

## Emotion and Conflict:

### Why It Is Important to Understand How Emotions Affect Conflict and How Conflict Affects Emotions

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We have all experienced strong emotions related to conflict. Our emotions affect the conflicts in our lives, and conflicts, in turn, influence our emotions.

This chapter begins with two brief examples—one international and one personal—to illustrate how emotion and conflict can interact.

First, let us look at Adolf Hitler. Already during World War I, he was obsessed with bemoaning the weakness of Germany. But he was an isolated loner without any influence. It was only later that his obsessions began to resonate with the feelings of other people, particularly with *die kleinen Leute*, as they were called in Germany, or “the little people,” “the powerless.” He offered a grand narrative of national humiliation and invited “the little people” to join in and invest their personal grievances, including those they suffered due to general political and economic misery. “The little people” had occupied a distinctly subordinated position in Germany’s social hierarchy prior to Hitler’s rise. Nobody had ever deemed them worthy of particular attention. When he invited them, they rallied to Hitler’s narrative. It provided them with an unprecedented sense of importance. Hitler was greeted as a savior, a new kind of leader promising love and unprecedented significance instead of subordination and insignificance.

Hitler was an expert on feelings. He evoked feelings of heroic resistance against national humiliation, convincing the German people that the true destiny of the Aryan race was to lead and save the world. Hitler wrote: “The people in their overwhelming majority are so feminine by nature and attitude that sober reasoning determines their thoughts and actions far less than emotion and feeling. And this sentiment is not complicated, but very simple and all of a piece. It does not have multiple shadings; it has a positive and a negative; love or hate, right or wrong, truth or lie, never half this way and half that way, never partially...” (Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, original work published in 1925-26 by Pimlico, London, p. 167). Like Hitler, also Lenin or Mao had discovered the soul of the masses as a resource to exploit.

But not only had the masses followed Hitler. Friedrich Kellner kept a secret diary in Nazi Germany from 1939-1945. It was published in 2011. He writes in 1941, secretly, while living in Nazi Germany:

If we consider the present conditions, a feeling of sadness flows from the thought that since 1933, the great majority of intellectual leaders, especially the university professors, without any hesitation, dedicated themselves to the new political direction and pushed aside everything they previously advocated and taught. Almost all gave up their own will, their own thinking, and idolized, in a sycophantic, unprincipled way, what had been prescribed to them by the party. What can you say, as a simple man, about scholars and scientists who do not dare to speak up, even though they know better? What will the rest of the world be thinking about a German science that is corroded by (Nazi) politics? (p. 154, translated into English by Evelin Lindner).

Many Germans put such faith in Hitler that they followed him even when it became evident that the situation was doomed. It required total defeat for many of his “lovers” to painfully realize that their loyalty had been fatally misplaced. Their loyalty not only led to millionfold homicide, it was even suicidal. Their own country, Germany, was bombed to ashes. In other words, intense and highly emotional participation in a collective obsession undercuts even the most basic rational and ethical considerations. Only Hitler himself was satisfied, as he believed in „das Recht des Stärkeren“ (“might is right”). Hitler said on November 27, 1941, to the Danish foreign minister Scavenius and the Croat foreign minister Lorkowitsch: “I am also here ice cold. If the German people are no longer strong enough and ready to sacrifice their own blood for their existence, then they must disappear and be destroyed by another, stronger power... I will not shed a tear for the German people” (translated by Lindner from the German original, Haffner, 1978, p. 139).

Now to a personal example. Imagine you are a social worker with a client named Eve. She comes to you because she is depressed. She is severely and regularly beaten by her husband, Adam. Neighbors describe scenes of shouting and crying and the bruise marks on Eve’s body are only too obvious. You are afraid Eve may not survive the next beating and you visit her as frequently as your schedule permits. You try to convince her to protect herself. You implore her to leave her unsafe home and seek refuge in sheltered housing, at least at times of crisis. In your mind, you define her as a victim and her husband as a perpetrator. You explain to Eve that “domestic chastisement” has long been outlawed. You suggest that Adam utterly humiliates her and that she ought to develop a “healthy” anger as a first step toward collecting sufficient strength to change her life. To you, the social worker, this situation represents a destructive conflict loaded with hot and violent emotions and you wish to contribute to its constructive resolution.

Eve, however, stubbornly undermines your efforts and thwarts your dedicated and well-intentioned attempts to help her. She argues along these lines: “Beating me is my husband’s way of loving me! I am not a victim. I bring his anger on myself when I fail to respect his authority! He saved me from a cruel father! My father never spoke of love and care—Adam does!” And also Adam adamantly refuses to be labeled a “perpetrator.” He accuses *you* of viciously disturbing the peace of his home and claiming that *you* violate his male honor.

From Eve's and Adam's perspective, there is no destructive conflict, no suffering victim, and no violent perpetrator. It is you, the social worker, the human rights defender, the therapist, you, an uninvited third party, who violates the sovereignty of a home and disturbs domestic peace by introducing conflict.

As we see, the definition of love and benevolence is crucial here. You define love as the meeting of equal hearts and minds in mutual caring, a definition embedded in the human rights ideal of equal dignity for all. Eve and her husband, on the other hand, connect love with female subservience. They are right when they claim that it is you who introduces conflict by drawing their attention to a new definition of love, one that stands in opposition to the couple's definition.

In both cases, that of Eve, and that of the "little people" of Germany, their loyalty was intensified by their dominators giving them the feeling of being loved as human beings endowed with feelings, rather than simply dominated like chattel. Martin Buber speaks about I-Thou relationships, in contrast to I-It relationships. People hunger to be approached as human beings and not as things. What these examples show is that the promise of dignity, even if undelivered, is strong enough to elicit considerable loyalty—and how it can be tragically instrumentalized and abused.

We can easily find more examples. Typically, neither the supposed "perpetrators" nor their co-opted "victims," initially, accept human rights framings of equal dignity. The South African elites, for example, were defensive about apartheid—they felt it was nature's order itself that entitled them to superiority. Was not "white" worth more than "black"? Was not the shade of your skin a kind of divine message that gave you a certain position in a ranking order of worthiness? And did not black underlings lead a good life under white patronage? Also many "victims" internalized this world view. The more a ranking order was one of benevolent patronage rather than malevolent oppression—or at least convincingly portrayed as such—the more outcomes were condoned that were other- and even self-destructive.

So-called "honor-killings" have recently received increased attention, as has female genital cutting. These practices have moved from the rather neutral category of "cultural practices" to the accusatory category of "cultural violence" or "harmful traditional practices." Or, consider the Indian caste system, which has only very recently been labeled "Indian Apartheid," a new definition for a way of life that has endured for thousands of years. Or, resistance is mounting against "war as the continuation of politics by other means." If not war altogether, at least the use of certain kinds of weapons in war is being opposed. Campaigns have been mounted against personal landmines, and the current increase in the employment of lethal unmanned combat air vehicles (drones) is being criticized. Emotion researchers in particular will want to resist the introduction of new "nonlethal weapons" that target emotions and thoughts. The Center for Cognitive Liberties, based in California, USA, affirms "the right of each individual to think independently and autonomously, to use the full spectrum of his or her mind, and to engage in multiple modes of thought" ([www.cognitiveliberty.org](http://www.cognitiveliberty.org)). Always, we are likely to meet perpetrators who feel thoroughly righteous and entitled, supported by successfully co-opted victims.

