

CANA eLETTER APRIL 2024

Our responses to conflict



Contents

Introduction – Jane Upchurch

Our response to conflict – Janice Dolley

Separation or oneness theology – Neale Donald Walsch

Nonviolence, an undervalued treasure in the Christian tradition? - Heather-Jane Ozanne

Peacemakers – Keith Lunn

How not to conflict with conflict - Brian Holley

Power, greed and control - Don MacGregor

Notes from World Day of Prayer 1.3.2024 – Jenny Cuff

My response to conflict – Bill Upchurch

Notices and upcoming events

Introduction

Responses to conflict seems a very pertinent topic with ongoing conflict in our world at so many levels, and the fruits of this are so often anger, fear and disunity. I often find these responses in myself, but try to release them and instead focus on love and peace and unity, the fruits of the Spirit, not only to help myself, but to feed these into the field. I am sure many others do the same, helping to keep a balance, helping to keep these options open for others to follow. What are your responses?

*‘We can never obtain peace in the outer world
until we make peace with ourselves.’*

Dalai Lama

Our response to conflict

Janice Dolley



Which of us has not wept at the plight of the people in Gaza as we witness what seems to be the pursuit of genocide? This current conflict has somehow awoken us collectively to the futility of armed war in this beautiful world that we have been gifted and this has given us cause to wonder whether the only benefit of war is for those who sell armaments or get contracts to rebuild after peace has prevailed for the few inhabitants that remain, traumatised by the experience.

We might then recall situations where conflict has eventually been resolved in a peaceful way. For example the conflict of apartheid in South Africa took the soul force of Mandela and his willingness to hear the distress of the people and work with all sides which brought about a resolution. Like-wise Martin Luther King in the USA and the courageous man in China in Tiananmen Square who walked up to the rifles and placed a flower inside. All demonstrated how soul can rule over anger, hatred and fear.

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Separation or Oneness Theology

Neale Donald Walsch.

Conversations with God, Book 4: Awaken the Species. Watkins. 2017.

I observe right now that most people who believe in God – and that is by far the largest number of people on our planet – still embrace a Separation Theology. Their way of looking at God is that humans are ‘over here’ and God is ‘over there’.

This would not matter if it began and ended there, but the problem with a Separation Theology is that it produces a Separation Cosmology – that is, a way of looking at all of Life which says that everything is separate from everything else.

That wouldn't be so bad if it was just a point of view, but the problem is that a Separation Cosmology produces a Separation Psychology – that is, a psychological viewpoint which says that I am ‘over here’ and everyone else is ‘over there’.

This would also be something we could live with if that was all there was to it, but the problem is that a Separation Psychology produces a Separation Sociology – that is, a way of socializing with each other which encourages everyone within a human society to act as separate entities serving their own separate interests.

Now we've entered into truly dangerous territory, because a Separation Theology inevitably produces a Separation Pathology – pathological behaviours of self-destruction, engaged in individually and collectively, and producing suffering, conflict, violence and death by our own hands – evidenced everywhere on our planet throughout human history.

To me it seems that only when our Separation Theology is replaced by a Oneness Theology will our pathology be healed. A Oneness Theology would recognise that we have been differentiated from God, but not separated from God, even as the fingers of our hand are differentiated but not separated from each other, but connected by the hand itself, and by the hand to the entire body – even as we are differentiated but not separated, connected by being parts of the body of God.

Nonviolence - An undervalued treasure in the Christian tradition?

Heather-Jane Ozanne



Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time.
Dr. Martin Luther King

Kingian nonviolence is not passive - it is assertive in that it resists things which do not allow communities to co-exist peacefully. It is able to deal with the issues and reconstruct them to allow people with opposing views to work together and build bridges. So, it is a constructive way to develop and elevate community harmony. Dr. Ben Israel, trainer in Kingian Nonviolence

Nonviolence is not a specifically Christian concept, indeed it has been developed and lived by exponents from many different faiths and none. Mahatma Gandhi, one of the best known adherents and exponents of non-violence was raised in the Hindu tradition, but also drew much of his inspiration from the Beatitudes. In the Muslim tradition Ghaffer Khan, dubbed 'the border Gandhi' was a leader who led a nonviolence movement in the North West Frontier of India. He rooted his belief in the teaching of the Quran, seeing nonviolence as the weapon of Jihad, or Holy War, based on patience

and righteousness. Jewish exponents include Martin Buber and Abraham Joshua Heschel. For some nonviolence is simply an expedient political/strategic tool but for those who come to it from a spiritual or faith background nonviolence often becomes a way of life.

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*Whenever you have truth, it must be given with love
or the message and the messenger will be rejected.*

Mahatma Gandhi

Peace-making

Keith Lunn



Arguably, disagreement is good. The 'to and fro' of argument enables us to identify possible flaws in an alternative view and so be clearer about our reasons for preferring our own. We more rarely use this process deliberately to work out what is deficient in our own viewpoint, or consciously to discover a fresh perspective that can emerge from cooperating with others to find a synthesis. However, positively expecting such transformation is perhaps essential when conflict becomes potentially damaging.

While the anticipation of co-existence and equilibrium may be comforting, the reality is that sooner or later one person's freedom will tread on the toes of another, and so a need arises for conflict-reduction, peace-making and healing processes including awareness, attitudes and skills such as are found in such worlds as diplomacy, mediation, groupwork and therapy.

