

MOVING TOWARD PEACE IN CONFLICT

Conflict is a part of life. It has been a characteristic of existence and relationships since the earliest records of humanity. Who has not experienced it in some form?

A tiny infant, just minutes old, protests loudly, having been thrust into a new, less secure environment than its mother's womb.

The children in a kindergarten class, brimming with excitement at the sight of new crayons, argue over who will open the first box.

A teenager, desperate to experience independence, rebels against the restraints placed upon him by his parents and outside authorities, creating conflict *between* himself and adults around him, as well as conflict *within*, as he acts out in childish ways.

The middle-aged adult, whose nest is empty and whose nest egg is full, is now confronted with the impending costs and care of his elderly parents, and the reversal of roles this stage of life presents.

There appears to be no boundary, no age limit, or no setting where conflict is excluded. Ron Kraybill, professor at Eastern Mennonite University, writes in the foreword to *When Good People Quarrel*, "Everyone experiences conflict. Wherever people are alive and growing, they rub shoulders in ways that chafe" (Kreider and Goossen, 1989, p. 11). Morton Deutsch, an expert on the social psychology of conflict, believes "conflict can neither be eliminated nor even suppressed for long" (Deutsch, 1973, p. 10).

As conflict is a universal experience, it is important to bear in mind that one's attitude toward conflict directly affects one's approach to conflict. If conflict is viewed negatively as something to be avoided, then one may choose to deny its existence or be reluctant to approach it. However, if conflict is seen as an inherent part of life with an opportunity for transformation, then one may be more willing to approach it.

Additionally, the patterns of conflict established within families or systems are influential in determining how one will approach conflict. If one's family of origin did not approach conflict, but rather modeled avoidance or suppression of conflict, one may continue to replicate this pattern. If conflict was approached constructively in one's family of origin, willingness to confront conflict openly may be an expected response.

This chapter will identify several themes contributing to a greater understanding of how individuals move toward experiencing peace in conflict. Interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict will be defined. Major elements of conflict and variables contributing to conflict will be identified. These themes will help construct an overview of conflict. Forgiveness and reconciliation will be considered as pathways to peace. Theories and models of peacemaking will also be examined. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the themes contributing to peacemaking in conflict.

The proposal of experiencing peace with loss is embedded in the themes of peacemaking. I believe this chapter will provide a lens through which to view peacemaking. This lens will be significant in future chapters as the commonalities of conflict and loss are explored and a model for experiencing peace with loss is developed.

Understanding Conflict

As stated in chapter one, conflict is often complex. Some of the difficulty in understanding conflict arises from the diversity found in one's experiences with conflict. In its most elementary form, conflict seems best described by Kraybill's word, "chafing" (Kreider and Goossen, 1989, p. 11). Individuals, for whatever reason, seem to rub and irritate one another. From chafing, conflict can escalate. Individuals who become entrenched in conflict may sever relationships and exclude each other from their lives through avoidance, or through physical, relational, and emotional separation.

Additionally, it is important to understand that conflict can be experienced in both interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts. Interpersonal conflict with others may result from personal offenses, differing

goals, and competing positions. Intrapersonal conflict within oneself may result from incongruence.

When one's own values, emotions and desires are in conflict with situations and circumstances, one may experience intrapersonal conflict. Hence, it is noteworthy to consider the nature of conflict more completely.

Interpersonal Conflict

Writers in the field of conflict studies define interpersonal conflict as a struggle or interaction between "interdependent" individuals who "perceive incompatible goals" and "interference from others in achieving" their goals (Wilmot and Hocker, 2001, p. 41; Folger, Poole, and Stutman, 2001, p. 5). Morton Deutsch offers a similar definition. "A conflict exists when incompatible activities occur . . . An action that is incompatible with another action prevents, obstructs, interferes, injures, or in some way makes the latter less likely or less effective" (Deutsch, 1973, p. 10).

John Burton defines conflict in terms of a basic human needs theory. When the actualization of deeply rooted, universal basic human needs, values and interests is frustrated or cut off, the result is conflictive behavior. Burton suggests, as Maslow and others have, that these basic human needs go beyond "the more obvious biological needs of food and shelter" (Burton, 1990, p. 36). These needs relate to growth and development. Marc Howard Ross articulates these basic human needs as "security, identity, recognition, and development" (Ross, 1993, p. 177).

Dalton Reimer and Ron Claassen of Fresno Pacific University summarize the above definitions of interpersonal conflict with a concise statement in their manual, *Basic Institute of Conflict Management and Mediation*. "A conflict exists when two parties perceive that their positions are incompatible; that there are scarce resources; and/or the actions of one block, interfere with, or in some way makes the achievement of the other's goals less likely" (Reimer and Claassen, 2000, p. 28).

Therefore, interpersonal conflict occurs when individuals believe their positions, goals, or basic human needs are blocked by the positions or actions of another. Interpersonal conflict can result from competing interests, real or perceived, which have consequences for either party. Conflict between

individuals may result from injury to one's person or possessions. A scarcity of resources, or being unaware of how to use available resources, may also lead to conflict.

