



# ORIGINS OF VIOLENCE AND STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

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Author  
Diane Delaney, MA  
Provincial Coordinator  
PATHS

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Saskatchewan  
2505 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 0K6  
[paths@sasktel.net](mailto:paths@sasktel.net)  
[www.abusehelplines.org](http://www.abusehelplines.org)



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## Part 1

### BACKGROUND

#### INTRODUCTION

Violence is defined by the World Health Organization as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation” (Drug, Dahlberg, Merecy, Zwi, & Lozano, 2002). Jenkins in his work with men who have abused women sees violence as any attempt to influence, coerce or control another person where there is potential to violate the integrity of the other or disrespect their difference. He says that violence can be seen as an attempt to correct wrong-doing, a reaction to unfairness or provocation, a means of getting even, or a way of becoming somebody. Arendt says that violence is political not psychological. We use violence to maintain control over someone who has not given up this control freely.

This paper is part of a project, and is produced by an organization, that is working to end violence against women. In trying to reach this goal we have asked ourselves, ‘What enhanced understanding about violence is necessary to produce effective strategies for creating non-violent communities and safe spaces for women?’ We determined that what is required is a better knowledge about the root causes of violence. We had a sense that people were asking deeper questions related to the origins of violence which demand an acknowledgement of the complexity of the issue and that violence resides in multiple places. We began to ask ourselves not only how do we end violence against women but also how do we create non-violent communities. We cannot create freedom from violence for women in the midst of violent communities. Also, if we only analyze violence in terms of a sociological examination of patriarchy, which we have traditionally always done, then there is no doubt that we are missing some of the solutions. “Breines and Gordon argued that discourses on violence that omit gender as a category of analysis are motivated by a desire to explain away realities that are too uncomfortable for nonfeminists to confront. They also point out that such discourses not only obscure the true nature of violence but discourage productive analysis of it” (Dragiewicz, p. 50). But what we are suggesting is just the

opposite in a way. We say that discourses that include only a gendered analysis will be by their nature be inadequate.

The roots of violence can be examined by focusing on unequal power relations and oppressive social structures but we must also include psychological dynamics, and a philosophical understanding of our values and ethics and what we are striving to become as individuals and communities. Research on these topics lead us to understand better the roots of violence thereby forming a strong base for identifying strategies for creating non-violent communities. Our research is unique in that it puts together existing multi-disciplinary literature on violence and applies this knowledge to possible strategies and to domestic violence. Actions to create non-violent communities will be designed based on a new more in-depth, nuanced and interdisciplinary understanding of violence. Previous and current strategies can be enhanced by this research, and they will be unique in that it will address the range of conditions that create violence.

The premise of this paper is that violence is preventable. It is prevented by a holistic approach to how we understand ourselves as humans. Our environment affects our emotions and our behaviours and our actions affect those around us and our environment in general. We are physical, moral, resource consuming, intelligent animals who have both the capacity to cause suffering to those around us or environmental destruction as well as the ability to console the afflicted and sustain the earth. Many philosophers and proponents of nonviolence believe that our essence as human beings is that of loving creatures and that, to some extent, we all strive to find this loving nature within us. Sometimes this is hard to believe given the violence that we see around us but there are many convincing arguments to be made that illustrate that believing in this ideal is worthwhile.

#### EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

**VIOLENCE GENERALLY** - Sites of violence are numerous. We can think of conflicts between nations, civil wars, national internal uprisings, gang violence and violence perpetrated by organized crime, as well as various configurations of interpersonal violence. We may even think of maltreatment of animals and the irreparable harm we do to the

environment as a type of violence. Statistics on violence internationally is dependent on the numbers reported by governments and so can at times be unreliable and inconsistent. Homicide data is perhaps the most reliable in that a loss of life is unequivocal and readily identifiable and these rates also often coincide with levels of other types of violence (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011, p. 12). In 2010 the number of homicides globally is estimated at 468,000. (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011, p. 9). Homicide numbers are influenced by availability of weapons, gang and organized crime activity particularly as it relates to the drug trade, urbanization, income inequality, and gender. "...a significant body of literature tends to suggest that firearm availability predominantly represents a risk factor rather than a protective factor for homicide" (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011, p. 43). Gangs have the effect of creating cultures of violence which can permeate and endanger an entire country and region. These cultures of violence and the lack of regard to the rule of law are very difficult situations to change. Central America in particular has seen a large rise in homicides (as opposed to Europe, Asia and Northern America where there has been a downturn). This increase is connected to organized crime activities. When there is a dramatic economic downturn homicide rates increase although studies point to the fact that other factors come into play in these situations such as a society's values and norms (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011, p. 43).

**WOMEN** - To illustrate the extent of violence in the world today, we can examine the research on violence against women. PATHS is an organization which addresses the issue of gender related violence through our support of the provincial women's shelters across the province. International studies and reports on the violence perpetrated against women are fairly numerous due to the success of the women's movement in developed countries, and increasingly due to the emerging movement in developing countries, have had in placing this issue on the public agenda. The following data on violence against women is excerpted from our publication, 'Violence against Women around the World' (PATHS, 2011) and serves as an illustration of the pervasiveness, multiplicity, and complexity of the phenomena of violence in general.

Discrimination against women and girls often begins at conception, especially in parts of India and South Asia. In parts of India and South Asia, there is a strong preference for having sons. Girls can be perceived as a financial burden for the family due to small income contributions and costly dowry demands (Viachova, 2005). In India, pre-natal sex selection and infanticide accounted for the pre-natal termination and death of half a million girls per year over the last 20 years (Pinheiro, 2007). In the Republic of Korea, 30 percent of pregnancies identified as female fetuses were terminated. Contrastingly, over 90 percent of pregnancies identified as male fetuses resulted in normal birth. (Pinheiro, 2007). According to China's 2000 census, the ratio of newborn girls to boys was 100:119. The biological standard is 100:103 (Viachova, 2005).

The rate of femicide (murder of women and girls) has significantly escalated over the last few years. (Femicide, n.d.) In Mexico, the high murder and disappearance rate of young women in Ciudad Juarez has received international attention with an alarming recent resurgence (Colombian Inspector General's Office. 2009). In Guatemala, the number of femicides has risen steadily from 303 in 2001 to 722 in 2007, with the majority of the victims between ages 16 and 30. A UN report found that femicides are inadequately investigated in Guatemala (United Nations General Assembly, n.d.). Throughout the region, inadequate record-keeping around domestic violence and the victim's relationship to the murderer results in a problem of underreporting of gender-based deaths (United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2007a).

"Dowry deaths" are responsible for the murders of thousands of women every year, especially in South Asia. If a bride cannot meet the financial demand of her dowry, she is often subject to torture, harassment and death by the groom's family (Pinheiro, 2007). The United Nations estimates that 5,000 women worldwide are burnt to death in murders disguised as 'kitchen accidents' each year because their dowry was considered insufficient (Viachova, 2005). In India and Pakistan, thousands of women are victims of dowry deaths. In India alone, there were almost 7,000 dowry deaths in 2005, with the majority of victims aged 15-34 (Garcia-Moreno, 2009).



"Honor killings" continue to take place in Pakistan, Turkey, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Iran, Yemen, Morocco and other Mediterranean and Gulf Countries (UNDFW, 2007a). So-called honour killings occur when women are put to death for an act that is perceived as bringing shame to their families resulting in acts such as killing as punishment for adultery or even for being the victim of rape (UNDFW, 2007a). In Pakistan, nearly 500 women a year are the victims of honour killings. (Nazrullah, Haqqi, & Cummings, 2009). In a study of female deaths in Egypt, 47 percent of female rape victims were then killed because of the dishonor the rape was thought to bring to the family (Viachova, 2005). In 2002, 315 women and girls in Bangladesh endured another form of violence against women, acid attacks. In 2005, even after the introduction of more serious punishments for the crime, over 200 women were attacked (UNDFW, 2007a).

Physical and sexual abuse of girls is a serious concern across all regions. In Nigeria, a treatment center reported that 15 percent of female patients requiring treatment for sexually transmitted infections were under the age of five. An additional six percent were between the ages of six and fifteen (Viachova, 2005). In South Africa, one in four men report having had sex with a woman against her will by the time he was 18 years old (Viachova, 2005). Research conducted among young women in sub-Saharan Africa found that partner violence and the fear of abuse stopped girls from saying "no" to sex and jeopardized condom use (Moore, Awusabo-Asare, Madise, John-Langba & Kumi-Kyereme, 2007). According to the Jamaica Reproductive Health Survey, approximately 20.3 percent of young women 15-19 years old report having been forced to have sexual intercourse at some point during their life. Overall, one-fifth of Jamaican women have experienced forced sexual intercourse (Thomas, 2006). A 2009 report released by the Colombian Inspector General's Office showed that in Colombia, at least 27,000 women and girls experienced intimate partner violence last year - with 74 percent of these being "underage girls" (Colombian Inspector General's Office, 2009). In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 20 percent of young women experience intimate partner violence (Varia, 2006).

Female genital cutting/mutilation (FGC/M) causes serious injury to

millions of young women every year. FGC/M is the removal of all or part of the young woman's genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is most prevalent in parts of West, East, and Northeast Africa, though also practiced in Asia, the Middle East and the immigrant populations of North America and Europe (UNDFW, 2007a). FGC/M is practiced for sociocultural and economic reasons. Family honor, the insurance of virginity until marriage, and social integration are often used as justifications for the procedure (Gender equality: calling for an end to female genital mutilation/cutting, n.d.). Between 100 and 140 million women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation worldwide and 3 million girls are at risk of the procedure each year in Africa. (PRB) A 2005 study found that in Egypt some 97 percent of women age 15-49 had undergone FGM. In Mali, 92 percent of women age 15-49 had undergone FGC/M in 2006; in Burkina Faso, 77 percent; and in North Sudan, 90 percent (United Nations Children's Fund, 2005).

Child marriage continues to put young girls at great risk for too-early pregnancy and other sexual and reproductive health issues. In Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, more than 30 percent of young women between 15 and 19 are married (UNDFW, 2007a). In Nepal, 40 percent of girls are married by age 15 (Jarallah, 2008.) In 2005, the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey concluded that in Ethiopia 62 percent of young women aged 20-49 married before age 18 (EGLDAM). Worldwide, approximately 14 million women and girls between the ages of 15 and 19 give birth each year (Gender equality: giving special attention to girls and adolescent, n.d.). Early pregnancy and childbirth have severe consequences for adolescent mothers including complications at birth, obstetric fistula and death. These conditions are also often linked to unsafe abortions. (United States Agency for International Development, 2009).

Cross-generational sex poses numerous risks to young women. Particularly in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, socioeconomic pressures force many unmarried 15-19 year old women to engage in sexual activity with a male partner at least 10 years her senior in exchange for material goods, money or higher social status (USAID, 2009). Based on 2006 Demographic and Health Surveys, among young women ages 15-19, 21 percent in Nigeria, 7.5 percent in Lesotho, and 9.5 in Uganda reported

they had recently engaged in high-risk sex with a partner 10 or more years their senior (USAID, 2009). Girls and young women involved in cross-generational sex have a severely reduced capacity to negotiate condom use, putting them at high risk for HIV infection. As such, young women 15-24 years old are three times more likely to be infected with HIV than young men age 15-24 (USAID, 2009).

Advocates for gender equality and reproductive justice are making progress. In Senegal, Tostan, a community-led development project, has successfully empowered thousands of African villages to abandon female genital mutilation and child marriage. Since 1997, 3,548 villages in Senegal, 298 villages in Guinea, and 23 villages in Burkina Faso have eliminated FGM through community-wide education on health, human rights and responsibilities and autonomy. (Tostan, Community-led development, n.d.) At present, over 2,460 villages have banned child marriage through public declaration. In Ethiopia, USAID and 3,700 local public schools have created girls' advisory groups to prevent early marriage and encourage all girls to attend school. Through conversations with parents, instructors, and religious leaders regarding the risks of child marriage and the benefits of education, this program is responsible for preventing over 4,000 child marriages and increasing the number of Ethiopian girls in school (USAID, 2009).

In 2003, Mexico established the Special Commission to Monitor Investigations of Femicide, which is working to raise awareness of the severity of violence against women among legislators in Mexico. The Commission is also broadening this dialogue by hosting workshops for legislators from Guatemala, Spain and Mexico to discuss the existence, implications and solutions for violence against women in Latin America (Femicide, n.d.). In 2004, the Young Empowered and Healthy Initiative (Y.E.A.H.) was established in Uganda by a group of local organizations, under the Uganda AIDS Commission HIV/AIDS Partnership, to reduce the incidence of HIV and early pregnancy. Through its first youth-developed campaign, "Something for Something Love," Y.E.A.H. used media and community outreach strategies, including the "Rock Point 256" radio drama series, to educate youth on safe and healthy relationships and in particular to avoid coercive cross-generational relationships (Clifton, 2009, Feb.).

## SASKATCHEWAN

Violence against women is a serious social problem in Saskatchewan. Crime statistics for 2009 showed that Saskatchewan still had the highest violent crime rate (2,508 per 100,000 population) of all the provinces and the second highest provincial violent crime severity index value. The homicide rate was 3.5 versus the national rate of 1.8 homicides per 100,000 population and the rate of serious assaults was 2.4 times the national rate. Based on police data from 2008, of those where the relationship between victim and perpetrator was known, three quarters of Saskatchewan victims of violent crime knew their assailant, 25% were victimized by a family member and 50% by friends and acquaintances (Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2012).

In 2009, spousal violence was experienced by 8.2% of Saskatchewan men and women 15 years and older who had contact with a current or former spouse in the last 5 years. The Saskatchewan level is the highest of all the provinces. Across Canada, women were three times more likely to experience more serious forms of spousal violence than men, and were more than twice as likely to have been injured (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Federal Family Violence Initiative, 2009).

Saskatchewan has a high portion of Aboriginal people and in 2009, Aboriginal women were almost three times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to report that they had been a victim of spousal violence in the past five years. Aboriginal victims of spousal violence were also more likely to report that they have feared for their lives or that they had been injured as a result of the violence (Perreault, 2011).

## COMMON THEORIES OF AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

Theories of violence and why we are violent or aggressive are multitudinous. Of the most commonly talked about theories that were thought to have the most validity Darwin's theory of violence is probably one of the first. Darwin's theory of evolution was of course groundbreaking in that he proposed that the human species had evolved over time starting from the most basic life forms. In terms of aggression

Darwin suggested that this trait in humans was a product of evolution as well. Aggression developed because it was necessary for animals and humans to be violent in order to survive. Those who were not aggressive were naturally selected out of the population. Aggression in humans was a product of evolution. Darwin's view was on the most extreme biological side of the nature versus nurture debate (Neuman, 1987, p. 1852).

Nietzsche said that the will to power is the basic force of the universe. This concept of 'will' emerged in philosophical thinking with Schopenhauer who was influenced by Buddhism. The idea is that we have an essence or will that drives our actions including the values and morals we adopt. The will is an ethereal concept that defies concrete description, but is something we must think about because it determines our moods and actions (Will to Power, n.d.). Schopenhauer said everything in the universe was driven by the will to live and procreate. Nietzsche (2005) said that violence might result from this will but nothing good comes from violence. He therefore admires those who can sublimate violence towards others. But he prefers violence to mediocrity and suggests that because of this will to power we can be cruel to people and we derive pleasure from this cruelty.

Miller and Dollard (1939) said that violence was always a result of frustration (Neuman, 1987, p. 19). Furthermore they suggested that there could be no other response to frustration than aggression. The frustration they suggested resulted from the inability to achieve a specific goal. There was a cathartic element to their analysis in that after the display of aggression the anger and frustration would subside. But there have been subsequent studies that have shown that indeed frustration does not always lead to aggression nor does it necessarily result in reduced aggression after the incident. Their frustration-aggression hypothesis is a "primordial response whenever pleasure-seeking or pain-avoiding behaviour is blocked" (Tremblay and Nagin, 2005, p. 36).

One can see the connection between Freud's theories and the idea of 'will'. Freud believed that it was frustration that leads to aggression; however, he had the added component of saying that the frustration was specifically related to our instinct to have sex and a drive within us towards death. While Freud himself developed the sex instinct

paradigm, the death drive concept, or Thanatos as Freud referred to it, is believed to be the original idea of Sabina Spielrein, a Russian psychoanalyst, portrayed in the movie 'A Dangerous Method'. Freud believed that aggression was a universal and inevitable response should the instinct to procreate or the drive to die be frustrated somehow. These instincts and drives are evident in childhood and thwarted for the most part resulting in childhood aggression. This aggression is resolved as adults as we find healthy outlets for the instinct to be sexual and creative cultural outlets that divert the aggression that would normally result from not being able to die.

Lorenz in 1963 wrote a book entitled *On Aggression* where he postulated that aggression was not only a result of sexual frustration but also was an instinct reminding us of Darwin's evolutionary theory. He postulated that aggressive feelings must be let out much as the steam from a kettle must escape to avoid an explosion. He called this theory the hydraulic model of aggression. We have no choice but to allow this release which we do through enacting violence towards each other or what he suggests are more healthy outlets such as violent sport or entertainment. Lorenz says that we evolved to be violent because it ensured the survival of the species but he says that we are also now evolving to be less violent.

According to Wolfgang and Ferracuti, "Violence is best understood in terms of deep feelings of revenge...." They suggested that some cultures are predisposed to violence because violence, emanating from a response to a wrong-doing, becomes a value that is seen in a positive light. This value is then reinforced by the norms and expectations of the group and the behaviour then becomes part of the group identity. Wolfgang and Ferracuti inject the notion of values into the analysis of violence. They suggest that this cultural attribute is lacking in the larger culture of which the subculture is a part. The tendency towards violence is an aberration then from the values of the broader culture. Deviant behavior "is not evenly distributed throughout the social structure. There is much empirical evidence that class position, ethnicity, occupational status, and other social variables are effective indicators for predicting rates of different kinds of deviance" (Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967, p. 151). There is a theme in their writing that violence defines the group and the individuals within the group. The counter-norm is nonviolence. There

are individual differences but there is a general pattern that relates to cultural influences.

There are a number of reasons why theories began to move away from the idea of innate instincts or inherited factors in determining violence. First, there is a wide variety in the degree of violence tolerated in different societies. Also, violence seems to be more intense in group settings implying that the presence of others has an impact on the type and extent of violence. There developed an idea that violent behaviour could be changed through techniques to manage responses to anger, prison rehabilitation, and strategies for non-violent conflict resolution. One of the first and most basic of these newer theories of the impact of the environment on violence was operant conditioning championed by B.F. Skinner and later Eysenck. The theory suggests that animals and people respond to punishment and rewards and by supplying one or the other in relation to a specific action, behaviour will change. The basic principles are based on the idea that behaviour should be regarded from a scientific, observable perspective not by esoteric unprovable ideas such as the mind (McLeod, 2007). Eysenck speaks about the use of conditioning in terms of preventing violence:

...man has to learn to behave in a socially acceptable manner, and to acquire a 'conscience'; this is done by means of a process of conditioning, in which antisocial acts constitute the conditioned stimuli (corresponding to the bell in Pavlov's experiment), and the punishment meted out by parents, teachers, peers, and people in authority constitutes the unconditioned stimulus (corresponding to the food in Pavlov's experiment). Thus on hundreds or even thousands of occasions a child misbehaves and is punished; slowly he learns to anticipate punishment for antisocial activities and the anxiety and fear produced as a result of this conditioning effectively prevents him on future occasions from acting in such an antisocial manner, even though he may be unobserved, and no punishment may be forthcoming. There is ample experimentation with animals and children to demonstrate this process, and to show that we can indeed acquire a 'conscience' in this manner (Eysenck, 1979, p. 107).