[Click here to read the rest](#)

How not to conflict with conflict

Brian Holley



In watching the news you must have noticed how easy it is to become upset by what's going on in the world. Sometimes an outburst of anger may be heard - as if the perpetrators could hear us! Our problem is our reptilian Mark 1 brain - that primitive part of our neural network which filters everything coming through our five senses. It provokes activity in either our comfort system or safeguarding system and is the first and fastest part of our brain processes. It reacts to a stimulus in about one fifth of a second and that's because for millions of generations our ancestors lived on the narrow margin between dark forests full of carnivorous creatures and the vast depths of the mercurial ocean. Although we've evolved socially, educationally, economically and technically, the pre-human part of our brains still react to the threat of conflict or the promise of comfort in the same way.

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Power, greed and control

Don MacGregor



What's wrong with the world? Many would say the problem lies in power, greed, and control. But changes are afoot in the world, thanks to globalisation. People are more aware of other ways of living, and are increasingly frustrated when power, greed and control are misused in leadership, leading to corruption, deceit and fraud. We see this tendency towards power, greed and control in some national leaders, but also in lesser positions where personal gain is put before community benefit. It can also be seen in interpersonal relationships - and it has to be said it is usually the men who are taking those positions of power and greed and control.

So why does human nature tend towards power and greed and control? Maybe it's an evolutionary development - in order to protect the offspring, we had to learn to control our environment, to have power over other beings, and to make sure we had enough food to keep our offspring alive. That was particularly a man-thing - the hunter, going out to get food for the family, dominating other animals and any other humans who threatened.

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Notes from World Day of Prayer 1st March 2024

Jenny Cuff



This year it was organised by the Christian women of Palestine. The host countries are chosen and prepare their service about four years in advance. Who knew then in 2020 what would befall the people in this land. People in over 146 countries and islands around the world joined in prayer and action for peace and justice focusing particularly on Palestine around the theme 'I beg you, bear with one another in love'.

The worship service included stories which illuminate the experiences of Palestinian Christian women. As we heard their stories we were urged to bear with one another in love, despite difficulties and differences; To unite in prayer for just and harmonious solutions that would bring an end to human suffering, and to commit ourselves to journey with each other to achieve security and peace for all people around the world. We gave thanks to the Christian women of Palestine for the service, and prayed that their stories would encourage and inspire women throughout the world.

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My response to conflict

Bill Upchurch

When I worked for British Telecom, our jobs were threatened due to the use of computers. As I couldn't find out what was happening, I became the Post Office Engineering Union Hillingdon Branch Union Secretary in 1977. The ex-Union

Secretary became my assistant secretary and was not pleased. For nearly a year he made that plain but I did not respond although I found that very hard. Jesus had said we should turn the other cheek. It worked and eventually I had the support of the Union members.

The Bible also says that a soft answer turns away anger. The principle I use is that for every action there is a reaction so I endeavour not to react. As I grow older and hopefully a bit wiser it becomes easier to respond in a positive way. Pride can get in the way. If someone is vocally upset with you and you believe you are not at fault it may be possible to say something like "I am sorry about that". The '*that*' could refer to being sorry that they are upset rather than the issue in hand.

For me, this is what it means to be a disciple. Webster's definition is 'a pupil or follower of any teacher or school'. So a true disciple is not just a student or a learner, but a follower, one who applies what he has learned. As Jesus said, Be doers of the word, not just hearers'.

EVENTS

Cana Conscious Conversations (CCC)



Saturday 20th April 2024 10.30-12.30 by zoom

The changing nature of spirituality today

with Diarmuid O'Murchu

Join us for an opportunity to meet together online with input on a theme and breakout groups for discussion.

Please email Bill at admin@cana.org.uk if you would like to participate.

CANA Online Sacred Space for Beltane (COSS)

10.30 Wednesday 8th May



This is an on-line ritual, an opportunity to engage with Spirit and with our own divine centre communally, and this time we will particularly be celebrating Beltane. This is not a eucharist, there is no wine, no blessing from a priest, no Christian liturgy. But it does seek to embody some of the essence of the eucharist experience in creating a sacred space of communion but within a wider framework.

Please email Bill at admin@cana.org.uk if you would like to participate.

CONTACT US

We link together every **Full Moon** to build a pathway to Universal Spirituality, aware of the particular energies at that time. Every **New Moon** we have a focus on Praying for the Planet, a day we particularly remember our beautiful planet in prayer, meditation, awareness or involvement with love, hope and gratitude.

If you would like to receive the monthly emails for either of these, email info@cana.org.uk

DONATIONS

CANA operates on a gift economy so if you would like to contribute and do not already, then contact us (see below) and we will send details, or go to the page on our website [Donate](#)

To reply to any of this or share questions or suggestions for future editions, please email info@cana.org.uk, ring Jane or Bill on 01895 639476 or write to them at 20 Manor Road, Ruislip, Middx HA4 7LB.

*May love and light fill your life and our world
bringing healing and wholeness*

CANA (*Christians Awakening to New Awareness*) is a network of people responding to the new impulse of Spirit at this time, companions on the way. Many of us recognise its resonance with the teachings of Jesus as a way of transformation. Our hope is to rediscover and re-imagine a path leading towards a more universal spirituality that can operate with respect for all living creatures and all faiths, a path of love and service for the betterment of all. This is not just about the transformation of the individual, but the global shift of humanity to a higher way of being and of love that Jesus termed 'the realm of God'.

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