



*Every child deserves a fair opportunity at life.
The sun should rise for every child.*



Your Piece of Peace A Peacebuilding Primer¹ for Rotarians

“Except life itself, there is probably nothing that men cherish as much as peace.”

Past RI President Richard L. Evans

INTRODUCTION

An essential element of the mission of Rotary is **to empower Rotarians** to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace. The purpose of this Primer is to give Rotarians the tools, a framework, and vision to more effectively do that and thus to increase the peacebuilding impact and return on investment of time and resources of every Rotary project in all 6 areas of focus.

Rather than being a checklist of things to do, the purpose of this Primer is to provide basic principles and stimulate your thinking about what you can do to address the very serious problem of **polarization** in the world and be a catalyst for stronger, more harmonious communities and peace in your part of the world.

Countering polarization and building peace in the world can seem like a daunting or even overwhelming task. To be successful, and not have our efforts die under their own weight, our approach in Part 1 is to *Simplify, Unify, and Engage* (5 pages). Part 2 addresses *Building a Culture of Peace* (2 pages). Part 3 focuses on *Your Rotary Piece* (1½ pages).

The approach is to get the basic principles in place as quickly and easily as possible and then build on the basics.

¹ A Primer is a small introductory book on a subject.

©Rotary Peace Fellow Brian L. Farr, 2017-2018 Chair, Rotarian Action Group For Peace.

PART 1: Simplify, Unify, & Engage.

Simplify

*All humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another
in a spirit of brotherhood.*

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1

In simplifying, there are three measures that are critical in addressing root causes of violence and building sustainable peace.

Simplify.1: Individual Responsibility and Integrity. Every person has the power to make the world a better and more peace-filled place or a worse place for those around them. The more people (i) appreciate and embrace that power, (ii) feel responsible to exercise it in positive ways, (iii) expand their vision as to how they can do that more powerfully in their homes and communities, and (iv) act on that vision, the more peace will prevail.

PRINCIPLE: You may not be responsible for world peace, but you are responsible for your piece/peace (i.e. your piece of world peace and your own inner peace).

The challenge is to burn that principle into the hearts and minds of every person on the planet – or at least as many as possible. “Never let it be forgotten that ultimately peace resides not in the hands of governments but in the hands of the people.” (King Hussein of Jordan)

Simplify.2: Respect and Fairness. One of the biggest problems in the world today is the tendency of people to disregard, belittle, shame, or vilify anyone that disagrees with them – even to accuse them of being motivated by animas, hatred, and bigotry – when the other person often just has a difference of opinion or just sees the world differently. Often, those that accuse others of hatred and bigotry are the perpetrators of the hatred and bigotry.

PEACE METRIC: “Lack of respect for freedom of belief and other basic rights and needs of others is one of the principle markers for violence in a society.” (Brian Grim, *The Cost of Freedom Denied.*)

If peace is ever to prevail we must temper the politics of division and make them less rewarding. We’ve got to somehow “inoculate” people against dehumanizing and vilifying others and against other rationalizations that override inborn traits of empathy and cooperation and make people vulnerable to being stirred to polarization and violence. As a threshold, we must build respect and at least a reasonable degree of fairness. Both are essential to peace.

Simplify.3: Intergroup Cohesion and Community. One of the great blessings of life is to come to know, respect, and love great people of other faiths, ethnicities, nationalities, persuasions and cultures. Not only is it deeply enriching, uplifting, and inspiring to learn of their goodness, example, friendship, courage, perspectives, and beliefs and to work together for the common good, it’s also a key to building community and peace. Rotarians understand this.

PEACE METRIC: “Intergroup cohesion is the top indicator of peace in a society.”
(Institute for Economics and Peace.)

Being catalysts in building those connections in our communities and the world is central to our objective of “advancing world understanding, goodwill, and peace.”

Unify

*Together, we see a world where people unite and take action
to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.*
Rotary International Vision Statement

To unify is to bring together in common cause; to become one in fellowship and action. That’s our challenge - to bring people everywhere together in the common cause, action, and fellowship of peace. One of the greatest powers to bring people together is the power of what is shared in common. Especially powerful are Shared Identity, Shared Values, and Shared Goodness. **The key is to focus more on what unites than on what divides.** Difference should enrich, not eclipse, the good that is shared in common.

