

Towards an integrative theory of peace education

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This paper proposes the integrative theory of peace (ITP) and briefly outlines the education for peace curriculum (EFP) developed on the basis of this theory. ITP is based on the concept that peace is, at once, a psychological, social, political, ethical and spiritual state with its expressions in intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, international, and global areas of human life. The theory holds that all human states of being, including peace, are shaped by our worldview—our view of reality, human nature, purpose of life and human relationships. Four prerequisites for effective peace education—unity-based worldview, culture of healing, culture of peace and peace-oriented curriculum—are discussed. The paper supports the conceptual elements of the ITP by drawing from the existing body of research on peace education and the EFP experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) where, since 2000, some 112 BiH schools with almost 80,000 students, along with their parents and teachers, have begun to systematically introduce the principles and practices of EFP into the curriculum and operation of their respective schools.

Introduction

Peace education is an elusive concept. Although peace always has been and continues to be the object of an unceasing quest in almost all communities and groups, the training of each new generation centers on divisive issues of in-group/out-group differentiations, intergroup conflict and ongoing preparation for defense and war against real and perceived enemies. The universal presence of conflict and war in human history has always necessitated that priority be given to education for conflict management and war preparation, and for the preservation of the larger community, every new generation has been prepared to be sacrificed at the altar of war. However, as a result of experiencing the world-devouring and technologically advanced wars of the last two centuries, and the parallel emergence of world-embracing concepts and perspectives on the fundamental oneness and interrelatedness of all humanity, in

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recent decades the concept of peace education has gained momentum and is gradually being accepted as an important and necessary dimension of truly democratic and progressive societies. Therefore, it is understandable that Vriens (1999) considers peace education an invention of modern times. Bar-Tal (1999) observes that although peace education has become increasingly common, such programmes differ considerably with respect to their conceptual and practical objectives and the emphasis they place on various components of the curriculum. Gavriel Salomon (2002) summarizes current peace education activities under four categories: peace education ‘mainly as a matter of changing mindset’, peace education ‘mainly as a matter of cultivating a set of skills’, peace education as ‘mainly a matter of promoting human rights (particularly in the Third World countries), and finally, peace education as a ‘matter of environmentalism, disarmament, and the promotion of a culture of peace’ (p. 4). Ian Harris (2002) identifies ten goals for effective peace education:

to appreciate the richness of the concept of *peace*; to address fears; to provide information about security systems; to understand violent behaviour; to develop intercultural understanding; to provide for a future orientation; to teach peace as a process; to promote a concept of peace accompanied by social justice; to stimulate a respect for life; and to end violence (p. 20).

This diversity of approach indicates the presence of a widespread desire for peace, on the one hand, and the difficulty of reaching agreement on the nature of peace and manner of creating it, on the other. There is a clear need for a theoretical framework of peace that will bring together these divergent—yet interrelated—objectives and concepts and would provide the necessary framework for a comprehensive, effective peace education programme. The absence of a universally agreed upon approach to peace is not the only reason for the very high incidence of conflict and war in different societies. The other main reason is the nature of education we provide to our children and students. Education has enormous impact on the presence or absence of a proclivity to violence in every new generation. As John Dewey (1897) observed, ‘education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform’ (pp. 77–80). Given the importance of education, we need to review our current approaches and perspectives to not only our methods and contents of education but also the framework—conflict-oriented or peace-oriented—within which this education is provided.

Prerequisites and components of effective peace education

Based on the insights emerging from peace education research and lessons learned from five years of implementation of the Education for Peace (EFP) programme to thousands of students in 112 schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), four prerequisite conditions for effective peace education are identified. These prerequisites also constitute the main components of peace education. In other words, the requirements and components of effective peace education are identical and give peace education a self-regenerative and organic quality. Thus, peace is a requirement for effective peace education, and peace education creates higher states of peace.

In this paper each of the four prerequisites for effective peace education are described; the main principles of the Integrative Theory of Peace (ITP) are outlined; and a brief review of the EFP programme, formulated within the framework of ITP, is provided. The main components of EFP are discussed throughout the paper.

Prerequisite I: truly effective peace education can only take place in the context of a unity-based worldview

Peace education and civilization are inseparable dimensions of human progress. Expressed differently, peace education is the only route to true civilization and true civilization is both peaceful and peace creating. However, in practice, nearly all segments of society ignore this fundamental fact and train every new generation of children and youth in accordance with conflict-based perspectives. The reason why peace education is 'such a difficult task', Ruth Firer (2002, p. 55) observes, is 'the continuous *war education* that youngsters and adults have been receiving since the beginning of mankind'. Firer's observation is validated when we critically review the current underlying worldviews that shape and inform our pedagogical philosophies and practices and it becomes evident that most current approaches to education revolve around the issues of conflict, violence and war. This is equally true about education at home, in school, within the community, through the example of ethnic and national heroes and leaders and through the mass media (television, Internet and the entertainment and recreation industry).

In the context of family, not infrequently, parents find themselves facing conflicts that they are often unable to resolve effectively and positively. Many parents also—intentionally or inadvertently—provide their children with the notion that the primary purpose of life is to ensure one's own survival, security and success in a dangerous, conflicted and violent world. Many teach their children that the most primal and powerful forces operating in life are those of competition and struggle. Children receive the same message from other influential sources of education in their homes, namely television, Internet and games.

In school, children once again are introduced to these conflict-based views through the actual experience of school life—with its culture of otherness, conflict, competition, aggression, bullying and violence—and through concepts provided by teachers and textbooks that further validate these conflict-oriented ideas and experiences. History textbooks, by and large, are the accounts of rivalries, conflicts, wars, conquests and defeats, with men as the main actors on the stage of social life. Many works of literature are renditions of the same processes in dramatic, emotionally charged and highly stirring manner. In biology classes, the emphasis is on survival and struggle that is observed at all levels of life. However, issues of coexistence, interdependence and cooperation—factors that are at the core of both formation and maintenance of life—are often given less attention and credence. In social studies, children are taught the dynamics of in-group and out-group and the notions of foreignness and otherness. Political science revolves around issues of power, competition, winning and losing and economic theories promote various concepts based on the notion of the survival of

the fittest. We teach our children that the world is a jungle, that life is the process of survival in this jungle and that power is the essential tool to emerge victorious in this highly conflicted and violence-prone world. It is, therefore, not surprising that every new generation matures with much greater familiarity, certainty and comfort with the ways of conflict, competition and violence than those of harmony, cooperation and peace.