Intrapersonal Conflict

One of the earliest recorded definitions of conflict is of biblical origin. The author of the New Testament Book of James, in chapter 4 of the English Bible describes conflict as a war within the body. The passage posits that conflict comes from desires that battle within the individual, when one want something but does not get it; when one cannot have what is desired. The word picture of a war in the body portrays conflict in both interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts.

Deutsch broadens the definition of conflict to include intrapersonal conflict with the following explanation. "The incompatible actions may originate in one person . . . such conflicts are called *intrapersonal*" (Deutsch, 1973, p. 10). This most often occurs when there is a negative correlation with the attainment of personal goals and values.

Stanford University's Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education offers similar insight. "Intrapersonal conflict involves a single individual whose two or more goals, beliefs, or actions, cannot be reconciled or achieved simultaneously" (Stanford, 2002).

Kenneth Petress of the University of Maine defines intrapersonal conflict in the following way: "Intrapersonal conflict occurs when dissonance, simultaneous contradictions, or external pulls drive us in multiple directions" (Petress, 2002). Suppose individuals want to perform well on the job and impress their superiors but are asked to carry out duties that contradict their value system? Those individuals experience intrapersonal conflict as they wrestle with the desire to succeed in the workplace and the desire to not violate their values and beliefs.

I believe it is possible to position the Reimer/Claassen definition of conflict into an intrapersonal context by changing the participants to *individuals*. The definition would read: Conflict exists when an individual perceives one's own position as incompatible with a situation, when one has scarce resources, and/or when one's own actions, thoughts, or emotions block, interfere with, or in some way make the

achievement of one's own goals less likely.

It is interesting to note that Norwegian peace researcher, Johan Galtung, is cited as viewing a conflict that has only one actor as a dilemma rather than a conflict (Van der Dennen and Falger, 1990). Deutsch and others cited in this chapter indicate that intrapersonal conflict exists when external factors create incongruent reactions within an individual, or when an individual possesses contradictory emotions or goals.

In summary, one's response to and attitude toward conflict can reduce or increase the effect it has on the individual. Conflict can extend from chafing to obstructing one's basic human needs to blocking one's goals. It can be experienced in the presence of competing interests or goals, real or perceived, intentional or unintentional. It can also result from injury or insult. Additionally, conflict can be experienced in both interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts.

Major Elements and Variables Contributing to Conflict

Exploring the major elements contributing to conflict offers a better understanding of conflict. Conflict may result from the following elements: "people, process, and problems" (Lederach, 1987, p. 2). Additionally, Kraybill believes the element of power may influence conflict (Kraybill, 1987, p. 10). Conflict may occur from one, or any combination, of these elements. Each element – people, process, problems, and power - has the potential of creating interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict.

Although these elements may produce similarities from one conflict to another, variables contribute to the uniqueness of each conflict. These variables can determine whether the outcome of the conflict will be constructive or destructive. Therefore, knowing the variables of conflict can help to establish the criteria leading to reconciliation and increase the potential of peacemaking.

People

The element of conflict relating to people "refers to the relational and psychological elements of the conflict. Included here are peoples' feelings, emotions, self-esteem, and individual perceptions and

conceptualization of the problems and others” (Lederach, 1987, p. 2). This element recognizes the need for one’s feelings to be expressed, attended to, and validated by the other party. There is a strong desire to maintain self-esteem and social esteem as the parties in conflict make attempts to save face in the conflict.

One variable influencing this element of conflict pertains to “the characteristics of the parties in conflict (their values and motivations; their aspirations and objectives; their physical, intellectual, and social resources for waging or resolving conflict; their beliefs about conflict . . . their conceptions of strategy and tactics)” (Deutsch, 1973, p. 5). Knowledge of available resources, and an individual’s ability to use these resources, can help plot the course of the conflict. What motivates each party to resolve the conflict?

A second variable related to the element of people looks at the history of conflict between the parties. To better understand the conflict, one must look at the parties’ “prior relationship to one another (their attitudes, beliefs, and expectations about one another, including each one’s belief about the other’s view of him . . . the degree of polarization that has occurred on such evaluations as ‘good-bad’, ‘trustworthy-untrustworthy’)” (Deutsch, 1973, p. 5). What preexisting attitudes do the parties have about each other? What past experiences have diminished trust or may negatively influence the course of conflict?

A third variable influencing the element of people is “the interested audiences to the conflict (their relationships to the parties in conflict and to one another, their interests in the conflict and its outcomes, their characteristics)” (Deutsch, 1973, p. 6). Is the conflict private or in a public arena? Does the need to save face increase with this audience?

Process

The process element “refers primarily to the *way* decisions get made and how people feel about it. We often overlook the process of decision-making as a key cause of conflict, but it is here that resentment, feelings of being treated unfairly, and a sense of powerlessness are rooted” (Lederach, 1987,

p. 2). Exclusion from process can influence one's choice of constructive or destructive behavior. The element of process addresses not only issues of inclusion, but also the issues of power and fairness. Kraybill (1987) asserts that conflict will increase when individuals feel excluded from, or powerless within, the process. I will consider the element of power later in this section.

