been trained in and understand the relationship between unhealed trauma and the cycle of violence can engage their communities in peacebuilding.

**D. Capacity Building:** Longer-term peacebuilding efforts enhance existing capacities to meet needs and rights and prevent violence through education and training, development, military conversion and transformation, research, and evaluation.

- **Effective disaster readiness, response and recovery will be enhanced by a community's capacity to constructively address conflict and crisis**, whether already latent in the community, or arising more immediately out of the disaster situation itself.
- **Peacebuilding skills include** self-reflection, empathic listening, assertive and diplomatic speaking, appreciative inquiry, creative problem-solving, dialogue, negotiation, and mediation, in addition to an array of trauma interventions.

**Who uses or teaches others this practice?**

Community and religious leaders who have been trained in and understand the relationship between unhealed trauma and the cycle of violence can engage their communities in peacebuilding.

Three examples of peacebuilding responses to the trauma of September 11 demonstrate the potential of communities and their leaders to reduce or prevent violence in the aftermath of a disaster.

A. Susie and the Arab stores: Several days after September 11, Susie, a long-term Bronx resident widely recognized in her diverse neighborhood as a community organizer, called her pastor:

Susie: Pastor, I need your help. I am so angry about what happened here. I am so angry. I am just full of rage and hatred and anger for what those people did to us. I want to get my friends together and go out into the neighborhood with baseball bats and trash the Arab stores over on Jerome. I want to get back at them. But I can't do

that now. You teach us that Jesus said we need to love our enemies. But what am I supposed to do with all the rage and anger and hatred I'm feeling inside?

Pastor: It's perfectly normal to experience all these feelings when something like this happens. Joe (a community health worker) is coming in tomorrow to do a workshop on how we as a church community can help each other and our neighbors get through this. Can you hold off for little longer?

Susie: Yeah, I guess I can tell my neighbors just to boycott the stores instead of trashing them.

Joe's workshop included a de-briefing component, followed by some very elemental training in self-reflection, active listening, and presence. He suggested that participants could help each other and their neighbors through the three H's: Hush. Hug. Hang around.

The next day, Susie put up flyers in the neighborhood inviting residents to a "prayer vigil" in a sheltered public-access walkway of the local hospital across the street from her basement apartment. Thirty people showed up, including a Muslim man who said, in tears as he removed his headpiece, "We are human beings, just like you. We are very sad about what happened. We just want to live in peace."

**Susie had learned a peaceful way of moving through her very real emotions in response to trauma, which resulted not in more violence and victimhood, but in a measure of understanding and resolution.**



Trained leaders can understand and then help shape a community's response through training and practice, as they work at resilience and well-being on an ongoing basis.

B. In a very diverse and violence-prone Bronx neighborhood, a grassroots, parent-cooperative nursery school (the COVE – Community Organized with a Vision of Excellence) had for several years focused on peaceful conflict transformation in its curriculum. Two evenings after 9/11, children, parents, staff, board and neighbors gathered for a community meeting.

The agenda included a time for each participant to write a “journal” entry describing where they were, what they were doing, how they were feeling, and what they were thinking when the planes hit the Trade Center towers. They shared their entries in small groups, and talked about what they could do as a community in this crisis. Scriptures from the major faith traditions, emphasizing peaceful response to conflict and respectful relationships among humans, were read by leaders from these faith communities. Prayers and a candle-lighting ceremony ended the event.

**In this volatile neighborhood, local civic and religious community leaders created a “safe” space for children, teens, parents, staff and neighbors to tell stories about what they had experienced. The process influenced how this community interpreted the meaning of the 9/11 events, and how people treated each other subsequently.**

C. About three weeks after 9/11, a well-established and active community organization (Mosholu-Woodlawn South Community and Clergy Coalition) in a highly diverse Bronx neighborhood organized a meeting at the local public school for the purpose of responding in ways that would build the community rather than destroy it. The organizing committee included religious and lay leaders from various faith traditions and local organizations.

The event itself began with a “journal” activity, in which participants wrote about their actions, thoughts and feelings regarding 9/11, sharing them orally in small groups. The group activity led into a series of speeches by a local imam, a Pakistani Muslim community organizer, a Jewish professor of political science, a Catholic priest, and several civic leaders, all calling for peace, for mutual respect, for conscientious reflection, and for consideration, protection and support for neighbors who were being marginalized and harassed because of who they were.

The highlight of the evening came after the formal event: sharing food from “Rainbow,” the local Pakistani deli, which had been boycotted by some residents after 9/11.

**The outcome of this meeting was a 1960’s-style “teach-in” sponsored by an emerging grassroots “peace” group on root causes of terrorism and alternatives to war.**

These examples of peacebuilding responses to disaster trauma demonstrate the potential impact the actions of community and religious leaders can make in transforming conflict and communities. Individuals, groups, and communities can learn peacebuilding skills, both in preparation for disaster and in response to disaster.