Truly effective peace education can only take place when the conflict-based worldviews which inform most of our educational endeavours are replaced with peace-based worldviews. Duffy (2000, p. 26), in a detailed review of peace education efforts aimed at creating a culture of peace in Northern Ireland, concludes that 'it is difficult to be optimistic about the long-term possibilities of promoting change' in conditions of conflict in Northern Ireland unless a 'dynamic model of education' is introduced that 'will encourage young people in Northern Ireland to question the traditional sectarian values of their homes'. In his review of various approaches to peace education in Northern Ireland, Duffy observes that no satisfactory approach has been found, despite considerable effort and expenditure of human and financial resources.

This paper maintains that nothing short of a comprehensive, all-inclusive and sustained curriculum of education for peace could possibly alter the current attitudes and worldviews that contribute so greatly to conflict, violence and war afflicting human societies worldwide. In fact, it is my assertion that a comprehensive programme of peace education should constitute the foundation and provide the framework for all curricula in schools everywhere. The long, disturbing history of human conflict and education's role in promoting conflict-based worldviews demand a new approach to education delivered within the framework of peace principles.

In fact there are some positive and hopeful signs that a new consciousness regarding the need for a change in our approach to education is emerging. An example is the work of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1998) that sees 'education as the key means to spearhead the movement towards a culture of peace'. Another example of this awareness is reflected in the inclusion of the issue of education in various attempts at peace between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, who during their Oslo I, Oslo II, and Wye Plantation Agreements¹ agreed to remove all hostile, inaccurate, untrue and misleading propaganda from their respective communities, including school curricula. In particular, the Palestinian Authority agreed to remove from its textbooks all prejudicial references against Israel. However, as Israeli (1999) has observed, the Palestinian Authority has not fulfilled this commitment, a fact that has contributed negatively to the Israeli-Palestinian relationships.

Currently, concerted efforts are under way by the authorities of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the international community in that country to create a school curriculum that will educate students in the principles of interethnic harmony, collaboration and peace, rather than the opposite, as has been the case (Spaulding, 1998; Hays, 2002; OSCE, 2005a). This attention to issues of education and peace is not surprising, because it is through education that our worldviews are profoundly influenced and shaped, and it is through the framework of our worldviews that we

become suspicious or trusting, conflicted or united, peaceful or violent. The concept of worldview, as is formulated in the ITP and the EFP curriculum, is described later.

Prerequisite II: peace education can best take place in the context of a culture of peace

In a review of 50 years of research on peace education, Vriens (1999, pp. 48–49) finds that peace education is a difficult task even in relatively more peaceful communities and concludes that although ‘studies of children’s conceptions of war and peace are very important for the realisation of a balanced peace education strategy’, nevertheless, ‘research cannot tell us what peace education should be’. Peace research has a better potential to tell us what should *not* be done, rather than what we need to do to create peace. However, common sense dictates that we cannot educate our children and youth about peace in an environment of conflict and violence. Therefore, in May 2000, when we started the implementation of the EFP programme in six primary and secondary schools in BiH, our primary objective was to attempt to create a culture of peace in and between these schools along the parameters outlined by the United Nations (1998):

The culture of peace is based on the principles established in the Charter of the United Nations and on respect for human rights, democracy and tolerance, the promotion of development, education for peace, the free flow of information and the wider participation of women as an integral approach to preventing violence and conflicts, and efforts aimed at the creation of conditions for peace and its consolidation (A/Res/52/13, 15 January 1998, para. 2).

Following these objectives, we held consultation with the educators in these schools and learned that although significant number of courses and projects on such topics as human rights, democracy, tolerance and equality have been and were continuing to be offered in their respective schools, the overall level of satisfaction with the effectiveness of these programmes was low. Several reasons were identified for this dissatisfaction, among them the facts that:

- In each school only a small number, usually one or two classes, received training in one or another of these issues for a short period as extracurricular activities.
- At the psychological level, the participating students were not ready to deal with such issues as tolerance, democracy and human rights. They needed careful preparation to tackle these potentially painful and bewildering issues. This applied not only to the students, but also to their parents and teachers at a deeper level because of the direct participation of most adults in the recent war, just five years earlier.
- At the social level, the necessary degree of trust and confidence has not been developed between members of the participating school communities, who came from other cities and regions of the country, generally viewed by each group as the home of ‘the enemy’. The necessary interface, communication, dialogue and joint activities—essential for removing the stereotypes, misconceptions and flawed information that many of the teachers, students and parents had about the ‘other’ groups—had not yet taken place between members of participating school communities. In

the absence of such close encounters, study of these issues can be perceived as being either unrealistic or not applicable to the realities of the life of these students.

- The fact that the subjects of human rights, tolerance, democracy, equality, freedom, etc., which the students were learning in these special classes, were not yet present in the mindsets and practices of their respective communities.

The discrepancy between theory and practice always has a detrimental impact on students' learning processes as it places them in a state of conflict between what is said and what is done. It is for this reason that peace education needs to help the students to develop a worldview based on peace principles within a peace-based environment. As UNESCO states, 'first and foremost, a culture of peace implies a global effort to change how people think and act in order to promote peace' (UNESCO, 1998, p. 1).

The issue of the necessity of change of mindset and the behaviour emanating from it is not only a social and political necessity, but is also strongly needed in the religious thinking of people and their leaders. It is a fact that religions have always played, and continue to play, a cardinal role in the worldview and behaviour of their followers and not infrequently have been, and continue to be, the cause of conflict and war in human history. The following statement is of a particular importance with regards to the role of religion in development of peace:

Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the earth; it should give birth to spirituality, and bring light and life to every soul. If religion becomes a cause of dislike, hatred and division it would be better to be without it, and to withdraw from such a religion would be a truly religious act ... Any religion which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion ('Abdu'l-Bahá, 1961, p. 130).