Interestingly, process is both an element of conflict and a variable contributing to conflict. "The strategy and tactics employed by the parties in the conflict (in assessing and/or changing one another's utilities, disutilities and subjective probabilities . . . the relative use of positive and negative incentives . . . the openness and veracity of communication and sharing of information, the degree of credibility, the degree of commitment, the types of motives appealed to)" (Deutsch, 1973, p. 6) will affect the constructive or destructive nature of the conflict. How will decisions be made? Will each party have a role in the process?

Another variable affecting process is "the social environment within which the conflict occurs (the facilities and restraints, the encouragements and deterrents it provides with regard to the different strategies and tactics of waging or resolving conflict, including . . . social norms and institutional forms of regulating conflict)" (Deutsch, 1973, p. 5-6). Will the environment of the conflict affect the processes of resolution?

Problems

The element of conflict stemming from problems "refers to the specific issues and differences people have between them. This usually involves things like differing values, opposing views . . . incompatible needs or interests . . . and concrete differences" (Lederach, 1987, p. 2). Lederach indicates that the element of problems is the root of many conflicts, as individuals often focus on positions and perspectives held on specific issues, and appear to be directly opposed to one another. Personal assumptions of how things should be tend to increase conflict. Resolution of conflicts dealing with positions must focus on identifying the needs and interests underlying the positions. If underlying interests are ignored, individuals may underscore their position and attempts to resolve conflict are

weakened.

“The nature of the issue which gives rise to the conflict (its scope, rigidity, motivational significance, formulation, periodicity)” (Deutsch, 1973, p. 5), is a variable related to this element of conflict. What are the underlying needs and interests behind the issues? How important are these interests to the parties?

Power

Kraybill describes the element of power as the ability to “significantly influence situations affecting one personally” (Kraybill, 1987, p. 10). Kraybill’s hierarchy of power, seen in Figure 1, helps to identify how the elements of conflict reduce one’s power, and therefore, influence and increase conflict. Kraybill states “people experience powerlessness at various levels, each more debilitating than the previous. The more powerless one feels, the more debilitating the conflict” (Kraybill, 1987, p.10, 12). The levels escalate from one’s preference being overruled, to being excluded from process, to feeling worthless, to feeling a lack of connection and meaning.

Level One: Outcome	When one’s preference is overruled or someone else prevails against one’s wishes. This form of powerlessness disappoints, but doesn’t embitter.
Level Two: Process	When one doesn’t just lose, but is not even seriously consulted. Or, when the process for arriving at a decision is too hasty, exclusive or unclear for one to feel a part of things. Process powerlessness is far more serious than outcome powerlessness.
Level Three: Social Esteem	When one is not only excluded from fair decision-making, but is also not valued or respected as a person. If a group or society functions in ways that diminish the value of certain persons, those people will feel powerless and react destructively.
Level Four: Self- Esteem	When one feels that he or she is a worthless person, regardless of what others may think of him or her. This person feels that he or she has no ability to influence who he or she becomes, and no options for constructive response to problems.
Level Five: Existential Issues	When one feels the inevitability of death and feels no connection of meaning or personal continuity to the eternal. As a result, such a person feels fundamentally powerless and inconsequential in the face of ultimate reality.

Figure 1 Kraybill’s Hierarchy of Powerlessness

From “Powerlessness,” by R. Kraybill, 1987, *MCS Quarterly*, 6(3), p. 10-12

An additional variable related to the elements of conflict is “the consequences of the conflict to each of the participants and to other interested parties (the gains or losses . . . the precedents . . . the internal changes . . . the long-term effects on the relationship . . . the reputation that each party develops)” (Deutsch, 1973, p. 6-7). Deutsch concludes, “the course of conflict and the consequences of conflict rarely leave the participants unchanged” (Deutsch, 1973, p. 7).

In summary, the elements of conflict - people, process, problems, and power - have the potential of blocking the actualization of one’s goals, interests, or needs. The distinct characteristics of each conflict and the course each takes can be influenced by variables. Understanding the major elements of the conflict and the variables contributing to the uniqueness of the conflict can enhance the potential of peacemaking.

Moving Toward Peace

Peace is one of the most sought after values in the world today. An understanding of the nature of peace is primary to the practice of peacemaking and is central to the notion of experiencing peace with loss. This discussion will increase one’s awareness of the nature of peace as it develops the meanings and applications presented in chapter one.

Definitions

A western view of peace communicates “an absence of dissension, violence, or war” (Rummel, 2001). Merriam-Webster’s collegiate dictionary indicates that peace, derived from the Latin word, *pax*, is “a state of tranquility or quiet, freedom from civil disturbance, a state of security or order within a community provided for by law or custom” (Merriam-Webster Version 2.5). These views bring to mind a peace imposed by external forces, where any form of conflict is avoided or suppressed. I believe a broader view of the nature of peace embraces the expectation of peacemaking.

Shalom. The Hebraic word, *shalom*, brings clarification to the meaning of peace. *Shalom* expresses not only an environment of safety and welfare, but also an internal state of health, prosperity, wholeness and rest. It indicates a quality of harmony both personally and relationally. Tenney states that shalom is used to “indicate a spirit of tranquility and freedom from either inward or outward disturbance” (Tenney, 1963, p. 632). Ron Claassen agrees. “One of the hallmarks of *shalom* is an absence of fear of being harmed” (Claassen, 2003, p. 3).