Trained leaders can understand and then help shape a community's response through training and practice, as they work at resilience and well-being on an ongoing basis.



Trained leaders can build capacity within their communities, through education, modeling, and practice.

## **GUIDELINES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS**

**Conflict and community transformation skills should be practiced during all stages of the Life-cycle of the Disaster, so that communities have the capacity to respond to crisis in healthy ways.**

Fortunately, the capacity for trauma intervention and healing work can begin at any point in the life-cycle of a disaster.

## **PREPARATION AND MITIGATION PHASES**

In preparation for a disaster, communities and leaders can develop their capacities for conflict transformation through **education. Education, opportunities for personal healing, and strategies for building resilience** are tools available for **helping people move through trauma rather than getting stuck in repetitive cycles of victimhood and violence.**

**Many programs offer training in conflict and community transformation.** Trained leaders can build capacity within their communities, through education, modeling, and practice. Possibilities for training sessions might include:

- Workshops in Trauma Overview & Definitions
- Common Responses to Trauma: Cycles of Victimhood and Violence
- Transforming Trauma: Breaking the Cycles of Victimhood and Violence
- Trauma Interventions for Individuals, Communities, and Societies
- Self-Care for the Caregiver
- Restorative Justice as a Response to Trauma
- Trauma and Truth, Mercy, Justice, Peace (How do these principles work together in transforming conflict?)
- Security in an Insecure World: A Framework for Peacebuilding
- Facilitating Dialogue: How to Handle Difficult Conversations

The STAR program (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience) is one which offers training in various formats, depending on needs presented by a specific situation. Located within the Conflict Transformation program at Eastern Mennonite University, and developed within the Institute for Justice and Peacebuilding, STAR connects personal transformation with organizational, societal and global wellbeing.

## **RESPONSE PHASE**

In response to a disaster, leaders who know and practice what to do for themselves in situations of crisis or ongoing stress will have the skills to be effective caregivers in times of crisis. Within communities, building capacity for conflict and community transformation through trauma healing work can happen in three “waves:”<sup>2</sup>

If you know and practice what to do for yourself in situations of crisis or ongoing stress, you have the skills to be an effective caregiver in times of crisis. Use the model of “Cycle of Violence/Harm” (Appendix C) and the “Trauma Healing Journey Model: Breaking the Cycles of Violence/Harm” (Appendix D), the analytical questions above and below, and your knowledge of neurobiology and trauma interventions to chart an action plan for helping in times of high stress and trauma. *Note that the \*Waves are to be used only as a guide. More important is common sense and the specifics of the situation.*

## A. Wave I

<b>Coping and Stabilization (Days 1-10 and ongoing after a disaster)</b>		
<b>“Psychological first aid for disaster survivors”</b>	<b>Helping Individuals (body, mind, spirit)</b>	<b>Helping Groups (body, mind, spirit)</b>
<p>Recreate a sense of safety</p> <p>Encourage social support</p> <p>Re-establish a sense of efficacy</p> <p>Normalize responses to trauma (“This response is ‘normal’ in an ‘abnormal’ situation.”) Caretakers need to do self care throughout this time</p>	<p>Be aware of different faith traditions’ practices around burial and grieving of loss</p> <p>Be sure debriefing is being done for uniformed personnel (police, fire, EMT, etc.) – including different faith traditions</p> <p>Coordinate outside help to give EMT personnel rest and time for the debriefing</p> <p>Do what can be done to lessen the sense of chaos and bring an orderly response</p> <p>Educate the public about how they can help, how to stay out of the way, and where and how to volunteer</p>	<p>Encourage mayor’s office to focus public statements so that the public is hearing the same information and message and not get mixed messages and confused information</p> <p>Police stationed at public gathering places to give sense of security, even normalcy</p> <p>Mayor’s office coordinating an interfaith gathering to show cooperative “face”</p> <p>If pre-planned major events happen—ball games, concerts—encourage them to continue, but maybe with a meeting beforehand to talk about things, reinforcing a sense of community as well as awareness of loss</p> <p>Announce houses of worship which are open for people to go to pray and find spiritual help</p>