However, the task of worldview transformation is very difficult, even under normal conditions. But, under conditions of conflict, violence and war a new and more fundamental challenge to the goal of changing 'how people think' is encountered. Conflict and violence afflict and damage all aspect of human life. They destroy the physical habitat of people. They inflict physical and psychological injuries on people. They cause social dislocation, poverty and disease and weaken the moral and spiritual fabric of individual and community life. Conflict, violence and war negatively impact every aspect of life: environmental, medical, psychological, economic, social, moral and spiritual. These injuries make the task of creation of a culture of peace very difficult and point to yet another prerequisite condition for effective peace education—a *culture of healing*. Successful peace education can only take place in a peace-oriented milieu—a *culture of peace*—which in turn requires the opportunity for the participants to heal their conflict-inflicted injuries in the context of a healing environment.

Prerequisite III: peace education best takes place within the context of a culture of healing

One wide-ranging review of peace education activities and research concludes that 'peace education is an extremely difficult task in war and post-war situations primarily

because of the tremendous need for children to overcome the catastrophic impact of war on all aspects of their lives and grieve their monumental losses' (Vriens 1999, p. 46). Ervin Staub (2002), reporting on his work in Rwanda, points to the importance of healing from trauma and states that 'without such healing, feeling vulnerable and seeing the world as dangerous, survivors of violence may feel that they need to defend themselves from threat and danger. As they engage in what they see as self-defense, they can become perpetrators' (p. 83). Here, Staub is describing the relationship between culture of healing and culture of peace.

An important aspect of healing is the process of reconciliation, which has received considerable attention in recent years through the institution of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in several different countries. Luc Huyse (2003) identifies three stages in the process of reconciliation: (1) replacing fear by non-violent coexistence; (2) creating conditions in which fear no longer rules and confidence and trust are being built; and (3) the involved community is moving towards 'empathy' (p. 19). He furthermore states 'all steps in the process [of reconciliation] entail the reconciling of not only individuals, but also groups and communities as a whole' (p. 22). These conclusions, drawn from the recent experiments with truth and reconciliation commissions in South Africa and elsewhere, point to the need for the creation of special environments required for the process of healing the wounds of conflict and violence. The notion of creating a culture of healing includes the realization that 'healing is inevitably a lengthy and culturally-bound process' (Hamber, 2003, p. 78).

Cognizant of these challenges, we began the EFP programme in BiH by focusing on those issues that could help students, their teachers and, indirectly, their parents, to gradually free themselves from the immediate psychosocial conditions that were keeping them in a continuous state of considerable fear and mistrust, on the one hand, and deep resentment and anger, on the other. We needed to create a safe and positive atmosphere of trust in and between the participating school communities, whose populations came from all three ethnic groups and who until recently had been at war with each other.

By the end of the first year of the implementation of EFP this objective was achieved at a very significant level through multiple modalities including: conceptual and cognitive instructions; creative and artistic presentations; meaningful, effective and sustained dialogue; complete transparency and openness; and full appreciation and profound respect for the rich and unique cultural heritage of all participants. Gradually, students and teachers began to discuss the impact of war on themselves and their families and communities in an environment characterized by mutual trust, optimism and a sense of empowerment and a culture of healing began to permeate these school communities.

Prerequisite IV: peace education is most effective when it constitutes the framework for all educational activities

The first three prerequisite conditions for peace education—the need for a unity-based worldview, a culture of peace and a culture of healing—together point to

the need for a peace-based curriculum. The notion of peace-based curriculum demands a total reorientation and transformation of our approach to education with the ultimate aim of creating a civilization of peace, which is at once a political, social, ethical and spiritual state. Political and social dimensions of peace have historically received considerable attention, and in recent decades, moral and ethical aspects of peace have also been incorporated in humanity's agenda, through national and international declarations of human rights and focus on the issue of nonviolence.²

However, the spiritual aspect of peace has received considerably less attention, which is especially significant in the light of current political and social dialogue about the place of religion and spirituality in the individual and collective life of humanity. This is so because, as is evident in our world today and as the history so graphically demonstrates, the political, social, legal and ethical efforts of leaders and peoples combined cannot yield their ultimate desired result—peace. Peace in its essence is a spiritual state with political, social and ethical expressions. The human spirit must be civilized before we can create a progressive material, social and political civilization. Peace must first take place in human consciousness—in our thoughts, sentiments and objectives—which are all shaped by the nature and focus of our education. To meet these requirements, the peace education curriculum needs to integrate and pay equal attention to all aspects of peace: its psychological roots; social, economic and political causes; moral and ethical dimensions; and transcendent spiritual foundations. Without any of these factors, achievement of peace remains an aspiration rather than an established reality.

Such a comprehensive, sustainable, restorative, transformative, inclusive and integrative programme of peace education requires a multifaceted and multi-level approach. This curriculum needs to be formulated within the framework of a peace-based worldview. It needs to take into consideration the developmental processes of human understanding and consciousness that shape the nature and quality of our responses to the challenges of life both at individual and collective levels. A comprehensive peace education must address the all-important issue of human relationships. At home, in school and within the community, children and youth are constantly learning about relationships, if not in a measured, thoughtful, systematic manner, then in a haphazard, careless and injurious manner. This curriculum must teach the children and youth not only the causes of conflict, violence and war and the ways of preventing and resolving them, but also the dynamics of love, unity and peace at individual, interpersonal, intergroup and universal levels. In the words of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1961): 'Love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfil them, for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in themselves' (pp. 291–292).

Figure 1 depicts the regenerative nature of the peace education model proposed in this paper. It shows that the prerequisites, components and the application of an effective peace education needs to have inherent qualities and focus that are in harmony with the principles, perspectives and practices of peace itself.