Eirene. The Greek word, *eirene*, depicts a similar picture of peace, characterized by quietness and rest. Additionally, *eirene* expresses the notion of being set at one again. When one considers how conflict divides individuals and relationships, the concept of being at one again is fundamental to peacemaking.

Negative peace and positive peace. Johan Galtung, founder of *Journal of Peace Research*, is credited with introducing the concept of “negative peace” and “positive peace” in the journal’s first editorial (Galtung, 1964, p. 2). Negative peace is a perception of peace produced when forces from inside or outside of an individual, relationship, or community function to avoid or suppress the reality of conflict. It resembles “pax Romana,” where the absence of conflict was established through coercion or constraint. It is not a condition of being free from conflict. It is not an absence of the fear of harm. One’s values, cognitions, and emotions are concealed or censured, through avoidance, suppression, or the refusal to acknowledge their reality. Safety and harmony are imposed.

Positive peace, on the other hand, embraces the reality that conflict exists and must be recognized. Conflict is neither avoided nor suppressed, but is approached through constructive peacemaking in an endeavor to reduce the factors that might extend or escalate conflict. One’s values, cognitions, and emotions are recognized, expressed, and addressed, as parties experience peace and work to resolve their conflict. Positive peace results in harmony, rest, and wholeness in the midst of conflict. Individuals move constructively toward peace, and experience *shalom*.

An example of Galtung's theory of negative peace was recently noted when the foreign minister of Israel responded to the recurring suicide bombings by Palestinians. The foreign minister pointed out that retaliatory attacks by the Israeli army do not indicate that Israel is seeking war, but rather, that Israel is seeking peace. He stated that Israel is at war to gain peace. What will be gained however, according to Galtung's definitions, is merely negative peace.

Likewise, the United States seeks peace for its citizens in light of the terrorists' attacks of September 11, 2001. The landscape of this nation, it is argued, was forever changed physically, emotionally, and psychologically by these events. At the one-year anniversary of the terrorists' attack, this nation still stood at alert. Armed National Guardsmen patrolled the nation's airports, bridges and major cities to establish a sense of safety and welfare, resembling a form of "pax Americana."

Peace, in the context of this thesis, is a state or condition within the individual, embracing the Hebraic and Greek notions of *shalom* and *eirene*. Peace is experienced through constructive peacemaking rather than suppression, coercion, or avoidance of conflict. Peacemaking acknowledges conflict; recognizes the values, cognitions, and emotions related to the conflict; and strives to find the criteria to achieve reconciliation. Even when conflict cannot be resolved, the peacemaking process can bring transformation to individuals and relationships in conflict, as it seeks to reduce the factors which escalate the conflict.

Pathways to Peace

How does one move toward peace and engage in constructive peacemaking? Forgiveness and reconciliation offer pathways to peace, and perform significant roles in transforming individuals and relationships in peacemaking. Most scholars agree the processes of forgiveness and reconciliation are related; yet they are not one and the same.

Forgiveness. Differing opinions exist concerning the nature of forgiveness. David Augsburger (1996) of Fuller Seminary addresses these opinions when he asks if forgiveness can be seen "as a

unilateral act from an individual paradigm or as a mutual transaction from an interpersonal paradigm” (p. 14)? His continuum of forgiveness, seen in Figure 2, communicates the differing viewpoints of the nature of forgiveness.

Augsburger (1996) explains that one end of the continuum represents “unilateral forgiveness (one party, the offended, takes the freeing step)” while the other end represents “mutual forgiveness (both parties move toward each other).” He indicates that the one-way nature of unilateral forgiveness is capable of healing the offended person “by releasing all resentment, all claims for recognition of the injury by the offender, all demands for repentance and restitution.” The two-way nature of mutual forgiveness is where “repentance is genuine (repentance by one or both parties) and right relationships have been restored or achieved.” (p. 14)