## B. Wave II

### **Stress Management (Days 2-15 and ongoing)**

<b>Questions to stimulate thinking:</b>	<b>Helping Individuals (body, mind, spirit)</b>	<b>Helping Groups (body, mind, spirit)</b>
<p>Are there people in your family, place of worship, or your community who could benefit from learning about normal physical responses to trauma?</p>	<p>Continue to coordinate the team of counselors, etc. – and offer them the rest and debriefing they will need</p>	<p>Continue to coordinate the availability of food, emergency assistance, help for the onsite workers</p>
<p>What is the emotional state in your community?</p>	<p>Offer other meetings for religious leaders to debrief, find other resources for help, and know what else is being done in the area</p>	<p>Through mayor’s office, perhaps, give help to the media to be positive and creative in their approach to continued reporting</p>
<p>Where is leadership? Whose attitudes and ideas are being adopted by the larger groups? Is it “high mode” or “low mode” thinking? Who has influence?</p>	<p>Be prepared to give them education and resources to know how to help people work through the trauma</p>	<p>Look for who the leaders in the community are, maybe the emerging leaders, and help them come together, coordinate their efforts, and speak with a common public voice</p>
<p>What is your role in leadership?</p>	<p>Offer other groups, such as police, similar education and resources, debriefing, rest, etc.</p>	<p>Organize creative public responses to any signs of ethnic/religious/cultural bias</p>
<p>What is the best point of entry? Trauma? Conflict? Justice? Violence containment?</p>		
<p>How can individuals best be strengthened in body, mind, spirit?</p>		
<p>Whose voices are heard, and whose are missing?</p>		
<p>Where are the potential “hot spots” for violence?</p>		

### C. Wave III

<b>Grief and Trauma Resolution</b>		
<b>Questions</b>		
<p>Are people stuck?</p> <p>How can your knowledge of the cycle of violence/victimhood be helpful in your community?</p>		

### D. Wave IV

<b>Loss Accommodation</b>		
<b>Questions</b>	<b>Helping Individuals (body, mind, spirit)</b>	<b>Helping Groups (body, mind, spirit)</b>
<p>Is there ambiguous grief? Frozen unnamed fear/grief?</p> <p>How do you engage other communities for this work?</p>	<p>Provide information and resources for helpers on how to sustain their services over time</p> <p>Provide information and resources for broader religious community leaders in how to help people heal</p> <p>Facilitate cooperation between interfaith leaders to monitor the religious environment in the community and creatively respond</p>	<p>Interfaith groups can give help when justice issues come up – for instance, if legal immigrants have lost proof of green cards</p> <p>Urge local and state government officials to be aware of injustice concerns</p> <p>Ask mayor/governor to appoint a commission of survivors to design a memorial</p> <p>Look at how to create a political and religious will to remember in healthy, creative ways as the community moves forward</p> <p>Develop long term strategies for how to protect and help heal children in the community – through schools, preschools, etc.</p>

\*Source: Green Cross Foundation: Field Traumatology, Kathleen Reagan Figley, MS. MT & Intermediate STAR participants (October, 2004).



The most effective interventions integrate body, mind and spirit, addressing the whole person.

## RECOVERY PHASE

As communities move into **long-term recovery (not days, but months and years after the traumatic event)**, their leaders can support resilience as they:

- Normalize panic, denial, shock, fear: i.e., “It’s normal to feel panic, shock, denial, fear when something like this happens.”
- Help name the loss: i.e., “We lost some of our most precious possessions in the flood.”
- Recognize the anger, shame, humiliation and guilt: i.e., “Anger is normal response that helps us make things right again. We refuse to live this way any longer!”
- Encourage expression of grief and fear, including their own: .e., “Now is the time for us to hold each other as we weep together in our pain.”
- Call on individuals’ assets, strengths, and deeper purpose: i.e., “We have been through tough times together before. Let’s take stock of the resources we have that will help us meet this challenge.”
- Encourage a desire for fairness, discouraging revenge: i.e., “What they did was harmful, unjust, and immoral. How can we take care of our feelings without harming others in return?”
- Present the gray areas and complexity of the situation/humanize the enemy: i.e., “What’s going on here that we need to ask about?”
- Denounce “justified” violence: i.e., “Violence of any kind always carries a cost. We can choose other ways to respond.”

As their communities are able to move through trauma, religious leaders may help them integrate trauma experiences into new self/group identity:

- Create rituals and safe places to grieve and memorialize over time.
- Help the group get clearer about their losses as well as their remaining resources.
- Ask questions about the aggressor: What has been their experience?
- Help identify risks that could be taken in encountering “the other,” and create a

structure of accountability for aggressors/offenders.

- Teach the importance of interconnectedness and tolerance.
- Create opportunities to face offenders in a safe place, if appropriate (needs to be handled very carefully, but can be highly effective in healing , for example, Truth and Reconciliation-style processes).
- Educate about forgiveness – healthy forgiveness that does not traumatize.
- Support ways to make the situation “right,” addressing harm done to victims and requiring accountability for “wrong” done within the community.
- Facilitate initiatives where involved individuals can create a new, collective narrative about the event/s.
- Be available to assist in reconciliation.
- Encourage individuals to share their stories of healing, transformation, and hope.

## GENERAL NOTES:

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL HEALING:

Effective trauma interventions are myriad. Just as there are many identifiable common responses to trauma (See Appendix E), there are many appropriate ways for individuals to take care of themselves – **emotionally, cognitively, behaviorally, physically and spiritually.** (See Appendix F: “What You Can Do To Take Care of Yourself”). **The most effective interventions integrate body, mind and spirit, addressing the whole person.**

As these trauma interventions help to release “stuck” or “frozen” responses, individuals, groups and communities can generate from within their own experience the **creative strategies that build resilience and enable them to transcend trauma.**



Resilient individuals, groups, and communities will be those who have worked at peacebuilding ahead of time...