In this conundrum, in which emotion and conflict are entangled in intricate ways, questions arise such as: When and in what ways are emotions (feelings of suffering, pain and rage, or love and caring) part of a "conflict" that calls for our attention? And when

are they not? Who decides? If perpetrator and victim agree that there is peace, who, as a third party, has the right to call it conflict? And, why, after all, should conflict be all negative? What about “waging good conflict”? Jean Baker Miller (1986), a pioneer in women’s psychology, suggests that conflict is a necessary part of growth and change. She stipulates that conflict is not the problem—the way we engage in conflict is.

What we learn is that emotion and conflict are not unfolding in a vacuum. They are embedded into larger historical and cultural contexts. We live in transitional times where growing global interdependence is connected with the human rights ideal of equal dignity for all. Emotions and conflicts and their consequences—how we live them, how we define them—are part of this transition. They, too, change as the world transforms.

## THE NATURE OF EMOTIONS

What are emotions? Are emotions cultural or biological, or both? Are they nothing more than constructs of folk knowledge? Or are they merely bodily responses, dictated by hormones, skin conductance levels, and cerebral blood flows? Are there basic emotions? Affects? Feelings? Thoughts? Why do we have them? What functions do they serve? What about the so-called social emotions? What about the meta-emotions of how people feel about feelings? Are there universal emotions across cultures? Are emotions rational? Controllable? To which actions do emotions lead? Is there an automatic link between emotion and action?

Interestingly, William James (1842-1910), one of the fathers of the field of psychology as we know it today in the academic context, gave significant attention to research on human emotion, while his immediate successors did so much less. Only a few visionary scholars, such as Silvan Tomkins, Magda Arnold, Paul Ekman, Carroll Izard, Klaus Scherer, and Nico Frijda, continued studying emotion. For a while, behaviorism and cognitivism were “sexier” than looking at emotions—until behaviorism turned out to be too narrow, as did cognitivism.

Today we know that feeling, thought, and behavior are closely connected. Feeling is meaning (Opdahl, 2002) and belief “felt thinking” (Cromby, 2012). Interestingly, only the term *feeling*—not *emotion*—is universal across cultures (Cromby, 2012). (This chapter could therefore also be titled “Feeling and Conflict;” yet, “Emotion and Conflict” is a suitable title as well, as “conflict evokes strong feelings which tend to be codified as emotions as modelled by the Western theories of emotion,” commented Louise Sundararajan in a personal communication, January 19, 2013.)

Indigenous psychologist Louise Sundararajan (2012) builds on John Cromby when she conceptualizes three approaches to belief systems—emotion as meaning, cognition as dialogue, and Susanne Langer’s (1953) aesthetic model of emotion/meaning (beyond the stress and coping framework of Lazarus, 1966)—and connects them through the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce.

These insights are not only important for psychology or health, but also for the field of conflict studies. Political scientist Robert Jervis (2006) underscores how “over the past decade or so, psychologists and political psychologists have come to see ... that a sharp separation between cognition and affect is impossible and that a person who embodied

pure rationality, undisturbed by emotion, would be a monster if she were not an impossibility” (p. 643).

Interest in learning about emotions, though resuscitated only very recently, is now exploding and already rapidly changing, fueled (some would say, over-fueled) and “legitimized,” not least, by new technologies. Research on mirror neurons, for instance, underpins the recent emphasis on emotion, making headlines in mainstream publications such as the *New York Times*: “Social emotions like guilt, shame, pride, embarrassment, disgust and lust are based on a uniquely human mirror neuron system found in a part of the brain called the insula” (“Cells That Read Minds,” *New York Times*, January 10, 2006).

Imaging techniques are being employed to examine the function and structure of the neural circuits that support human emotion processing and emotion regulation. The Program for Imaging and Cognitive Sciences at Columbia University in New York City is but one example of similar projects emerging in many places. What is being researched is crucially important for conflict studies: the neurocircuitry of emotional systems (amygdala and basal ganglia) and control and regulatory systems (cingulate and pre-frontal cortex).

In the beginning, until only a few years ago, researchers were intent on constructing classifications categorizing the fundamental so-called *basic* emotions. Andrew Ortony and Terence Turner (1990) give a tabular overview of some of the classification systems.

Today, the new cohort of researchers no longer endorses a single perspective on emotion. They prefer multi-layered approaches that conceptualize elaborated emotions as comprehensive packages of meanings, behaviors, social practices, and norms that crystallize around primordial emotions. Jan Smedslund (1997) describes the *psycho-logic* inherent in our dealings with emotions. James Averill (1997) discusses how emotional experiences are “scripted.” The application of such scripts varies according to cultural and historic influences. A rich overview of the new approaches to emotion research is to be found, among many others, in David Yun Dai and Robert Sternberg (2004), Joseph Forgas (2001), and Tracy Mayne and George Bonanno (2001). Journals that serve as platforms for emotion research are, among others: *Emotion*, *Emotion Review*, *Emotion, Space and Society*, *International Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion*, *Consciousness and Emotion*, *Motivation and Emotion*, *Cognition and Emotion*, *Research on Emotion in Organizations*, and *Frontiers in Emotion Science*.

The exploding interest in emotions goes hand-in-hand with another major shift in the field of psychology, namely away from regarding the individual as main unit of analysis toward a more relational view. Just as behaviorism and cognitivism turned out to be too narrow, so, too, Western psychology’s historical emphasis on individualism and separate, independent, constructions of the “self” turned out to be too limited:

From its inception, the field of psychology attempted to emulate the “hard” science of Newtonian physics that proclaimed the salience of material, separate objects (the atom or molecule) secondarily coming into relationship. Ironically, Newtonian physics, which has shaped much of the thinking in science and psychology, has been challenged and replaced by modern physics, which emphasizes the primacy of relationships (Jordan and Hartling, 2002, p. 50).

Emotions are the “wireless navigation system” for participating in relationships. “Social connectedness is one of the most powerful determinants of our wellbeing” (Putnam, 2000, p. 326) and “happiness is best predicted by the breadth and depth of one’s social connections” (p. 332). Mutually empathic and empowering relationships are key to resilience in the face of hardships and stress (Linda Hartling, 2003). Individualistic “separate-self” models of psychological development have endured in Western psychology perhaps not least because these models serve a consumer economy that thrives on a myth of self-sufficiency (Cushman, 1996).

An illustration of the ongoing interplay between relationships and emotions is being offered, for example, by emerging research on the overlap between “social pain” and “physical pain” processing systems in the brain (MacDonald and Jensen-Campbell, 2011). Using functional magnetic resonance imaging, Naomi Eisenberger and her colleagues describe how the social pain of being excluded profoundly influences human behavior—“social connection is a need as basic as air, water, or food and . . . like these more basic needs, the absence of social connections causes pain. Indeed, we propose that the pain of social separation or rejection may not be very different from some kinds of physical pain” (Eisenberger, 2005, p. 110).