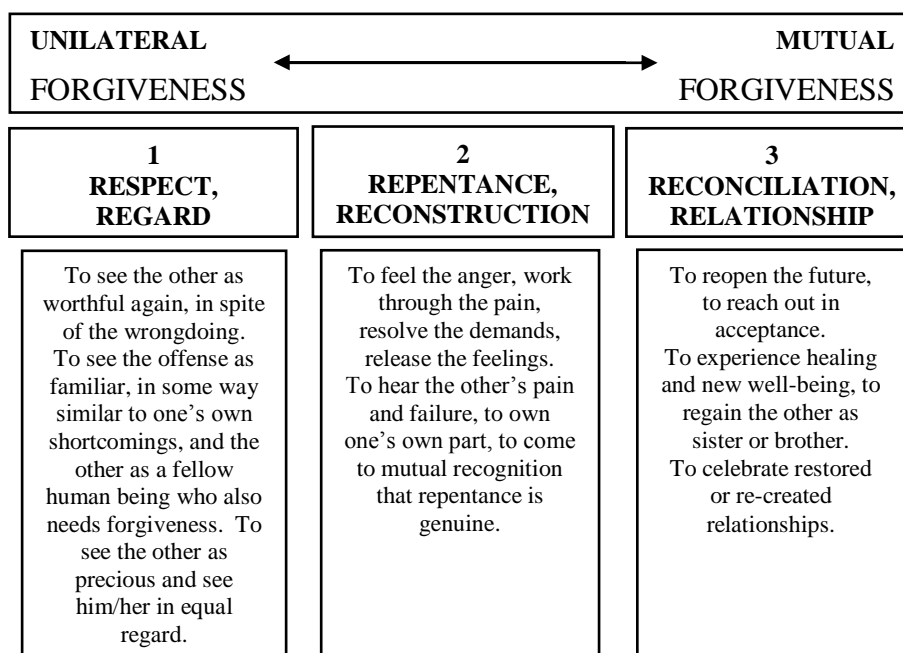


Figure 2 **Continuum from Unilateral to Mutual Forgiveness**

From *Helping People Forgive*, by David Augsburger, 1996, p. 15

Situations exist where victims of conflict do not have the opportunity to come together with their offender to experience mutual forgiveness. Perhaps the offender is not apprehended or dies while committing the offense. Possibly the offender refuses to meet with the victim. Unilateral forgiveness presents those in conflict the opportunity to release negative emotions and envision healing for both

themselves and their offenders. As Augsburger implies, unilateral forgiveness means those in conflict do not need to carry the negative emotions associated with it. The release of the negative emotions through unilateral forgiveness can lead to *shalom*.

Mutual forgiveness involves not only individual healing for the offended but also broadens the potential of healing to include the offender, and brings the potential for restoration of relationship. Both unilateral and mutual forgiveness provide “a new context within which to nurture the relationship” (Coleman, 1998, p. 79) and move the parties toward reconciliation.

View of forgiveness abound. Zehr writes that forgiveness “is letting go of the power the offense and the offender have over a person. It means no longer letting that offense and offender dominate” (Zehr, 1995, p. 47). Zehr notes that forgiveness allows one to move from being a victim to being a survivor.

Joanna North of the University of London agrees. “From the injured party’s point of view, forgiveness will have the effect of preventing the wrong from continuing to damage one’s self-esteem and one’s psyche, so bringing to an end the distortion and corruption of one’s relations with others” (North, 1998, p. 18). Forgiveness releases the power of the offense, and empowers and heals the offended.

North (1987) adds, “forgiveness is a matter of a *willed* change of heart, the successful result of an active endeavor to replace bad thoughts with good, bitterness and anger with compassion and affection” (p. 506). Forgiveness hopes the best for the offender, paving the way for steps to be taken for future individual growth and reconciliation. Forgiveness looks beyond the past and present, and into the future.

Desmond Tutu, chairman of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission comments, “Forgiveness is taking seriously the awfulness of what has happened when you are treated unfairly. It is opening the door for the other person to have a chance to begin again” (Tutu, 1998, p. xiii).

Forgiveness demonstrates the desire for renewed and restored relationship. Ron Claassen (2003) describes forgiveness as “the process that transforms a relationship that has been damaged by hurt, violation, or injustice, into a new creation” (p. 8).

“Forgiveness is the quality of *being with* another in spite of injury done or alienation mutually experienced” (Augsburger, 1996, p. 117). L. Gregory Jones, dean of the Divinity School and professor of theology at Duke University, writes that forgiveness is a desire and willingness to experience “the restoration of communion, the reconciliation of brokenness” (Jones, 1995, p. 5).

Robert Enright of the University of Wisconsin submits, “Forgiveness includes a *willingness* to reconcile or a waiting in the hope that the other changes. Reconciliation, of course, may be a result of forgiveness” (Enright, Gassin, and Wu, 1992, p. 102).

Swedish theologian Carl Bråkenhielm notes that part of the difficulty in understanding the nature of forgiveness is because “it is ambiguous; there is no one single concept of forgiveness but many” (Bråkenhielm, 1993, p. 22). He and others believe to define forgiveness, apart from what it is not, may be difficult to do. I believe it is helpful to consider the notions which are not a part of forgiveness.

Forgiveness is not forgetting. Desmond Tutu asserts, “In forgiving, people are not being asked to forget. On the contrary, it is important to remember, so that we should not let such atrocities happen again” (Tutu, 1999, p. 271).

Forgiveness is not condoning. Zehr notes that forgiveness does not mean, “redefining the offense as a nonoffense.” To deny the pain of the offense would “devalue both the experience of suffering and the very humanity of the person responsible” (Zehr, 1995, p. 46-47).

Further, forgiveness is not excusing the wrongdoer. “Forgiveness does not, indeed cannot, wipe out the fact of wrong having been done” (North, 1998, p. 16). Without a wrongdoer or a wrong committed, there would be nothing to forgive.

Perhaps Nerburn captures the essence of forgiveness, whatever the position. “Forgiveness is something freely granted, whether earned or deserved; something lovingly offered without thought of acknowledgment or return . . . it allows us to live in the sunlight of the present, not the darkness of the past” (Nerburn, 1999, p. 120). In this portrayal, forgiveness embraces a desire for restoration, a hope for reconciliation, and a yearning for transformation within individuals and relationships. As such,

forgiveness is a pathway to peace and a significant part of peacemaking.

Reconciliation. Reconciliation is also a pathway of peace - personally, within the individual, and relationally, between individuals. As a pathway, reconciliation addresses the needs of the individual in conflict. Reconciliation includes the notions of apology, reconciling interests, resolving differences, and making restitution. A broader definition of reconciliation includes the concept of adapting: bringing oneself to accept, making one's thinking consistent with a standard, or submitting to something unpleasant.