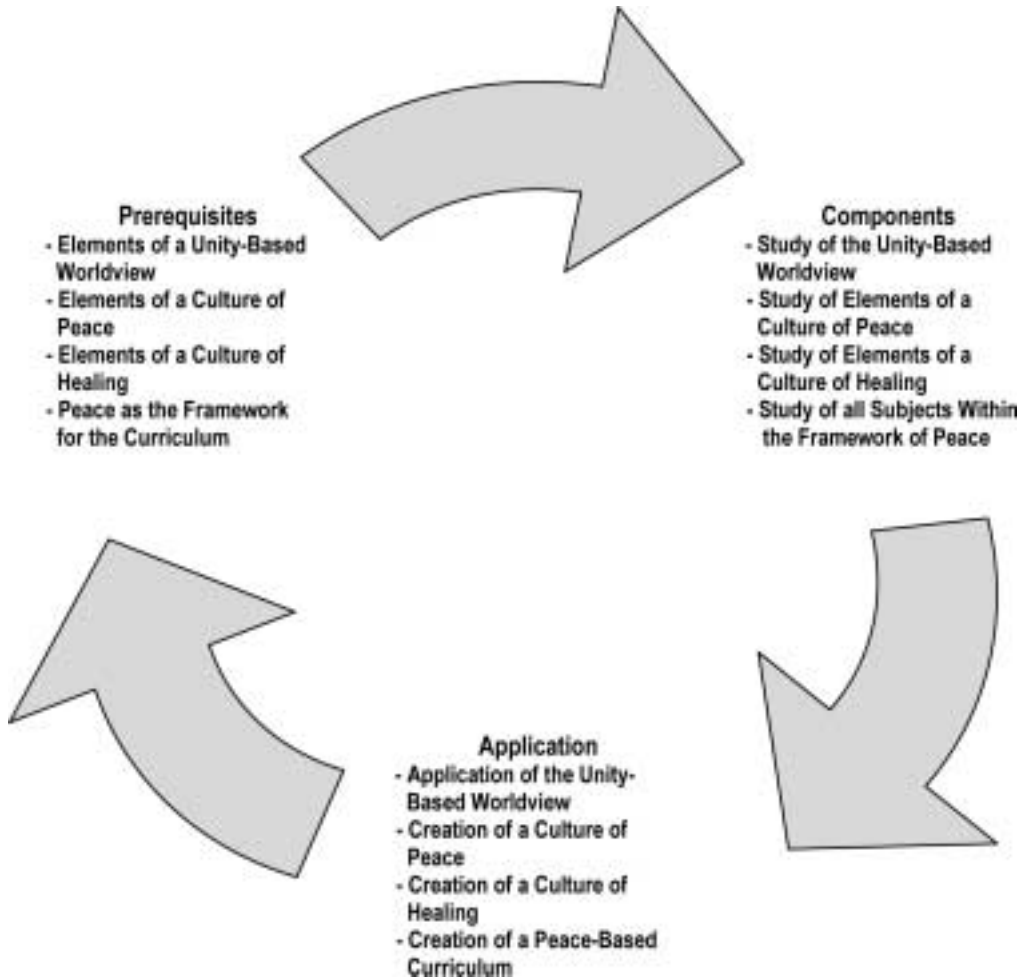


Figure 1. Prerequisites and components of an effective program of Peace Education

The Integrative Theory of Peace

The Integrative Theory of Peace (ITP) is based on the concept that peace is, at once, a psychological, social, political, ethical and spiritual state with expressions at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup and international areas of human life. The theory holds that all human states of being, including peace, are the outcome of the main human cognitive (knowing), emotive (loving) and conative (choosing) capacities (Danesh, 1997; Huitt, 1999a, b) which, together, determine the nature of our worldview. Within the framework of a peace-based worldview, the fundamental elements of a culture of peace, such as respect for human rights and freedom, assume a unique character. ITP draws from the existing body of research on issues of psychosocial development and peace education, as well as a developmental approach to conflict

resolution (Danesh & Danesh, 2002 a, b) and the lessons learned and observations made during five years of implementation of the Education for Peace programme in 112 schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The integrative theory of peace consists of four subtheories:

- *Subtheory 1:* Peace is a psychosocial and political as well as a moral and spiritual condition.
- *Subtheory 2:* Peace is the main expression of a unity-based worldview.
- *Subtheory 3:* The unity-based worldview is the prerequisite for creating both a culture of peace and a culture of healing.
- *Subtheory 4:* A comprehensive, integrated and lifelong education within the framework of peace is the most effective approach for a transformation from the conflict-based metacategories of survival-based and identity-based worldviews to the metacategory of unity-based worldview.

ITP posits that peace has its roots at once in the satisfaction of human need for survival, safety and security; in the human quest for freedom, justice and interconnectedness; and in the human search for meaning, purpose and righteousness. Thus, peace is the ultimate outcome of our transition from self-centred and anxiety-ridden insecurities of survival instincts and the quarrelsome, dichotomous tensions of the identity-formation processes to a universal and all-inclusive state of awareness of our fundamental oneness and connectedness with all humanity and, in fact, with all life.

Worldview, education and power

The foundation of every culture is its worldview, a concept that Moscovici (1993) calls ‘social representations’ (pp. 160–170), and Hägglund (1999) describes as ‘cultural fabric’, stating that worldviews ‘constitute discursive complexes of norms, values, beliefs, and knowledge, adhered to various phenomena in human beings’ lives’ (pp. 190–207). Worldviews are usually expressed at a subconscious level (Zanna & Rempel, 1988; Guerra *et al.*, 1997; Van Slyck *et al.*, 1999), and there is ample evidence that most peoples of the world live with conflict-oriented worldviews, whether ethnically, religiously or environmentally based (Van Slyck *et al.*, 1999). Worldviews are also at the core of some of the current peace-related concepts and approaches such as storytelling (Bar-Tal, 2000), ‘contact theory’ (Pettigrew, 1998; Allport, 1954), collective narrative (Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998) and dialogue (Sonnenschein *et al.*, 1998).

Worldview and education

One of the main functions of education is its considerable contribution to the formulation of our worldview, which in turn provides the necessary framework for all our life processes—our thoughts, feelings, choices and actions. Worldview construction is an inherent aspect of the development of human consciousness and is therefore an inevitable and essential aspect of development of human individuals and societies alike. Every individual and every society has a worldview shaped by

religious beliefs, philosophical concepts, political ideologies and particular life experiences and environmental characteristics. In all societies, the main vehicle for both transfer and formation of worldview is education (formal as well as informal). However, this process has frequently been manipulated and abused by leaders in all sectors of human society. History provides many examples of imposition of worldview on citizens and strangers alike in the name of a religion, an ideology, a scientific or pseudoscientific theory, a political persuasion, a popular philosophy or economic necessity.