Another new trend in the study of emotion is the “humbling of Western psychology.” Western psychology is merely one psychology among others, and *indigenous psychologies of emotion* are gaining visibility now. (See, for instance, Averill and Sundararajan, 2006; Sibia and Misra, 2011; and Dalal and Misra, 2012.)

All new approaches invalidate the old nature-versus-nurture debate. We are learning that emotions are both “hardwired” *and* malleable, and adaptive to social and cultural influences. Basic affects such as the fearful *fight or flight* reaction, or its opposite, *pleasurable approach*, are only the bedrock on which elaborated emotions build. Our primordial emotions are universal biologically based response systems that have enabled humans to meet the problems of physical survival, reproduction, and group governance. Culture, however, has loosened the link between those primordial emotions and their functions. New solutions to old problems have emerged, as well as new uses for old emotions.

Humans display the greatest variety of feelings and emotions of all species and this is reflected in the complex web of connections between the more recently developed prefrontal area and the older limbic structures of the brain. The historical evolution of the brain and emotions is mirrored in each human being’s individual development. *Ontogeny* (development of an individual organism) often recapitulates *phylogeny* (evolution of a particular species). Newborns process basic affects in lower brain structures. Emotions, which are more recent in human evolution, become possible only when certain cognitive milestones have been reached in the life of a child. In the second half of the second year of life the cognitive capacity of objective self-awareness emerges, with accompanying emotions such as embarrassment, empathy, and envy. Between two and three years of age, the complex ability to evaluate one’s behavior according to an external or internal standard emerges. Self-conscious evaluative emotions such as pride, shame, and guilt are now possible. Schemas for emotions evolve to organize what we believe and how we react to emotions. Finally, cognition and affect are forcefully intertwined in cultural symbol and knowledge systems such as religions.

The most immediate function provided to us by our emotional apparatus is to warn us. Fear alerts us to potential danger or to potential benefit. We hear a noise. Is it a thief—or just our favorite cat? The first brain structure to react is the *amygdala*, an almond-shaped neurological structure in the lower cortical brain. This structure identifies shapes, sounds, and other perceptual characteristics, sorting for threats and, very quickly and automatically, responding with avoidance if necessary. It acts as a pre-attentive analyzer of our environment and works without our conscious control, triggering fast and automatic changes in tone and heart rate. Fear is a primary reaction that is processed via adrenergic neurons (as opposed to dopaminergic neurons). Is it a thief? We jump up from our chair, breathe heavily, and feel frightened. This system developed early in human evolution and dominates our first years as children. In adults, stress brings it to the fore again, often in unfortunate ways.

Let's assume the noise proves to emanate from our favorite cat, back home from an excursion! If a situation shows itself to be rewarding, rather than a threat, the amygdala can relax, passing the data on to the basal ganglia to encode and store, awash in positive-valence dopaminergic neurons. We get ready to approach the situation. We open our arms to our purring pet. This simple daily stimulus response is aided by information from two internal “library” structures (the left prefrontal cortex and a posterior area) from which our brain draws stored abstract semantic and associative knowledge. All of this is automatic. The brain runs largely on autopilot. We are not in control. Indeed, research shows that our brain begins to unconsciously prepare our decisions several seconds before they reach our awareness. The left hemisphere creates the illusion of a meaningful script and a coherent self. It gives us explanations—and they may or may not be trustworthy—for our behavior post-hoc. (The potential implications of this research for free will, highly relevant for conflict studies, have been discussed at great length in the literature, see, for instance, Roskies, 2010, or Gazzaniga, 2011.)

Our brain “wakes up” to controlled emotion processing when another, higher brain structure, the *anterior cingulate* (ACC) signals discrepancy, uncertainty, errors, conflicts, pain, or violations of expectations. The ACC tells us when something is wrong, when our automatic responses do not work and we need to do something different. At that point, two high cortical structures, the *ventromedial frontal cortex* (VMFC) and *orbital frontal cortex*, weigh our current goals and the affective value of the situation we face. We need these higher cortical structures particularly in conflict situations, because they empower us to regulate and control our emotional responses. Here we learn and adapt, and generate self-consciousness, abstraction, and imagination.

Findings support the view that emotions play a necessary role for the generation of sound moral judgments. Indeed, the VMFC is crucial for appropriate judgments of right and wrong—damage to the VMFC increases narrow “utilitarian” moral judgments (Koenigs et al., 2007). Research on these processes, clearly, is highly relevant for conflict studies. (“Neuroscience and Ethics: Intersections” is the title of a relevant article by Damásio, 2007.)

To come back to Eve facing Adam—or to global neighbors negotiating climate change or nuclear disarmament—all participants' brains loop through at least six brain structures that deal with emotion, from lower to higher brain structures, from evolutionarily older to more recent components, from stored memories of how we reacted as children to new modes of responses that are open to us as adults. There are several distinctions and

dualities. Feelings can be hot or cold, they can have positive or negative valence, and they can be automatic or controlled. Furthermore, there is the doer-watcher duality. The duality of attention and processing is based on the fact that we can perform a task and at the same time watch ourselves performing this task. Emotions can interfere in this duality and disturb task focus and performance.

There is order and coherence in emotional processes, but that order can quickly degenerate into chaos if we are unaware and insufficiently in control. Our behavior is regulated by feedback loops that are organized hierarchically. *Superordinate loops* attend to longer-term, abstract goals. Embedded within them are *subordinate loops* for short-term tasks. We create or maintain unnecessary destructive conflict when we allow lower-order mechanisms to supersede higher-order mechanisms. We invite failure when we permit phylogenically more immediate and automated emotional processes to override more abstracted regulatory processes. Long-term goals, such as the future of our children and our planet, require that we use long-term mental tools.

The centrality of interpretation, meaning making as conversation, and the integration of thinking and feeling are central to the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914). He posited that meaning making is a dynamic and dialectic interaction between two opposing movements of thought—one near experience and the other more distant from experience (Lee, 1997). The integration between sub-symbolic systems that are closer to experience and symbolic systems that are more distant to experience (Bucci, 1997), can also be described as “vertical integration” between the limbic core of the brain and its cortical systems (Tucker, 2007). The latter refers to the integration of thinking and feeling through extensive “buffered” processing of related information across multiple subsystems (Teasdale, 1999) or reflective responses (Cupchik, 2005), rather than direct “mindless” or reactive processing. Integration of thinking and feeling can be objectively measured by at least two language analysis programs, one based on the *multiple code theory* of Bucci (2007) and the other based on the principles of Peircean semiotics (Sundararajan-Schubert Word Count, SSWC, Sundararajan and Schubert, 2005, Sundararajan and Kim, 2011).

In other words, there is an ongoing tension between older, more basic emotional responses and our more recently achieved capabilities. To some extent, we manage to resolve this tension through a series of hierarchically structured feedback loops. If we succeed, emotions can be helpful and guide us well. Unfortunately, if we do not succeed, this might lead to disaster. In turn, conflict situations themselves, with their increased levels of stress, may cause us to override those loops and let older parts of the brain leap into action. Learning to recognize and defuse this tension may be among the most important skills an individual committed to healthy conflict transformation can achieve.