It is said, "reconciliation is the ultimate goal of peacebuilding. It occurs when disputants develop a new relationship based on apology, forgiveness, and newly established trust" ("Reconciliation," 2002). In essence, reconciliation is "a change of relationship" (Tenney, 1963, p. 707).

In *Exploring Forgiveness*, Enright, Freedman, and Rique (1998) suggest that reconciliation "involves two people coming together again" (p. 49). Restoration of relationship requires that both sides participate in reconciliation. When one party's actions to restore the relationship are rejected, reconciliation is not complete. It is of value to remember that without invitation, there can be no reconciliation. When one desires to be at peace, to be set at one with others, to be in relationship, one will continue to invite even after attempts of reconciliation have failed.

Lederach depicts reconciliation as a journey leading to a healing place. Based on the language of Psalm 85:10, Lederach believes reconciliation is "where truth and mercy have met, and where justice and peace have kissed" (Lederach, 1999, p. 53).

Truth, in the context of conflict, is about remembering – what to remember and how to remember. Truth casts her eyes toward the past. Justice is about what can be done now to rebalance a broken relationship. Justice asks what can make the wrong right and what can restore the balance in the relationship that has been damaged. Justice casts eyes toward the present. Mercy and Peace ask, "How will we coexist; how will we start anew; how can we rebuild with each other?" They cast their eyes toward the future. . . . For Truth without Mercy is blinding and raw; Mercy without

Truth is a cover-up and superficial. Justice without Peace falls easily into cycles of bitterness and revenge; Peace without Justice is short-lived and benefits only the privileged or the victors.

(Lederach, 2001, p. 3)

Within the context of this thesis, reconciliation is the process by which injustices are recognized (truth), criteria of restoration are established (justice), and intentions of renewed relationship are affirmed (mercy and peace).

Reconciliation, then, first and foremost, involves an acknowledgement that there is brokenness, a rift, a conflict, that needs reconciling. To deny the existence of conflict can be a means of releasing oneself from any responsibility to reconcile. A primary element of peacemaking is recognition of the reality of the conflict. Second, reconciliation is motivated by one's desire for relationship, as one risks taking steps toward reestablishing relations which have been broken by conflict. Third, reconciliation arises out a desire to be at peace, to experience harmony, to be set at one again both personally and relationally.

Reconciliation is, therefore, a constructive process in peacemaking where individuals and relationships move toward peace. The goal of the reconciliation is transformation and peace.

A well-known story of forgiveness and reconciliation, the parable of The Prodigal Son, found in New Testament writings in the Gospel of Luke, illustrates these pathways to peace. The story tells of a wealthy young son who asked for and received his inheritance from his father. The son left his home, traveled to a far off land, and squandered away all of his inheritance. He found himself living worse off than the pigs he had been hired to feed. The son, broken and penniless, resolved to return home, repent of his wayward ways, and humbly request to be hired as one of his father's servants. The twist of this tale came when the father, seeing his son returning yet still far off in the distance, ran to greet him, being filled with compassion for him.

In the parable of the Prodigal Son, I consider the father's response to the son's appearance on the horizon as an example of what Jones (1995) calls "embodying forgiveness" (p. 225). The father embraces his son before any acts of reconciliation or words of repentance are uttered. What at first appears to be a willingness to offer unilateral forgiveness becomes mutual forgiveness as the son repents of his ways. Forgiveness becomes the pathway to peace individually for both the father and the son, and relationally between them. The father's act of forgiveness places value on the relationship and opens the door for the son to have a chance to begin again. Forgiveness brings transformation and peace.

In this wonderful story, the pathways of forgiveness and reconciliation are embedded in the need for relationship. Miroslav Volf writes of the above parable, "The most significant aspect of the story is, however, that the father who lets the son depart *does not let go of the relationship between them.*" Volf adds, "the father's directed, expectant gaze toward the distant land filled the father's heart with compassion when he saw the son returning; it made the father run, put his arms around the prodigal, and kiss him. Without the father's having kept the son in his heart, the father would not have put his arms around the prodigal" (Volf, 1996, p. 159). Forgiveness and reconciliation are embedded in the desire for renewed relationship.

Additionally, forgiveness and reconciliation spring from a yearning for peace. These processes seek to restore broken relationships, resolve conflict, and return a state of harmony and wholeness within and between individuals. Neither the father nor the son had experienced peace in the brokenness of the relationship. The father's longing for *shalom* in his family was stronger than his natural instincts toward punishment or retribution. The son's need for *eirene* to repair the brokenness, took precedence over the humiliation of returning home in such a destitute and shameful condition.

One moves toward peace through the processes of forgiveness and reconciliation. These pathways to peace have the potential of transforming individuals and relationships. Forgiveness and reconciliation are constructive processes of peacemaking.