Social learning theory suggests that children learn from their environment, specifically from the adults around them, the media and entertainment such as video games and television. If they see violence, they will imitate violence. This theory was initiated by the work of Albert Bandura who conducted a number of experiments that today would be

considered unethical and manipulative in a way that called into question the validity of his findings. The most famous experiment is the Bobo Doll experiment where children watch an adult aggressively attacking an inflatable doll. The children are then put into a room with toys that they are not allowed to touch and then put into another room with a Bobo Doll which they proceed to treat in the same way that they had witnessed earlier. The idea, however, that violent behaviour is a result of witnessing violent behaviour is still found within elements of current theories, particularly in terms of our understanding of the impact of witnessing domestic violence on children.

In theories of the 1980s the complexity of violence and its relation to anger begins to emerge. In his book *Anger and Aggression: An Essay on Emotion*, Averill deconstructs the concept of anger into an emotion that results from a thought process whereby one has determined that an injustice has been done. One may respond to this perceived injustice with violence, however, most feelings of anger do not result in aggression so that we begin to distinguish between the emotion and the range of choices that we have in responding to that emotion. McDougall introduces the emotion of fear into the analysis of violence. He defined hate as “the general name of all sentiments in the structure of which the affective dispositions of anger and of fear are incorporated” (McDougall, 1936, p. 167). This thinking moved away from the psychoanalytic approach where few “distinguish anger from rage, hatred, chronic resentment or violence” (DiCanio, 1993, p. 436). Tavis provides a critique of psychoanalysis suggesting that anger is more complex than the psychoanalytic notions would suggest. She says that the assumptions that ground this theory are not necessarily always true and cannot be verified. These assumptions include:

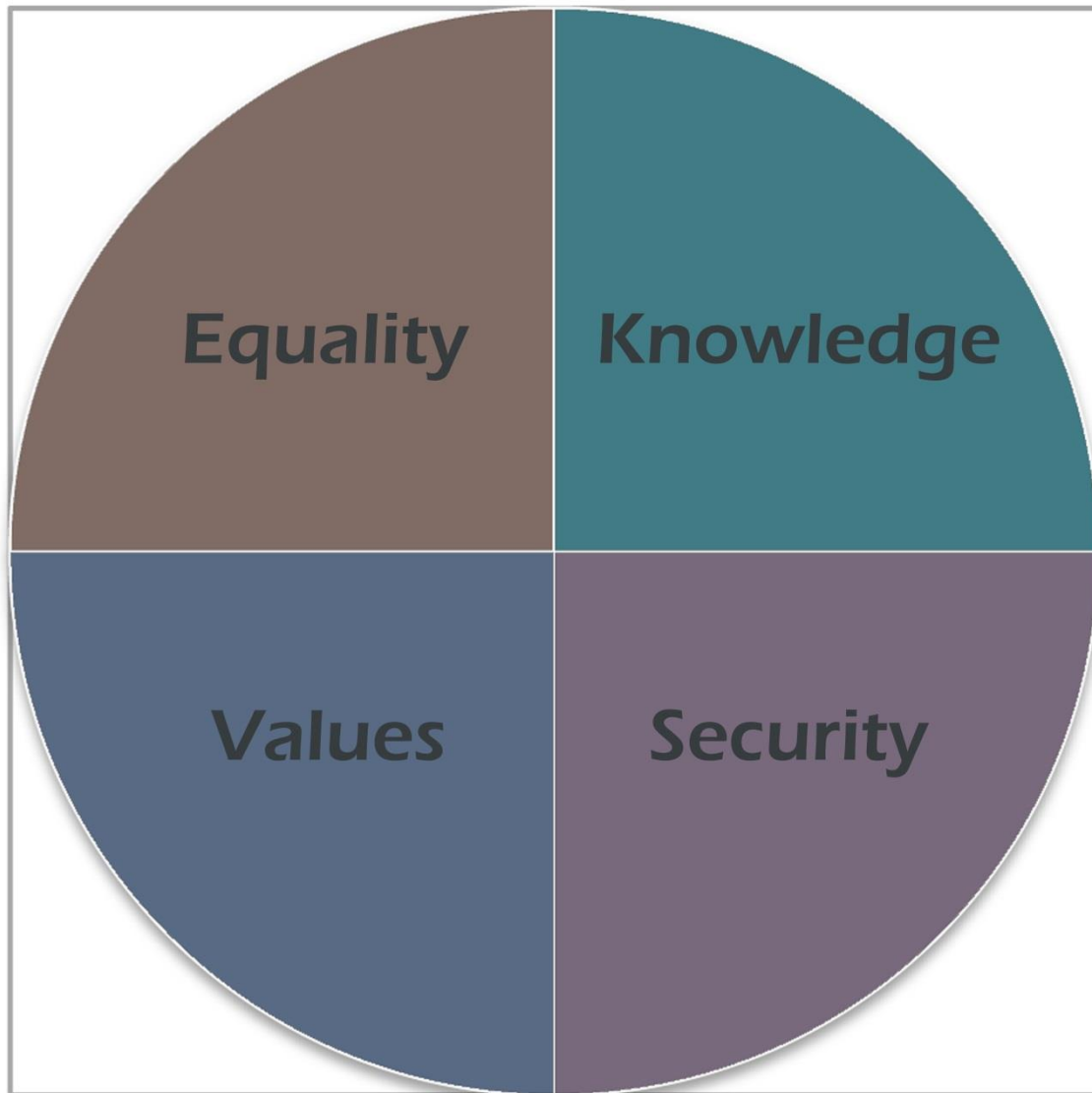
- That emotional energy exists in a fixed quantity that can be dammed up, or conversely, that can flood the system.
- That anger and aggression are inextricably, biologically linked: that anger is the feeling and aggression its overt expression; that both are aspects of an aggressive instinct.
- That anger is an instinctive response to threat and to the frustration of goals or desire.
- That when blocked, the outward expression of anger “turns inward,” where it is felt as depression, guilt, shame, anxiety or lethargy (DiCanio, 1993, p. 6).



Tavris also connects anger with depression and says that, contrary to what the psychoanalysts say, depression is not the result of repressed anger. Rather anger is the manifestation of depression. "Follow the trail of anger inward, and there you find the small, still voice of pain" (Tavris, 1989, p. 14). She says there can be a variety of specific situations that can cause a person to be angry and a range of choices as to how one will respond.

Perkis' research is a recent focus on the choice factor in interpersonal violence. She suggests that in couples violence is actually a calculated response where the perpetrator decides to use violence to achieve goals if the person believes that she or he will be successful by using violence and that there will be few negative consequences. Perkis states, "The violent partner might conceive his or her behavior as a 'loss of control', but the same individual, unsurprisingly, would not lose control in this way with a boss or friends" (University of Haifa, 2009).

## REQUISITES FOR A NON-VIOLENT SOCIETY



## PART 2

### REQUISITES FOR A NONVIOLENT SOCIETY

Most theories of violence lie solely within their particular discipline of philosophy, psychology or sociology. The International Society for Research on Aggression says “truly interdisciplinary exchange is a relatively rare phenomenon in the field of interpersonal violence...” (DiCanio, 1993, p. ix). The issue is complex and as such provides challenges when trying to understand the dynamics from a more comprehensive view. This challenge presents a conundrum however for those working trying to make change. Unless our efforts and strategies touch on all the causes of violence we can never be successful in moving towards its elimination. There are clues in current discourses about how we understand social problems, and the human condition generally that allow for a model to emerge of what is required to create non-violent communities.

## SECURITY

### THE CONCEPT OF ATTACHMENT

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The discussion around the physiology of the brain is worth examining for we should not underestimate the role that the structure and chemistry of the brain plays in determining the degree and sites of violence in our society. Understanding the dynamics of brain chemistry and the brain's response to environmental factors leads us to the issue of what the brain requires, particularly the brains of children, in order to develop in a way which will make us the least prone to violence.

Animals and people are differentiated by our more complex brains, longer development period for learning to organize behaviour, advanced cognitive skills and our specific social world. As humans, however, we are born with undeveloped brains. Eighty percent of brain growth occurs after birth. Neufeld says that attachment is the drive to be close to someone. It begins with birth and is with us all our life. We are physiologically required to attach at birth and have the mechanisms to be able to do that. We must form close attachments to our caregivers because we are the most immature animal at birth. The growth of the human brain, and specifically the prefrontal cortex which allowed for expansion of our reasoning abilities, led to humans having to be born before full maturity in order to be able to exit the birth canal. Consequently as we begin our lives it is imperative that we are cared for and our brains are constructed to ensure that we remain close to our caregiver.

Our brains develop healthy neurological connections and chemistry when a healthy attachment to a consistent caregiver is made from the very beginning of life. When this attachment to a caregiver and to other family connections as the child grows is severed then there are repercussions which result in challenging behaviour both in childhood and for adults. This behaviour often includes exhibiting violence towards others. "Dr. Richard Tremblay has found that chronic forms of violent behaviour are specifically related to maternal characteristics such as maternal age at first pregnancy, history of behaviour problems, education, smoking, depression, [and] coercive parenting" (Tremblay R.,

2009). All these characteristics are consistent with the probability that the mother will not be able to attach in a healthy way to her child.

To understand the concept of attachment and its vital importance in child development we need to first learn about the human physiology of genes, brain structure, hormones and neurotransmitters and then to appreciate Cordelia Fine's words of caution about going down a path that sees us only as biological beings forgetting that all we are trying to really measure and change is behavior.

### EPIGENETICS

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One of the most recent and interesting areas of research today is referred to as epigenetics. Epigenetics is a chemical process which allows a gene to be turned on without changing DNA. Epigenetic tags can be visualized as sitting on a gene and, when instructed, influence the gene to become active which will then be reflected in the physiology of the person. They can also influence how strongly a gene's characteristics become evident. Quatrefages described the phenomena of epigenesis shortly after Darwin wrote *On the Origin of the Species*, "Every normal egg which gives birth to an abnormal individual is influenced by external agents whatever they are; this is what I call action of the milieu" (Tremblay R., 2009).

The Minnesota Study of Twins by Buchard and Segal sought to explain how people with the exact same DNA, by virtue of being identical twins, could at times display their own differing and individual characteristics. It is most common for identical twins to exhibit similar behaviour. "One investigation found that an identical twin with a criminal co-twin was more than 1.5 times as likely to break the law as a fraternal twin in the same situation, suggesting that genetic factors somehow set the stage for criminal behaviour" (Miller, 2012). Epigenetics explains one of the reasons why differences emerge in twin behaviour. The twins would have the same DNA but in one the process of 'methylation' would have occurred making the gene active or strong.

### BRAIN STRUCTURE

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In simple terms the brain is composed of 2 basic parts - the limbic system and the prefrontal cortex.

The limbic system developed before the pre-frontal cortex. It is found in the lower brain, lower brain stem and spinal cord. The limbic system is responsible for emotions, memory, mirroring behaviours, taste, smell, aggression and the sex drive. It comes from reptilian neural machinery for self-preservation. Mirroring comes from instinct and is basic to maintaining the identity of a species or a social group. It is responsible for “obsessive compulsive disorder, personal day-to-day rituals, superstitious acts, slavish conforming to old ways of doing things, ceremonial reenactments, obeisance to precedent, deception” (Neuman, 1987, p. 36). The limbic system is responsible for emotions and strong feelings of conviction. In the brain there is a link between oral (eating) genitals (procreation) and aggression. The limbic system is where memory is stored. Memory is responsible for our sense of identity. There are two basic emotions: fear and love. Both have to do with attachment. Fear is about losing love.

The human brain has doubled in size in the last 300,000 to 400,000 years and this doubling was largely due to the development of the prefrontal cortex. Our large pre-frontal cortex is what distinguishes us from other mammals. The prefrontal cortex is responsible for reasoning and has the centres for sight, hearing and enhanced skin sensors. The pre-frontal cortex is where we do our thinking. We reflect on the past and plan for the future. If we were to have only a pre-frontal cortex we would only be able to reason based on sight, hearing and touch without the benefit of emotion. Emotion is necessary for self-preservation. Fear indicates to us that a survival response is needed and love ensures that we keep connected to one another.

But we cannot operate on emotion alone either. Instinct and emotion without reasoning would result in impulsive behaviour that could also have negative consequences for survival. There is therefore strong neurological links between the limbic system and the pre-frontal cortex. These links result in humans having compassion, empathy and altruism. Our reasoning then factors into how we respond to our emotions and helps us to gage the best response to a situation. Other animals are able to reason, even lizards, but none do this with the same capacity that humans do and this is primarily because of the size of the pre-frontal cortex. This size of the prefrontal cortex distinguishes us from other

animals in the way we relate to the care and attention that we give to our young. “This care amounts psychologically to love which, in turn, means being loved” (Neuman, 1987, p. 37). “Clinically there is evidence that this frontal cortex, by looking inward, so to speak, obtains the insight required for identifying with another individual” (Neuman, 1987, p. 40). Strong connections are made in the healthy brain between the prefrontal cortex and the limbic brain, that is between the emotional and reasoning part of the brain. Strong healthy connections are what enable us to experience empathy. Rage type of aggression is a result of fear and originates in the older part of the brain. We depend on the prefrontal cortex to mitigate the rage response through rational thinking and the empathic responses that result from the interconnectedness between the limbic emotional system and the prefrontal cortex rational system.

### HORMONES AND NEUROTRANSMITTERS

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Hormones are chemicals released by a cell or gland that sends out messages to other parts of the body. They are produced in endocrine glands (pituitary, pineal, thymus, thyroid, adrenal, pancreas, testes, and ovaries). They travel in the blood and can be measured in blood samples. “Hormones are responsible for human responses such as stimulation or inhibition of growth, mood swings, induction or suppression of apoptosis (programmed cell death), activation or inhibition of the immune system, regulation of metabolism, preparation of the body for mating, fighting, fleeing, and other activity, preparation of the body for a new phase of life, such as puberty, parenting, and menopause, control of the reproductive cycle, hunger cravings, sexual arousal. Our bodies produce hormones in response to a variety of biological and environmental stimuli including for example other hormones, food, mental activity and light and heat” (Hormones, n.d.).

We can examine the relationship between anger and hormones. In the case of anger, it is our hormones, adrenaline and noradrenaline, which give us the sensations often associated with anger. We may experience tingling, heightened energy, excitement and arousal. As the hormone travels through the body the sympathetic nervous system responds. Heart rate increases; digestion slows down. The physical sensations of feelings such as anger – tingling, energy, excitement, and arousal – are the

effects of the chemicals adrenaline and noradrenaline. These adrenal hormones act on all organs of the body reached by the sympathetic nervous system. They stimulate the heart and dilate coronary vessels. Memory, concentration and performance improve, although too much adrenaline can cause performance to deteriorate. People respond differently to a rush of hormones. For some it may be pleasant and exciting. Others may feel fearful and powerless (Di Canio, 1993, p. 4).

Our responses to our hormones, whether we see the physical responses they elicit as frightening or exhilarating, and how we physically respond to these sensations is determined by our beliefs and previous experiences, that is essentially what is stored in our memories (which reside in the limbic system). Hormone levels increase when we are under attack. Serotonin regulates anxiety, fear, irritability and aggression. One of the popular questions has been to what extent testosterone plays a role in male aggression. Some studies show higher levels of testosterone in male criminals, particularly when they are teens, however the studies show differing results. There are no consistent findings that would allow us to suggest that if we lowered the testosterone level in men, then we would have a society with less violence. Furthermore, the chemical soup and neurological connections of the body are so complex that we could never hope to untangle all the intricacies that would allow for hormone therapy to be a cure for violence. The vast majority of the research today separates the physical autonomic response and subsequent feelings produced by hormones from the rational decisions made about how to act on these responses. Prentky cites Goldstein, "There is general support for the notion that in humans testosterone may be more related to the feeling of anger than to the expression of anger. Social learning and cognitive over-ride may be the most critical factors in determining the expression of anger when anger is translated into aggressive criminal activity" (Prentky, 1987, p.11). "...there are powerful learning and social factors that are related to the manner in which individuals learn to deal with emotional experiences associated with effects of hormones" (Prentky, 1987, p. 27).

"Nevertheless, there remains convincing evidence to suggest that biological factors may have important influences specifically on human sexual aggression" (Prentky, 1987, p. 41). Violence may also be pleasure producing in that experiencing or watching violence causes the release of



dopamine and serotonin. This pleasure response explains why we seek out violence in video games, sports, and television. Dopamine and serotonin cause a response in the prefrontal cortex (Gendreau and Archer, 2005, p. 37). Dopamine and serotonin give us feelings of being motivated.

### WE ARE NOT HARD-WIRED FOR ANYTHING

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In her book *Delusions of Gender*, Fine (2010) takes on the issue of the concept of 'hard-wiring' particularly as it relates to research that makes the argument that boys and girls brains are made differently and function differently simply by reason of the sex of the person. She systematically finds flaws in all the research challenging those who espouse this theory to come up with something that proves the argument that the brains of boys and girls are different which results in biologically determined differences in behaviour. She says it is impossible to completely physiologically understand what is happening in the brain. We need to be careful about offering explanations which cannot at this point be proven. "To make this kind of confident claim about hardwired psychological differences between males and females is to overlook the likelihood of spurious findings, the teething problems of new technology, the obscurity of the relationship between brain structure and psychological function, and the difficulty of inferring psychological states from neuroimaging data. Dazzled by the seductive scientificness of neuroscience, commentators become blind to low-tech behavioral evidence of gender similarity, or flexibility in response to the social context" (Fine, 2010, p. 174).

While neurotechnology is very appealing, it can also be used to reinforce existing socially constructed stereotypes and assumptions. Fine emphasizes that we are not hard-wired for anything and rather than focusing on exact quantification and concrete answers as to how the brain works we need to also keep in mind that brain patterns can change as evidenced through concepts such as neuroplasticity and epigenetics. Within this context, we must keep an open mind about our current knowledge of how the brain works given that the technology could be flawed and that the brain has a complexity that we may never fully be able to understand. The scientific technology is slick and expensive and makes emotions look real. But in the end it is behaviour that we are

examining. If we want to know for example what gives people pleasure is it not just as valid to identify that feeling by “selecting the box on the questionnaire marked ‘Yes, I really enjoyed eating that doughnut’” (Fine, 2010, p. 169)?

Dragiewicz talks specifically about ideas that men are ‘hard-wired’ to be more violent. We must distinguish between sex and gender she says. While this seems to many of us an obvious distinction it sometimes gets lost when we are examining behaviour from a biological perspective. We tend to forget that gender is socially constructed as compared to sex which is a biological characteristic. The social construction of gender is evident through variations across cultures in expectations of men and women’s roles and behaviours. Gender also is what frames our interaction with each other. We need to acknowledge that while men’s rates of violence are higher than women’s, there are variations in men’s violence over time and in location (Dragiewicz, 2001, p. 105). So, we must, therefore, never neglect the social and environmental influences on violence.

### WHAT HAPPENS TO CHILDREN

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Our body is interconnected through the nervous system which wires all parts of the body together and the circulatory system which sends chemical messengers through the blood. The gut has a huge nervous system hence the expression ‘gut feeling’. It is not just a digestive system. It sends connections to the brain. The gut has more serotonin, the neurotransmitter that is responsible for one’s mood, than the brain. “You can be fooled by the brain but not by the gut” (Maté, 2010). The new discovery that the heart has a brain has resulted in a new discipline called neurocardiology. The nervous system in the heart is connected to the nervous system in the brain.

How does this all relate to how we raise our children and their potential for violence - the brain structure, hormones, neurotransmitters, and the interconnectedness of it all? The argument is a strong one that how children are treated when they are young affects their behaviour in later life. In many ways it is common sense and we know this intuitively. And now we have enough physical evidence and understanding of

biochemistry and neurology to know that the way we treat children when they are young affects the development of their brain and body chemistry over the long-term and is evident in behaviours such as addiction and violence and a lack of empathy and compassion.