To prevent such an abuse, much effort is expended by progressive elements in various communities to create opportunities for free investigation and adoption of worldviews on the part of children, youth and adults alike, preferably without any imposition or influence from others. This objective, however, is very difficult to achieve. From the earliest days of life we are engaged, usually not in a deliberate or systematic manner, in the formulation of our worldviews through our life experiences and lessons we learn from our parents, teachers and classmates, as well as from accurate or inaccurate concepts and ideas we adopt from our exposure to various scientific theories and historical accounts, belief systems, ideologies and media presentations in our respective cultural milieu.

Worldview and power

A significant and closely related element in the development of worldview is power. Central to the development of a worldview, in addition to the inevitable development and expansion of human consciousness, is the role of power in the formation of worldview, which is due to (1) the ubiquitous attraction to power in all human relationships in the earlier stages of development of both the individual and the society, and (2) power's intimate relationship to issues of survival, security and identity formation. All these issues—survival, security, identity—have direct relationship with subjects of conflict, war and peace. Power gives the illusion of security and supremacy and consequently is both the most sought after and the most abused element in human interactions.

Power is sought to ensure safety and peace for oneself and one's group. However, because power at best provides limited peace based on the dichotomous concepts of otherness and contention, it is usually open to abuse and gives rise to new conflicts and wars. Thus, every occasion of limited peace—for oneself and one's group—is punctuated by periods of conflict and war with others, and a durable peace is a relatively rare occurrence in human history.

Power is also sought as the main vehicle for establishing one's individual and group identity, particularly in the earlier stages of the development of human individuals and societies. Under these conditions, the main expression of identity formation is in the form of power struggle in all departments of human life—physical, economical, social, political, intellectual, artistic and religious—which in turn gives birth to conflicted rivalries and highly competitive and aggressive practices.

Three metacategories of worldview

The concept of worldview, as formulated in ITP, encompasses our view of (1) reality, (2) human nature, (3) the purpose of life, and (4) approach to all human relationships. Worldviews evolve in direct response to the development of human consciousness which, in turn, is shaped by the aggregate of life experiences. As such, our worldviews are shaped by our individual life stories in the context of our collective cultural histories. Because all individuals and societies are subject to the universal laws of life—unity, development, creativity—we are able to find fundamental similarities and patterns in worldviews that cut across cultural, linguistic, religious and ideological boundaries. By taking into consideration the dynamics of development of individual and collective consciousness, we can identify three distinct metacategories of worldview that are, to varying degrees, present in all human individuals and societies. These worldviews reflect the particular characteristics of three distinct aspects and phases in the development of every individual and society, respectively designated as survival-based, identity-based and unity-based worldviews. (Danesh, 2002).

A: Survival-based worldview

The survival-based worldview is normal during infancy and childhood and corresponds to the agrarian and pre-industrial periods of societal development. This worldview can also develop under conditions of poverty, injustice, anarchy, physical threat and war at any time and in any cultural setting or age group. These circumstances can jeopardize the very survival of both individuals and groups and predispose them to seek power in their quest for security. However, the distribution of power and the nature of relationships during this phase are unequal and proclivity to use force and/or conformity to achieve one's objectives is strong. Under these conditions usually one person or a small number of individuals hold the reins of power and assume a position of authority. The remaining members of the group become appeasing conformists, withdrawn pessimists, or subversive activists. These dynamics apply to both small groups such as the family, school and the workplace and to large groups such as nations and religions. The use of power in the survival phase is in the form of 'hierarchical power structure' with a considerable proclivity to conflict and violence because within this mindset the world is viewed as a dangerous place, operating on the principles of force and control, with the twin ultimate aims of survival and security for oneself and one's group. In the survival-based worldview authoritarian and dictatorial practices are common and deemed justified.

This worldview is not conducive to the creation of lasting peace in the context of 'unity in diversity'. It demands conformity, blind obedience and passive resignation. It systematically puts women, children, minorities, foreigners and others devoid of power and wealth in a condition of disadvantage, neglect or abuse. Thus the *peace* and *order* created by an authoritarian system are illusory, lasting only as long as the balance of power favours rulers and the ruling class, enabling imposition of an arbitrary peace on their subjects. One recent example is the former USSR's state of

enforced peace that has been replaced by sporadic devastating periods of conflict since the regime collapsed.

B. Identity-based worldview

The identity-based worldview corresponds to the gradual coming of age of both the individual and the society. Development of new ideas and practices, intensity of passions and attitudes and extremes of competition and rivalry characterize this phase. Identity development, though a lifelong process, attains its highest level of expression in adolescence and early adulthood in the individual and, correspondingly, for societies at the time of their emergence from authoritarian environments and attempts to create democracy. It is a phase in which physical, emotional and mental powers begin to blossom, bringing a new level of dynamism and extremism to the life of the individual and society alike (see Erikson, 1968; Hogg *et al.*, 1995; Rothman, 1997).

This phase typically corresponds with the period of scientific/technological advancement and democratization of the society, usually within the framework of adversarial power structure. Extreme competition and power struggle are the main operating principles at this stage of development, and the political, economic and social processes are shaped by the concept of the survival of the fittest. The ultimate objective of individuals and groups operating within the framework of the identity-based worldview is to prevail and win—an objective that often adversely affects the manner in which such important issues as the rule of law, regard for human rights, and respect for democratic practices are approached.

It is important to note that all aspects of human culture such as science, religion, governance, technology, marriage, family and business practices are subject to abuse and misuse within both the survival-based and identity-based worldviews. A cursory review of contemporary approaches to human and social relationships demonstrates the prevalence of these two worldviews, which are also reflected in the two main approaches to governance (authoritarian and adversarial democracy) and the two dominant economic philosophies (Marxist socialism and individualistic capitalism) that have dominated the world political and socio-economic landscape for the past one and a half centuries. We are still using scientific knowledge, technological expertise, religious affiliation and ethical concepts in the limited, conflict-ridden and conflict-prone survival-based and identity-based worldviews. Consequently, both science and technology, and religion and morality, have been used for the good of humanity and also abused in the name of humanity. However, a new level of consciousness, characterized by a new worldview, is gradually emerging, pointing to the fact that humanity is entering a new phase in its progress toward the creation of a civilization of peace. *Humanity is now becoming aware of its fundamental oneness.*

C: Unity-based worldview

The unity-based worldview characterizes the age of maturity of humanity and is based on the fundamental issue of the consciousness of the oneness of humanity. Within the

parameters of this worldview, society operates according to the principle of unity in diversity and holds as its ultimate objective the creation of a civilization of peace—equal, just, progressive, moral, diverse and united. The unity-based worldview entails the equal participation of women and men in the administration of human society. It rejects all forms of prejudice and segregation. It requires the application of universal ethical principles at all levels of government and leadership. It ensures that the basic human needs and rights—survival and security; justice, equality and freedom in all human associations; and the opportunity for a meaningful, generative life—are met within the framework of the rule of law and moral/ethical principles. A consultative, cooperative power structure characterizes the unity-based worldview and creates conditions in which the legitimate exercise of power and facilitation of empowerment—both necessary for survival and identity formation—take place within the framework of unified, caring interpersonal and group relationships. The unity-based worldview is at the core of the EFP curriculum and is based on the all-important yet little-understood concept of unity.