Theories and Models

The theories and models of peacemaking in this thesis reflect a transformative approach. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess, co-directors of the Conflict Research Consortium at University of Colorado, Boulder, note that transformation acknowledges that conflict changes or transforms the individuals who experience it. Transformation through peacemaking seeks “a fundamental change in attitude and/or behavior of individuals and/or relationships between two or more disputing parties . . . to alter the way in which the parties see themselves, the world, and especially, each other and how they treat each other over the long term” (Burgess and Burgess, 2001). Carolyn Schrock-Shenk says transformative peacemaking “begins with and focuses more heavily on the people involved and on their relationships with each other” (Schrock-Shenk, 1999, p. 35).

Mediation

I believe mediation, where conflicting parties come together, has the potential to transform the participants, the conflict, and the relationship. Although mediation is a long-standing approach to conflict resolution, the fundamental work of Folger and Bush in *The Promise of Mediation* brought the transformative mediation process to the foreground. In transformative mediation, the focus is on transforming the individuals, and guiding them to a position of peace. “In a transformative approach, empowerment and recognition are the two most important effects” (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. 84). The authors contend that the “opportunities that conflict affords for moral development . . . by helping people respond with compassionate strength as they address difficult and often painful disputes” is the goal of transformative peacemaking (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. xv). Folger and Bush explain the meaning of empowerment, recognition, and compassionate strength.

Empowerment is “the restoration to individuals of a sense of their own value and strength and their own capacity to handle life’s problem” (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. 2). With empowerment, individuals in conflict “experience a strengthened awareness of their own self-worth and their own ability

to deal with whatever difficulties they face, regardless of external constraints” (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. 84). Folger and Bush explain in later writings that empowerment helps the individual gain “greater clarity about their goals, resources, options, and preferences” (Folger and Bush, 1996, p. 264).

Empowerment is not about balancing power or controlling the outcome. It is about realizing one’s own capabilities in regard to the goals, options, skills, resources and decisions regarding the conflict. John Paul Lederach defines empowerment as “overcoming the obstacles and making possible the movement from *I cannot* to *I can*” (Lederach, 1995, p. 21). In view of Kraybill’s hierarchy of powerlessness, presented in Figure 1, empowerment results in an increase of one’s self-esteem and social esteem.

Mutual recognition is another goal of a transformative approach to peacemaking. “The hallmark of recognition is *letting go* – however briefly or partially – of one’s focus on self and becoming interested in the perspectives of the other party” (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. 97). The perspectives, views, and experiences of both parties are acknowledged and “empathy for the situation and problems of others” is evoked (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. 2). There is “an expanded willingness to acknowledge and be responsive to other parties’ situations and common human qualities” (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. 85).

Thinking back to the parable of the Prodigal Son, one sees the expression of mutual recognition. The father offered gifts to demonstrate his recognition of the needs of his son: a robe to cover the shame of his sins; a ring with a family seal to indicate his position as son; sandals as a sign of being a member of the family, not a servant who was bare-footed; and the slaughter of the fattened calf as a symbol of his worth to the family. The son responded with submission and humility, bowing before the father in contrition, with recognition of the emotional and relational needs of the father.

Folger and Bush believe empowerment and mutual recognition can be integrated to become what they call “compassionate strength” (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. 230). The strength is demonstrated as individuals face adversity with their own resources. The compassion is demonstrated when individuals reach out beyond themselves in recognition of the needs of others in the adversity.

Peacemaking Model

The Peacemaking Model developed by Ron Claassen illustrates “the way people make peace between them” (Claassen, 2003, p. 17).

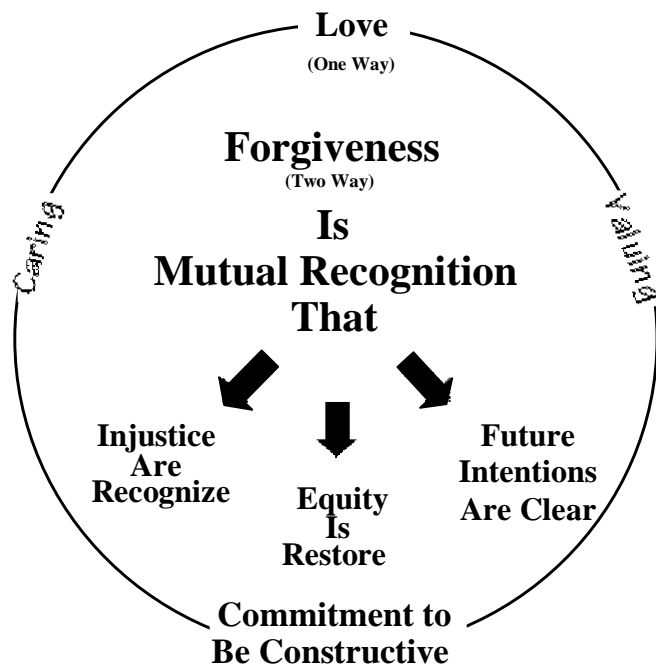


Figure 3 **The Peacemaking Model**

From *Basic Institute in Conflict Management and Mediation Manual*, by D. Reimer and R. Claassen, 2000, p. 155

The Peacemaking Model, shown in Figure 3, reflects a transformative approach to peacemaking. A key part to this model involves individuals coming together in two-way forgiveness and reconciliation.