Unify.1: Shared Identity. People the world over are much more alike than they are different. Every person on earth is 99.9% genetically identical to every other. All have the same basic needs, hopes, and fears. “We all bleed the same.” (Alex Boye’)

It’s a great strength to peacebuilding to start with recognition of shared humanity. Recognizing and remembering that we are all part of the same group can activate the inborn traits of empathy, social interaction, problem-solving, collaboration, and fairness and be a powerful force for building respect, resolving conflict² and building peace. See [Appendix 1: The Power of Shared Humanity.](#)

Unify.2: Shared Values. After a lifetime of negotiating and attempting to implement peace treaties Uri Savir, a lead negotiator in the Oslo Accords, laments “few things are more archaic than today’s peacemaking strategies.” He observes that since “societies and governments act according to the dominant values and myths of the day”, peacemaking “must address a society’s beliefs and ideals at its roots.” Savir concludes “peace cannot simply be the domino effect of other processes – **PEACE MUST COME FIRST.**”[Emphasis added] He goes on to explain the necessity of creation of a “peace ecology” which he describes as “a transition from a psychological and cultural environment of war to one of peace, based on common values, tolerance, and coexistence . . . **common values are key**”³. See [Appendix 2](#) for an example.

² To put things in perspective, conflict is not necessarily a bad thing unless it is allowed to divide and polarize. While most people do not seek to have conflict in their lives and would avoid it if they could, a certain measure of conflict seems to enter the lives of all. While it is important to try to minimize conflict, at least equally important is how conflict that does occur is managed and resolved. When resolved in positive ways it can even lead to growth of the human spirit, to more respectful relationships, and to more caring, connected community.

³ *Peace First*, Uri Savir, pp.2, 6, 8, and 64.

Shared values build social cohesion and unity within groups and between groups – within communities and between communities – within nations and between nations. Shared values are foundational to a culture of peace (the “peace ecology” urged by Savir) and increase the sense and power of shared identity referenced in the preceding section. (Example below.)

Unify.3: Shared Goodness. “Somehow the world is hungry for goodness and recognizes it when it sees it. There’s something in all of us that hungers after the good and the true.” (Desmond Tutu). No group has a corner on the market of goodness. There are good people all over the world from all races, ethnic groups, religions, beliefs, nationalities, etc. Recognizing and harnessing shared goodness is a powerful force for peace that can be part of our approach.

Increasing awareness of, appreciation for, and commitment to the good that is shared in common (especially Shared Humanity, Shared Values, and Shared Goodness) is the most powerful way to build sustainable peace - the greatest hope for humanity.

That’s our opportunity and challenge - individually and collectively.

Engage

Peace is not a spectator sport. It requires the efforts of all.
Past RI President Charles “Chuck” Keller

Here are a few ideas to stimulate your thinking about how you can help get more people off the sidelines and into the game and to help them (& yourself) play more powerfully.

Engage.1: Infuse - with a sense of empowerment and personal responsibility. Many people are concerned about the state of the world but are not sure what to do about it. Empower them by expanding their vision of what they can do and of their responsibility to do it. Empowering people helps them accept personal responsibility and become more naturally and energetically engaged. Empowering them can be as simple as having them read this Primer.

Building personal responsibility could be as simple as putting the following quote on the back of your business and Rotary cards, spreading the quote every other way you can think of, and getting others to do the same.

***You may not be responsible for world peace,
but you are responsible for your piece/peace.***
(i.e. your piece of world peace and your own inner peace.)

Fully live your piece of peace.

See how on our [Website](#)

If everyone lived their piece of peace, peace would surely prevail. The cumulative impact would be immense. By working together that impact is magnified exponentially. “Focused, determined, enlightened public opinion is (one of) the most potent force(s) in the world.” (Robert Stewart) Ultimately, peace resides in the hands of the people – all of the people. For other ideas regarding personal empowerment and responsibility see Appendix 3.

Engage.2: Inoculate and Enhance. If peace is ever to prevail we’ve got to find a way to inoculate people against violence – against belittling, demonizing, and dehumanizing others - and to enhance respect, fairness, and intergroup cohesion. The key to all of that is to overcome ignorance and arrogance through education and interaction. Both are intertwined. Each enhances the other.

A starting point for education (inoculation) can be as simple as getting people to stop and take note of shared humanity, values, and goodness (perhaps by reading this Primer). It’s much harder to demean and vilify another person or group when you first stop and recognize the many ways they are similar to you. Listening to understand builds empathy and respect. Interaction can be as simple as working together to meet a community need or making sure membership in your club is reflective of the demographics in your community. Other simple examples to stimulate your thinking are listed in Appendix 3: *Ideas for Engagement*.

Be a catalyst in inoculating against division, polarization and violence and in building respect, fairness, and intergroup cohesion.

Engage.3: Resonate, Motivate, and Embrace.