Emotions serve at least three functions. First, emotions monitor our inner world; second, they track our relationships with the outer world; and third, they help us act. The second function can cause us to make grave mistakes, because the outer world entails both our ecological and social environments. Both can slide into opposition in disastrous ways. As Jervis (2006) pointed out, beliefs not only serve our reality testing and understanding of the world, but also our psychological and social needs to live with ourselves and others. Our beliefs are feelings; they are lived and embodied meaning (John Cromby, 2012). Our emotional desire for belonging and recognition may entice us to bypass responsible reality testing and turn untested observations, reflections, and



opinions into overly firm beliefs. One result may be that we create scenarios for unnecessary, catastrophic conflicts, while leaving necessary conflicts unaddressed. Nicos Poulantzas (1936-1979), a Greco-French political sociologist in Paris, was one of Pol Pot's teachers. Seeing what he had instigated, he later committed suicide (personal communication with Kevin Clements, August 21, 2007). Pol Pot had turned Poulantzas' academic reflections into rigid ideology, ruthlessly implementing it in his homeland, Cambodia, and in that way creating immense unnecessary suffering. In the aftermath, Cambodia's necessary conflicts became even more complicated to approach.

Necessary conflicts that wait to be addressed in today's world are challenges such as global climate change and unsustainable economic models. One underlying obstacle is the culture of ranked honor. To link back to Eve and Adam, the belief in honor norms can be functional for "meeting the psychological and social needs to live with oneself and others" as long as one is embedded into a community that subscribes to such norms. However, honor scripts become inappropriate in human rights based contexts. More even, human history has shown that narratives of honor have never been very functional with regard to "reality testing." Hitler's allegiance to honor made him lose his connection with reality. As for a more recent instance, also in the context of the 2003 Iraq war, important facts were overlooked so as to maintain a socially desired narrative and rhetoric of national honor. In general, the common good of all is undercut and sound reality testing undermined when people forge strong emotional allegiances to cultural scripts that suggest that "worthier beings" merit to have privileged access to resources and deserve to preside over "lesser beings." In human history, this arrangement has manifested by way of direct force (meted out by the feudal lord, for example), but also indirectly, as via "success" in accumulating monetary resources (within basic cultural structures that give priority to profit maximization, Richards and Swanger, 2006). The results are accordingly. There are more people in slave-like situations in the world today than when slavery still was an official institution (21 million in 2012), inequality is on the rise, and humankind would need several planets to continue its present overuse of resources.

Earlier, we discussed that emotions are hardwired *and* malleable. How can we imagine the various levels playing together in daily life? There is the hardwired physiological response and negative state of "feeling bad" and, at the psychological level, "this is bad for me." Parallel, there is the hardwired positive state of "feeling good" or "pleasure" and "this is good for me." As the "me" acquires social identity, these basic responses form the nucleus for our more elaborated emotions toward other persons, groups, notions, or ideologies. Rejection and enmity, as well as affection, attachment, loyalty, cooperation, and other positive emotions are no longer automatic but context dependent. Very simple examples show this. Spiders or worms are greeted as welcome delicacies in some cultures, and in others with disgust. Or, for a vegetarian, eating meat is sickening, while it is a joy for a non-vegetarian. Also the example of Eve and Adam shows how our emotional reactions are embedded into broader historic transformations of normative contexts. The term *domestic chastisement* expresses positive valence—the "man of the house" has the right and duty to "chastise" his disobedient wife and children, and it is regarded as "good" for all involved to be reminded of "their place." Nowadays, particularly in social contexts influenced by human rights values, this term has transmuted into the negative concept of "domestic violence." Similarly, in five hundred years or so, the 21<sup>st</sup> century will perhaps be decried as a dark century of unsustainable

social and ecological arrangements, against which human rights activists fought in vain. In all cases, the same sequence of behavior that once was regarded as “good for everybody,” is later deemed to be “bad for everybody.”

Neuroimaging may show Adam’s left anterior insula and anterior cingulate cortices being activated by his *social dominance orientation* (the preference for social hierarchy over egalitarianism) and his lack of empathy (Chiao et al., 2009). However, such orientations are not to be taken as fixed states. They are embedded into meta-emotions that guide us in how we feel about feelings (Gottman et al., 1997). These meta-emotions emerge within social contexts. Since it is human nature to be social and cultural, efforts to create a new culture of dignity are not in vain.

It would be easy to overwhelm readers with an over-abundance of concepts and terms at this point. Goals, attitudes, affects, feelings, emotions, emotional states, moods, consciousness, self, psyche—the list of terms is endless and often scholars do not agree on their definitions. For our purposes, it is sufficient to understand that we have to give up any quest for rigid context-free classifications of complex elaborated emotions. Elaborated emotions are multifaceted clusters embedded in culture and history.

## **THE INTERACTION BETWEEN EMOTION AND CONFLICT**

This section focuses on key emotions (negative and positive) such as fear, anger, humiliation, guilt, hope, confidence and warmth, illustrating how they affect conflict and are affected by conflict. It will be discussed what happens when we, during a conflict, experience an emotion, let us say anger, and, as a consequence, try to make our opponent feel emotions such as fear, guilt, or humiliation. Furthermore, the issue will be raised what distinguishes a “normal” from a “pathological” version of an emotion and under what circumstances an emotion may play a constructive or destructive role in conflict and negotiation.

This section begins with the subject of fear, as a basic emotion processed in our “old” brain. From there, we move on to more complex emotions.

### **Fear and How It Affects Conflict and Is Affected by Conflict**

The voice of intelligence is drowned out by the roar of fear. It is ignored by the voice of desire. It is contradicted by the voice of shame. It is biased by hate and extinguished by anger. Most of all, it is silenced by ignorance.

– Karl A. Menninger

Fear can make us avoid conflict (“flight”), or we might respond with aggression (“fight”). Or, we might steer clear of either by embarking on productive negotiation and reaching an agreement. Fear can hamper constructive conflict transformation when it fogs our mind, or it can enhance it when it sharpens our senses and alerts our thoughts to engage in higher-level regulation.

As discussed earlier, fear is basic. Its seat in the brain is the amygdala region. Fear warns us. It jolts us into alertness in a split second, sending stress hormones soaring, making our vision narrower and more focused. Our old brain takes over to save us from immediate danger. We may indeed gain short-term safety. However, there is a price to pay.

In 1998, I interviewed Adam Bixi in Somaliland as part of my doctoral research. He described growing up in the Somali semi-desert, learning as a very small boy to be constantly alert, even at night, for dangerous animals and “enemies” from other clans. He learned to be ready for fight or flight in a matter of seconds, at any time, day or night. Continuous emergency preparedness meant that all other aspects of life had to wait. Emergency trumped everything else. As a consequence, Bixi admitted, he felt he had not lived life.