Maté says we are biopsychosocial beings in that our biology, psychology and social natures are all interrelated. For the past 10 years there has been a discourse emerging and which is now forming a solid base for popular understanding which links all these together. Biology and socialization have traditionally been on “parallel trajectories” but this is slowly changing (Tremblay and Côté, 2005, p. 453). We are slowly learning to understand each other’s language and to integrate concepts. What results is a biopsychosocial approach which results in a holistic understanding of how the body and mind and environment work together. Aboriginal people have known for many generations that everything is interconnected. Western understanding is just beginning to catch up (Maté, 2010).

One thing we are learning in this context then is that what happens to children from the beginning of their lives, and potentially even in utero, affects how their brain develops and how this physiological reaction to the environment then affects behaviour in the social context, specifically violence. Maté’s analysis explains this process and how it produces addiction. For this paper we are examining how childhood influences affect children’s and adults’ propensity for violence, and also how violence itself has an impact on the child.

Over the lifespan people are the most violent between the ages of 2 to 4. Even the famous, and infamous St. Augustine, who caused his poor afflicted mother St. Monica much grief (hence her induction to sainthood, as many of us should be) noticed this phenomena. “Thank God that humans have weak limbs at the age when they most often use physical aggression.” (Tremblay and Nagin, 2005, p. 99). It is during this time that we see a strong peak in violent behaviour which goes steadily downhill over the rest of the lifespan with the exception of a smaller peak in adolescence. This pattern is the same for girls and boys, women and men with the exception that with girls and women incidents of violence are somewhat below those of males (Tremblay and Nagin, 2005). In boys

from a poor Canadian inner city neighbourhood, levels of aggression decreased as they moved toward adulthood in all but 4% of the cases. This pattern is a normal pattern but there are anomalies whereby we see strong and frequent aggression that begins early in life which seems to be carried over the lifespan. Occasionally we see the occurrence of late onset aggression which happens during the teen years and generally only lasts that long (Gendreau and Archer, 2005, p. 39).

We see a relationship between a number of variables in studies of children, adults and animals. In the case of animals we can actually impose conditions and then measure the response. For example, in the case of rhesus monkeys that are isolated from their mothers we see low serotonin levels and then inappropriate aggression (Suomi, 2005). In mice this intervention results in mouse-killing behaviour and aggression and indications of depression in adult mice. Prolonged isolation and repeated defeats cause animals to be more likely to perceive ambiguous situations to be hostile. The often-cited study by Casp et al. of maternal behaviour in rats which showed that rat pups insufficiently licked by their mothers showed changes in their gene methylation and an increase in indicators of stress as evidenced by behaviour and activity in the pituitary gland and adrenal levels (Suomi, 2005).

In an article in *Nature Neuroscience* in 2009, Steven Hyman summarises the evidence of epigenetics occurring in the case of child abuse. In children who are abused, the gene that regulates cortisol is changed through the epigenetic process of myelation. Cortisol circulation increases which leads to an increased risk of depression. Depression can be linked to anger and violence (Tavris, 1989, p 9). So, this is a concrete example of how violence begets violence through a physical experience that triggers a chemical response which alters a gene which results in physical symptoms. Genes then are physically altered and are passed on in this way to offspring so that there is the possibility that propensities to certain behaviours can be passed on through the generations. Genes can be affected in a positive way as well. Church cites hundreds of scientific studies that show us how thoughts of appreciation, acts of kindness, and de-stressing meditation can positively affect the expression of DNA strands within a few seconds. In a New Zealand study of teens they found that teens who had a genetic marker that was associated with

involvement with the justice system did not exhibit aggression if they had been raised in a setting with a strong healthy attachment to their mother (Suomi, 2005, p. 76). Even in the case of teens who have a proven genetic propensity for violence, this gene appears not to be turned on when they are raised in a setting with a strong attachment to their mothers.

Adults who have been raised in circumstances where they have had poor maternal connections in childhood display more aggression as do children who have witnessed violence. Narvaez (n.d.) summarizes the research findings that link early environmental experience as children. Evidence shows us that traumatization, neglect or abuse in childhood results in:

- an overactive stress response system
- suppressed immune system
- malformed endocrine system
- malformed in number and functionality of neurotransmitters
- underdeveloped emotions and emotion systems
- underdeveloped corpus callosum
- poor integration of the brain hemispheres

On the other hand she cites evidence that shows that good early experiences for children elicit a different response:

- Positive touch results in children with greater empathy, self-regulation, inhibitory control, conscience development, social engagement and cognitive development and less aggression.
- Responsive caregivers result in less depression, less aggression, greater cooperation, behaviour regulation, and higher intelligence.
- Breast feeding results in development of conscience, concern about wrongdoing, inhibitory control and less aggression.
- Maternal social support results in greater cooperation, better cognitive development, improved sense of self-efficacy.

Sroufe points out that undercare of children leads to insecure attachments, difficult temperaments, poor social skills, aggression and depression (Narvaez, n.d.). Other researchers, including Kochanska (2002) and Greenspan and Shankar (2006), have found that good care

results in secure attachment, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and being open to experience (Narvaez, n.d.). Narvaez studied people who were assessed as having unhealthy emotional childhoods and found a relationship between that experience and aggression and a lack of compassion and empathy in later life. She says, "The results [of the research] provide preliminary evidence that early life experience shapes brain and body systems for preferred moral functioning.... For optimal moral development, good early life experience is needed to foster the neurobiology of compassion and imagination" (Narvaez, n.d.). Narvaez has developed a typology of imagination which can be used as a starting point to illustrate what happens in the brain to cause these results.

Narvaez deconstructs ethics by saying it begins with an event which elicits an emotion which results in a cognitive response and then a behaviour which is chosen based on a value that trumps other values at the time. In connecting these findings to morality, Narvaez says that the ethics we develop can be categorized into three types - security, engagement and imagination. Security results in values which are based on instincts for survival. They are values which result from past experience and are subjective moral orientations. Engagement morals are grounded in the present and reflect an understanding of how others closest to us are impacted by our actions. Imaginative morality results from being able to see possibilities in our actions, to foresee the impact of what we do into the future and also the impact that our actions have on those not immediately known to us. To which degree our behaviour reflects the values connected with each of these moral types, and what action we then choose, depends on environmental impacts from our childhood. Her research showed that people who reported childhoods where violence was experienced were less likely to have engagement and particularly imaginative morals.

To carry Narvaez's argument forward we can now reflect on the previously described workings of the brain and provide a further, deeper analysis. We will recall that the limbic part of our brain is responsible for emotions while the prefrontal cortex developed later and is responsible for reasoning and the ability to plan for the future and that there is a connection between the two which grows over the course of time and is not fully developed until the third decade. Fear resides in the limbic part

of the brain, specifically the amygdala. This fear response is not fully functional at birth and only slowly comes into play as the infant moves away from its mother. As the infant gradually becomes more independent from the mother, the chemicals released in the brain are reduced and the response to fear is allowed to develop (Landers & Sullivan, 2012). It is important that the fear response does not become active too early in life because once the fear response begins it becomes embedded in the limbic system of the brain which holds repetitive type memories. The way we keep the fear response in check before we are cognitively prepared to deal with it, is through chemicals that are released by the smell and touch of the mother. If it is engaged too strongly and too early before we have the cognitive development and capacity to judge what is worthy of a fear response, the infant will draw on this embedded memory to respond to fear more often than is required. In addition, the infant does not have the capacity to use judgement to control the actions that result from fear and the opportunity to learn how to use this judgement is lost. This fear response becomes part of the long-term automatic response that is called upon when the child and then the adult is presented with a situation and the adult has not learned the skills required to deal appropriately with the emotion of fear as a child. There are two main responses to fear – withdrawal or aggression. This phenomena could explain why people who have experienced child abuse are more likely to exhibit explosive rage.

The other side of the equation involves the emotion of love. Attachment as an infant and child also results in the release of endorphins and the development of receptors to attach the endorphins. When an infant gazes at its mother endorphins are released. The purpose of endorphins is to keep us attached to our mothers which in turn keeps us safe. If we do not begin life with a healthy attachment, then we do not produce endorphins sufficiently and we do not feel love. This lack of love, which inhibits physical and emotional pain, can result in the development of addictions as we search for what the body is not giving us. Without endorphins we not only do not love ourselves but we have difficulty loving those around us and developing the capacity for an empathic response.

As discussed previously, it is the connections between the rational prefrontal cortex and the emotional limbic system which give us feelings

of empathy and compassion for others. When these connections are grounded in an appropriate fear response and a healthy ability to feel and give love, we have the ability to ensure that our actions will take into consideration the well-being of the other, even those outside of our close networks of family and friends. We will be more cooperative and willing to compromise as opposed to being combative.

Many experts in the field of child development believe that we are born with an ability to both fight and cooperate. As the prefrontal cortex develops our external limbs become more functional and we have the ability to act out on our emotions in a violent way, hence the 'terrible twos'. But, in a healthy environment, we also have the capacity for love and as the prefrontal cortex develops there emerges a capacity to use reason and understand the consequences of our actions. We depend on the adults around us to give us direction in this regard – to model the behaviour that we want to see in our children which is more and more based on an expectation of cooperation and nonviolence. The actions for which children are rewarded become part of their repetitive and their long-term memory so that they are more likely to choose these responses in interactions with others. But if we do not learn these non-violent approaches and we are not raised in secure environments where we are not required to respond with aggression as a result of fear, and we are deficient in the ability to experience love, then we face an uphill battle when it comes to developing into cooperative and nonviolent adults. It is not to say that people cannot adapt. Indeed we must adapt, and we must support those who are unable to adapt. However, if we are striving to create nonviolent communities, then we would have a great advantage in this endeavour by giving children what they need to develop from the time they are born.

We now have the added complication that we live in a society where more and more children are attaching to their peers with the result that peers are role models rather than mature adults (Neufeld, 2005). Also, peers cannot adequately protect you from the challenges and pains of childhood and adolescence. Resistance to parental authority is a natural part of growing up; however, children should not replace that authority with an attachment to peers. Rather healthy ties to parents and adult communities will result in a gradual move towards independence which



may see displays of resistance, but at least will occur with healthy and safe direction if this occurs in a loving home (Maté, 2010).

## VALUES

### VALUES DEFINED

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As deconstructed in the previous section we learned that ethics can be defined as value-based decision making. While it may be possible to conjecture, and even with a certain degree of scientific proof, that our values are shaped by the physiology of the brain as it responds to the environment, to study ethics, morality and values and how these relate to violence requires an examination of the particular values which lead to nonviolent societies. The words ethics and morality can be used interchangeably. Values are beliefs which are important to us and which guide our ethical or moral decision-making, so that when we make a decision we ask ourselves is this consistent with behaviours that I value? Some philosophers argue that we should make our moral decisions based on a sense of obligation or duty while others believe we should think through each decision and decide what is best based on a rational choice after an analysis of what is required of us if we are to act in accordance with our own personal value system.

### VIOLENCE LEARNED

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**EXPERIMENTS** - What are the factors which cause some decisions that we make to be hurtful to others or that alternatively result in cooperation that benefits everyone? Research and experiments from many years ago, which today would be considered unethical, shed some light on what can influence behaviour. From the Encyclopedia of Violence (DiCanio, 1993, p. 330) comes this description of the classic Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Sherif experiment conducted in 1949 at a 11 – 12 yr. old boys camp. The Sherifs were motivated to conduct this study because he had a problem with theories that equated human behaviour as being consistent with animal behaviour. They felt there was something fundamentally different happening which related to the human response to outside influences such as a lack of resources and the desire to work cooperatively.

“...at a time when it was widely believed that the principal sources of intergroup aggression were race or religious differences. They thought that cultural values, particularly beliefs in competition and self-advancement, were equally likely sources and set out to test whether the achievement of goals by one group at the expense of the other engenders hostilities, even though both groups are composed of similar socially and emotionally adjusted individuals. The researchers established summer camps for children to which they brought 11- and 12-year-old boys from stable white Protestant families. During the first experiment the campers were given several days to form friendships. Then they were separated from their new friends and sorted into two groups of about a dozen each called the Red Devils and the Bull Dogs. The two groups ate and slept separately and participated in activities designed to foster intragroup solidarity. A series of contests brought the two groups into competition for prizes. A camping knife was promised to each member of whichever team won the overall competition. As the Red Devils fell behind in the competition, frustration and tempers mounted on both sides.

To add to frustrations the experimenters staged a party with refreshments. They battered half of the cake and ice cream and made sure the losing Red Devils arrived first at the party to claim the unbattered treats. The late-arriving Bull Dogs were upset with the food left behind and insults were exchanged.

At lunch the following day, further insults were followed by the hurling of food and cutlery. Throughout the rest of the day the team engaged in sporadic warfare using green apples as weapons. None of the researchers' attempts to restore cooperation had any effect until they arranged a competition with a team from a neighboring camp to provide the teams with a common enemy. In effect, to solve the problem of localized aggression, the researcher had to create a potential for hostilities on a larger scale – the whole camp against an external enemy.

Five years later, with two other groups in whom they had engendered hostility, the Sherifs tested the hypothesis that working together on a common endeavor promotes harmony. They created disasters in living conditions. The camp water supply broke down requiring the efforts of both groups to track down the problem and fix it, and the food truck got stuck, requiring both groups to haul it out with a rope. At the end of their stay, the two groups voted to go home together on the same bus.”

The 1965 Milgram (Milgram n.d.) experiments were a result of the Nazi trials after the holocaust. Milgram wanted to know if the holocaust was a result of mutual intent and a shared morality.

The volunteer subject was given the role of teacher, and the confederate, the role of learner. The participants drew slips of paper to determine their roles, but unknown to the subject, both slips said "teacher", and the actor claimed to have the slip that read "learner", thus guaranteeing that the participant would always be the "teacher". At this point, the "teacher" and "learner" were separated into different rooms where they could communicate but not see each other. In one version of the experiment, the confederate was sure to mention to the participant that he had a heart condition. The "teacher" was given an electric shock from the electro-shock generator as a sample of the shock that the "learner" would supposedly receive during the experiment. The "teacher" was then given a list of word pairs which he was to teach the learner. The teacher began by reading the list of word pairs to the learner. The teacher would then read the first word of each pair and read four possible answers. The learner would press a button to indicate his response. If the answer was incorrect, the teacher would administer a shock to the learner, with the voltage increasing in 15-volt increments for each wrong answer. If correct, the teacher would read the next word pair.

The subjects believed that for each wrong answer, the learner was receiving actual shocks. In reality, there were no shocks. After the confederate was separated from the subject, the confederate set up a tape recorder integrated with the electro-shock generator, which played pre-recorded sounds for each shock level. After a number of voltage level increases, the actor started to bang on the wall that separated him from the subject. After several times banging on the wall and complaining about his heart condition, all responses by the learner would cease.

At this point, many people indicated their desire to stop the experiment and check on the learner. Some test subjects paused at 135 volts and began to question the purpose of the experiment. Most continued after being assured that they would not be held responsible. A few subjects began to laugh nervously or exhibit other signs of extreme stress once they heard the screams of pain coming from the learner.

If at any time the subject indicated his desire to halt the experiment, he was given a succession of verbal prods by the experimenter, in this order:

1. Please *continue*.
2. The experiment requires that you *continue*.
3. It is absolutely essential that you *continue*.

4. You have no other choice, you *must* go on.

If the subject still wished to stop after all four successive verbal prods, the experiment was halted. Otherwise, it was halted after the subject had given the maximum 450-volt shock three times in succession.

The experimenter also gave special prods if the teacher made specific comments. If the teacher asked whether the learner might suffer permanent physical harm, the experimenter replied, "Although the shocks may be painful, there is no permanent tissue damage, so please go on". If the teacher said that the learner clearly wants to stop, the experimenter replied, "Whether the learner likes it or not, you must go on until he has learned all the word pairs correctly, so please go on".

What we learn from these experiments is threefold. First, people who were thought to make decisions based on compassion and respect for others can find themselves in situations where they are hostile towards one another and will inflict pain without regard to the other person's suffering. No matter what our neurological wiring and personal chemistry has constructed for us, we can subvert that through the influence of the expectations of those around us. Milgram himself specifically came up with two theories. In the Theory of Conformism he suggests that if people do not feel that they have ability or expertise they will defer to those in authority or who they perceive to have expertise even if this means violating their own personal held values. The second theory he proposed was Agent State Theory which suggests that once you believe that you are carrying out someone else's wishes then you relinquish a feeling of responsibility for the outcome. The original experiment was replicated numerous times, even recently, and done in more ethical ways and the results have been consistent with these original findings and hold true for both genders. They found that the closer the 'learner' to the 'teacher' the less likelihood of compliance by the 'teacher'. If there was more than one 'teacher' at a time and one or two of the other 'teachers' refused to participate then the likelihood of the remaining 'teachers' participating diminished. Also, it should be noted that some participants deduced from the beginning the true nature of the experiment and ceased participation early on. In terms of the impact on the participants a quote from a 'teacher' as he struggled with the ethics of the Vietnam War is insightful. He felt that this experience made him

realize how people conform to authority and it influenced his decision regarding participating in the war.

“While I was a subject in 1964, though I believed that I was hurting someone, I was totally unaware of why I was doing so. Few people ever realize when they are acting according to their own beliefs and when they are meekly submitting to authority... To permit myself to be drafted with the understanding that I am submitting to authority's demand to do something very wrong would make me frightened of myself... I am fully prepared to go to jail if I am not granted Conscientious Objector status. Indeed, it is the only course I could take to be faithful to what I believe. My only hope is that members of my board act equally according to their conscience” (Raiten-D'Antonio, 2010, p. 200).

The camp experiment shows that we do have the ability to work cooperatively particularly when the circumstances allow for it. When those in authority create conditions amenable to cooperation for this and resources are adequate it would appear that this is our preferred response. It also illustrates that we are motivated to cooperate more by the bond we have with our own group and that seeing an outside group as an adversary is sometimes a factor that draws us closer to our own group.

Third, the development of ethical decision-making is constantly evolving, often in the direction of being more cognizant of causing harm to people as in the understanding that the experiments which were conducted 40 – 50 years ago would not be approved today because of the potential emotional impact, short and long term, on the research participants. In fact, as a direct result of the Milgram Experiments, university ethics reviews became more stringent. But we are not always necessarily moving in the direction of more compassion as can be seen by recent policies of the right in the United States which are punitive towards women and the poor. We are seeing fewer wars in the world today compare, however one can argue that war is becoming more generalized as we see populations that suffer rape, assault and murder of civilians and abduction of children by groups fighting for political power (Welsh, 2012). Dictators, who refuse to leave power and are threatened by the populace, fight back by killing civilians without regard to whether or not they participated in revolt.

**WAR** – We resort to war for a number of reasons. Nonviolence is a more difficult intellectual exercise than war. It requires more creativity, patience, and listening. The results of violence are more immediate. The winner gets what they want and the loser has less say in any negotiated treaty. We are not allowed to speak against war. Those in political power tend to benefit in the short term by war so any argument against it is made to seem unpatriotic. Those who question the right of the state to engage in war are seen as a threat to the people in power. Once religion becomes aligned with a war-like state we see a perversion of any of the original non-violence tenets espoused by the founders of the religion – witness *The Borgias* television series which showcases the most horrific violence all done in the name of Christianity, a religion whose founder was an unequivocal supporter of non-violence.

In the short-term non-violence seems like an unattainable way to settle disputes. There is a tension between seeing humans inherently good or inherently evil. Is our essential nature a violent one or a peaceful one? When we believe that it is in our nature to be violent we see war as a natural outcome of what it means to be human. Many philosophers (Proudhon for one) and religions (Taoism, Hinduism) see the human condition as moving toward a state of perfection. As such war is then accepted as a state of imperfection that is natural to most humans. Advocates of pacifism are seen as weak as opposed to proponents of war being strong. Kurlansky (2006) says a pattern has developed since Christianity to kill those who will not fight because their pacifism is seen as a threat. And then they are made a saint. Our world has been constructed as good guys and bad guys starting with St. Augustine's "thesis of just war in the fifth century" up to the present day Westerns (Kurlansky, 2006, p. 31). Christianity which remained true to the non-violent philosophy of the religion when it started by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> century was espousing the view that "not only was violence acceptable but that killing pleased God when done in the cause of the Church." In an odd perversion, the Christian church in Europe, in its attempt to exert authority over kings and stop noblemen from raiding and looting church properties, declared that whatever war or looting that was happening would have to be halted on holy days, of which there were a significant number throughout the year. The Church then amassed a great army to enforce the days of peace and viciously attacked castles and villagers in one instance killing 1400 people who had sought refuge in the fortress.