Resonate. In trying to engage others, it’s important to recognize that different people resonate with different approaches (some faith-based, some humanist-based, some nature based, some peace science based, and so forth.). Failure to recognize and respect that fact can lead to quibbling and division - even among would-be positive voices. Invite and encourage people to arrive at principles of Shared Humanity, Shared Values, Shared Goodness, and other principles of peace by whatever path resonates the most with them and brings them to the principles most powerfully.

For peace to prevail, people of goodwill of all stripes need to band together. In a world where it often seems that everyone thinks they have the answer, it’s easy to overlook the fact that others may also have a piece of the answer. Together we have the answer. Together we ARE the answer.

To be most effective we need the strength of all positive voices standing together in a powerful way that exposes the weakness and error of negative hateful voices. See Appendix 4: *A Battle for Hearts and Minds*.

Motivate. Peace activist Paul K. Chappell notes there is shared human hunger for (i) purpose and meaning, (ii) belonging, (iii) self-worth, and (iv) explanation (people want to

understand). The urge to satisfy those hungers of the human spirit can be powerful. Chappell notes that if you give a person enough purpose and meaning they will willingly give up food and safety, suffer deprivation and physical hardships of all kinds, and even be willing to die for a cause (like protection of family, faith, country, or freedom.)⁴ The promise of satisfaction of those hungers can be a powerful generator of loyalty to a cause and a motivator to action.

Keep that in mind as you plan your peace projects. Find ways to increase every person's sense of belonging. Build their self-worth. Give them purpose, meaning, and explanation.

The principles of this Primer are designed to help do that. Establishing an atmosphere of individual responsibility, respect, fairness, and connection goes a long way in satisfying the hunger for self-worth and belonging. Efforts to build peace are powerfully enhanced when the incomparable power of shared values and wisdom is harnessed in providing purpose and meaning. Shared Identity and Shared Goodness help satisfy all three, i.e. (i) purpose and meaning, (ii) belonging, and (iii) self-worth.

Consider other things you think might motivate people in your area to accept responsibility and take action. A couple of possibilities to stimulate your thinking are:

- Some people are motivated by the futility and terrible waste of war and violence.
- Most people want a better world not only for themselves but even more powerfully for the children and grandchildren of the world – especially their own. Motivate them to help “make the sun rise for every child” – to give every child a fair opportunity at life.

Build peace using whatever motivates people to peace in your part of the world. Help fill these shared human spiritual hungers in positive ways. Append. 5: *Finding Purpose & Meaning*.

Embrace. It is one thing to read this Primer and quite another to embrace its principles and make them more fully a part of daily life. We encourage you to do so - as part of your piece of peace. To assist you we've attached the “My Piece of Peace Pledge” as Appendix 6. Fine-tune it to fit what resonates the most with you and to your own vision and commitment of what you will do to more fully live your piece of peace. Then print it out and hang it on your wall or put it somewhere else that you can review it regularly (like with your day planner or saved on your mobile devices). Make it part of your daily life.

Help start a community-building and peacebuilding movement in your locality and globally by getting as many Rotarians and others as possible to embrace the pledge. Encourage them to encourage as many others as possible to join in and help make it “go viral”. Encourage all to register their support for the pledge by adding their “Like” at our [Facebook Page](#) (if they can do so without unwarranted risk of danger.)

⁴ A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma, p 2, Paul K. Chappell, Nov. 2, 2017. www.peaceliteracy.org.

PART 2: Building a Culture of Peace

Peace has been defined simply as “the existence of peaceful cultural beliefs and norms.” That’s the target. That’s the end-game. That’s our objective. That’s what we’ve got to do if lasting peace is ever to prevail – build peaceful cultural beliefs and norms (normal social behaviors). **We need to focus on that objective at the outset and stay focused on it through every stage of our efforts.** PART 2 focuses on doing that by (i) setting forth a working definition of peace to unify our efforts, (ii) addressing the critical issues of Structural Peace, and (iii) making suggestions for establishing local and global Standards of Peace.

2.1: What Peace? It is said that the word “peace” means something different to everyone. While that may be true, it would seem there are also elements of peace with which most people would agree. To unify and focus our efforts, it seems helpful to have at least a working definition of “peace” that incorporates the metrics and principles of this Primer. Some common elements and aspects of peace for the beginning of such a definition are:

Peace includes an absence of hostilities, violence (verbal and physical), harsh and hateful feelings, and fear of violence. It includes the presence of respect and at least a reasonable degree of fairness.