The unity paradigm

Certain basic assumptions form the foundation of most existing theories with regard to the phenomenon of human conflict in its varied expressions—intrapersonal, interpersonal and intergroup. These assumptions basically focus on issues of survival, security, pleasure and individual and/or group identity. They consider interpersonal and intergroup power struggle and intense competition as necessary, inevitable processes of life, and deem conflict the unavoidable outcome of this struggle. Dahrendorf (1958, cited in Wehr, 2001) states that ‘[conflict is] the great creative force of human history’, and Coser, in his analysis of the results of social conflict, concludes ‘that conflict often leads to change. It can stimulate innovation, for example, or, especially in war, increase centralization’ (cited in Wehr, 2001). According to these theories, the best we could accomplish is to decrease the destructiveness of human conflict and to develop tools to resolve conflicts before they turn into aggression and violence. In this respect it is important to note that several concepts and approaches to conflict resolution such as ‘super-ordinate goals’ (Deutsch, 1973; Worchel, 1986; Galtung & Jacobsen, 2000), cooperative conflict resolution (Deutsch, 1994; Johnson *et al.*, 2000), principled negotiation (Fisher *et al.*, 1991) and conflict transformation (Bush & Folger, 1995; Lederach, 1995), are in fact seeking to bring more cooperative, positive and caring dimensions to the current understanding of conflict and its resolution. Similar attempts at finding a new approach to the issue of conflict and unity are also being made within the education community. An excellent example is the range of articles in the recent issue of the *Journal of School Health* on the theme of ‘school connectedness—strengthening health and education outcomes for teenagers (issue 74(7), 2004). However, many of these concepts and strategies are still formulated according to the notion that conflict is an intrinsic and inevitable aspect of human reality and life.

The concept of *unity*, however, proposes that unity—not conflict—has an independent reality and that once unity is established, conflicts are often prevented or easily resolved (Danesh & Danesh, 2002a, b, 2004). This is similar to the process of creating a state of health, rather than trying to deal with the symptoms of disease. The unity paradigm provides a developmental framework within which various theories of conflict—biological, psychosocial, economic and political—can be accounted for and the diverse expressions of our humanness can be understood. Certain essential laws govern life and their violation makes the continuation of life problematic or even impossible. Among the most crucial laws of life is the law of unity, which refers to the fact of the oneness of humanity in its diverse expressions. Peace is achieved when both the oneness and the diversity of humanity are safeguarded and celebrated. As we begin the twenty-first century, it is clear that the process of unity is accelerating in all departments of human life.

Education for Peace programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Context: education in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina

In 2000, the state of education in the post-conflict BiH—a society with a long history of authoritarian practices and having just emerged from a devastating civil war—was paradoxical in terms of its challenges and opportunities. The challenges were many, among them the extreme levels of poverty, insecurity and psychological trauma and social dislocation. Many children, their teachers and parents had lost members of their families in the war and the majority of them lived in conditions of extreme poverty and had directly or indirectly experienced the atrocities of the war. Thousands had been forced out of their homes and communities and were now internal refugees. All these individuals were still living in the psychosocial conditions characterized by fear and mistrust, uncertainty about the future, and preconceived and deeply rooted negative notions about people outside of their ethnic groups.

Schools which, prior to the war, were fully integrated without ethnic and racial discrimination, had become segregated. Some of them became bastions of indoctrination of the younger generation within the framework of misguided ideologies based on ethnic, religious and racial prejudices and misconceptions which had fuelled the recent war. Also, a good number of BiH schools were partially or fully destroyed during the war and some of them were used as detention or torture centres. These conditions, along with the extreme financial crises, provided a very poor and unhealthy educational environment for the teachers and students alike. Added to these conditions was the fact that the quality and standards of education had suffered greatly as a direct consequence of the war. Post-war ethnic animosities were reflected in curricula and textbooks which differed from region to region. Teachers were not trained in up-to-date teaching methods and fresh graduates were not equipped with the skills to tackle the educational challenges of a post-conflict society. In this unsatisfactory context approximately 25% (OSCE, 2005b) to over 60% (Prism Research, 2000) of the country's young people have expressed their desire to leave BiH.

These monumental challenges were tackled by a group of remarkably dedicated, courageous and motivated teachers and school directors; insightful and progressive education leaders and ministers; and reawakened and highly concerned parents, coming, to a greater or lesser degree, from all three ethnic populations. In the course of the past five years, since the introduction of EFP programme into over 100 BiH schools, we have been privileged to work with these individuals and their counterparts from both the Office of High Representative and, more recently, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, that have been and continue to be in the vanguard of education reform in BiH. The school system in BiH consists of primary (grades 1–8) and secondary (grades 9–12) schools. Secondary schools are organized in two categories: academic (gymnasium) and occupational. Almost all children have an opportunity to attend school.

It is in this context that the EFP programme has been accepted, without any modifications, by all stakeholders and has enjoyed their support and collaboration in its implementation. On a number of occasions we have asked the teachers, school principals, parents, government officials and students the reason for their positive reception of EFP. Almost universally, we have received answers that could best be encapsulated in this statement: ‘EFP transcends the boundaries of political ideologies, religious beliefs, ethnic affiliations, and peace slogans and puts forward universal truths about most important issues of life. Because of this it is easy to both accept it and trust it’.