Modern managers often feel the same way. Continuous emergency alertness diminishes our zest for life. It may even lead to cardiac failure. This is also valid for societies. Cultures that idolize “lone hero” actionism (equivalent to the sympathetic nervous system) and stigmatize maintenance and nurturing (equivalent to the parasympathetic systems) invite social collapse. The reason is that the fact is overlooked that sound maintenance is not optional; essentials are neglected that seem “menial” in the face of emergency, but are vital for long-term survival. Investment in provident care and nurture is as important at the individual as at the societal level. Therefore, Martha Fineman is right when she laments, “Families bear the burdens of dependency, while market institutions are free to operate as though the domestic tasks that reproduce the society were some other institution’s responsibility” (Fineman, 2004, p. 203). By invoking autonomy, “we create and perpetuate cultural and political practices that stigmatize and punish those among us labeled dependent” (p. 31).

I was writing these lines while super storm Sandy roared outside of the window. This storm once again exposed the dire state of infrastructure that results when a culture idolizes heroic individual action here-and-now, but shies away from long-term investment into the common good of all.

Earlier, we saw that feelings can be hot or cold and automatic or more controlled. Joseph LeDoux (1996, 2002), a leading researcher on fear, describes how emotional triggers can travel through the “high road” of cognitively cool assessment or the “low road” of the hot system going directly to the amygdala. The cool “know” system is cognitive, complex, contemplative, slow, strategic, integrated, coherent, and emotionally rather balanced. It is the basis of self-regulation. Fear, as well as acute and chronic stress, accentuates the hot “go” system, which represents a double-edged sword. While it may save us from immediate danger because it is impulsive, it also tends to cause “tunnel vision” and reduce the range of our perceptions, thoughts, and choices. It can undermine attempts at calmer regulation, and finally produce overhasty reactivity and suboptimal decisions. Particularly in case of a complex conflict, fear easily operates malignly.

Fear and humiliation carry the potential to link up in particularly disastrous ways. In Rwanda, fear of future humiliation, based on the experience of past humiliation, was used as justification for genocide. In his speeches, Hitler peddled the fear of future humiliation by the *Weltjudentum*, or world Jewry. The Holocaust was his horrific “solution.”

To conclude, we are well advised to cool down when we experience fear during a conflict, in order to avoid disastrous tunnel vision and to be able to reap the potential

advantage of fear, namely, enhanced alertness. Likewise, we should help our opponents in conflicts to calm their fears. In negotiations, operating with threats—making others afraid—may undermine constructive solutions rather than provide advantages. Present-day politically polarizing talk media are doing society a disservice when they target both the amygdala and insula regions in their aim to evoke fear and disgust for the sake of profit and power preservation from drama (there is a close association of the amygdala, insula, and the olfactory system, the amygdala being more likely activated during the sensation of fear, while the insula activates more during the experience of disgust). It would be more responsible to use the brain's capacity for plasticity by speaking to those brain structures that support cognitive openness.

Let us consider the example of Eve and Adam. At some point they seek counseling. The counselor begins with reducing the level of threat and fear between them. Then she attempts to transform fear into alertness and motivation for change. Adam is afraid to lose power and Eve is afraid to be empowered. Addressed in a calm manner, these fears can be translated into deep personal growth for both. However, this is possible only in an atmosphere of warmth, firmness, and safety, an atmosphere of respect, love, understanding, empathy, and patience, all of which the therapist strives to make available, aided by their larger social support network.

### **Anger and Hatred, and How They Affect Conflict and Are Affected by Conflict**

Victory breeds hatred. The defeated live in pain. Happily the  
peaceful live, giving up victory and defeat.

– Gautama Buddha, Dhammapada, Sukha Vagga, verse 201

We easily get angry when we feel hurt. Sometimes we even kick a chair that stands in our way and gives us a bruise. Still, anger is a more composite set of mental processes than fear. It unfolds in a complex fashion and entails cognitive and emotional elements. Our brain does three things. First, it maps a comprehensive representation of the thing, animal, or person who has hurt us; second, it maps the state of our body, for example, our readiness to fight; and third, it maps the kind of relationship we have to the perpetrator and how we might respond. For example, we presumably would refrain from hitting a sumo wrestler.

We react with anger—rather than sympathy—when we believe that the other person, through either neglect or intentionally, treats us with disrespect. The more we feel hurt, the more we get angry. We get angry when we deem that the person who hurts us has sufficient control over the situation to avoid harming us (the so-called *controllability* dimension). We get even angrier when we infer that the other intended to hurt us. Indeed, research shows that we want to harm others, either overtly or covertly, when we believe they could have avoided hurting us. It is one thing to be pushed accidentally by a drunken man, another to be harmed deliberately by an apparently clearheaded man. As Keith Allred (2000) explains, it is crucial how we make *attributions*. In the case of the pushing man, it may be drunkenness or fully conscious malevolence.

Our beliefs as to why others behave as they do are being addressed by *attribution theory*, one of the basic paradigms in social psychology. Fritz Heider (1958) is regarded as the first attribution theorist. (For further discussion of attribution theory see Gilbert, 1998; Jones and Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1967; Ross, 1977.) This theory has been elaborated since and has been instrumental in shedding light on biases of which we are unaware and which carry the potential to hamper conflict transformation. During a contentious conflict, the *fundamental attribution error* and the *actor-observer bias*, for example, may lead each side to overestimate the other's hostility as well as one's own benign attitude. We tend to paint our own behavior in a more lenient light than theirs. We attribute others' hostile remarks to their personality dispositions ("they simply hate us" or "they are unworthy, lazy, and primitive people") rather than to transient circumstances ("we belittled them first"), while making opposite attributions for ourselves. *Reactive devaluation* is another insidious bias that stands in the way of constructive conflict transformation: we tend to reject even the best solutions when it was "the enemy" who suggested them.

For both Eve and Adam, anger can lead to destruction. Or, it can open a path to personal growth. For many years, Linda Hartling worked closely with psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller, who emphasized that anger can be viewed as a valuable signal in a relationship, and, if duly acknowledged and transformed, can lead to constructive conflict and growth (Miller, 1986). This is what Baker Miller would have told Eve and Adam:

Anger indicates that something is wrong, that something hurts, something needs to change. Anger is an emotion that should be understood independent of acts of aggression. Anger can provide us with useful information about what needs to be attended to or what needs to be changed in our relationships. In contrast, aggression is hurtful or destructive behavior that can damage and destroy relationships. Therefore, it is unfortunate to conflate the emotion of anger with acts of aggression, violence, and destructive conflict.

Anger can provide energy for constructive action, action that creates movement in relationships. In particular, anger can signal the need to address conflict in our relationships. Conflict occurs in all relationships. Therefore, we need to "wage good conflict," conflict without aggression. Sadly, we are bombarded with media images of conflict as violence, aggression, and war ("if it bleeds, it leads"). Yes, these are not images of conflict; they are images of "failed conflict," conflict in the extreme, images of "bad" conflict. Waging good conflict means engaging in conflict without aggression, engaging in a way that allows people to move beyond their feelings of anger and hurt, while preserving the health and dignity of all involved. Waging good conflict moves the relationship forward. Effective parenting can be seen as an everyday example of waging good conflict, that is, conflict that contributes to the growth of individuals *and* the growth of the relationship. Unfortunately, models of waging good conflict rarely make it into the headlines. Consequently, it is not surprising that people are severely limited in their capacity to direct their anger into constructive action and productive change (Linda Hartling, in a personal communication, October 28, 2012).