Peace is more complete and enduring when it includes harmonious relations and a condition of mutual concern, goodwill, friendship and love in which members of a community actively and constantly promote one another’s good. (Daniel Philpott) At its best, peace includes conditions that allow for full development of the human spirit and potential – especially for children.

Peace is both in the present and forward-looking. Hatred, ill will, and violence move one away from peace. Understanding, goodwill, and love move one closer. Finding forgiveness within or some other way to let go of strong negative feelings may be necessary to find peace.

Peace is a process – a dynamic process of becoming. It must be learned by each generation anew. It begins in the heart and in the home. It is strongest when built upon a widely-accepted morality of peace and endures only if a society wills it.

Individual peace includes a growing inner tranquility that can exist even in the midst of turmoil. Such peace comes largely from moving ever closer to harmony within (i.e. integrity); with nature; with the source of wisdom, love, and light; and with others.

Send us your thoughts on what you would add. Include a short story or example if you like. We’ll publish as many as we can through RAGFP’s social media - spread out in a weekly or daily posting. We’ll also collect them as a resource on our website and may publish them in a booklet if warranted. Send submissions to contact@rotariansforpeace.org

2.2 Structural Peace: The Eight Principles of Positive Peace. To build lasting peace, principles and values of peace (including specifically those mentioned above) must be woven into the structures and institutions of society.

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) has identified 8 Pillars of Positive Peace. Each pillar is an important part of a culture of peace. Each pillar is stronger when built upon the foundation of a global morality of peace and permeated by the principles herein. The 8 Pillars are:

1. Well-functioning government.
2. Sound business environment.
3. Equitable distribution of resources
4. Acceptance of the rights of others
5. Good relations with neighbors
6. Free flow of information
7. High levels of human capital
8. Low levels of corruption

Great training in the 8 Pillars of Positive Peace is available online at **The Rotary Peace Academy** (www.rotarypeaceacademy.org) which has been created as a joint project of Rotary International and IEP. Take the training as soon as you can. Build your capacity to build peace.

2.3: Building Community & Global Standards of Peace. Contribute to building “peaceful cultural beliefs and norms” in your community/country by increasing awareness of peaceful values that are shared by the various groups that make up your community/country. You can start with the shared values listed in Appendix 2. Fine-tune them if necessary to reflect the shared values of people living in your geographical area. Build on them. Engage the goodwill of business, government, faith, and other leaders in defining the shared values and making them widely known. Spread them everywhere you can, to everyone you can, and in every way you can. Use local fora like school classes, public bulletin boards and banners, community newspapers, etc. Create a website. Use social media of every form. Draw attention to it through school peace art or video contests, peace poles, and in other ways.

[As a first step, you may choose to set your site a little lower and focus just on standards of civility. An example entitled *A Call to Civility* is attached as Appendix 7. Fine-tune it to fit the values in your community. Get it endorsed by community leaders. Spread it in all the ways mentioned in the prior paragraph.]

Help us develop a Global Standard for Peace. Give us your feedback on the draft in Appendix 2. Once we have input from all over the world, we’ll fine-tune that draft. Once that document is approved by the RAGFP we’ll send it out to RAGFP members, peacebuilder clubs, and partnering organizations around the world. Together we’ll launch a global effort to spread the Global Standard for Peace in the same ways suggested in the first paragraph of this section. Send feedback to PeaceStandards@outlook.com. See Appendix 8: *Three of the Most Critical Questions of Our Time – Who Fills the Ethics Box? With What? How?*

PART 3: Your Rotary Piece

3.1: The Club is the Hub - Every Rotarian a Peacebuilder. Help maximize Rotary International’s impact in building peace in the world and more powerfully implement the Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution area of focus by making your club a Peacebuilder Club. See how at www.rotarianactiongroupforpeace.org (Click on “Peacebuilder”) Make your club the hub of peacebuilding activity in your community. **Be part of a growing network of Peacebuilder Clubs that will change the world.**

3.2: Maximize the Peacebuilding Impact of Every Rotary Project. Hopefully it’s obvious that every Rotary project in all 6 areas of focus builds peace. Every time we meet a need and help build local capacity for people to solve their own problems we increase stability and build peace. Every time we get people working together for the common good – especially when helping the oppressed or less fortunate – we create the potential to build community and peace. For every project you help plan, take a few minutes and see if by applying the principles in this Primer and its Appendices you can create a bigger impact. Things like:

- Watch for opportunities to engage people that would not normally participate – even non-Rotarians. Help them to get outside themselves, grow in knowledge and understanding of the other, and feel the deep satisfaction of *Service above Self*.
- If possible, invite people of different ethnic backgrounds or faiths that would not normally associate with each other to participate in the project. Be a catalyst in helping them to learn something about each other and build understanding and friendship.
- Watch for opportunities to implement the principles of this Primer as part of the project.