Anthropologists study patterns of war and propensities for violence cross-culturally and while there is some debate about the differences in degree of violence it is clear that most cultures have within them some degree of sanctioned violence though the extent to which they pursue more conciliatory models of decision making varies. Anthropologists have identified cultures in Africa whose citizens, while they feel anger, they seem to manage it (DiCanio, 1993).

**Masculinities** – Giesbrecht provides the following overview of the literature on masculinities. Masculinities are qualities which are stereotypically seen to be ones which define men's identity. They include characteristics such as strength, lack of emotion, chivalry, responsibility, a focus on honour, that is to say strict rules about acceptable codes of behaviour, and heterosexuality. They can also include contempt for women and homosexuality, and a need to display stereotypically male behaviour. It should be noted that the understanding by those who research masculinities is that these masculine characteristics vary across cultures and can vary over time and may differ according to one's socioeconomic status. Masculinities therefore can be seen to be learned and constructed. They are not actions and beliefs with which men are born. Masculinities are also part of everyday life according to Connell (2012).

Messerschmidt (2000) studied young males and their construction of male identity which he found was intimately connected with acts of violence. Violence as part of the male identity can be detrimental to women in particular. Kaufman says that violence against women is definitely part of some masculinities.

When violence against women is perceived as part of masculinity either on an individual or collective level, the consequences for women are, as we know, dangerous and life threatening. This culture of violence that defines masculinities can be seen as a major contributor to the violence we see against women. Masculinities can also be framed as masculine 'resources' or practices which can be drawn upon to respond to situations. They are not all negative such as violence. Civility and chivalry are some of the more positive male responses.

There is a sense that men learn the masculine identity characterized by violence through male peer support (DeKeseredy and Schwartz, 2005, p. 115). Also, there is evidence that boys who witness violence are more likely to become men who are violent. “Deborah Reitzel-Jaffe and David Wolfe’s study of 585 male college students (2001) found that violence in men’s family of origin predicted abuse in their own dating relationships and predicted the development of negative beliefs in turn predicted their own use of violence or coercion in relationships and their association with peers who endorse violent attitudes and behaviors. Finally, the association with negative peers also predicted the occurrence of abuse toward a dating partner” (Dragiewicz, 2001, p. 116).

“Research comparing why and how women and men use force in relationships has consistently found sex-disparate patterns and has indicated divergent etiologies for women’s and men’s violence” (Dragiewicz, 2001 p. 62). This difference in male and female response suggests the possibility of feminine resources which are counter to masculine resources and which might be based on conciliation, negotiation and compassion for the other. Men are more likely to be involved in crime and to be more violent than women, but there is an emerging concern that women are more frequently turning to masculine resources for conflict resolution rather than the typically feminine resources which are more conciliatory and non-violent. Indeed some identify violence in the vociferous preaching against violence by women who focus on shaming the perpetrators who may be struggling with their own fears which led to their violent behaviour (Jenkins, 2006).

## VIOLENCE JUSTIFIED

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When we do resort to violence we often attempt to justify it, both when it occurs in war and in the interpersonal level. This attempt at justification implies an understanding at some level that the act of violence is fundamentally wrong. The sites where we socially justify violence are in war, self-defence, passion is excused partially, and to discipline children. Many philosophers say our true nature is one that is compassionate and loving. “...the powerful depths of human nature...is made of goodness and generosity” (Dalai Lama’s & Hatier, 2002, p. 133). We never find



ourselves justifying our compassion except in times when the group demands violence from us for a 'just' cause.

**War** - Walzer's book from 1977, *Just and Unjust War* is a classic in how we rationalize war. "Walzer proposes that [people]... can apply practical morality (the present structure of the moral world) to debating the justification for war and the conduct in fighting one. Walzer argues nations must fight a just war with a just cause" (Just and Unjust Wars, n.d.). Restraints on what we can and can't do in war are grounded in cultural norms, religious beliefs and social structures. He says a war can be fought if it is done to protect human rights and that it should not be fought if it is against people's will at which times it becomes immoral. Also, civilians should not be attacked or harmed unless they are engaged in the enemy's war related activities. War should be a last resort after other non-violent efforts have been made. We may have war if it is an act of self-defence of a state's political boundaries. It may be used if it is deemed there is an imminent threat of aggression. Soldiers must adhere to the determined conventions and rules of war. "The legal argument alone cannot sufficiently debate the decision to go to war. The debate rests on practical morality. Practical morality is relative to the time and place in history, thus it changes. Be cognizant of the domestic and international environment when deciding on a military course of action" (Just and Unjust Wars, n.d.). Walzer says there are moral values involved in the decision to go to war and there are moral values which guide specific actions in war. He says, therefore, that you can have a just war that is fought unjustly or an unjust war that is fought justly.

But there are flaws in Walzer's arguments. First, he says that people should not be involved in a war against their will. But all citizens are implicated when their government makes the decision to go to war. Following Walzer's logic, you would need consensus from every citizen to enter into war. How often do we see a war taking place and the impact it has on people's lives in sometimes horrific ways and you ask "Whose war is this?" Did the people suffering, many of them women and children, have a say in determining that this conflict should occur? When Walzer argues that our morals are grounded in our culture, religious beliefs and social structures he seems to neglect the fact that some of our values are not ones that we want to maintain, as we have seen in our

discussion of masculinities that support violence, not to mention the direction that Christianity and Islam has taken in supporting militaristic solutions rather than nonviolent solutions. Walzer is a proponent of the human rights approach, which is a very popular discourse at the moment it must be acknowledged. However, there are problems inherent in a rights approach. Brewster Kneen (2009) in his book *The Tyranny of Rights* outlines the challenges that a human rights approach to justice and morality presents. He says that rights are actually about laws and not morality at all. They “transform a human necessity into a legal claim.” Rights are often framed as a demand at the expense of others. They are vague generalities that avoid naming the details of what it is we are really trying to achieve. In war, Kneen says, rights are used as rhetoric to pursue and maintain power.

When Walzer says that civilians must not be harmed, how can this possibly be avoided? Every war has civilian casualties which we saw most graphically for the first time on our televisions during the Vietnam War, (or the American War as it is called in Vietnam) portrayals which arguably played a part in turning public opinion against the war. Since then, governments do everything in their power to prevent these images from meeting the public eye. We are also living in a new age when war is conducted differently where attacks on civilians are an integral part of the strategy of war, as they have always been, but now seem to be replacing taking on battle with another country’s army. Dodd (2009) says that Walzer’s argument is flawed because it does not confront the morality of the actual acts committed within war by the individuals. He defines rules for a soldier’s behaviour but he does not analyse whether or not these rules meet one’s personal moral standards.

These philosophical questions around war seem far removed from the experience of everyday Canadians in rural areas of our country. But whenever we make exceptions for violence, even when we take a position that condones war in other places, or the involvement of our country in wars in other countries, we are making a statement that we agree that violence is acceptable in some situations. Our involvement in Afghanistan was seen as a ‘just war’ in that we were fighting for women’s freedom. But every time we accept the use of violence, we are making a choice to forego other responses. By condoning war we place ourselves

in a contradictory position when we ask that people not use violence in interpersonal settings. Why are the justifications for war acceptable but the justifications that we make for our own personal violence not acceptable. The late Brian Vallee (2007) said that the violence against women in our society was indeed a war. It is the most egregious war, by Walzer's definition, in that it is a war fought by a civilian army against civilians. If we see interpersonal aggression as part of a continuum of violence which is defined by state aggressions on one extreme and interpersonal on the other then we can never fully justify anything that occurs on this continuum from a moral perspective that includes values such as love, respect, generosity and feelings of compassion.

**Men's Narratives** - There are consistent themes that emerge in men's narratives about why they abuse women. They tend to minimize their abusive behaviour, blame the victim for partner's failure to submit, and claim the act was defensive and not violent. These themes reflect that there are norms indicating when it might be acceptable or necessary to use violence in intimate relationships. Men draw on these norms to justify their actions implying an understanding that the action was outside of what is morally correct and must be explained. These norms are socially enforced in that men find support from their peers in justifying their actions. But at the same time men often describe violent acts as something that is not part of their usual character and they see what they did as an isolated event (Hearn, 1998). Feminists say that men's justification for their violence stems from a "patriarchal imperative to maintain male supremacy" but men do not tend to see their violence in this political context. "Batterer narratives reveal a very low threshold of tolerance for women's failure to submit to male domination and the fact that many male batterers equate women's defiance with violence against men" (Dragiewicz, 2001, p. 78).

In her master's thesis, Hannah Jarvinen (2011) has produced a surprisingly insightful breakdown of the thought processes of men who have abused women. She categorizes their responses to their actions into 6 main areas. Some men feel that they are a failure and feel 'uncertain' as though they are wondering if they are able to function as moral human beings. They may identify that they had no other skills to get out of the situation and that they had no match for their female partner's verbal

abilities. Some said they were driven to violence as a response to stress. They identified feeling boxed in. This feeling had an element of blame to it implying that it was his partner's fault that they felt this way. A feeling of being temporarily out of control was identified, sometimes alcohol related. Others said it was only 'natural' that they respond this way.

Dragiewicz (2001) says that men's narratives are a rich source of information about conflicting social norms. There is no question that the values previously discussed which are embedded in male identity that include the need to dominate women are played out in men's violence towards women. Dragiewicz (2001, p. 61) cites numerous studies on masculinities which say that frequently "men use violence to produce and defend patriarchal masculinities. Not only can we see in men's narratives this consistency with the values of masculinities, we can also see more generally the cases where violence is excused such as when we are feeling stressed (which could also be seen as crimes of passion) or when we are acting in self-defense. There is also the idea that violence is a natural human response that we must expect, particularly from men, as part of being human which implies a certain inevitability. On the other hand, there is also an implication in the narratives that there might be ways to handle a situation differently if one possessed the appropriate skill-set.

**Children** - As identified by the United Nations commissioned study, violence against children occurs within the family, in schools, in alternative care institutions and detention facilities, in the workplace and in communities (Pinheiro, 2006, p. 4). As well, children suffer violence as casualties of war including being coerced into military service. Perhaps more than other types of violence, violence against children occurs irrespective of culture, class, geographical location and ethnicity. While this situation has existed for centuries, we are becoming even more aware of the problem thanks to our enhanced ability to communicate globally. We have a relatively comprehensive idea about the pervasiveness and the numbers involved.

- Only 33 of 196 countries have a complete prohibition on the corporal punishment of children (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012).

- Children in over 75 countries experience violence at school including being whipped and being beaten with a cane (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012) (Pienheiro, 2006).
- The World Health Organization estimates that almost 53,000 child deaths in 2002 were homicides with the rate in low income countries being twice as high as the rate in high income countries. (World Health Report, 2006).
- Higher levels of vulnerability to violence are experienced by children with disabilities, orphaned children and children from marginalized populations (Pienheiro, 2006).
- In Canada a 2004 Supreme Court ruling upheld parents' right to administer corporal punishment to children aged 2-12 but not using objects and not involving slaps or blows to the head.

This violence against children continues despite the fact that we know the harmful and long-term effects of violence on the individual. Children suffer acute and long-term physical consequences such as brain injuries, abdominal illnesses, and problems with reproductive organs. Mental health problems are known to occur as a result of corporal punishment such as sleeping disorders, depression, addiction and the likelihood of growing up to be violent (Runyan, Wattam, Ikeda, Hassan, & Ramiro, 2002, p. 59-56) (Durrant, 2011, p. 1374) Particularly disturbing is the fact that this violence occurs at the hands of people such as teachers, parents and other caregivers who have a duty of care towards the children. In addition, while states may have signed human rights conventions, or have publicly recognized the needs of the child, "much violence remains legal, state-authorized and legally approved" (Pienheiro, 2006, p. 3). Studies show that most violence against children is perpetrated as a form of punishment (Durrant, 2011, p. 1375). We have come to believe that physical violence is a legitimate way to control children's behaviour in spite of the fact that we know it to be wrong in other contexts and indeed we have clear laws and repercussions to protect adults from the same type of violence. It is the justification of violence against children that allows its continuance.

#### PHILOSOPHICAL AND OTHER TEACHINGS OF THE VALUES OF NONVIOLENCE

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There are places where the morals to which we should be aspiring are defined and articulated. They reside in many religious beliefs,

spiritualities and philosophies. Kurlansky (2006) documents how we are called to practice nonviolence in Christianity, Hinduism, Jainism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism and Islam although over the course of time exceptions to these directives have emerged from the acknowledgement that it is acceptable to kill animals to eat to brutal wars in the name of religion when the state entwines with religion to achieve its political ends without the benefit of adhering to the original tenets of the religion. The philosophies of Canadian indigenous cultures, and in some other parts of the world as well, which existed pre-capitalism have teachings containing wisdom that often lead us towards a path of nonviolence. The discussion of morals is a major purview of philosophy and the reflections from these teachings can inform our actions as well.

**Christianity** - Christianity, in its original form is perhaps the most unequivocal in its requirements for nonviolence. Kurlansky states that Jesus was initially inspired by the teachings of Hillel and is evidenced in the Sermon on the Mount,

“‘In everything, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.’ His first example was the interdiction against killing. But he went even further. Even being angry at a fellow human being was a sin. In Jesus’ view of Jewish law, there was no room for violence of any kind, even emotional violence, and weapons, military, and war were clearly illegal. The righteous person who walked in God’s path loved everyone even his enemies” (Kurlansky 2009, p. 19).

Kurlansky tells us how the early Christians sought to maintain this belief in nonviolence, even to the extent of labeling the loss of life in warfare as murder. There is documented evidence of this teaching for example in the writings of St. Ignatius who said that warfare should be abolished and if people were truly following Jesus’ teachings that it would be.

The early Christians successfully held to this belief until church and state become entwined when Constantine I, Caesar of the Roman Empire, took power in 312 and saw in the Christian religion a possibility of increasing his chances of winning at war through a supernatural connection with a Christian motif and grounded in his adoption of Christianity. From there the commitment to nonviolence by Christians began its downward spiral to the point where it is today. We see fundamentalist Christians justify

violence in the pursuit of their country's political agenda which they identify as being morally superior to that of others. Once this corruption of Christianity became the norm in the political realm it was difficult to stay true to the original message in people's everyday lives for the everyday life is intimately connected to the dictates and requirements of the state.

**Buddhism, Spirituality, and True Nature of Happiness** - One of the consistent and main themes of Buddhism is that the true nature of humans is one of love and compassion. Buddhism provides instructions on how to find our true nature. To do this we must follow the tenet of nonviolence. The teachings say that at first we obey the rule but over time we come to find that it comes naturally to us as we lose our fears and connect with our true selves. Nonviolence therefore is seen as a sign of strength not as a sign of weakness as we are often led to believe. Buddhism tells us that violence will always fail because it goes against our essential humanness. Violence may give us what we are looking for in the short-term but because it causes harm to others it will not bring us happiness. We find happiness through meditation (Dalai Lama & Hatier, 2002, p. 133). Even the killing of animals is eschewed however if they are killed for food it must be done humanely, just as humans are the food in the soil when we die and we and animals should be given a life of the least suffering possible. We should not fear death because it is part of the cycle of life (Kurlansky, 2009, p.9).

The main reason that people inflict suffering on others is that they do not understand the true nature of happiness. "They think that others' pain will in some way bring about their own happiness, or that their own happiness is more important than that of others, regardless of any suffering incurred in the process of securing it. In the long run, causing others to suffer and trampling on their rights to a peaceful and happy existence only lead to one's own anxiety, fear, and doubt" (Dalai Lama & Hatier, 2002, p. 245). Violence can be seen as our own response to fear. The Buddhists are experts at finding where happiness resides. Venerable David Lungtok, a Buddhist monk says, "If we train our mind properly, happiness will be the result" (Graham, 2007). Research backs up what Buddhism has been practicing for hundreds of years that among other things meditation can relieve stress, anxiety and depression all of which

contribute to potential acting out violently. The brain waves of Buddhist monks have been studied and there is evidence of an increase in gamma rays and increased neural connectivity into all parts of the brain which indicates physiologically feelings of happiness. The Buddhists generate these feelings of happiness when they think about love and compassion. What we have come to call neuroplasticity and cognitive behaviour therapy is what the Buddhists have learned to do through meditation. Meditation involves training the mind not to be distracted by our thoughts by focusing on one thing such as breathing or a body part. In Buddhism we learn to detach ourselves from our thoughts while in some of the other similar therapies we might try to replace these thoughts with other more positive thoughts.

"Negative emotions such as anger and desire cause all of our problems. However by applying antidotes, it's possible to free ourselves from their harmful influence. So for instance, to overcome anger, Buddhists cultivate the practice of patience. Similarly, positive behaviours such as acting in a kind and loving way, or as Buddhists say, practising 'loving-kindness', give rise to joyful experiences and we should therefore try to cultivate them" (Graham, 2007).

What the Buddhists are practicing is spiritualism which means getting in touch in the most intimate way possible with one's core values which is different from adhering to the rules of an organized religion says Dr. Craig Hassed a Senior Lecturer in Monash's Department of General Practice cited in Graham (2007). "If, for example, people express compassion in their daily life, if they respect and live according to simple natural laws and principles, if they believe in the interconnectedness of life, they're leading a very 'spiritual' life." And this is what makes people happy. Religion is not required to have virtues such as love and compassion and other positive values. What Buddhism says is that we have to be mindful of these values and take time to think about them in our everyday lives. The Dalai Lama encourages people to find their virtuous selves within their own context perhaps through a religion with which they are familiar. The main goal is to think empathically. When we are thinking empathically we minimize anger and hate. Lungtok summarizes, "Therefore as we're all seeking happiness, it makes sense to try to be as good as possible" (Graham, 2007).



**Tipi Teachings** - We are so fortunate to have access to the knowledge of elder Mary Lee (2006-2012) from Pelican Lake, Saskatchewan who has articulated the tipi teachings so that all may benefit from the wisdom inherent in these values. Aboriginal philosophy is strongly grounded in values which are passed on from the elders over the generations. These values are based on a respect for all living things and acknowledging the balance that is required to sustain the planet. Aboriginal thinking itself is circular allowing us to conceptualize ourselves as part of the natural order. We are part of the circle of life which is symbiotically connected. These values serve to help us treat each other with respect and sustain our planet. If we are guided by these values we will be moving towards a nonviolent society. Elder Mary Lee has shared this wisdom with us as a gift and encourages people to pass on her articulation of the teachings.

#### Tipi Structure

Today I make tipis that stand twenty-two feet high, but years ago, tipis were maybe twelve or thirteen feet. They didn't have the material for large structures because they used hide instead of canvas and rocks instead of ground pegs. That is why today you can still find circles of rocks, or tipi rings, on the land. It wouldn't make sense to have your tipi too high, because the winds and storms would catch it. As time passed, the rocks were replaced with chokecherry ground pegs because they were one of the harder woods once they were dry. Today I cut and peel spruce for the tipi poles and I use sticks to adjust the front flaps of the tipi entryway. My mother used a bone from the moose leg to close the tipi in the front. My mother never used a measuring tape, or mapped things out mathematically – she just cut out her tipi and made it. And each time it was perfect.

The Cree people use 15 poles to make the structure of the tipi. For every pole in that tipi, there is a teaching. So there are 15 teachings that hold up the tipi. Other Nations use 16 poles, and maybe more, I don't know. All I know is what I know I was taught and that is the teachings for 15 poles. The tipi does not have to face east all the time; it can rotate in any direction. It is only the first time that I request that the tipi face east, because of the opening ceremony.