Introduction of the EFP programme into BiH schools

The first introduction of EFP into BiH was in September 1999 in the course of an invitational intensive workshop on conflict-free conflict resolution (CFCR) (Danesh & Danesh 2002a, b, 2004). The workshop participants were journalists, BiH government officials, members of the international community, and members of the NGO community in BiH. The workshop started with a high level of tension, as it was taking place with a sizeable number of participants from the three main BiH ethnic groups (Bosniak, Croat and Serb) who had been at war with each other only four years earlier. However, on the second day of the three-day workshop the participants themselves had personally experienced enough positive results to prompt the Minister of Education for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (The Bosniak and Croat Entity of BiH) to extend an invitation to the author to bring his programme to BiH schools. In a follow-up consultation, an invitation from the Minister of Education of Republika Srpska (the Serb Entity of BiH) was also received.

On the basis of these formal invitations and a grant from the Government of Luxembourg in May 2000, the Education for Peace programme was introduced as a pilot project into six primary and secondary schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These schools, located in Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Travnik, represent all segments of this war-torn, conflicted country. EFP is one of the few education programmes that the authorities representing the three ethnic groups in BiH have accepted voluntarily and

without any qualifications. Midway during the first year of its implementation, the education authorities concluded that EFP should be implemented in many more—and if possible all—BiH schools. In response to this invitation, EFP-International,³ thus far, has been able to secure the necessary resources to implement the project in 112 schools. These schools together have some 80,000 students, 5000 teachers and school staff and 130,000 parents/guardians. A long-term plan is now under consideration for the introduction of EFP to all primary and secondary schools in BiH with an estimated number of 700,000 students.

The EFP programme has the full support of all 13 BiH Ministries of Education at both entity and cantonal levels and all eight pedagogical institutes. In May 2005, an EFP-BiH Advisory Commission, with appointed representatives from the 13 Ministries of Education and eight pedagogical institutes (who are responsible for teacher training and curriculum development) representing all regions of BiH, formally began its work with the twin mandates to:

1. review and provide input to the government on the framework for formal integration of the EFP curriculum into BiH education reform policy; and
2. undertake the function of bringing the process into the phase of implementation.

This task is now being pursued with full collaboration between the government of BiH, the OSCE BiH Mission, and the International Education for Peace Institute and its branch, the Education for Peace Institute of the Balkans.

EFP curriculum

The EFP curriculum is designed to meet, within the parameters of ITP, the four requisite conditions for the successful implementation of any peace education program: development of a unity-based worldview; creating a culture of peace; creating a culture of healing; and using peace education as the framework for all educational activities.

Development of a unity-based worldview. EFP achieves this objective by ensuring that all learning processes and discourse in the school community—teacher–teacher, student–teacher, student–student, student–parent and teacher–parent—would take place within the framework of a unity-based worldview. This goal requires that all members of the school community become fully conversant with the concept of worldview and its different expressions. It also needs to create a safe milieu for everyone to explore their own respective worldview without any hindrance or pressure and to understand the singular role of the unity-based worldview in creating a culture of peace in and between their respective communities. This is an all-inclusive process and all participants, particularly teachers and students and, to the extent possible, their parents, are focused on the impact of various worldviews on issues of peace and conflict and how as individuals we can review and modify our own worldviews. It is through this process that education at home, in the school and within the community becomes the primary medium for the formation of a unity-based worldview in children and adults.

Creating a culture of peace. The second objective of EFP is to help members of the participating school communities, together, create a culture of peace in and between their schools. The first and the most crucial step towards achievement of this goal is to create an atmosphere of trust among all participants. EFP approaches this task through a number of strategies. It engages all participants in a deep and sustained reflection on their personal and group worldviews and their role in either creating conflict or peace. It encourages students in every classroom and subject area to examine the impact of application of the unity-based worldview on that subject; for example, how the history books would be different if they were to be written within the framework of a unity-based worldview rather than conflict-based worldviews, as they are written now; how geography, biology, literature or religious studies textbooks would alter; how our approach to economics, political science, and sociology would change. In doing so, students and teachers alike become aware of the bias with which they study arts and science. And this bias is almost always in favour of conflict. In school textbooks, everywhere, conflict rules supreme!

The third strategy to infuse a sense of trust into the school community is by creating opportunities for shared peace-oriented activities. This is done through the institution of *peace events* at local, regional and state-wide levels. These peace events take place at least twice every academic year and involve all students, teachers, school staff, parents and the larger community. In the course of these events, students in every classroom, under the guidance of their teachers, make presentations using the medium of arts such as music, dance, drama, film, paintings, poetry, etc. The purpose of these presentations is to share with the school community and community at large the impact of a unity-based worldview on every aspect of human life. The themes frequently chosen are those of family relationships, gender equality, unity in diversity, inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony, and various approaches to governance, such as authoritarianism vs. democracy. In a very real sense, during these events, students become teachers of their parents and other adults in the audience. And because all students from every grade (1–12) participate in this process, the whole community becomes actively involved in these peace events.

A representative number of students, teachers and parents from each EFP school then travel to another city, usually the city of the ‘former enemy’, for participation in the regional and national peace events. Hundreds of individuals (students, teachers, parents, leaders, the media), from all parts of the country participate in this celebration of peace and share their profound hunger and desire to re-establish normal and healthy relationships with their fellow citizens, to share in the joys and sorrows of life, and gradually begin to heal the wounds of war through the healing remedy of unity.⁴

Creating a culture of healing. The third objective of EFP is the creation of a culture of healing in and between the participating schools. During the first year of the implementation of the EFP programme, while we were focused on the task of creating a culture of peace through worldview transformation, it became evident that this

process also helps to create the third prerequisite for effective peace education: creating a *culture of healing*.

The concept of culture of healing refers to the creation of environments in which the psychosocial, moral and spiritual wounds and trauma sustained as a result of severe conflict, violence and war are gradually healed. In the course of the implementation of the EFP programme to BiH schools, we identified the main characteristics of a culture of healing:

- *mutual trust* in and between the members of participating school communities;
- satisfaction of the tripartite *human needs* for security, identity and meaning;
- *hope and optimism*—hope for a better future and optimism for the ability to overcome future conflicts without recourse to violence, as was the case for them in their immediate past.⁵

These conditions are among the most important prerequisites for creating a culture of healing. These conditions are also the essential components of the state of *unity* required for the process of physical, psychological, social and spiritual healing. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a positive state of physical, emotional and social well-being (WHO, Preamble to the Constitution, p. 100). This definition covers physical, emotional and social aspects of health. However, it does not include the moral/spiritual dimension, which is also an important aspect of both individual and community health. Within the context of the culture of healing, this latter dimension of health is also included. The inclusion of the spiritual dimension of health into the concept of culture of healing is particularly relevant to peace education, because, peace, like health, is at once a state of physical, emotional, social and spiritual wholeness and unity. Such subjects as justice, equality and concern for others are moral/spiritual issues with significant social, political and economic expressions, all extremely important in alleviating the wounds of conflict and violence.