## **BUILDING RESILIENCY:**

A. Trauma awareness education before a disaster including the cycles and the healing path AND

- Regular practice of relaxation response skills
- Regular spiritual practice
- A robust theology (e.g., not equating God's presence only with prosperity and a good life). Spiritual resilience comes from faith in:
  - the goodness of God
  - other human beings
  - self (that one can survive and overcome)
  - the future
  - a meaningful religion
- Strong social networks
- Community and religious leader networks across faith lines with feedback loops
- Disaster preparedness planning by individuals, communities, and societies

B. Basics of resilience for caregivers

- Functional social support
  - Attachment
  - Social integration
  - Opportunity for nurturance
  - Reassurance of worth
  - Sense of reliable alliance and guidance
- Structural/social support: a friendship network in which several people in that network also know each other
- Family cohesion
- Work team cohesion

## **Conclusion**

When disaster strikes, trauma occurs. Resilient individuals, groups, and communities will be those who have worked at peacebuilding ahead of time, through increasing their capacity to wage conflict non-violently, reduce violence, transform relationships, and build resilience.

A key component of that peace-building process is understanding trauma and its potential to perpetuate a vicious, energy-draining cycle of violence, or transform pain and suffering into a fruitful transcendence which generates wellbeing for individuals, groups and communities.

*Editor's Note: The resources and websites provided here are provided by the authors as resources for issues raised in this chapter. For a list of all the resources provided in this manual, please refer to Chapter 10, just before the Reference Section.*

## RESOURCES

### Talking about Difficult Topics

The following websites provide resources on difficult topics. Some provide principles and guidelines for leading controversial discussions. If you are aware of other good websites on dialogue, please let us know.

The Choices Curriculum at Brown University has excellent resources. [www.choices.edu](http://www.choices.edu)

The Public Conversations Project (PCP) provides workshops on leading dialogues of difficult topics. [www.publicconversations.org](http://www.publicconversations.org)

Sojourners, a community in Washington DC, produces a magazine and on this website has study guides/resources on non-violent action, urban violence, justice, and peacebuilding from an evangelical, social-justice Christian perspective. [www.sojo.net](http://www.sojo.net)

The website of the Muslim Peace Fellowship, this site contains thought-provoking articles and relates teachings from the Koran to current issues. [www.mpfweb.org](http://www.mpfweb.org)

Thought-provoking articles and a newsletter are offered on this site from a Jewish perspective. [www.jewishpeacefellowship.org](http://www.jewishpeacefellowship.org)

This site contains free materials on facilitating dialogues on controversial issues. There are guidelines for facilitators plus excellent materials and a process for studying difficult topics. [www.studyircles.com](http://www.studyircles.com)

This Chapter has the following Appendices:

Appendix A: Integrated Framework for Peacebuilding

Appendix B: Peacebuilding Processes

Appendix C: Cycles of Violence / Harm

Appendix D: Trauma Healing Journey: Breaking the Cycles of Violence / Harm

Appendix E: Common Responses to High Stress and/or Trauma

Appendix F: What You Can Do to Take Care of Yourself

---

<sup>1</sup> This material is adapted from Schirch, Lisa, *The Little Book of Strategic Peacebuilding*, Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> This material is based on Green Cross Foundation: Field Traumatology, Kathleen Reagan Figley, MS. MT , incorporating analysis by Intermediate STAR participants (October, 2004).

## Integrated Framework for Peacebuilding



### Analysis

#### International:

What are the material, social, cultural or spiritual needs of people in different areas of the world that fed into the crisis? How well do international structures and relationships meet these needs?

#### National:

What are the material, social, cultural or spiritual needs of people within this nation? How well do national structures and relationships meet these needs?

#### Community:

What are the material, social, cultural or spiritual needs of people within this community? How well do local structures and relationships meet these needs?

#### Individual:

What are my needs as an individual? How mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually ready am I to intervene in this crisis?

### Design of Peacebuilding

#### International:

What new international structures, policies and relationships can we foster to help meet global needs that feed into the crisis?

#### National:

What new national structures, policies and relationships can we foster to help meet the needs of people within this nation?