This approach to peacemaking begins with establishing an environment in which the participants may experience empowerment. Individuals agree to come together in an atmosphere of “caring, love, valuing and commitment to be constructive” where they can handle conflict constructively (Reimer and Claassen, 2000, p. 155).

The model indicates that as parties come together with a commitment to be constructive, mutual recognition can occur. Individuals participating in this model may then experience empowerment, as they “grow calmer, clearer, more confident, more organized, and more decisive” (Folger and Bush, 1994, p. 85). Individuals listen to one another and feel heard, as the conflict is acknowledged. They understand

the emotions and cognitions of each other's perception of the conflict. The criteria for reconciliation are established. They create a plan for the future leading to the renewing of relationship. These intentions for the future become the basis for agreement and the starting point for rebuilding the trust, broken through the conflict.

Furthermore, the Peacemaking Model provides a place for compassionate strength to occur. One's self-esteem increases through participation with the process and by the validation of one's perceptions and interests. Likewise, individuals are strengthened to extend the same esteem to the other party.

Dialogue

Dialogue is another transformative approach to conflict. It is especially effective in value-based conflicts, where individuals holding opposing views, come together to talk about the components of their conflict. "Unlike debate, which seeks to score points and to persuade, the goal of dialogue is mutual understanding and respect – essentially recognition in Bush and Folger's terms" (Burgess and Burgess, 2001).

Although dialogue may not bring resolution of the conflict, it leads to transformation and peace. Previously destructive processes are replaced with constructive methods. Individuals experience personal growth as dialogue alters the broken relationship as a result of the individual's honoring of one another.

Dalton Reimer writes, the "first step in dialogue has to do with me – with my own transformation. I must be willing to embrace the other as fully human and worthy of my attention and concern" (Reimer, 1999, p. 78).

The Conflict Research Consortium explains the dialogue process as an approach to peacemaking. Individuals experience transformation by "sitting down together with a facilitator who will help them explore their feelings about the conflict and each other" and then having the opportunity to offer "understanding of the concerns, fears, and needs of the other side" (Dialogue Projects, 2002).

Dialogue serves to promote positive peace. The reality of a conflict is recognized. Through conversation, the factors that might extend or escalate conflict can diminish. As everyone's values,

interests, and emotions are recognized and expressed, peace is experienced, within and between the participants.

The goal of transformative peacemaking is change. Transformation, or change, occurs in the behaviors, emotions, and cognitions of those in conflict. Individuals are transformed in the way they perceive conflict. As transformation occurs, individuals are changed and become better equipped to handle conflict, and the potential for resolution increases. Relationships are transformed and renewed.

Transformative peacemaking brings the hope of experiencing *shalom* – the internal state of harmony, wholeness, and rest. Individuals recognize the resources within themselves as well as the value of the other participants in the conflict. Individuals find peace as they experience empowerment and mutual recognition, and demonstrate compassionate strength in the midst of conflict.

Conclusion

A major objective of this thesis is to help those who grieve envisioned the notion of experiencing peace with loss, as they look at grief through the lens of peacemaking. In chapter two, several themes were considered that contribute to a better understanding of peacemaking, and the elements and variables contributing to conflict. A deeper awareness of the nature of peace was explored through the pathways of forgiveness and reconciliation. A transformative approach to peacemaking was portrayed. It seems beneficial to underscore the themes of conflict presented in this chapter.

1. Conflict is an inherent part of relationship. It is experienced interpersonally, between individuals, and intrapersonally, within an individual. Conflict extends from chafing to obstructing one's basic human needs to blocking one's desires, goals, or values. Conflict may occur with the presence of competing interests or goals. The patterns of conflict established within families or systems are influential in determining one's attitude, approach, and response to conflict.
2. The major elements of conflict are people, process, problems, and power. Variables have the potential of blocking the achievement of one's goals, interests, or needs. Understanding the

elements and variables of conflict enhances the potential for peacemaking.

3. Peace is a state or condition within the individual experienced through constructive processes rather than suppression, coercion, or avoidance of conflict. Peace is possible when conflict is acknowledged, needs are recognized and addressed, and underlying interests are identified and reconciled. Peace brings transformation to those in conflict.
4. Forgiveness and reconciliation are rooted in one's desire for relationship, and one's longing for peace, both personally and relationally. As pathways to peace, these processes seek to transform individuals, renew broken relationships, and establish peace between and within individuals.
5. Transformative approaches to peacemaking in conflict lead to positive peace. Individuals replace negative cognitions, emotions, and behaviors with positive thoughts, feelings, and actions. Transformed individuals can experience empowerment as they recognize the resources within. Additionally, transformation develops mutual recognition as both parties recognize each other's worth. Transformation results in compassionate strength and shalom in the midst of conflict.

In conclusion, conflict is inevitable in life. A constructive path of peacemaking embraces the reality of conflict and endeavors to reduce the factors that extend or escalate it. Peacemaking places value on relationships and motivates individuals to participate in the processes of forgiveness and reconciliation. As a response to the inevitable conflicts of life, one can choose peacemaking and experience peace in conflict.

The perspectives gleaned through the lens of peacemaking in this chapter will become useful in the creation of a model for experiencing peace with loss. In the following chapters, themes relating to grief and loss are identified. A number of commonalities of conflict and loss are seen through the lens of peacemaking. A model will come into focus.