To start, we take three poles and bind them together to make a tripod. Each pole also has a very specific meaning. These three together fortify the structure. They are obedience, respect and humility. Notice the poles, the way they stand. If they stood straight up and down, they couldn't support a tipi. But balanced properly together, they are able to

reinforce each other. There's a teaching in that. In order to make a family, you need three: the two parents and the child, to make that balance.

The tops of the poles have many teachings. Each one points in a different direction. We are like those poles. We all need the strength and support of our families and communities, but we accept that we all have different journeys and point in different directions. The poles also teach us that no matter what version of the Great Spirit we believe in, we still go to the same Creator from those many directions and belief systems; we just have different journeys to get there. And where the poles come out together at the top, it's like they're creating a nest. And they also resemble a bird with its wings up when it comes to land, and that's another teaching: the spirit coming to land, holding its wings up. We could talk about each of these poles for a long time; each one holds many teachings, and takes a long time and much experience to truly understand. I will give you some words on each pole, to give a beginning idea of what the poles represent.

### The Values

**Obedience** means accepting guidance and wisdom from outside of ourselves, using our ears before our mouth. We learn by listening to traditional stories, by listening to our parents or guardians, our fellow students and our teachers. We learn by their behaviors and reminders, so that we know what is right and what is wrong.

**Respect** means giving honor to our Elders and fellow students, to the strangers that come to visit our community, and to all of life. We must honor the basic rights of all others.

**Humility** teaches that we are not above or below others in the circle of life. We feel humbled when we understand our relationship with Creation. We are so small compared to the majestic expanse of Creation, just a "strand in the web of life." Understanding this helps us to respect and value life.

**Happiness** - After the tripod is up, the fourth pole completes your doorway. This fourth pole teaches us **happiness**. We must show some enthusiasm to encourage others. Our good actions will make our ancestors happy in the next world. This is how we share happiness.

**Love** - If we are to live in harmony we must accept one another as we are, and accept others who are not in our circle. **Love** means to be good and kind to one another and to ourselves.

**Faith** - We must learn to believe and trust others, to believe in a power greater than ourselves, whom we worship and who gives us strength to be a worthy member of the human race. To sustain our spirituality, we need to walk it every day. Not just sometimes, but every day. It's not just once a week; it's your life.

**Kinship** - Our family is important to us. This includes our parents, brothers and sisters, who love us and give us roots that tie us to the lifeblood of the earth. It also includes extended family: grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, and their in-laws and children. They are also our brothers and sisters and give us a sense of belonging to a community.

**Cleanliness** - Today when we talk about cleanliness, most people think hygiene, and that's very important. But years ago, when old people talked about cleanliness, they meant spiritual cleanliness. When I used to sit with the old Kookums in their tipis, spiritually, they were so powerfully clean. Clean thoughts come from a clean mind and this comes from our spirituality. With a clean mind and sense of peace within we learn not to inflict ills on others. Good health habits also reflect a clean mind.

**Thankfulness** - We learn to give thanks: to always be thankful for the Creator's bounty, which we are privileged to share with others, and for all the kind things others do for us.

**Sharing** - We learn to be part of a family and community by helping with the provisions of food and other basic needs. Through the sharing of responsibilities we learn the value of working together and enjoying the fruits of our labor.

**Strength** - We are not talking about physical strength, but spiritual strength. That was instilled in us when we were young people through fasting. We must learn to be patient in times of trouble and not to complain but to endure and show understanding. We must accept difficulties and tragedies so that we may give others strength to accept their own difficulties and tragedies.

**Good Child-Rearing** - Children are gifts from the Creator. We are responsible for their wellbeing, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and intellectually, since they are blessed with the gift of representing the continuing circle of life, which we perceive to be the Creator's will.

**Hope** - We must look forward to moving toward good things. We need to have a sense that the seeds we are planting will bear fruit for our children, families and communities.

**Ultimate Protection** - This is the ultimate responsibility to achieve the balance and well-being of the body, mind, emotions and spirit for the individual, the family, the community and the nation.

### **Control Flaps**

The control flaps on a tipi teach that we are all connected by relationship and that we depend on each other. Having respect for and understanding this connection creates and controls harmony and balance in the circle of life. When we don't know how to use the flaps, it gets all smoky inside the tipi, and you can't see, which is like life – because if we can't live in balance, we can't see clearly where we're going.

### **Conclusion**

**Poles** - For every time that a pole is added, a rope goes around to bind that pole into place. You have to be there and see it to appreciate that teaching. That rope is a sacred bond, binding all the teachings together until they are all connected.

I have shared these teachings with you with the hope that they will help keep the women strong and will help our communities to nurture healthy, balanced people.

**Gandhi** - Gandhi said, "Nonviolence is a perfect stage. It is a goal towards which all mankind moves naturally, though unconsciously" (Kurlansky, 2002, p. 7). He believed human beings were working towards perfection. Violence was a barbaric retrogressive trait that had not yet been shed. The human being who achieved complete nonviolence, according to Gandhi, would not be a saint. "He only becomes truly a man," he said. Gandhi's ethical thinking was influenced by some of the many philosophers with whom he was well-acquainted specifically Plato, Salter, Thoreau, Tolstoy and Ruskin. He was also profoundly influenced by Hinduism, Jainism and Christianity. Gandhi lived an austere life trying to improve himself on his search for truth (Murphy, 1991).

Gandhi believed the universe to be an organic whole where we should be striving for harmony in our thoughts, words and actions. He said that human nature is regarded as fundamentally virtuous and that we as part of the human condition are always struggling to move away from sin and to become more virtuous. We are all capable of becoming moral; it is part of what it means to be human that we strive for this. Gandhi's two main

beliefs were based on the concepts of truth and nonviolence. He saw truth as residing in each of us. As individuals we are capable of finding truth although not in one's own lifetime necessarily. Indeed he said that, "the perfect truth can never be achieved while the spirit is embodied" (Murphy, 1991). As a group we are moving over time to finding truth and becoming more virtuous. The other truth is the ultimate truth which resides with God. God and truth are the same thing according to Gandhi. Moral laws and codes are the basis of the ultimate truth, that is the rules that lead us to treat other people with compassion, love, and respect. Conflict is inevitable says Gandhi, and even desirable, but violence resulting from conflict is not inevitable. Some say that Gandhi saw possibilities for violence, for example in a just war, because he said that he thought apathy was worse than violence and that if one had to choose between the two they should choose violence. But one does not necessarily have to assume that this belief infers that he supported violence. It may have been an illustration of the depth to which he abhorred apathy. Apathy can be responsible for violence to others continuing, as we saw in the failure of the world to use nonviolent strategies when they were available to them in order to avert the horrors WWII. So it may be that he thought the violence resulting from apathy, which he also called cowardice, was greater than outright violent acts themselves. Gandhi was a practical realist and did not eschew this label. He was committed to action. Nonviolence never means doing nothing. Rather nonviolence means using other strategies to make a fair world. In terms of the practicality, Gandhi was always willing to make compromise which is consistent with his view of seeing the world as evolving over time through a process to a more and more moral condition.

Should all negotiation and mediation fail in bringing an end to disagreement then Gandhi proposed the philosophy of Satyagraha which were strategies to effect change which were nonviolent. To engage in a Satyagraha strategy requires great courage and the willingness in extreme cases to die for one's beliefs in a fair society. Gandhi said, "There are many causes I would die for but none for which I would kill" (Murphy, 1991). Satyagraha uses reason and a call on the morality of the opponent to do the right thing. When you respond to your opponent in a completely nonviolent manner, then their continued violence appears immoral and eventually they will be called upon to negotiate in peace.

“Satyagraha in this sense is highly creative. It creates no enemies, hatred or lasting bitterness, but ultimately only mutual regard. After a successful campaign there is not the least hint of gloating, nor is there any desire to embarrass the opponent. The former opponent becomes a friend. There are no losers, only winners. A truthful Satyagraha campaign, though it demands courage, self-discipline and humility on the part of the Satyagrahi, brings to bear tremendous moral pressure on the opponent and can bring about remarkable transformations.

Two factors are absolutely crucial to understand. There can be no Satyagraha in a cause which is not indisputably just and truthful. Nor can there be any element of violence or bitterness in a Satyagraha campaign - it must be conducted in a spirit of genuine nonviolence. Any campaign which is insincere in its spirit of nonviolence, or is not undertaken in a clearly just cause is not Satyagraha as Gandhi meant it” (Murphy, 1991).

**Restorative Justice** - Alan Jenkins from Adelaide Australia works with men who have been abusive to their partners. In this capacity he has developed an idea for the values to which we should be aspiring if we are to create nonviolent communities. He suggests that we are all inherently moral people and through a therapeutic approach we can be encouraged to find these positive values within us. He takes issue with feminists who deny that men who abuse women have any intrinsic moral values. He says the “shame, disgrace, [and] remorse” that men feel after they have been violent can be overlooked. Jenkins says that remorse (Gaita) and shame are “a pained bewildered realization of what it means to wrong someone, an awakened sense of the reality of another...through the shock of wrongdoing to the other.” Jenkins uses these emotions in his work with men and calls upon them in their striving to become ethical. We are all doing this as imperfect humans, constantly striving to become ethical and we should support each other to the best of our abilities in these efforts. We can overestimate a person’s capability for remorse when we do not acknowledge the past struggles in his or her life that have not afforded the person the necessary skills and capabilities. And we can underestimate his or her preferences for moral behaviour. We need to hear people’s narratives in order to identify where their morality resides and the extent to which they are in touch with themselves as a moral person.

Jenkins says that we must be aware of the power relationships we have with people in our everyday lives and expose, deconstruct and understand the power tactics that we use. Jenkins likes the concept of restorative justice because it allows the offender to develop the capacity to be generous and imagine the experience of the other. He sees the process of restorative justice as having the goals of preventing further abuse, providing restitution for harm, and then reclamation of the violent person's integrity. On the part of the victim, their forgiveness of the offence would involve relinquishment of suffering and resentment, a pardoning of the perpetrator and the abusive act, and reconciliation which is found within the possibilities of the first two. The third part of the restorative process is atonement which involves having a realization of the nature and effects of abuse, restitution which involves a repairing of the harm that was done, and restoration which is arrived at by acceptance of the wrong-doing and the return to morality. Atonement is achieved through the "extraordinary experience of remorse and love."

In recognition of the feelings of the victim, however, Jenkins says that we must disconnect apology from forgiveness and forgetting from forgiveness. A victim is not obligated by the restorative actions of the abuser to forgive and forget. He draws on the philosophy of Derrida who says that forgiveness is to restore normality. "It should not **be** normality. It should be extraordinary. Forgiveness is the business of the other person."

There are a number of informing principles or values that will lead to nonviolent communities according to Jenkins and these principles apply to our expectations for behaviour in all involved – therapist, client, victim and community. He says that safety is always the first and foremost concern in any intervention. Other principles are accepting responsibility for one's actions, accountability to all involved including the larger community, self-respect and respect for others, fairness, hospitality, love, and generosity. These principles says Jenkins allow us to open ourselves up to difference and help us work towards becoming more ethical.

Lois Presser (2004) interviewed men who had committed serious crimes, some of whom were on the verge of execution. Their narratives were characterized by disorganized thoughts and sad efforts to define

themselves as moral people. They were all clearly damaged people either through child abuse or perhaps brain damage. But still they tried to define themselves as moral people as perhaps we all do. It may be that some of us find putting our wishes to be ethical into practice more difficult than others.

**Movement to End Corporal Punishment of Children** - The philosophy of the UN is that violence against children can never be justified. They want to move all states within our global community toward enacting laws which prevent violence against children and to this end they promote educating the public on the importance of ending corporal punishment and other forms of violence. The report of the independent expert for the UN study on violence against children has 12 recommendations which, if implemented, will move us in the direction of ending violence against children. These recommendations include legally prohibiting all violence against children, ensuring accountability and ending the impunity of perpetrators, and promoting non-violent values. Indeed many countries have taken action as a response to the recommendations. Countries such as Belgium, Lebanon, Norway, Mexico, Tunisia, Uruguay, India, Kiribati, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe have either established or strengthened national committees, enacted legislation, or put into place action plans to end violence against children (United Nations Children's Fund, 2006, p. 7).

The voices of children are now frequently being sought out and heard. These voices reflect a belief in non-violence often because they know the suffering caused by violence. Their quotes reflect the need for values such as love, respect, fairness and knowledge:

"End physical and psychological/emotional punishment and promote love and affection for children. (Statement by children and young people to the Regional consultation for the UN Study against Violence against Children, 17 – 18 May 2005, Islamabad, Pakistan.) (End Corporal Punishment, 2013).

"I was asked to come here today to talk about what I think children need to have a better future for the Pacific. There are two things which I think are the most



important for children. One is good family life and the other is a good education so that children can have good opportunities and get jobs when they grow up.”

(12 year old Karen Abel from Central Primary School in Port Vila in Vanuatu at the 33<sup>rd</sup> South Pacific Forum, held in Nauru, where the theme was *The State of Pacific Children*.)

(End Corporal Punishment, 2013).

“When I grow up and have children I won’t use corporal punishment on my kids. Beating a child makes the child feel worthless and unloved. You must show a child love.” (Child in Namibia, quoted in *Corporal Punishment: National and International Perspectives*, 2010.)

(End Corporal Punishment, 2013).

“The EU should ensure that a total prohibition against corporal punishment of children is introduced in all Member States and candidate countries. Why should it be allowed to hit children when it is not allowed to hit adults? Adults must convince children to behave properly instead of hitting them....”

(A Children’s Summit, held on June 13 2001 in Göteborg, Sweden urged the EU to ensure that all Member States and candidate countries ban all corporal punishment.)

(Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012).

There is a global movement to end corporal punishment of children. For example there exists the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children whose stated goal is “to act as a catalyst to encourage more action and progress towards ending all corporal punishment in all continents; to encourage governments and other organizations to ‘own’ the issue and work actively on it; and to support national campaigns with relevant information and assistance.” This organization hosts a comprehensive website which keeps track of progress made in the move to end corporal punishment of children. Also, in Canada, the Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth outlines the research which indicates how harmful corporal punishment is to children. They recommend public education as well as laws, and enforcement of laws that will protect children. There is a call to action to communities and individuals.

One of the concepts which people involved with the movement encourage is ‘Positive Discipline.’ Positive discipline is grounded in an

understanding of a child's developmental process and is solution-focused. It also values based promoting non-violence and respect. The manual 'Positive Discipline: What it is and How to do it' provides a synopsis of the concept.

"What positive discipline is:

- Positive discipline is about long-term solutions that develop your child's own self-discipline.
- Positive discipline is clear communication of your expectations, rules and limits.
- Positive discipline is about building a mutually respectful relationship with your child.
- Positive discipline is about teaching your child life-long skills.
- Positive discipline is about increasing your child's competence and confidence to handle challenging situations.
- Positive discipline is about teaching courtesy, non-violence, empathy, self-respect...and respect for others" (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012).

All these solutions to changing our mind-set about the justification of violence against children are grounded in the belief that violence is never an option when trying to shape or change human behaviour. The strategies of positive discipline correspond to other teachings of non-violence. There are alternatives to violence and we can learn these alternatives and use them consistently as a response to the behavior of others or conflict, or to help us achieve our individual and communal goals.

## EQUALITY

### STUDIES IN INEQUALITY

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We might ask if there is difficulty having access to food, water, shelter and health care, how can a person be able to contribute to the economy much less be creative in anyway, or form healthy attachments to one's children. The Spirit Level is a book documenting the connection between social inequality and quality of life focusing on the difference in wealth between the richest and the poorest in a particular country, meaning income disparities within the state. The authors provide convincing evidence that the more inequality there is in a country the poorer the quality of life for the people in that country in terms of health and social relationships including violence. Rates of violence are higher in countries

where there is a relatively greater disparity in wealth among that country's citizens. The authors cite a comparative study between homicide rates in Chicago and England. The pattern is the same for both localities for age and gender. Where there is a huge discrepancy in terms of income disparity. In this example of the most extreme violence, we can see that the determining factor for the homicide rate differential is income disparity. "This is a robust finding i.e. it is not due to anything else." Wilkinson and Pickett (2009, p. 140) cite sociologist Robert Sampson who has studied violent crime in the United States. "In the USA poor neighbourhoods have become ghettos, ring-fenced and neglected by the better-off who move out." He showed that the more cohesive the neighbourhood, the lower the violent crime rate.

This finding holds true for other types of violence as well. The overall wealth of the country is not the issue at hand say the authors. It is the degree of the gap between the most rich and the most poor in the country. A country may have little wealth but if there is a relatively flat distribution of this wealth violence is less likely. Wilkinson and Pickett, the authors of the Spirit Level, point out that there are poorer social relations in societies where income disparity is higher. Societies that have lower levels of trust amongst individuals have higher rates of homicide. This statistic implies a high level of fear existing in these societies. Spending on health and social programs were not factors that affected social cohesion. Rather it appears from the research that income disparity reduces social cohesion which results in lower levels of trust and there is a proven relationship between low levels of trust and the homicide rate.

We know that the findings in this kind of research suggesting a link between poor quality of life, and in our case, violence, meet opposition from those who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) refer to the work of Oreskes and Conway in their book *Merchants of Doubt* who suggest that those resistant to a more equitable distribution of income do so in order to defend the free market economy. Wilkinson and Pickett point out, however, that the general public says that they want to live in societies that have less income disparity. Even in the United States, regardless of political affiliation, most people value a society that does not have a wide range between the highest earners and the lowest. There is a lot at stake for those earning

the most. They stand to lose enormous wealth through loss of interest on borrowed money should lending be curtailed. "It has been estimated that growing inequality meant that, in the years before the 2008 crash, about \$1.5trn per year was being siphoned from the bottom 90 per cent of the US population to the top 10 per cent" (Equality Trust, 2011).