Adam is angry that Eve is not submissive enough, while Eve does not dare to be angry at his wrath; frightened by him, and the possibility and the strength of her own anger, she seeks relief in ever meeker subservience. The therapist attempts to transform the explosive fury that Adam projects onto Eve into deeper reflection on his own growth. The therapist ultimately invites Adam to relinquish using anger as an easy-to-use escape route and helps him to instead face deeper feelings of hurt and pain that lie buried. The counselor explains to Eve and Adam that the new normative universe of mutual respect for equal dignity defines concepts such as love, loyalty, cooperation, connection, and relationship in profoundly new ways. She encourages Eve to embrace these new ways and no longer efface herself in front of Adam. It is important for Eve to dare to feel anger, at least sometimes—not frantic rage and hatred—but a confident firmness that she can use for constructing a richer and more comprehensive repertoire of being an authentic person, rather than merely shrinking into a self-effacing servant.

If we consider intergroup or international relations, the world will benefit from everybody firmly standing *up* in the face of abuse instead of passively standing *by*, disengaging and looking away (Staub, 1989). If we wish to produce constructive results, however, this anger must be channeled into the *conscientization* of consciousness and conscience that Paulo Freire (1970) suggested, and then into Gandhi- or Mandela-like strategies, rather than into frantic hatred and violence.

### **Humiliation and How it Affects Conflict and Is Affected by Conflict**

It has always been a mystery to me how men can feel themselves honored by the humiliation of their fellow beings.  
– Mahatma Gandhi

Fear is basic, anger more complex, and humiliation even more so. The term refers to feelings of humiliation, to acts of humiliation, and to cultural, societal, social, and psychological structures that perpetrate humiliation systemically. The act of humiliation involves putting down, holding down, and rendering the other helpless to resist the debasement. The feeling of being humiliated emerges when one is unable to repel the degradation and deems it to be not just unwanted, but illegitimate. Apartheid was humiliation qua system. The humiliating effects of feudalism were brilliantly unmasked by Lu Xun (1881–1936), considered the founder of modern Chinese literature.

What counts as humiliation and what it leads to—the consequences of humiliation—is determined by emotional scripts that vary from one historical period to another, from one cultural realm to another, from one person to another, and even within a single person as he or she reacts at different times to the same humiliation.

Morton Deutsch (2006) explains how Nelson Mandela “kept his self undistorted by preserving his dignity and refusing to submit, psychologically, to the definition of self that the oppressors tread to force upon him” (p. 38). Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela described the following incident after landing on Robben Island:

“We were met by a group of burly white wardens shouting: ‘Dis die Eiland! Hier gaan jiell vrek! (This is the island! Here you will die!)’ . . . As we walked toward the prison,

the guards shouted ‘Two – two! Two – two!’— meaning we should walk in pairs . . . . I linked up with Tefu. The guards started screaming, ‘Haas! . . . Haas!’ The word haas means ‘move’ in Afrikaans, but it is commonly reserved for cattle.

“The wardens were demanding that we jog, and I turned to Tefu and under my breath said that we must set an example; if we give in now we would be at their mercy . . . . I mentioned to Tefu that we should walk in front, and we took the lead. Once in front, we actually decreased the pace, walking slowly and deliberately. The guards were incredulous (and said) ‘. . . we will tolerate no insubordination here. Haas! Haas!’ But we continued at our stately pace. (The head guard) ordered us to halt and stood in front of us: ‘Look, man, we will kill you, we are not fooling around . . . . This the last warning. Haas! Haas!’ “To this, I said: ‘You have your duty and we have ours.’ I was determined that we would not give in, and we did not, for we were already at the cells.” (Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, 1995, pp. 297–299)

Morton Deutsch concludes: “By his persistent public refusal to be humiliated or to feel humiliated, Mandela rejected the distorted, self-debilitating relationship that the oppressor sought to impose upon him. Doing so enhanced his leadership among his fellow political prisoners and the respect he was accorded by the less sadistic guards and wardens of the prison” (Deutsch, 2006, p. 39).

Feelings of humiliation can have extremely violent consequences. “Feelings of humiliation are the nuclear bomb of the emotions” (Lindner, 2002). My research suggests that feelings of humiliation may acquire the quality and strength of obsession and addiction (see the chapter titled “The Humiliation Addiction” in Lindner, 2006). They can dominate people’s lives to the extent that their actions become destructive for others and for themselves.

Also Avishai Margalit (2002) warns that people may become attached to the point of addiction to the emotion of humiliation, as this secures the “benefits” of the victim status and an entitlement to retaliation. James E. Jones (2006) speaks of the *post victim ethical exemption syndrome* as an outgrowth of humiliation. Vamik D. Volkan (2004) in his *theory of collective violence* set out in his book *Blind Trust*, puts forth that when a *chosen trauma* is experienced as *humiliation* and is *not mourned*, this may lead to feelings of *entitlement to revenge* and, under the pressure of *fear* or *anxiety*, to *collective regression*.

If instigated by humiliation-entrepreneurs, such as it happened, for example, in Rwanda, in 1994, feelings of humiliation can be instrumentalized to produce mayhem in unprecedented ways. Due to their potency, feelings of humiliation lend themselves above all other emotions to being used to unleash mass violence. When people are determined—either genuinely or through manipulation—to perpetrate atrocities, costly military weaponry may no longer be needed. In Rwanda, everybody had machetes at home for agricultural use, with which neighbors could be hacked to death. The only resource required was a relatively low cost radio station, Radio Mille Collines, to disseminate the necessary propaganda. As a result, within a time span of a few weeks almost 1 million people were being viciously humiliated, literally, by being “cut short” from allegedly arrogating superiority, and then brought to death. As it seems, the only true “weapons of mass destruction” are hearts and minds that translate feelings of humiliation (be they felt authentically or through manipulation) into acts of humiliation.

Until very recently, few researchers have studied humiliation explicitly—the phenomenon of humiliation typically figures only implicitly in literature on violence and war. When humiliation is treated explicitly, it is often used interchangeably with shame or conceptualized as a variant of shame, among others by psychologist Silvan Tomkins (1962–1992), who describes humiliation as a combination of three innate affects out of a total of nine, namely, shame, disgust, and “dissmell” (sic).

However, humiliation is a complex phenomenon of acts and feelings that can occur without shame being involved. Particularly the rise of human rights ideals changes the position of humiliation in relation to concepts such as shame and humility and makes humiliation more salient (Lindner, 2007a). Interestingly, an important historical linguistic marker is related to humiliation. In the English language, “the earliest recorded use of *to humiliate* meaning to mortify or to lower or to depress the dignity or self-respect of someone does not occur until 1757” (Miller, 1993, p. 175, emphasis in original). As in the case of Nelson Mandela, people who face humiliating treatment may sternly reject feeling humiliated or ashamed. And even if they feel humiliated, victims of torture and maltreatment recount that part of their success in being resilient was not to feel ashamed while indeed feeling humiliated.