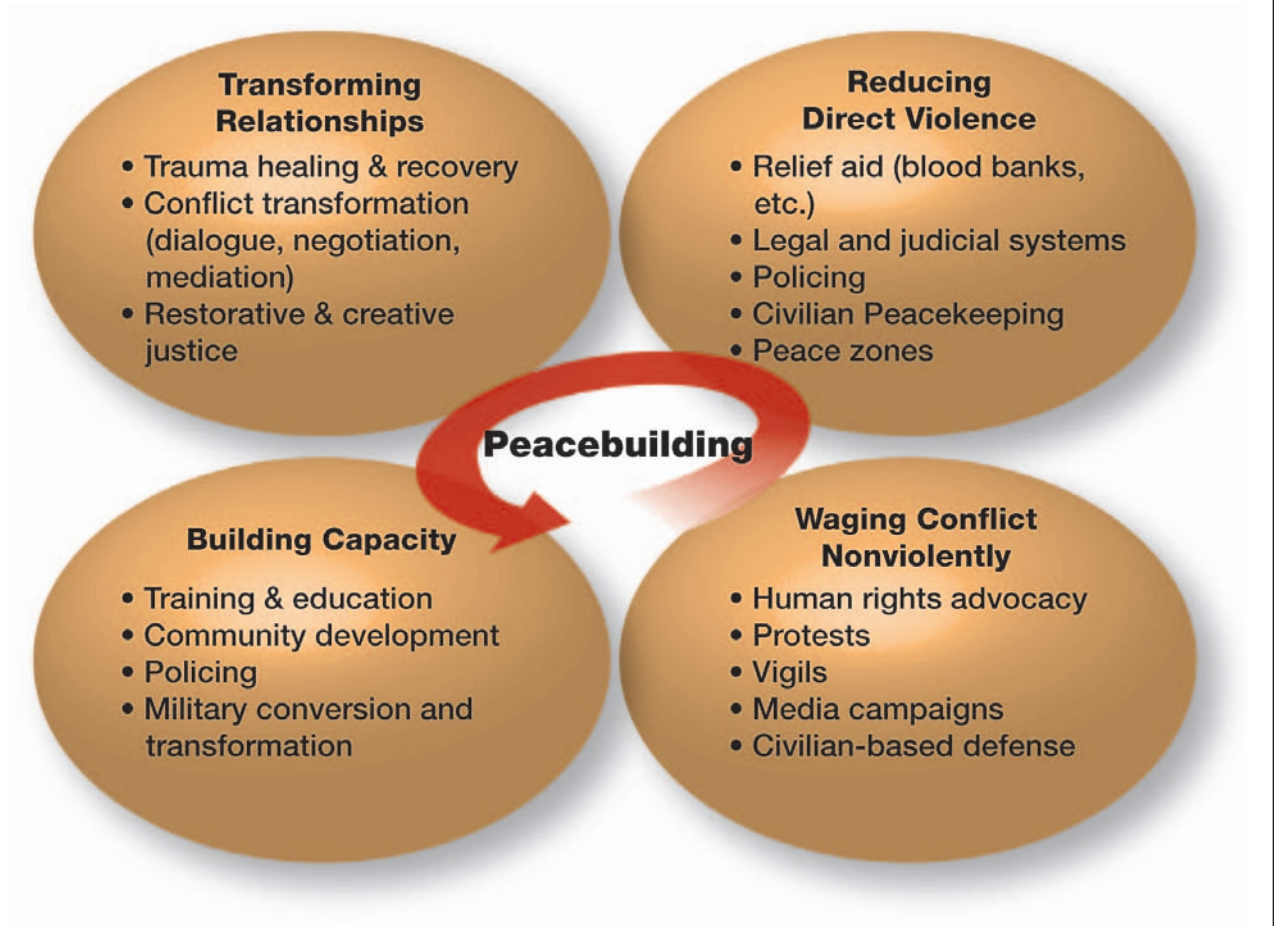
#### Community:

What new local structures, policies, processes and relationships can we foster to help meet the needs of people within our community? How do we manage the immediate crisis and prevent further violence?