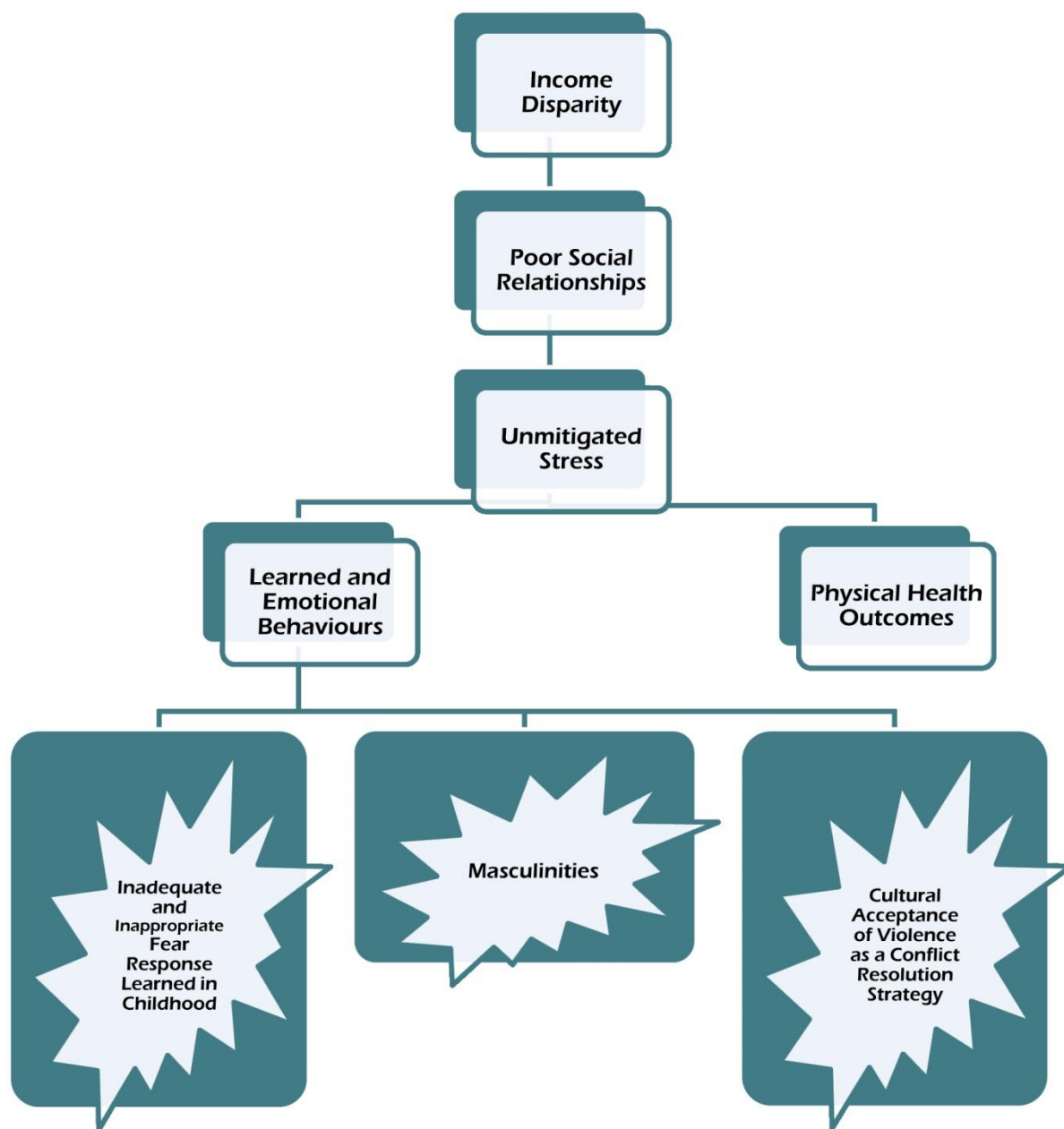
It appears that the proponents of the unfettered market will espouse their cause at great expense to people's personal health and safety and the environment. Naomi Klein's (2007) book *Shock Doctrine* is worth referencing as she documents the entrenchment of the principles of a free market economy, led by the Milton Freeman and the Chicago School, and the impact that the imposition of this approach has had on countries where the United States has imposed these principles. She documents the history of most South American countries who valued principles of equality and a commitment to ensuring that all citizens had enough to eat, access to education and health care plus understood the importance of national control of resources. Fueled by the ideology of a free market economy, the United States provided American free market education to some South American business scholars and then financed the military to stage the bloody coups with which we are all familiar, and from which many of our Saskatchewan residents escaped as refugees. After the coups the public resources which were formerly held by government, were sold to American companies. The military at the insistence of the American government and economists ended all economic redistribution programs resulting in starvation and extreme poverty for people who had previously had been part of socially and physically healthy communities. South America still struggles to overcome this disastrous chain of events today. These movements back to more egalitarian societies may be occurring, however, the social costs are more difficult to change, as we see in the high levels of crime and violence in South America, particularly in the favelas and other poor neighbourhoods. It is not to say that all violence in South America stems from this foreign interference in domestic affairs. One must recall the initial colonization of this part of the world which was implemented and sustained through the most brutal violence humankind has seen. Any movement, however, toward a more equal and peaceful society was thwarted by the second wave of American colonization.

Brazil can be seen as a case in point. Brazil is known as one of the most violent countries in the world. People live in a state of fear of attack, assault, or robbery and are restricted in their everyday movements with very few safe places to be outside the home. We can compare Brazil to Canada, a country with much lower rates of violence. The highest rate of income tax that anyone pays in Brazil is 25% while in Canada it is 45%. Someone in a professional position can be making 20 times what a person makes on minimum wage. In Canada, a similar position is 5 times the minimum wage. How can there not be problems in a country where there is such an enormous gap between rich and poor. And people are virtually powerless to do anything about it. The rich operate under old Spanish/Portuguese colonialist assumptions of inherited privilege. They readily exploit their own citizens to their own advantage. And people advocating for change, including the current and past governments, do so under the constant threat of military intervention if they suggest anything more radical than what they are already doing. The only thing in their favour is the sympathy held towards them by the rank and file members of the military who would like to see their own circumstances improve along with that of other citizens, similar to the finding cited in *The Spirit Level* that people really do prefer a more equal country. The country's political leaders say that the world is suffering from a lack of leadership at the nation-state level. Those in the precarious position of advocating for change get no support for fundamental change from their international counterparts.

Studies in international crime rates are complex in that a difference in reporting rates must be considered. By using homicide statistics one can see a clear pattern with the countries that have the highest homicide rates being the ones with the greatest income disparities as well as a history of exploitation of its natural resources by outside wealthier countries. Violence is perpetrated within communities particularly against women, within countries via civil wars, and against those perceived as possessing the wealth and privilege which is not accessible to the indigenous or poor elements of the population. All the reasons for the violence that we experience are interrelated and impact one on the other – income inequality, health, social relationships and violence. One's health is strongly related to the health of one's social relationships. Social relationships help to mitigate the stress in one's life. While we know that

stress is a contributing factor to poor health it also causes a physiological response that can result in violence. "...it is now clear that life-long stress responses are tuned by early experience, so that people who have had difficulty early in childhood are more stressed, more likely to have a faster age-rise in blood pressure, and are less healthy in later life" (Wilkinson, 2004, p. 10) Add into this mix masculine identity and cultural norms that allow violence as an option to resolve conflict and or excuse violence as a response to stress. To illustrate this interconnectedness we can view the information that we know about income inequalities and the other factors that contribute to violence in societies as illustrated in the following diagram.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INCOME DISPARITY AND VIOLENCE



### THE PERILS OF OUR CURRENT ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) attribute the violence that is contingent on income disparity to identity issues related to social status. While they do cite some evidence to support this assertion, I would suggest that there are more complex issues at work that relate to the nature of our current economic system and the impact it has on our social relationships. In the previously illustrated chart the exploration of this question lies within deepening our understanding of what happens in the linkages between having a society with high income disparity and poor social relationships. We can look to other theorists to explore these dynamics and thereby understand more fully the roots of violence as they are caused by the way we choose to operate our economy, that is, how we decide how to produce and distribute resources. There is an argument to be made that the decisions we make in this regard and how this plays out profoundly affects our social relationships.

**Global Economy and Global Problems** - Bruce Alexander (2008) in his book *The Globalization of Addiction* links addiction to our current economic system. While the subject of this paper is not addiction, we are all aware of the violence that can be a part of the addictive lifestyle. It is also worth reflecting upon Alexander's analysis because he has a broad understanding of the things to which we can be addicted. Violence can definitely be an addiction in that for some people violent acts cause the release of dopamine in the brain, so that people who are depressed or lack motivation due to the reasons cited earlier in the paper, may use violence to enhance their feelings of well-being and engagement with the world. Alexander (2008, p. 23) cites the work of Gresswell and Holin who found that all serial violent offenders have been victims of child abuse so that we know how important it is to ensure that children grow up in loving and healthy environments. Alexander says that we suffer from a 'poverty of the spirit' which results from social dislocation which he attributes to the changes to our economic system over the last several hundred years and which now is becoming global, just as addiction is becoming global. This dislocation causes us to be disconnected from those around us. We have been on a trajectory that has taken us to the extreme psychosocial dislocation we are experiencing today. This trajectory started with the removal of farmers access to the common land



and is evident in today's unemployment rates, which in some countries are over 50%.

"Free market society was very bad...for the lower strata of the English working class and worse still for colonial labourers and slaves. Although the sun never set on the global British Empire, it set far too early on these workers and their children who toiled arduously for bare subsistence – when they had the good fortune to find work and could muster the strength to carry it out. Their privations were both psychosocial and material. Amidst desperate poverty, there was little hope of developing stable new social customs and ties to replace those traditional forms of psychosocial integration that had been ruptured" (Alexander, 2008, p.103).

The displacement of the Innu in Davis Inlet is an example of a modern day displaced community where despite being moved to a new location with all the amenities required, the population continued to suffer profound hopelessness and the suicides of its teenagers because they had lost a sense of purpose and connectedness to their way of life. Alexander cites the many instances of market encroachment into private life from intellectual property to internet dating to pre-determining the genetic makeup of our children. It is not only the poor who are affected. All people find their social relations becoming more and more encroached upon by the market. The rich are not any happier and depression is also becoming a global phenomenon amongst all classes. We respond to this dislocation and lack of integration between ourselves and those around us and control over our circumstances by turning to addiction and violence.

**Vision of the Future** - What Alexander is touching upon in his analysis is the concept of alienation as well as our need as humans to be in touch with ourselves and our creativity. These ideas are rooted in ancient philosophical teachings. Throughout the history of metaphysical thinking there has been a bifurcation between idealism and materialism. In Greek times idealism was the purview of Plato and its opposite, materialism, was espoused by Epicurus. Plato was an idealist. An idealist is someone who strives to find the essence of things. Idealism is a concept that says that the way we think about things is the way our reality is determined with the underlying assumption that there is something beyond the human experience that determines that reality. From this thinking comes the idea of the Greek gods and from there our current religious beliefs. Epicurus, on the other hand believed that the

world is composed entirely of matter (atoms) and thus our thinking is a result of this physical construction without the need for a concept of something beyond what we know to exist scientifically.

Philosophers who espoused idealism had to struggle with how we could understand our material circumstances if everything was actually not completely knowable. Kant, being a rationalist, attempted to bring idealism and materialism together by saying that we create concepts such as space and time which enable us to think about our reality, but these are just constructs and our world is still essentially transcendent of the human experience and only partially knowable. By using these rational concepts, we are able to develop a partial understanding of our world. But we could not ever be absolutely sure of what causes things to happen. Hegel made a further attempt to connect idealism and materialism by saying that people could actually influence their world through their actions based on these concepts identified by Kant. But he was grounded in idealism in that he said the way we think about things is not dependent on the material world, rather our thinking comes first and influences our actions. Hegel, in a similar vein as Kant, says there is no reality per se. There is just our understanding using thought and cognition of what we understand to be reality.

These philosophical concepts were the groundwork for Marx's research and philosophical constructions. Marx is said to have 'turned Hegel on his head'. He disagreed with Hegel in that he said that our actions are determined by our material circumstances and in fact our thinking is influenced by the material circumstances in which we find ourselves. Marx lived at a time when there was a great movement for democracy in Europe, an effort to wrest power from the hands of the elite whose wealth and power were inherited. Influenced at first by the critical thinkers of the time who were calling for democratization and fairness, he was further motivated by the suffering of the poor and working class which he witnessed firsthand in England. Marx was exiled from Prussia due to his proselytizing about his political views. He and his family became one of the many political and economic refugees in London. Migrants were not the only political exiles. Others were flocking to London, in the hopes of escaping the poverty of their European homelands where they had less and less access to a means to survive due to the loss of their traditional

agricultural livelihoods due to the expropriation of the common land. But once in England, the industrial centre of the world, people found working conditions determined solely at the discretion of the factory and business owners resulting in meager pay, long hours, and dangerous working conditions. They lived in squalor in cramped quarters where the sewage system consisted of standing excrement collected in the basements of the buildings. There were no laws to prevent pollution so that the air was always foul, the Thames River was essentially sludge and to see the light of day one had to leave the city (Gabriel, 2011). What caused this kind of human suffering and what could be done to end it?

Marx studied the economic conditions and relations of the time and came up with a construction that explained the forces at work along with ideas for possible solutions which still hold relevance today. His construction was firmly grounded in materialism. His ideas were not the same as Darwin's, a contemporary of Marx, because Marx said that our existence was more than biology. His is a layered and nuanced notion of materialism which can be used to argue against the simplistic views of social Darwinism or biological determinism.

Marx saw man, using Marx's language, as a creator and in order to create we need to be connected to our environment in a meaningful way. The economic system of his time (and our time) did not allow for that connection since only a select elite had access to the means of production, land, labour and capital, and they controlled the mode of production which was a combination of those means and the social relationships required to produce. People had no control over the land, no access to capital, and were forced to sell their labour for a price that did not represent its true value. They could not produce what was essential for human survival in a collective fashion which would have been true to our social nature. As a result of our inability to produce what we needed to live and to be creative in a context that allowed for control over the process and a connection to our world and those around us, people became alienated.

Alienation is a concept relevant to both idealism and Marx's understanding of materialism. Those espousing idealism say that we are inherently alienated because we can never fully know our reality but that

the human condition is a search for finding more and more meaning. Marx says we can only understand the totality of our world by being grounded in our material existence and through praxis, practical engagement and action in the world. Then we will “transcend our alienation and create a respectful relationship between man and environment and the ability to express our creative selves.”

The struggle has been how to overcome this alienation, a concept that started with Plato. We do this through the dialectic which is a process of contradiction and then transcendence a process that could occur through class struggle says Marx. Marx used the dialectical method, as did Hegel, but grounded it in materialism not the metaphysical idealism of Hegel.

Idealism, being in the mind, says that humans strive for perfection but we work out points of moral consensus, that is our values, by thinking. Marx says we do this through material reality and the social relations that are produced from this. In terms of values, Marx saw the values which are part of capitalism as oppressive because they service the interests of those in power. It is not until we get to live in a world controlled by the general public (or the proletariat) that we will be able to define a new set of values. When working people have control over their circumstances new values will emerge. While Marx refused to state what these values might be, we do know what Marx himself valued when he defined a communist utopia. It would be a classless, non-hierarchical society, with less work, more leisure, and opportunities for creative expression, equality, good social relations, and respect for the environment. Further, there may not be a reason to have a law that says, “Thou shalt not steal” in a society where stealing would not be necessary (Tucker, 1978).

Marx is often associated with the concept of a violent overthrow of the existing economic order. Marx was not a pacifist but he would have preferred to avoid violence in order to achieve his vision of a fair and creative society. Arendt describes succinctly Marx’s views on violence. “Marx was aware of the role of violence in history, but this role was to him secondary; not violence but the contradictions inherent in the old society brought about its end. The emergence of a new society was preceded, but not caused, by violent outbreaks” (Arendt, 1969, p. 11). Arendt points out that it was those who sought to maintain inequity through continued control of the mode of production who used violence

although they had other means to maintain control as well. “Marx regarded the state as an instrument of violence in command of the ruling class, but the actual power of the ruling class did not consist of or rely on violence. It was defined by the role the ruling class played in society, or, more exactly, by its role in the process of production.” “Political assassination, except for a few acts of individual terror perpetrated by small groups of anarchists, was mostly the prerogative of the Right...” (Arendt, 1969, p. 11).

Education of the working class would be the best way to make change according to Marx. He foresaw the injustices and violence of the society that emerged from the Russian revolution because he said that people had moved too quickly from a feudal society to socialism without the benefit of having learned through capitalism, or alternately education, a less harsh teacher than living through the horrors of early capitalism. If we educate ourselves sufficiently we can make the transfer of power and wealth less likely to be violent. Marx saw the contradictions inherent in the argument that it is through capitalism, a system that causes alienation, suffering and environmental destruction, that we were able to develop the material wherewithal to more fully express our creative selves, although he would not deny that we could potentially have made this progress in other ways. But he did recognize that we need to have materialism for our creative and intellectual fulfillment. Marx’s analysis could be said to have much in common with traditional Aboriginal philosophy and economic policies in that Aboriginal society was for the most part classless and intimately linked with nature, a sense of self, and connectedness to the other and lacking in the concept of alienation. But what Aboriginal society did lack was the science and knowledge inherent in materialism. The Aboriginal people in their wisdom immediately recognized this fact and sought to learn these skills in order to enhance their lives. They wished for, as they put it, ‘the cunning of the white man’.

Foster (2000) says that Marx’s philosophy is an ecological one. He says that Marx believed that, “We transform our relations of the world and transcend our alienation from it by creating our own distinctly natural relations which involves action and material praxis – doing stuff in the world – trying to achieve our goals in the world through practical action.”

Marx said that our relations with nature are evolving but that we are always dependent on nature. Our social selves emerge from our biological selves. "We are driven by the material need for subsistence. But then you establish the social relations of production so that you might do better."

One of the key concepts of the current economic system is that of the need for unending economic growth. We constantly hear about the health of the economy in these terms. If the economy is not growing then we are headed for disaster. Economic growth is an increased output in goods for each consumer. We measure our gross domestic product, which we are told always should be getting higher, by the amount we spend over time. The desire is to always spend more every year. This mantra is sung by all political parties, be they right or left. The right typically wants to spend on creating more goods using the earth's resources. The left typically places slightly more value on increasing spending on public services. In both scenarios we are increasing spending which always involves using more of the earth's resources although spending on services uses less. We also talk of environmentally sustainable growth which essentially is an oxymoron although one always wants to produce in a manner which causes the least harm to the environment. There is no way to avoid the fact that as long as we are producing more, whether it is material goods or the human labour of providing services, we are destroying the environment. The *rate* of destruction is the only thing that may vary. It has been a given that growth must continue forever, for it is through this growth that the rich maintain and grow their own wealth while those at the bottom have an opportunity to receive some of the benefits as well. The rich, and we are all part of this elite group by virtue of living in Canada, to date have not been prepared to adopt a policy of reduced consumption on their part, and a redistribution of their wealth to those who have less.

**The Need for a Planned Recession** - William Rees, a professor from the University of British Columbia, who invented the term 'ecological footprint' says that we cannot continue on this path of unending growth, spending and increased production (Wackernagel & Rees 1996). Rees' aim was to alter human behaviour in a way that would reduce consumption. He came up with the concept of the 'ecological footprint'

as a way for people to be able to measure how much of the earth's resources they were consuming and the cost of that consumption. He estimates that one person requires 1.8 hectares of land to sustain her or him. It also shows how inequitably the earth's resources are being used.

Rees provides a most interesting analysis in that he says that, "Mainstream neo-liberal economic theory is rooted in concepts borrowed from Newtonian analytic mechanics. This paradigm fosters the development of simple, reductionist, linear, deterministic, single equilibrium-oriented models that are highly abstracted from biophysical reality." He says we need to move to a model which accounts for complexity, and the interconnectedness of everything. We are a "dependent, growing, fully-contained sub-system of a non-growing finite ecosphere" that requires non-linear thinking and recognition of our biophysical limits. He points out that we would need "four additional Earth-like planets to raise just the present world population to North American levels of consumption" (Wackernagel & Rees, 1996).

Citing anthropologist Joseph Tainter, Rees discusses the concept of the history of the cycle of growth and collapse which has been the continuous pattern of life on earth. He says that we are approaching another collapse which we seem at this point to be incapable of averting. We do, however, have the capacity and knowledge to avoid this disaster. Rees says we need a planned recession which would involve the following actions:

"[We need to recognize that] *human resilience can be frustrating to our collective survival*. Consider the well-funded resistance of the corporate sector to evidence of climate change and to demands for ecological responsibility and social justice. Even globalization and technology are essentially dedicated to resisting change and sustaining the status quo while, in the process, they destroy long-term global life support. Our skills in adapting for the short term – human resilience – are destroying our chances for the long term. We need to restructure our socio-ecosystems for *collective* resilience.

We need to *abandon the myth of continuous economic growth* and reorganize on a manageable scale. This means creating socio-economic planning regions, partially returning to a localized economy, and maintaining the integrity of the natural system

within each region. We need to invest in multiple redundant energy systems with an emphasis on sustainable renewable forms.

We need to *re-socialize*. We need to initiate a national public education campaign on the severity of the crisis and the need for decisive action. It must be emphasized that global change is a collective problem requiring collective solutions – individual actions have inadequate, even trivial effect. Governments must take action for the common good. Re-socialization requires that we:

- Promote a cultural shift from private to public capital accumulation and to human development.
- Implement programs in job training and job placement to equip people for employment in sunrise industries
- Design and implement new forms of social safety nets to enable transition to the post-carbon economy. (There will be sunset as well as sunrise industries.)
- Recognize the advantages of job-sharing, such as improved work-life balance.