3.3: Raise the Profile – Build Rotary. Spread the Rotary motto and *4-Way Test* everywhere you can, to everyone you can, and in every way you can. Teaching people to embrace *Service above Self* is just what’s needed to counter selfishness and greed in the world (one of the major root causes of violence). The *4-Way Test* is a more powerful addition to the community and global ethical standards than most people realize. Even Rotarians may not fully appreciate its strength. Consider how it lines up with critical elements of peace above.

Principles of Peace	Rotary’s 4-Way Test
Individual Responsibility	Of the things we think, say, and do
Integrity	Is it the TRUTH?
Respect	Is it FAIR to all concerned?
Intergroup Cohesion	Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS? Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

Invite people to join Rotary and your peacebuilding activities. If they decline, let them know that, while we’d love to have them join Rotary, these are great principles to live by whether they join Rotary or not.

Increase public awareness of Rotary’s peacebuilding power and activities by conducting a peace conference, planting a Peace Pole, sponsoring a student peace art or peace video competition, and so forth. Invite community participation (not just Rotarians). **Engage other organizations as cosponsors.** Maximize publicity for the activity. Tie it to your local peace initiatives and this Primer. Get maximum impact for your efforts.

3 FINAL THOUGHTS

1. Start With What You Know. Take a few minutes to stop, take a few deep breaths, and look at life through the peacebuilder lens. Picture yourself as a peacebuilder. Envision what you will do to build more peace in your home, your school or workplace, and your community. How will you be more proactive in building peace in all those places? How will you respond to daily frictions, conflicts, division, polarization, and other challenges that disrupt peace? What about finding more peace in your own life?

If you stop and think about it, you already know some things you can do to be a better peacebuilder. Step up. Accept responsibility. Put them into action. Live your piece of peace.

2. Become Even Better. To be respectful of your time we’ve tried to keep this Primer as brief as possible while targeting some key aspects of peacebuilding. There are some big concepts squeezed into a very small amount of text. The focus has been on stimulating thinking and on getting to more-impactful action as quickly and easily as possible. There is more richness for those who take time to think about the content, thoughtfully read the Appendices (one a day suggested), go back and read the Primer again, and then adapt it all to local circumstances. Since you are a Rotarian, we know you are already impacting your community and the world for good. We salute you and thank you for that. We hope this Primer has stimulated some thought about how you can do even better and have even more impact. Increase your impact even more. Sign up for training in the 8 Pillars of Positive Peace at The Rotary Peace Academy. Other resources that may be helpful are on our website at www.rotarianactiongroupforpeace.org

3. Lead Out. We all influence those around us for good or ill. Whether those we influence are many or few, we can each contribute to bringing out the best in ourselves and those around us – or bringing out the worst. We find more peace and happiness by bringing out the best.

In the final analysis, peacebuilding is about people-building and community-building. It’s about bringing out the best in both.

If we each live our piece of peace and help others do the same, together we’ll help make the “sun rise for every child” and build the communities and world we all yearn to see and, with or without intention, build ourselves and our own sense of fulfillment and peace in the process.

Fully live your piece of peace.

Appendices

(The Appendices are currently being edited and will be available by July 31, 2018)

[Appendix 1: *The Power of Shared Humanity*](#)

[Appendix 2: *An Example of Shared Values*](#)

Appendix 3: *Ideas for Engagement (To Stimulate Your Thinking)*

Appendix 4: *A Battle for Hearts and Minds*

Appendix 5: *Finding Purpose and Meaning*

Appendix 6: *The “My Piece of Peace” Pledge*

Appendix 7: *A Call to Civility*

Appendix 8: *Three of the Most Critical Questions of Our Time – Who Fills the Ethics Box? With What? & How?*

Other Resources

Other resources are available on the RAGFP website www.rotarianactiongroupforpeace.org. Click on “Resources” on the menu bar.

Watch for upcoming RAGFP online training on peace-related topics like:

- i. The “Do No Harm” Approach
- ii. Non-violent Communication
- iii. Conflict Mapping
- iv. Conflict Transformation
- v. Citizen and track two diplomacy.
- vi. Mediation – including training as “First Responders” to address community conflicts at the earliest possible stage before they escalate to violence.
- vii. The power of women in peacebuilding.
- viii. Forgiveness Science and addressing historical narratives that perpetuate violence.
- ix. Peace Literacy and/or Peace Science