Using peace education as the framework for all educational activities. This fourth aspect of the EFP curriculum calls for a fundamental shift in our philosophy of education. Earlier in this paper I addressed the fact that, deliberately or inadvertently, most children around the world, including those in BiH, are educated within the framework of conflict-based worldviews. To address this highly consequential issue, the EFP curriculum is designed within the parameters of the unity-based worldview. Among specific aspects of this orientation is the requirement for the active and sustained involvement of the whole school community—teachers, administrators, support staff and parents—in this peace-oriented education for their students and children. Further, EFP indirectly engages the wider society, chiefly through organization and presentation of regional and national peace events and coverage by the media. Through these activities EFP aims to create a lively, positive and thoughtful discourse on peace, rather than the normal discussions of anger, resentment, blame and accusation that abundantly exist, particularly in post-conflict societies.

EFP's approach to peace education is comprehensive. It assists the participants to develop the necessary knowledge, capacity, courage and skills to create violence-free and peaceful environments in their homes, schools and places of work and worship. EFP focuses on the education and empowerment of girls and women, as well as the training and guidance of boys and men on how to avoid abusing power and not resorting to aggression and violence, a behaviour that has been typically expected of men. The curriculum includes a major component on the principles and skills of leadership for peace with the aim of preparing the students—the future leaders of the society—to become peacemakers. As a complementary programme, advanced Leadership for Peace (LFP) workshops are offered for the current leadership in each participating community.

The EFP curriculum for each participating community is designed with the help and full participation of its educators. The objective is to create a tailor-made curriculum based on the universal principles of peace in the context of the specific realities of each community. Children and youth of today need to develop identities that are at once unique and universal, so that they will see themselves as the agents of progress for their respective communities within the parameters of an increasingly global order.

In the course of its implementation, the EFP programme ensures cultivation of local human resources, strengthens inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration and involves the participation of the entire school communities. The programme provides on-going training and professional development of all school staff, enhances the creative dimension of the learning process and, through its activities, reaches out to the community at large. The EFP curriculum is designed for both primary and secondary school from Grades 1–12.

During 2000–2005 the EFP programme has been introduced into 112 schools and there is ample empirical evidence that these schools have benefited from it in several ways. Both a *culture of peace* and a *culture of healing* have been established in and between these schools. The populations of these schools communities have begun to gradually shed their fears and mistrust of those belonging to other ethnic populations, have started to re-establish their bonds of friendship that they had before the recent war, and have visited each other's cities. Mayors of the 60 communities in which the EFP schools are located have proclaimed a specific week as Peace Week in their respective communities and community leaders are regularly participating in the peace events that are organized once every semester in and between all these schools. Most of the participants in peace events attest to the benefits of the EFP programme and an increasing number of schools are vying with each other to be included in the next groups of schools to receive the EFP programme. Currently two longitudinal research projects—one by researchers from the School of Education of Columbia University (New York) and the other by the EFP faculty through a grant by the United States Institute of Peace—are being conducted to evaluate the outcome of the EFP programme in a more systematic manner. The details of the implementation process of the EFP programme are the subject of another paper.

Conclusion

The integrative theory of peace incorporates many of the currently held perspectives and approaches to peace education, while at the same time challenges some of the most widely held concepts with respect to the nature of peace itself. By viewing peace as a psychological, social, political and spiritual phenomenon, ITP calls for a comprehensive and integrated approach to the all-important issue of peace. Inclusion of the spiritual dimension of peace in the formulation of ITP and the curriculum of EFP, invites serious discourse among the peace academics and practitioners on this much neglected issue. Both ITP and EFP call for a fundamental rethinking of the current concepts on peace and conflict and the most prevalent approaches to peace education. These concepts hold that in order to create peace, we need to focus, first and foremost, on creation of unity in the context of diversity. This sounds simple and easy. However, in reality, it is one of the most challenging and difficult tasks. The focus of EFP is not to show the participants how destructive entrenched conflicts and war are. The participants know this at first hand. Rather, EFP aims at helping the participants to create a healing and peaceful culture out of the ruins of conflict, violence and war. The skills taught are primarily about how to create peace within ourselves, between us and other individuals, in our families, in our places of work, in our communities and finally in the context of whole nations. The curriculum also aims at teaching the participants how to create a culture of peace and a culture of healing in and between their respective communities and how to resolve conflicts without creating new conflicts.

Notes

1. The Oslo Peace Agreement I (1993) is available online at: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/israel-palestine/peaceindex.htm> (accessed 22 September 1999). The Oslo Peace Agreement II (1995) is available online at: <http://www.mideastweb.org/meosint.htm> (accessed 22 September 1999). The Wye River Memorandum full text (10/24/1998) is available online at: <http://www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/981024/1998102453.html> (accessed 16 November 2004).
2. Among the most notable of these declarations are: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN, 1948; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, UN, 1985; the UNESCO Manifesto 2000 for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence (1999); and UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (Ref. A/RES/53/243).
3. International Education for Peace Institute (EFP-International) is a research, training, implementation and consulting agency registered as a not-for profit association in Switzerland. The BiH project is offered jointly by EFP-International and its branch, the Education for Peace Institute of the Balkans (EFP-Balkans), with its seat in Sarajevo (www.efpinternational.org).
4. In June 2004, the International Peace Event and the Youth for Peace Forum brought together about 1000 students, teachers and school administrators from 102 schools located in 60 different communities throughout BiH, representing all ethnic groups and segments of the society, in a day-long celebration of peace in Sarajevo.

5. I have discussed the specific components of the EFP curriculum, including the issue of culture of healing, in an article: 'Education for peace: the pedagogy of civilization' to appear in a book edited by Zvi Beckerman and Claire McGlynn (scheduled for publication in 2006).

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