We need to *intervene to create more efficient markets*. We need to end perverse subsidies, such as those to the fossil fuel sector, and acknowledge that most goods are underpriced and therefore over-consumed. We must:

- Recognize that government intervention to correct for gross market failure, such as climate change, is necessary and legitimate.
- Internalize ecological and social externalities, such as pollution and social damage from development. Among other things a sustainable society will insist on full-cost producing of goods and services.
- Initiate ecological fiscal reform: tax the bad, not the good. Implement a combination of pollution charges/taxes (e.g., carbon tax) and import tariffs as necessary. Support World Trade Organization reform.
- Consider a negative income tax to assist low-income families through the transition.

Society must consciously *script a new cultural narrative*. This is the ultimate in constructive resilience. We must learn to override our innate expansionist tendencies and abandon our perpetual growth myth. Instead of forcing the environment to conform to our demands we must learn to adapt our expectations to ecological reality. A good start would be a new global cultural narrative that shifts the values of society from competitive individualism greed, and narrow self-interest, toward community, cooperation and our collective interest in repairing the earth for survival.``



In conclusion Rees says:

“Could growth-based global culture be ‘selected out’? Could civilization as we know it collapse? It wouldn’t be the first time. “...what is perhaps most intriguing in the evolution of human societies is the regularity with which the pattern of increasing complexity is interrupted by collapse.” Sir Frederic Hoyle stated. On the subject of the sustainability of civilization Hoyle said:

‘It has often been said that, if the human species fails to make a go of it here on the Earth, some other species will take over the running.... This is not correct. WE have, or soon will have, exhausted the necessary physical prerequisites so far as this planet is concerned. With coal gone, oil gone, high-grade metallic ores gone, no species, however competent, can make the long climb from primitive conditions to high-level technology. [Civilization] is a one-shot affair. If we fail, this planetary system fails so far as intelligence is concerned.’

Our real hope is that we recognize that for the first time individual and national self-interests have converged with humanity’s collective interests. Regardless of place, culture, or circumstance all of us share the same planet and the same global future. We have the benefit of hindsight – we’ve seen what has happened to previous civilizations that ignored obvious danger signs. And we have the technical capacity to re-educate a whole new generation to the nature of our plight.

We may have to shrink the economy for survival but this isn’t doom and gloom or even a vision of sacrifice. Maintaining the status quo is the path that ultimately represents doom. Instead, the ecological perspective offers a vision in which human beings can flourish more equitably with greater economic security and ecological stability well within the means of nature. Reducing our gross consumption, putting a cap on the damage we’re doing and reducing the income gap all have the potential to enhance quality of life for everyone.

Our most “human” qualities must prevail – our capacity for reason, our capacity for forward planning, our ability to make moral judgments, our compassion for other people and other species. If we use these qualities in a great expression of collective intelligence on both the local and global scales, humanity can become sustainable. However, if we don’t exercise our full human endowment, the great evolutionary experiment that is *Homo sapiens* will have failed absolutely. In this case, humans may well sink out of existence just like any ordinary species that fails to adapt to changing reality” (Wackernagel & Rees, 1996).

Why do we spend time reflecting on the nature of our economic relations? We do so because feeling alienated and disconnected from the people and the world around us is a result of how we distribute the earth's scarce resources. And this alienation causes a disruption in our social relations and the subsequent potential for violence. Psychosocial dislocation, alienation and overconsumption as discussed by Alexander, Marx, and Rees are key concepts that can help us to have a better appreciation of the changes that we need to make to create more equal societies, changes that we have not been allowed to consider for fear of being marginalized or defined as a threat. If we are to create nonviolent societies it is imperative that we eliminate income disparities. We cannot do this within our current economic system while at the same time sustaining the health of our environment. Therefore it is imperative that we reduce consumption and redistribute wealth.

**Overpopulation** - Our current economic system demands population growth because it requires more and more consumers to maintain economic growth. A New York Times article from April 2012 (Rosenthal, 2012, April 14) gives the current picture of the effects of overpopulation in Africa as well as an idea of what we can expect for the future. The article points out that The United Nations Population Division predicts that the world's population will reach 10 billion by the end of the century. A high projection would take us to 10.6 billion in 2050. The low projection would mean 8.1 billion. The difference between these high and low variants is equivalent to the entire global population in 1950. That 2050 figure is vital in determining how large the population will grow by 2100 -- either as high as 15.8 billion or as low as 6.2 billion. This enormous increase is happening primarily because of high fertility rates, particularly in Africa. "Elsewhere in the developing world, in Asia and Latin America, fertility rates have fallen sharply in recent generations and now resemble those in the United States — just above two children per woman. That transformation was driven in each country by a mix of educational and employment opportunities for women, access to contraception, urbanization and an evolving middle class." What are the consequences of increasing numbers of humans on the planet? In Africa we are seeing what can result from an unfettered increase in population. One of the results is increased violence. Resources are scarce and people resort to violence to obtain what they need to survive.

In Africa, the population is growing at such a rate that economic growth is actually decreasing because people do not have the resources to spend and the country does not have the resources to produce. “Peter Ogunjuyigbe, a demographer at Obafemi Awolowo University in the small central city of Ile-Ife [said] “If you don’t take care of population, schools can’t cope, hospitals can’t cope, there’s not enough housing — there’s nothing you can do to have economic development.” The article outlines the problems being faced in Nigeria where the population has doubled in the past 15 years and describes one family’s circumstances:

Lifelong residents like Peju Taofika and her three granddaughters inhabit a room in a typical apartment block known as a “Face Me, Face You” because whole families squeeze into 7-by-11-foot rooms along a narrow corridor. Up to 50 people share a kitchen, toilet and sink — though the pipes in the neighborhood often no longer carry water. At Alapere Primary School, more than 100 students cram into most classrooms, two to a desk. As graduates pour out of high schools and universities, Nigeria’s unemployment rate is nearly 50 percent for people in urban areas ages 15 to 24 — driving crime and discontent (Rosenthal, 2012, April 14).

The following is an example of what is happening in Niger:

Some of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, especially those making up the Sahel bordering the Sahara desert, face particularly somber demographic problems. In Niger, the rate of population growth exceeds economic growth. Twenty percent of women there have 10 or more children, and only one in 1,000 women completes secondary school. Already, one-third of children in Niger are malnourished, and global warming will further undermine agricultural output in the desertifying Sahel. Even if the current birth rate is halved by 2050, the population will still explode -- from 14 million today to 53 million by 2050. If the birth rate continues at current levels, the population could reach a totally unsustainable 80 million (Rosenthal, 2012, April 14).

When women are undereducated and devalued they do not have access to contraception and cannot control their family size even though they many want to. Access to contraception has been reduced because, since 1990, developed countries have taken a position opposed to contraception on religious grounds believing that family planning could potentially involve abortion. Because of this policy shift, movement that was being

made in reducing family size has been halted and numbers are back to where they were before family planning interventions were available. The New York Times article quotes Babatunde Osotimehin, the executive director of the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA), "Neglect of sexual and reproductive health results in an estimated 80 million unintended pregnancies; 22 million unsafe abortions; and 358,000 deaths from maternal causes - including 47,000 deaths from unsafe abortion."

The challenges connected with overpopulation include ensuring adequate food and water for this growing number, addressing the ever-increasing numbers of people living in poverty and sustaining the environment as we attempt to meet the demand. We can anticipate increased migration of people as they seek to live in areas where their well-being might improve causing even more social dislocation not to mention the increase in refugee camps that will result from the inevitable wars that will ensue over the distribution of scarce resources. "In Nigeria, experts say, the swelling ranks of unemployed youths with little hope have fed the growth of the radical Islamist group Boko Haram, which has bombed or burned more than a dozen churches and schools this year." And while extreme overpopulation can lead to reduced economic growth, which is the direction to which we want to be headed, reducing the consumption of the most needy in the world is not the means by which we achieve this goal.

### GENDER INEQUALITY

This unmanageable population growth is in large part due to inequality between genders in that women are not able to determine their own sexual activity and fertility patterns. There are indeed a variety of locations where inequality exists including inequality based on race, disability, colonized vs. non-colonized people, north vs. south and gender. The evidence of inequality is seen in the lower incomes of oppressed groups compared to the dominant group, a lack of access to democratic decision-making, underrepresentation in high-status employment or employment in general and lack of access to resources such as health care and education. Any time a group of people is marginalized in this way they become vulnerable to acts of violence. Specifically we can examine the inequality between women and men and relate this inequality to the level of violence that is experienced by women.

Nowhere in the world do women outrank men in terms of income and representation in government. In most countries girls have less access to education than boys (United Nations Development Programme, 2013). In many parts of the world women's health is precarious particularly in terms of childbirth where there are still places where women do not have access to medical care when giving birth (Viachova & Biason, 2005). Female infanticide in China has actually increased since the 1980s because female children are seen as less valuable and even not human at birth (Mungello, 2008, p. 129). Is it a coincidence that women earn less money than men, are underrepresented in government and other decision-making bodies, are excluded from the business establishment and are considered of less worth than men and then experience staggering rates of violence as we have seen in our previous statistics? Dragiewicz (2001, p. 110) points to research that finds that relationships in which both partners have similar status, such as having a similar education or sharing decision-making power in the family, have far lower rates of violence than relationships in which partners have equitable status. Dragiewicz (2001, p. 114) also cites Smith whose research published in 1987, 1990 and 1991 established a link between patriarchal attitudes that condoned violence against women and income level. The lower the socioeconomic status the more likely the men were to be violent.

Feminists have situated this inequality, and the violence that is part of it, in relation to patriarchy which is a complex arrangement of structures, places, and actions which allow men to have power over women. "In patriarchal cultures, rigid, polarized, and hierarchical gender roles work to maintain a strong, normative relationship between sex and gender" (Dragiewicz, 2001, p. 108). Without patriarchal forces men would not be able to sustain their dominance over women in a systematic way. Many cultures are attempting to dismantle the institutional rules and norms which form the groundwork of patriarchy. We see rules around pay and employment equity. Women's access to all fields of education is improving. Women are gaining control over their reproductive decisions. And where there is the most success in these areas there is also less violence.

When women have the economic resources to leave a violent partner, where she is protected by law against violence perpetrated against her,

where she does not have to depend on the generosity of her husband for survival, where social supports and resources are ensured and where laws and attitudes support women to live independently with their children, then women are more likely to be able to lead a life that is violence free. We are still struggling for some of these amenities in Canada particularly in the area of housing. We have no national housing policy meaning no commitment by the federal government to ensure that people have one of the basic necessities of life. Saskatchewan is the only province in the country that has no system of rent control in either of the major cities. Living conditions can be abysmal with extreme overcrowding, unsanitary conditions and rents far beyond what people can afford. As we pointed out in our housing research, how can a woman be expected to escape a life of violence when these housing challenges are so overwhelming (Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan, 2010).

Dragiewicz's (2001) book, *Equality with a Vengeance*, is about the response of men's rights groups to efforts to support women who have experienced violence and other state responses that serve to help women to be able to overcome the systemic inequality that still exists even in Canada. She says some men are threatened by these responses. Feeling threatened could be a combination of their response to the potential of losing power as Dragiewicz and others argue, but it could also be a reaction grounded in the shame of knowing that they, or people with whom they identify, have committed acts of violence and that we all know at some intrinsic level that violence is wrong, particularly when it is directed to those vulnerable and less powerful.

Men and women experience crime differently a fact that Britton says has been for the most part ignored in studying the types and incidences of violence until recently. "...men dominate among serious violent criminals and the highest proportions of women are arrested for nonviolent property offenses. This is a well-established pattern that has been consistent over many years" (Britton, 2011, p. 143). Britton points out that men are also more likely to be victims of crime which is consistent with the culture of violence that is part of masculinities. The exception to this statistic, using American data, is in the case of black women who experience rates of violence higher than white men. So, in

the United States at least, race is an additional factor influencing crime rates.

Wilkinson says that we have always suspected that inequality was divisive. Now it is confirmed with statistics that income differences result in lower levels of trust, a weaker community life, poor health and more violence. "It is now time egalitarians returned to the public arena. We need to do so confident that our intuitions have been validated and found to be truer than most of us ever imagined. Because the evidence shows that few people are aware of the actual scale of inequality and injustice in our societies, or recognise how it damages the vast majority of the population, the first task is to provide education and information" (Wilkinson, 2004, p. 20). As Wilkinson points out, even small disparities in income matter, therefore the more equal we become the less likely we will have violence.

## KNOWLEDGE

### REASON, COMPASSION FOR THE OTHER, AND PATTERNS

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Clearly we desire to be a nonviolent society. There are thousands of books, websites, and documents which address the issue proposing strategies to help us change our habits and learn how to resolve our conflicts without violence whether it be between states, individuals, with our children, in the workplace, or in our homes. The answers to creating non-violent societies lie in a variety of places. They lie within a return to values that we lost particularly after capitalism which removed us from our relationships with our environment and with each other so that we no longer feel the real impact that our actions have on even the persons within our own communities. Our global world places us in the conundrum of making economic decisions that have far-reaching effects while at the same time not being able to appreciate the negative circumstances and suffering that results because as humans we are less likely to have empathy for people who are not physically close to us. But this capacity can grow as we use our reasoning to become aware of and understand the consequences of our actions.

Marx said that without education violence would be inevitable as we move toward his utopian vision of a fair and equitable society based on our compassion and our desire to alleviate the suffering of others. “To expect people, who have not the slightest notion of what the *res publica*, the public thing, is, to behave nonviolently and argue rationally in matters of interest is neither realistic nor reasonable” (Arendt, 1969, p. 78). It is imperative that we educate people to be able to see the other and the public good – otherwise they will be violent thinking of only their own self-interest.

In essence we are required to rationally understand what causes violence and to know from an emotional standpoint what others are feeling when they experience violence and then to ensure that all our actions are grounded in compassion and kindness. We find the answer in finding new strategies of communication that we learn through practice and research. Rational approaches require critical thinking, questioning our assumptions, and collecting information. They require an educated population, a population that is given the circumstances they need to learn. Our education must be taking us on, as Gandhi would put it, a journey towards truth, or in the words of Jesus, the truth and the light and the way.

But this bifurcation into rational and emotional is of course artificial and only useful in describing and articulating our current dilemmas particularly to those who are accustomed to linear thinking. The reality is that everything is interconnected as we learn from Aboriginal and many eastern philosophies. So we must always work from this basis and incorporate this way of thinking into everything we do. In fact in reflecting on what we have learned from how the brain works, nothing is more interconnected than our body and its systems and the brain in particular. And we have learned also that the more interconnected our brains are the more we are able to experience happiness and compassion.

This interconnectedness leads us to thinking about patterns which some philosophers, psychologists and anthropologists, and even the business community have explored. These patterns are evident but often defy rational explanation. What can we learn from studying these patterns? Can identifying these patterns help us to see ourselves as part of a larger



meaning that places us even more securely as part of an ordered and integrated whole that perhaps extends beyond mother earth. Can seeing our own individual behaviour and that of others as all equally necessary parts of a complex but balanced pattern help us to accept others as our equals in a nonjudgemental way?

### ARENDT – A RATIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF VIOLENCE

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There are many writers on violence but none in my mind who has taken on the subject without hesitation and in such depth as Hannah Arendt. She deconstructs the concept of violence in a way that helps us to understand better how we can tackle avoiding violence and what is required across the spectrum to make change. Arendt was motivated to bring forth this analysis from her experience with witnessing the holocaust and then from living in an age where we have the capacity to annihilate the entire planet through the use of nuclear weapons. In fact much of the writings on violence we refer to today result from trying to make sense of and avoid repetition of this most devastating display of violence that the world has ever seen.

“The most crucial political issue is, and always has been, the question of Who rules Whom? Power, strength, force, authority, violence – these are but words to indicate the means by which man rules over man; they are held to be synonyms because they have the same function” (Arendt, 1969, p. 43). Arendt says we rarely break down the essence of violence in our general conversations and we use the words violence, power, strength, force and authority interchangeably to describe how people attempt to control each other or maintain control over a group. Arendt defines each of these words and her definitions help us to understand the dynamics of how people attempt to maintain control over each other. She is speaking about state political control for the most part, but her analysis applies just as easily to control in interpersonal relationships.

First, she defines power as something which is given to someone by the group. The group, or a person, bestows power by allowing another person or group to make decisions on her or his own behalf. This aspect of permission is key in understanding power. If you are the person who has been given the power, you cannot maintain power if the person or

group giving it to you takes it away. Strength is a personal characteristic which implies a physical or emotional ability to exert or resist force. Force is simply energy released. The difference between power and authority is nuanced. Authority is bestowed on an individual or institution on behalf of the group. It involves elements of trust and respect. For example a political party after an election is given power to make decisions on behalf of everyone. But it would be the people or the institutions that carry out the decisions who have authority. Violence is the use of force to maintain control when the group or person has withdrawn power or perhaps has never given power to that person in the first place. Violence, therefore, is never legitimate. People who have lost power, and use violence to maintain control, justify their violence. The closer the violent act is to the threat of a loss of control or the threat of harm to a person, the easier it is to justify.

“Power springs up whenever people get together and act in concert, but it derives its legitimacy from the initial getting together rather than from any action that then may follow. Legitimacy, when challenged, bases itself on an appeal to the past, while justification relates to an end that lies in the future. Violence can be justifiable, but it never will be legitimate. Its justification loses in plausibility the farther its intended end recedes into the future. No one questions the use of violence in self-defense, because the danger is not only clear but also present, and the end justifying the means is immediate” (Arendt, 1969, p. 52).

To lose control for some people elicits an extreme fear response which, as we have discussed earlier can be rooted in a lack of healthy attachment in infancy or perhaps a lack of trust which is inherent to unequal societies as we have learned from Wilkinson and Pickett’s study on inequality. Coupled with cultures that value masculinities which are characterized by the use of force, the response to the withdrawal of power and the resulting lack of control can be violence perpetrated against the person seeking to maintain their autonomy. Using Arendt’s categories of what constitutes violence, it is not difficult then to construct the possible dynamics of interpersonal violence (not to mention outright war). As an example, violence against women can be viewed through this lens when trying to understand its interpersonal as well as systemic aspects. A man may feel threatened at a personal level, or even on behalf of men as a group some argue. Men’s control over women by violence, or any

person's control over another person through violence, is never legitimate. Eventually after a person has maintained control through violence for some time, the violence becomes something different. Eventually the person rules through terror. In state terms, Arendt defines terror as "the form of government that comes into being when violence, having destroyed all power, does not abdicate but, on the contrary, remains in full control" (Arendt, 1969, p. 55).

How does this analysis then help us to construct non-violent communities? Arendt says that we must resist violence, because the only thing that comes from violence is more violence. To avoid violence, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that we respect the group or individual's decision about who holds power over them, if anyone. This awareness and acceptance of where power, in the true sense of the word, resides will ensure that the use of force to maintain control (violence) will not occur. The goal then is to respect a person's integrity and autonomy with respect to self-determination unless the person poses a threat to her or himself or others (and there needs to be clear and thoughtful parameters around this exception). Any attempt to coerce someone to relinquish power over her or himself can be considered to be an act of violence.