The view that humiliation may be more than just another negative emotion, but may indeed represent a particularly forceful phenomenon, is supported by the research of a number of authors, among others, James Gilligan (1996), Jennifer Goldman and Peter Coleman (2005), Linda Hartling and Tracy Luchetta (1999), Donald Klein (1991), Helen Block Lewis (1971), Evelin Lindner (2000, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2012), Richard Nisbett and Dov Cohen (1996), and Thomas Scheff and Suzanne Retzinger (1991).

Considering feelings of humiliation may shed more light on violence or terrorism than other explanations. Conditions such as inequality, or conflict of interest, or poverty, are not automatically perceived as negative. As long as all players accept justifications (poverty as “divine order,” for example, or as *karma*), there might be pain, but no shared awareness of a problem that needs fixing, no conflict, and no violent reactions. And conflict, even if it becomes open, is not automatically destructive either; it can be solved mutually and creatively. “Waging good conflict” as advocated by Jean Baker Miller, is a viable option. It is when feelings of humiliation emerge that rifts are created and trust destroyed. If feelings of humiliation are not overcome constructively, cooperation fails. In the worst-case scenario, violence ensues.

Research on mirror neurons indicates that witnessing others’ feelings makes us experience these feelings ourselves. This means that we will feel humiliated when we see media coverage of other people whom we identify with experiencing humiliation, even if they live far away and our life circumstances are radically different. “Everyone knows how the Muslim country bows down to pressure from west. Everyone knows the kind of humiliation we are faced with around the globe,” said Faisal Shahzad, who planted the Times Square bomb (“For Times Sq. Suspect, Long Roots of Discontent,” Andrea Elliott, *New York Times*, May 15, 2010). Mirror neurons are perhaps the most potent “globalizing agent” of our emotions, for better and worse. They can make us help earthquake victims in Haiti, or become “warriors of terror,” wherever we are on this planet.

At the current historic juncture, two new forces —what is called “globalization” in concert with the rise of the human rights ideals—bring humiliation to the fore in



unprecedented intensity (Lindner, 2006). Globalization in both of its expressions, the coming-together of humankind, and the global exploitation of social and ecological resources, when combined with the human rights message is a recipe to increase feelings of humiliation. As long as people lived far apart from each other, in isolation, relative deprivation went undetected. Nowadays, Western soap operas and Western tourists walking about are teaching the less privileged of the world to recognize their own deprivation. At the same time, human rights promise that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights,” which means that all human beings are part of *one* family where all members are equal in dignity. Poverty, relative deprivation, vulnerability to being exploited, are no longer acceptable as divinely ordained *karma*, now they represent a violation of human rights, indeed, a violation of the very humanity of the *one* human family. When the underprivileged of this world, and those who identify with them, see how the gap between the poor and the rich grows wider locally and globally, when they at the same time hear human rights rhetoric from elites that is empty, when they, moreover, have reason to suspect that the rich and powerful peddle empty human rights rhetoric only to maintain and even increase their dominant position, then life at the bottom turns from *karma* into humiliation and the rich and powerful of the world become humiliators. There is nothing as humiliating as empty dignity sermon: “to recognize humanity hypocritically and betray the promise, humiliates in the most devastating way by denying the humanity professed” (Stephan Feuchtwang, November 14, 2002, in a personal note).

Thomas Friedman, *New York Times* columnist, states (2003), “If I’ve learned one thing covering world affairs, it’s this: The single most underappreciated force in international relations is humiliation.” Aaron Lazare (2004) writes: “I believe that humiliation is one of the most important emotions we must understand and manage, both in ourselves and in others, and on an individual and national level” (pp. 262).

Based on many years of research on humiliation, I suggest that the desire for recognition unites the human family and thereby provides us with a platform for cooperation. Ethnic, religious, or cultural differences or conflicts of interests can lead to creative cooperation and problem solving, and diversity can be a source of mutual enrichment, but only within relationships characterized by respect. When respect and recognition fail, those who feel victimized are prone to highlight differences to “justify” rifts caused by humiliation. “*Clashes of civilizations* are not the problem, but *clashes of humiliation* are” (Lindner, 2006, p. 172, emphasis in original).

What happens when feelings of humiliation emerge? Blema Steinberg (1996) posits that feelings of humiliation may trigger narcissistic rage and acts of aggression meant to lessen pain and increase self-worth. Steinberg analyzes political crises and cautions that international leaders who have been publicly humiliated may instigate mass destruction and war. Roy Baumeister (1996) suggests that perpetrators of violent crime combine high self-esteem, albeit brittle, with poor self-regulation, particularly when it is challenged. Walter Mischel, Aaron DeSmet, and Ethan Kross (2006) explain that rejection-sensitive men may even get “hooked” on situations of debasement in which they can feel humiliated.

In our example of Eve and Adam, Adam may be such a rejection-sensitive man. As long as Eve merely fades into subservience at his onslaught, no open destructive conflict and no cycles of humiliation occur. An unwise therapist could very well create such

cycles if she were to nurture feelings of humiliation in Eve that would lead to nothing but tit-for-tat retaliation and the creation of new rounds of humiliation. Eve would merely learn the same dysfunctional processing of humiliation as Adam engages in. The therapist needs to lay out a vision for Mandela-like dealings with feelings of humiliation for both Eve and Adam.

Cycles of humiliation occur when feelings of humiliation are translated into acts of humiliation that are responded to in kind. In cases of collectively perpetrated mayhem, Hitler-like humiliation entrepreneurs “invite” followers to pour their frustrations into grand narratives of humiliation that call for retaliatory acts of humiliation as “remedy.” Massacres typically are not just “efficient” slaughter, but generally more cruel. Rape, torture, and mutilation, with the aim to humiliate “the enemy,” often precede killing. Many soldiers engage in actions that are hard to explain with average forensic theories, since nothing suggests that they are rapists in civilian life or are drawn to sexual sadism or sadistic violence. In the Rwandan genocide, for example, killing was not enough. The victims were humiliated before they died. Why else would an old woman be paraded naked through the streets before being locked up with hungry dogs to be eaten alive? Why else would the legs of Tutsi victims be hacked shorter? To literally “take them down,” to respond to arrogation with humiliation (Lindner, 2000a). Only “Mandelas,” individuals who know how to build dignified relationships, can avoid this.

Even the history of the field of psychology itself could be narrated as a story of humiliation. The field began its existence as an underdog (and still is, in many ways). Foregrounding “hard science”—be it through quantitative methodologies or the application of the latest technologies—is a path to gaining respect, honor, and dignity in a Western world that is still characterized by a male culture of domination. Emotions, relationships, and qualitative approaches are “soft” and have a taste of the female sphere. Also listening to indigenous peoples provides little prestige. Currently, it is the arrival of new hard imaging technology that provides prestige to soft emotions, rather than intrinsic interest. Here we see how psychologists themselves can become victims of traps that are part of their very own field of inquiry—in their wish to avoid being humiliated as “touchy-feely quacks” (to formulate it provocatively), they overlook feelings and relationships, as well as neglecting the wisdom of indigenous peoples.