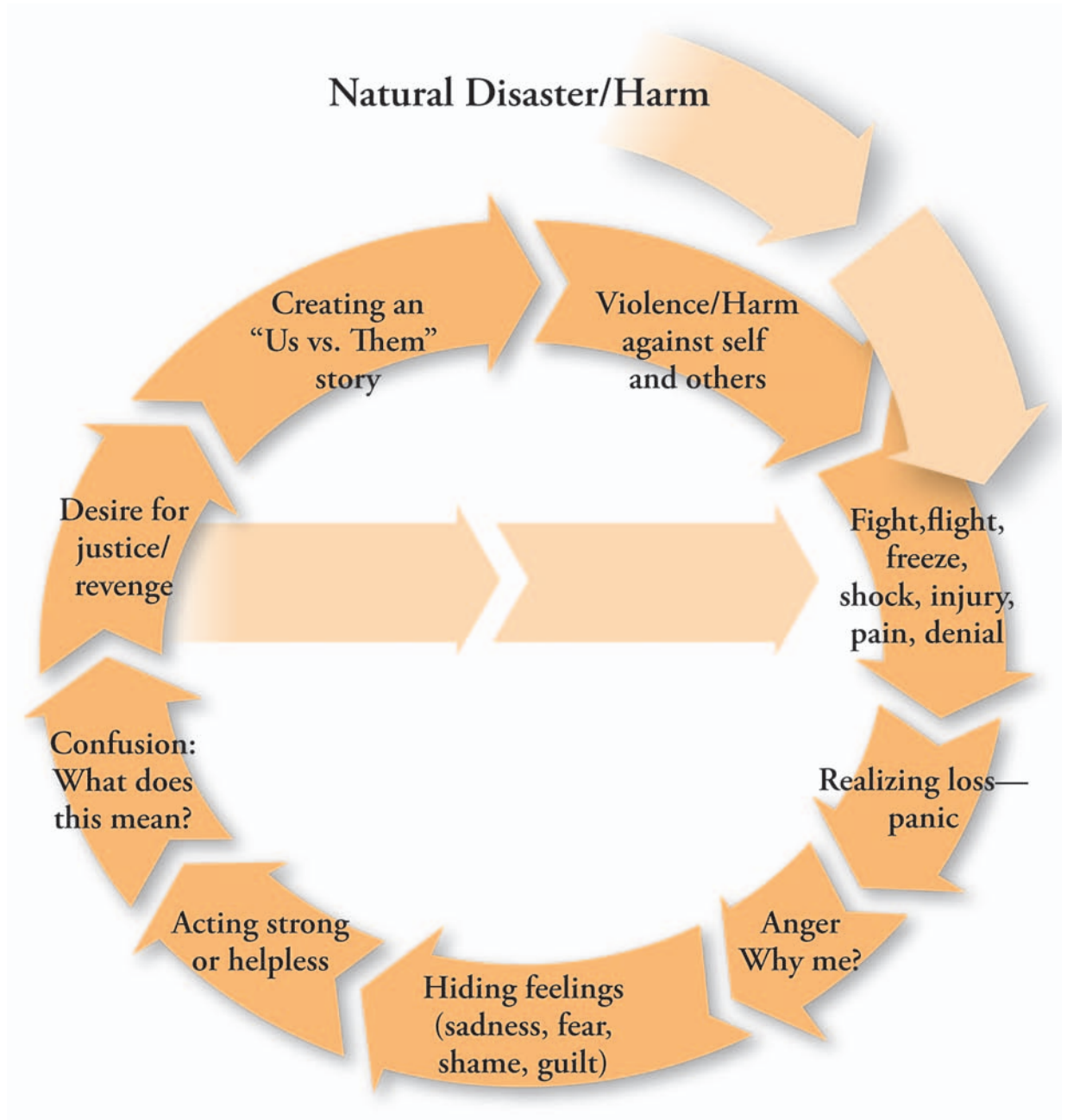
#### Individual:

What do I need mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually in order to be an effective peacebuilder in this crisis?