### PHENOMENOLOGY: CONNECTION TO THE OTHER

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**Phenomenology Defined in Relation to Violence against Women\*** - Dodd claims that "[a]t the heart of phenomenological philosophy is the conviction that all genuine philosophical problems are problems of sense, or meaning" (Dodd, 2009, p. 15). This claim highlights the importance of phenomenological study in relation to scientific observation. On the one hand, scientific observations and empirical psychological or sociological studies give us factual information concerning mental and social phenomena. The phenomena observed are gathered from an objective standpoint and concern a precisely demarcated set of things and events. The results of these studies give us factual and statistical information about the empirically observable world. Phenomenology, on the other hand, is concerned not with the factual and statistical information gathered from the observations of empirical events, but with the *sense* or *meaning* that underlies the facts. In phenomenology, as first defined by Edmund Husserl in *Logical Investigations*, meaning or sense refers to the real psychological *act* that is involved with any statement, as well as the *content* of that act, or in other words the idea behind it. So, for example, a statement like "Mary is a victim of domestic violence," not

only gives us information concerning a factual event in the world, but underlying the word “Mary” is a real person in the world with certain traits and characteristics, and if we know Mary then the things we associate will come to mind when her name is expressed. And when we think about the term “domestic violence”, its meaning resides in certain types of behavior that we deem definitive of this term. Furthermore, the statement itself is an *act of judgement*, and this is also where its meaning lies. Based on some real, perceptual observations, the psychological judgement has been made that Mary is a victim of domestic violence. In other words, the meaning or sense of any factual statement is found in its origin as some kind of mental or perceptual act –the fact that Mary is a victim of domestic violence takes shape in the *judgement*, which is the specific kind of mental act, made by an observer who perhaps hears Mary’s testimony, or is a witness to the violence. Thus, the meaning of any expression is comprised of the *content* of the statement – in this case, who Mary is, and what we take domestic violence to be – as well as the *psychological act* in which the fact attains its meaning – in this case again, the real instance in which the judgement is made by the observer.

Amidst all the information given to us by science concerning the brain, reason, and emotion in the attempt to understand violence, phenomenology’s contribution is to bring to light the real meaning that lies behind the scientific facts. By focusing on the real acts of perception whereby scientific information is gathered, as well as the meaning of the terms it uses, we can come to an understanding of the *lived experience* of violence. By itself, science provides us with mere facts and data. In order to go beyond these facts and make them relevant to our lives, we need to think about the meaning of this information, about how it relates to our real, daily experience as psychological, social, and ethical beings.

\*By Susannah Mulvale

Phenomenology tells us that our reality is grounded in the material world. It is important to think critically, to question our certainty. Through our critical thinking we may feel we have found truth but we must never close the door to re-examining this truth; that is the essence of philosophy. Phenomenology allows us to complement scientific or rational thinking with logical reflection and intuition. It might be suggested that we must never abandon either one.

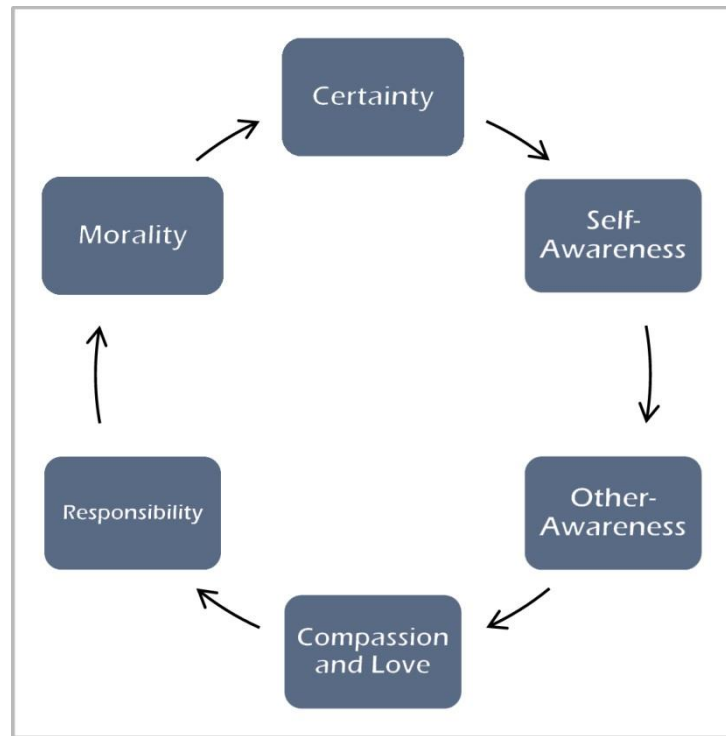
Dodd, from a phenomenological perspective, takes on Walzer’s defense of war as a justifiable option in certain circumstances. He says that in Walzer’s analysis all we think about are the consequences of war in terms of political outcomes. In effect he is arguing that Walzer says that the

ends justifies the means. If we think that war is justifiable in some cases, for example to remove a tyrant from power, then we are willing to overlook both the experiences of the individuals who are involved in the war and the sense that war is wrong. We are willing to overlook those lived experiences and in doing so we not only miss the suffering of those enduring the war, we also miss really understanding the reason for the war occurring in itself and then finding opportunities for resolving the real issues at hand as Gandhi would have us do. When we view war from a phenomenological perspective it means that we are trying to make sense of violence. But violence is senseless because through reflection we realize that violence always negatively impacts on our human experience, causes much immediate suffering to individuals, and has no possibility for long-term positive outcomes. When we know that violence is in reality senseless, then we must make every effort to avoid it.

Phenomenology allows us to become self-aware and aware of the impact of our actions on others. The following 'virtuous circle' diagram illustrates how self-awareness can lead us to moral decisions. A CBC Tapestry program asks the question *Is it Possible to Have Moral Certainty* (Faulk, 2012)? Burton (2008) says it is our biology that makes us want certainty. Our brains respond to feeling certain about something in the same way as an addiction feels pleasurable. This response he says was necessary for us to develop in order to be able to make quick decisions in times of perceived threat. Through experience we learn that particular actions result in keeping ourselves safe. We can then use these same actions repeatedly so that we do not have to take the time to make the rational choice repeatedly. But this certainty can also be detrimental and can lead to conflict when others do not have the same certainty as ourselves. Embracing rigid rules and understandings can make us miss a reality that may have changed or allow us to step outside ourselves to consider the experiences of another person. We must counteract this narrow-mindedness by developing Awareness which is a deep questioning of ourselves to see clearly who we are beyond the rules of certainty that we impose on ourselves. In this way we lose the fear that results from a self-preservation instinct. This diminishment of fear can be described as attaining a measure of control over our emotions whereby we develop into more mature, emotionally intelligent people.

Self-awareness is promoted by various religions and philosophies including Buddhism. In this same Ideas program the teachings of Krishnamurti are explored. Krishnamurti says we only need to find a stillness in our thinking that allows us to accept who we are and to view ourselves with love and compassion. Burton suggests that love is the mind free from conditioning and that this state is also the highest state of intelligence. Once we are able to view ourselves in this way we are then free to see others in this non-judgemental way which brings out the emotion of love for others and compassion. Once we view others with compassion and love, a sense of responsibility emerges and we then develop rules that will ensure that others are treated in ways that are not harmful to them. These rules are in essence our morals.

If, as Burton says, our biology then makes us believe these rules with certainty, we risk once again becoming judgemental of those (and ourselves) who cannot live up to these codes. It seems a paradox that those with the most profound convictions of moral certainty are often the ones who are found to have violated those principles that they espouse, such as in the members of the religious right who are caught in extramarital affairs. But once we understand how certainty develops we can understand how this situation occurs. We tend to develop moral rules not only for others but for ourselves as well and once we become certain about them we do not allow ourselves to reflect on our own emotions and how these emotions can lead us to actions which violate our moral codes. There is an Aboriginal tenet which says, "We teach what we are trying to learn." So, often the belief of which we are most certain connects to the emotions and actions we are struggling to control within ourselves. And so we must therefore begin the cycle again by re-entering into self-reflection. This self-reflection is the purpose of meditation and those proponents of meditation recommend that we calm our minds and practice, as Krishnamurti says, attaining the state of 'choiceless awareness' continuing on our journey around the circle. This process allows us to acknowledge, accept and embrace difference which is a basic lesson of phenomenology.



### PATTERNS

Father Michael Mulhall in the Tapestry program says that once we begin to think that “something that is operational in each of us but not confined to one of us” we might get a sense “that we belong to something bigger than ourselves, our family, society, our language group, race...” We get a sense that “we must join in a wider dance; participate in the creation of a new world.” Sometimes we get an inkling about this connection to a larger whole, when we recognize patterns that might not be scientifically explainable but that are proven nonetheless to exist. Patterns can be seen in nature, in cultures, and in people’s behaviours. Perhaps as humans we are designed to see patterns. Also, we must remember Burton’s warning that we are wired to look for certainty but without testing our certainties we do not know if they are actually true. Given this caution, we may want to consider Tarnas’ (2006) suggestion that identifying patterns can be a first step in opening our minds to new scientific possibilities that can explain behaviour and in our situation enhance our ability to better understand the causes of and possible solutions to violence. Indeed patterns can offer a bridge between religion and science being that they are concretely identifiable but their cause is not necessarily provable.

They are played out in real life experience and in nature but a cause and effect relationship cannot necessarily be established. The mathematician Senechal says it is a dialogue between truth [science] and beauty [patterns], "a trial and error process" that can take you towards a solution (Roberts, 2013).



Patterns of human behaviour can be useful to identify in that they help us to understand that people may be acting in a way which is intrinsic to their nature, part of a larger culture or part of a larger harmony. If we think in these terms then it helps us become less judgemental by seeing ourselves and other individuals as part of something larger over which we may have limited control. Essentially, these improved understandings have the potential of reducing violence in that we become more accepting of ourselves and others. In fact human differences may be necessary to ensure the survival of the species and contribute to an essential universal harmony. The following are some of the patterns which have been identified and which give us insights into human behaviour.

**Behaviour Styles** - There are four main behaviour styles which have been understood to be part of the human condition for as long as we have been



trying to understand behaviour. These styles, or personality types, were identified in the early civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia and were described in connection to Greek understanding of medicine by Hippocrates and Galen (Four temperaments, n.d.). These four types are Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholic and Phlegmatic. Variations on ways to describe these 4 types have developed over the centuries and close variations are used today in the business world to help people work more effectively. In the context of our capitalist economic model they are used to help businesses produce and sell more products at cheaper costs to the company. While this model of thinking about patterns of human behaviour has been appropriated by the American business community, this ancient identified pattern and its modern day refinement can nonetheless provide us with valuable tools for interacting with others in ways that reduce the likelihood of conflict and violence. Following is a brief description of the four types.

**Sanguine** – The Sanguine personality type is a person who is typically viewed as fun-loving and optimistic. Their outgoing, happy nature makes them the life of the party. Whether or they are liked by others is of primary concern to them and they can tend to focus on this personal need rather than worrying as much about the needs and concerns of others. They do, however, require time away from others because, although they are outgoing, they often are impatient with people and need time to recuperate from their rather intense levels of social interaction. They are quick in their thinking and actions.

**Choleric** – This personality type is action oriented and direct. They say what they think in a straightforward way and do not spend time dwelling on past interactions or decisions. They find lengthy decision-making processes tiresome and tend not to think strategically. They like to be the instigator of ideas and sometimes have trouble taking direction from others, although they do respond positively to a forthright approach from others. They exude a sense of being able to cope with challenging situations in times of crisis.

**Phlegmatic** – These individuals are generally calm, friendly, and likeable. They are typically seen to be kind in their interactions with others. They have a strong need for harmony and shy away from making decisions that might be counter to other people's opinions and wishes. In this way they can be made to comply with others biddings. They can tend to take action, however, not in full view of others to rectify the situation and can be seen as stubborn if they do feel the need to take a stand on an issue.

Melancholic – Melancholic types are analytical and methodical in their thinking. They deliberate carefully about details before making decisions and enjoy the process of working towards action more than the action itself. They strive for perfection and have a vision of a correct way of performance that can be seen as judgemental and critical.

People can be combinations of types which produces interesting sub-types. No one style is better than another and all have positive qualities. People can display pathologies within each type as well. If a person has had difficulties in her or his life then the negative behaviours that might emerge will be typical of that behaviour style. For example, a melancholic person may be overly critical of others or become incapacitated by indecision. A choleric person may become too direct and controlling in their behaviour not taking into consideration the opinions of others. These negative behaviours are primarily a response to fear and have the potential to be modified through self-awareness such as Krishnamurti has described. Knowing our behaviour style can be liberating as well because one can then see oneself as part of a greater whole, each type essential to the survival of the species.

We do not know why these patterns of behaviour exist, and they deserve more scientific reflection, but it may be that these personality types contribute to the overall balance in the world that some see as essential to our survival. Examine behaviour styles in families and you will most often find that there is a balance of styles and that no one style predominates in a family although the parents style are often evident as a secondary characteristic in their children. We can then see how conflict sometimes emerges in families as children have a style different from their parents and until they learn how to interact cooperatively and be tolerant of different approaches struggles can ensue. For example the action orientation and self-focused approach of choleric often clashes with the process and other-focused methods of melancholics. When we come to appreciate the upside of each of the styles, a synergy can emerge where we can experience great accomplishments by embracing the talents of all types.

**Patterns of Culture** - Ruth Benedict and her student Margaret Mead are the most well-known anthropologists who viewed individual cultures from the perspective of patterns. *Patterns of Culture* (1934) was

Benedict's work and Mead described the same ideas in her book *Coming of Age in Samoa*. Benedict proposed that cultures were a group of personalities and that the personalities within the culture would have main characteristics that were typical of that culture. Benedict said, "A culture, like an individual, is a more or less consistent pattern of thought and action" (Benedict, 1936, p. 46). Benedict thought that people within a culture had individual behaviour that was consistent with the behavioural expectations consistent with the values of the culture. This behaviour then becomes how the culture is defined. "A culture can be understood as an individual personality, and each person within a culture can be understood in relation to the pattern, traits, or types which characterize their particular culture" (Alexy, n.d.). For example she said the Pueblo culture emphasized restraint, some particular Greek cultures emphasized order and calm others wildness and abandon. Some argue that Benedict's analysis fundamentally changed the way we regard cultures moving from descriptive reports to a recognition of a larger system of patterns.

One can think of national identities today in this regard using Canada as an example. Our identity is typically portrayed as one of being reasonable and kind (much like the phlegmatic personality of the Greek behaviour styles). Ralston Saul (2008) in his book *A Fair Country* makes the argument that Canadians have a tradition of fairness and cooperation which we have learned from a merging of English, French, and Aboriginal cultural values which together comprise the Canadian identity. We can think of other ways that we might define cultures although one runs the risk of creating stereotypes so it is important to remember that there is always individual uniqueness within these general patterns. In a sense these patterns are the substance of identity and the sense of self which we identify in relation to others within our culture. Burton says that we form a sense of self from a personal narrative that is shaped by genetics and personal and cultural history. Benedict and Mead, in work that predates Burton's contemporary understanding, have illustrated and argued a similar concept. It was through passing down cultural expectations and behaviours, or values, that a 'national' identity is formed. Values hold a particular meaning for the people of that culture. Indeed Benedict argued for an acceptance of the values of other cultures as we strive for acceptance of cultural

diversity today. Embedded in her thinking was the concept of understanding the other with compassion and a non-judgmental attitude, both qualities which we have argued are essential to creating non-violent communities.

### **Collective Unconscious: The Search for a Universal Connectedness -**

There is a German expression called 'zeitgeist' which means spirit of the times and refers to the common beliefs and values of a particular period. The zeitgeist changes over time and some philosophers suggest that changes are due to and part of a larger phenomenon which binds us all together as part of one whole earth and universe. While Freud may have identified our commonalities to be based on instinct, Jung, his colleague and contemporary, on the other hand, called these attitudinal tendencies our 'collective unconscious'.

Collective conscience was a term first coined by Durkheim which he defined as occurring when, "the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own" (Marshall, 1998, p. 89). Durkheim used the concept in his attempts to understand what causes social order. At the time he wrote this many scholars, who came to be known as sociologists, were reflecting on the nature of social order and how this order was maintained. This collective consciousness, Durkheim said, gave us social cohesion. In preindustrial societies he said that this collective consciousness comprised a set of rigid rules implicitly understood by all members of the larger society and which created social bonds. Durkheim is famous for his studies of suicide rates which he said were higher in societies where traditional social bonds break down such as the newly industrializing societies of northern Europe in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. More traditional societies in southern Europe that placed more emphasis on traditional social bonds of family, community and religious authority had lower suicide rates. In his work he always attempted to understand society in empirical scientific terms.

Burton says that the source of stated meaning and purpose which is related to our morality is more obscure. It is rooted in a "personal hidden layer-based narrative" (Burton, 2008, p. 184) that resides within the confines of the neurology of the brain and is never completely knowable

due to the intricacies of the brain. Jung, on the other hand, says that meaning and purpose can come from both inside and outside of ourselves, because as individuals we are part of a universal wholeness. He calls this 'unus mundus' and it is made apparent by symbols which he calls archetypes. Archetypes according to Jung are "innate symbolic forms and psychological dispositions that unconsciously structure and impel human behaviour and experience at both the personal and collective level" (Tarnas, 2006, p. 57). Some archetypes are dualities such as light and dark, birth and death, growth and decay. Part of the innate character of this duality can be a tension between poles. Other archetypes are common figures such as the Great Mother or the Trickster. Archetypes can also be geometric or mathematical such as the mandala which is a figure comprised of an interconnected square and circle and represents one's place in the universe. These archetypes often reside in our unconscious mind but they form the basis for life's meaning and purpose.

Jung also developed the concept of synchronicity which occurs he says when two or more seemingly unrelated events happen at the same time and seem connected by way of a pattern which gives the events meaning. We often see these events as coincidence, but if the events are synchronous then there is a connection that we perceive as existing not by chance alone. What emerges then is a larger field of meaning (Tarnas, 2006, p. 54). Patterns of synchronicity are more likely to be seen when we think in terms of symbols and metaphors. Tarnas cites the following story told by a colleague of Jung's regarding a discussion about the possible publication of another colleague's manuscript:

Jung had read the book and he thought that it should not be published, but I disagreed and was for [in favour of] publication. Our discussion finally got rather sharp, and Jung looked at his wristwatch, obviously thinking that he had spent enough time on the matter and that he could send me home. Looking at his watch he said: "When did you come?" I: "At five, as agreed." Jung: "But that's queer. My watch came back from the watch-maker this morning after a complete revision, and now I have 5:05. But you must have been here much longer. What time do you have?" I: "It's 5:35." Whereon Jung said: "So you have the right time, and I the wrong one. Let us discuss the thing again." This time I could convince Jung that the book should be published (Tarnas, 2006, p. 54).

The story illustrates how Jung saw his watch as a symbol which was letting him know that he needed to back up and rethink his opinion. He would have believed that, rather than there being a flaw in the watch, there was a connection between his incorrect decision and the wrong time on his watch.

Synchronicities are not amenable to analysis by traditional scientific methods. They are rather universal tendencies in behaviours and attitudes which move wave like (much like quantum physics says Tarnas) and are reflected in gradual shifts to different foci of attention. Also, we are participants in this process, not observers, which makes it difficult to name the trends and common ways of thinking, until the timeframe has passed and we are able to then reflect on a different way of viewing the world or accomplishments specific to that time.

Tarnas says that this sense of a connectedness that spans the universe has been suggested by philosophers as early as Plato whose archetypes were essential principles of reality. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Jung saw archetypes as principles which were evident in the human mind. More recently comments by the late Vaclav Havel, the exceptional playwright, intellectual and recipient of the Gandhi Peace Prize who became the first president of the Czech Republic, reveal the same concepts:

Planetary democracy does not yet exist, but our global civilization is already preparing a place for it: It is the very Earth we inhabit, linked with Heaven above us. Only in this setting can the mutuality and the commonality of the human race be newly created, with reverence and gratitude for that which transcends each of us singly, and all of us together. The authority of a world democratic order simply cannot be built on anything else but the revitalized authority of the universe (Tarnas, 2008, p. 452).

Thinking in terms of patterns moves us away from linear thinking in that, while we seek to improve our knowledge and the quality of life for all, we live within an environment which is eclectically based on the positive as well as the negative. We witness creative beauty as well as decay. We live with our great capacity to love as well as our displays of violence. The hope is that as we will come to learn and understand more so that we can overcome our fears and the violence which results by eventually seeing ourselves as part of something larger, something which connects

us all and makes us all valued and essential parts of the universe. One can hope that this insight will draw us all closer together into relationships of mutual respect and with a commitment to improve the circumstances of those around us.

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