## Peacebuilding Processes

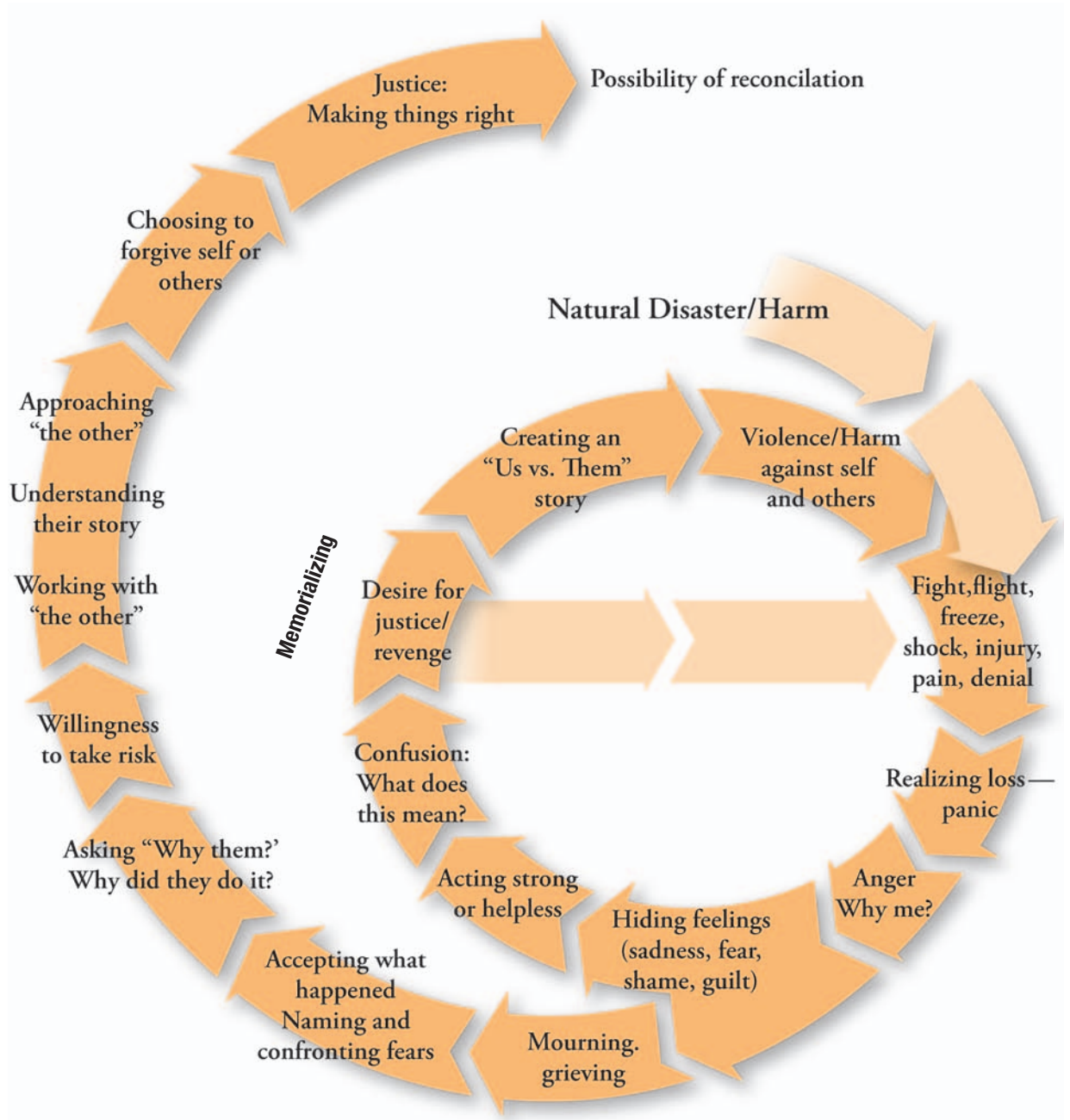


**Cycles of Violence / Harm**



© EU, Conflict Transformation Program, 2005, Adapted from model by Olga Botcharova for Youth STAR

**Trauma Healing Journey: Breaking the Cycles of Violence / Harm**



© EMU, Conflict Transformation Program, 2005, Adapted from model by Olga Botcharova for Youth STAR

## Appendix E

### Common Responses to High Stress and/or Trauma

After experiencing a traumatic event, or in response to cumulative stressors, it is common to experience a wide range of emotional, cognitive, physical and spiritual reactions. These responses may appear immediately after the event(s) *or some time later*. *These are normal reactions to difficult situations. The following are some of the more common responses:*

Emotional	Cognitive (thinking)	Behavioral (doing)	Physical	Spiritual	Societal Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Fear</li> <li>•Terror</li> <li>•Anxiety</li> <li>•Panic/ paranoia</li> <li>•Anger/ rage</li> <li>•Apprehension</li> <li>•Depression</li> <li>•Vengeful</li> <li>•Shame</li> <li>•Guilt</li> <li>•Sadness</li> <li>•Grief</li> <li>•Emotional shock</li> <li>•Loss of emotional control</li> <li>•Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness</li> <li>•Feeling numb</li> <li>•Irritability</li> <li>•COURAGE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Confusion</li> <li>•Nightmares</li> <li>•Hypervigilance</li> <li>•Suspiciousness</li> <li>•Flashbacks</li> <li>•Overly sensitive</li> <li>•Difficulty concentrating/ making decisions, spaciousness</li> <li>•Memory problems</li> <li>•Shortened attention span</li> <li>•Overly critical</li> <li>•Blaming others</li> <li>•Poor problem solving</li> <li>•Poor abstract thinking</li> <li>•Preoccupied with the event(s)</li> <li>•Inability to recall all or parts of the event</li> <li>•Disorientation of time, place or person</li> <li>•Heightened or lowered awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Withdrawal: avoiding usual activities</li> <li>•Antisocial acts</li> <li>•Inability to rest, pacing</li> <li>•Hype- alertness</li> <li>•Erratic movement</li> <li>•Suspiciousness</li> <li>•Emotional outbursts</li> <li>•Excessive use of humor</li> <li>•Problems at work</li> <li>•Change in speech patterns</li> <li>•Increased alcohol/ drug use</li> <li>•Avoiding thoughts, feelings related to the event</li> <li>•Difficulty trusting</li> <li>•Impaired sexual functioning</li> <li>•Loss or increase of appetite</li> <li>•Feeling uncoordinated</li> <li>•Domestic violence</li> <li>•CARING FOR OTHERS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Thirst/ dry mouth</li> <li>•Twitches</li> <li>•Vomiting</li> <li>•Weakness</li> <li>•Chest pain</li> <li>•Elevated blood pressure</li> <li>•Rapid heart rate</li> <li>•Muscle tremors</li> <li>•Visual difficulties</li> <li>•Nausea/ diarrhea</li> <li>•Shallow breathing</li> <li>•Dizziness or faintness</li> <li>•Chill or sweating</li> <li>•Easily startled</li> <li>•Fatigue</li> <li>•Changes in appetite</li> <li>•Sleep disturbances or nightmares</li> <li>•Headaches</li> <li>•Grinding teeth</li> <li>•Inability to rest</li> <li>•Illness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Emptiness</li> <li>•Loss of meaning</li> <li>•Doubt</li> <li>•Anger at God</li> <li>•Feeling unforgiven</li> <li>•Martyrdom</li> <li>•Feeling punished</li> <li>•Loss of faith in humanity</li> <li>•Looking for magic</li> <li>•Sudden turning to God</li> <li>•Belief that God is powerless</li> <li>•Belief that we have failed God</li> <li>•Loss of direction</li> <li>•Cynicism</li> <li>•Apathy</li> <li>•Needing to “prove” self</li> <li>•Alienated</li> <li>•Mistrust</li> <li>•Crisis of faith</li> <li>•Familiar faith practices seem empty</li> <li>•GROWTH DEEPER FAITH REILIENCE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Apathy</li> <li>•Silence/ impaired communication suppression of truth</li> <li>•Denial</li> <li>•Aggression</li> <li>•Gangs</li> <li>•Isolation</li> <li>•Lack of empathy</li> <li>•Low energy, and productivity</li> <li>•Inflexibility</li> <li>•High rates of alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic abuse, (untreated) mental health issues (depression, sexual dysfunction, etc)</li> <li>•High rates of stress related health issues (and medication use)</li> <li>•Intergenerational transmission of pain</li> <li>•SPIRITUAL GROWTH, WISDOM</li> </ul>

## Appendix F

### What You Can Do To Take Care of Yourself

Adapted from the work of Jim Norman, M.ED, C.T.S Oklahoma City, OK, who credits it “to the survivors of the bombing of the Murrah Building and the good people of Oklahoma City.”

The same five areas in which you experience the effects of trauma are also areas to focus efforts to help yourself cope. The following are some ideas others have found useful. Add to it those you have found helpful.

Emotional (feelings)	Cognitive (thinking)	Behavioral (doing)	Physical	Spiritual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Practice moderation</li> <li>•Allow yourself to experience what you feel (cry, shake, breathe deeply)</li> <li>•Label what you are experiencing</li> <li>•See a counselor</li> <li>•Be assertive when needed but check with a trusted person to see if you're overreacting</li> <li>•Practice relaxation-response exercises</li> <li>•Keep communication open with others</li> <li>•Remember you have choices</li> <li>•Develop your sense of humor</li> <li>•Find a vent-partner"</li> <li>•Use "positive" words and language</li> <li>•Go fishing</li> <li>•YOUR IDEAS:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Practice moderation</li> <li>•Write things down</li> <li>•Be patient with yourself</li> <li>•See the decisions you are already making</li> <li>•Make small, daily decisions</li> <li>•See a counselor who does EMDR, (Eye Movement Desensitization and Repressing)</li> <li>•Get the most info you can to help make decisions</li> <li>•Plan the future</li> <li>•Anticipate needs</li> <li>•Remember you have choices</li> <li>•Review previous successful problem solving</li> <li>•Break large tasks into smaller ones</li> <li>•Ask for help from friends and family</li> <li>•Go bass fishing</li> <li>•YOUR IDEAS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Practice moderation</li> <li>•Balance time spent with others with time for yourself/with God</li> <li>•Limit demands on time and energy</li> <li>•Help others with tasks</li> <li>•See a counselor</li> <li>•Do activities that were previously enjoyable</li> <li>•Take trips or different routes to work</li> <li>•Remember you have choices</li> <li>•Ask others how they think you're doing</li> <li>•Find new activities that are enjoyable and (mildly) challenging</li> <li>•Set goals, have a plan</li> <li>•Do things that relax you and bring you joy</li> <li>•Get involved with others in working for a justice that restores</li> <li>•Go crappie fishing</li> <li>•YOUR IDEAS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Practice moderation</li> <li>•See your doctor and dentist</li> <li>•Exercise</li> <li>•Maintain regular sleep patterns</li> <li>•Minimize caffeine</li> <li>•Eat well-balanced and regular meals</li> <li>•Drink water</li> <li>•Wear less restrictive clothing</li> <li>•Remember you have choices</li> <li>•Engage in some physical luxuries- spas, massage, exercise trainers, baths</li> <li>•Practice relaxation response exercises</li> <li>•Dance</li> <li>•Go catfish fishing</li> <li>•YOUR IDEAS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Practice moderation</li> <li>•Discuss your beliefs with spiritual leaders</li> <li>•Pray</li> <li>•Meditate</li> <li>•Practice the rituals of your beliefs</li> <li>•See a counselor</li> <li>•Attend spiritual retreats</li> <li>•Visit new places of worship</li> <li>•Remember you have choices</li> <li>•Ask the hard questions boldly</li> <li>•Pass on or teach your spiritual beliefs</li> <li>•Read spiritual literature</li> <li>•Read stories of other survivors who overcame hard times</li> <li>•Sing</li> <li>•Paint</li> <li>•Write poetry</li> <li>•Go trout fishing</li> <li>•YOUR IDEAS:</li> </ul>