To conclude, feelings of humiliation affect conflict in malignant ways when they are translated into violence like Hitler’s, or into terrorism, and set off cycles of humiliation. Yet, feelings of humiliation do not automatically trigger violence. There is no rigid link. Feelings of humiliation can also be invested in constructive social change. Paulo Freire’s conscientization even depends on feelings of humiliation to unfold. What if Mandela had not been sensitive to the systemic humiliation meted out by apartheid? What if he had meekly bowed to humiliation, or cultivated a false “resilience” of denial and apathy? Mandela used the force entailed in feelings of humiliating to rise up. Yet, he did not translate these feelings into violent retaliation. He did not follow the example of Rwanda, where the former underlings killed their former elite in a genocide. He showed that there is a constructive script that proceeds from being humiliated and feeling humiliated to beneficial engagement in change, rather than retaliation with aggressive humiliation-for-humiliation.

*Indignez vous! Cry Out!* This is the voice of Stéphane Frédéric Hessel, a French wartime resistance hero, born in 1917. In the 1940s, he cried out against Nazism. Today,

he calls on people to “cry out against the complicity between politicians and economic and financial powers” and to “defend our democratic rights.” The Occupy movement followed his call.

Conflict, in turn, affects feelings of humiliation through the way conflict is managed. If managed in a respectful manner, the probability for finding constructive solutions is high. If managed in condescending, patronizing, and arrogant ways, even if this is done unwittingly, feelings of humiliation will undermine constructive cooperation. The essence of “waging good conflict” is that necessary conflict is addressed rather than neglected, and that this is done in dignified ways, without humiliating the humiliators. This insight can be institutionalized at the societal level. In his book *The Decent Society*, Margalit (1996) calls for institutions that do not humiliate. What is needed today is a decent global society.

### **Guilt, and How It Affects Conflict and Is Affected by Conflict**

It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity. Technological progress is like an axe in the hands of a pathological criminal. I believe that the horrifying deterioration in the ethical conduct of people today stems from the mechanization and dehumanization of our lives, a disastrous by-product of the scientific and technical mentality. *Nostra culpa!*  
– Albert Einstein

Guilt is an elaborated emotion and a topic for psychology, psychiatry, ethics, criminal law, and other related fields. To feel guilty, we need self-awareness and the ability to measure our behavior in relation to standards. Self-conscious evaluative emotions such as pride, shame, or guilt are not possible earlier than the second or third year of life. However, as discussed earlier, elaborated emotions are culturally dependent. The concept of guilt might never evolve, at least not in any Western sense; in some cultural spheres a word for guilt simply does not exist.

In its simplest description, guilt may be understood as an affective state of regret at having done something one believes one should not have done. Humiliation, humility, shame, and guilt are related concepts. When I feel ashamed, I accept that I fell short. I blush when I break wind inadvertently. I can be ashamed even if nobody notices. Norbert Elias (1897–1990) places the emerging “skill” of feeling shame at such transgressions at the center of his *theory of civilization* (Elias, 1969–1982). Being able to feel shame is prosocial, as is the ability to feel guilt. When I feel guilty, I accept that I have committed a moral transgression. People, who are not capable of feeling shame or guilt, are seen as “shameless” monsters. We all hope that the desire to avoid shame and guilt will safeguard social cohesion and foster humility before social and legal rules and the need to cooperate for building a sustainable world. We deem humility to be a virtue, and shame and guilt as hugely important. Guilt can render healing for perpetrators, victims, and larger society, through remorse, apology, forgiveness, and restorative justice.

Shame and guilt societies have been differentiated. In a shame society, it is said, I seek to maintain my good name in the eyes of the others, while in a guilt society I have

internalized moral norms into my super-ego and feel guilty when disobeying them. “Face” and “face-saving” is usually associated with Asian culture. Chinese scholars, however, explain that shame and guilt shade into each other, both directing people into self-examination in social situations, and motivating people to evaluate their behavior and adapt it.

Ruth Benedict’s name has become connected to the shame-versus-guilt differentiation of societies. The society of traditional Japan was long held to be a good example of a shame society, following her book *Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946). However, her conclusions are widely criticized today, and not only in Asia. I myself have lived in Japan for three years, and also am very familiar with China, and I understand very well how Benedict arrived at her conclusions, however, I also do not resonate very much with the shame-versus-guilt societies differentiation.

Guilt can be abused, however, as a tool of social control, because guilty people feel less deserving and are less likely to assert their rights and prerogatives. When people are taught to feel guilty for their very existence or for certain characteristics of their appearance, this represents a destructive application of guilt.

To conclude, feelings of shame and guilt can prevent people from perpetrating abuse. Feelings of shame and guilt for past omissions and transgressions, if acknowledged, remedied by apology and forgiveness, can be a powerful healing force in conflict. What is needed for shame and guilt to be healing forces is the courage to face them with candidness, humility, and warmth. If not acknowledged and worked through constructively, if bypassed, feelings of shame can maintain destructive conflict (Scheff and Retzinger, 1991). Particular men in honor contexts may suppress such feelings as they reckon that feeling shame is an unacceptable dishonorable humiliation.

In turn, conflict can impinge on feelings of shame and guilt and push them toward violence if conditions inhibit their acknowledgement and healing. Moreover, deliberately creating “pathological guilt” by making opponents in a conflict or negotiation feel guilty so as to weaken them, risks undermining long-term constructive solutions.

To revisit Eve and Adam, Eve is kept in timid subservience not least by feeling guilty. She partly believes Adam’s complaint that she ought to be more docile. Their therapist brings clarity into the normative confusion of the couple. Indeed, in traditional normative contexts of ranked honor, a woman is expected to efface herself. However, times have changed, and subservience no longer represents the same kind of virtue, at least not in cultural contexts influenced by the human rights message. Eve is entitled to develop a more comprehensive and expansive personal space—not arrogantly attacking Adam in retaliation—but maintaining a spirit of firm and respectful humility. Adam is no longer required to feel ashamed and guilty for not succeeding in keeping his wife meek and lowly—and he no longer needs to bypass his shame at his failure and cover up with violence. He is entitled to feel proud to be a male who supports a strong woman at his side. He may even come to feel guilty and apologize to his wife for not having grasped this insight earlier. An exchange of mutual respect for equal dignity, in a spirit of shared humility, may lead to a new and nourishing relationship between Eve and Adam.

### **Hope and How It Affects Conflict and Is Affected by Conflict**

The source of hope lies in believing that one has or can move toward a sense of connection with at least one other person.  
 – Jean Baker Miller

Richard Snyder (2002) developed *hope theory*. Snyder's work is related to and overlaps with theories of learned optimism, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and coping. Snyder reports that higher hope is consistently related to better outcomes in academics, athletics, physical health, psychological adjustment, and psychotherapy.

Interestingly, hope can be learned. Most people lack hope, Snyder points out, because they were not taught appropriately during childhood; many experienced having their nascent hopeful thinking strategies destroyed. Snyder recommends the building of cultural and institutional frames that highlight insights from hope theory: "When laws are implemented so as to allow a maximal number of people to pursue goal-directed activities, then citizens should be less likely to become frustrated and act aggressively against each other" (p. 261). As a result, higher hope will lead to better social adjustment, both with one's extended family, one's friends and larger social networks, and also public health and general wellbeing is likely to increase.

Hope is not to be confused with naïve and unrealistic expectations. On the contrary, this would be a recipe for hopelessness. A strategy of hope entails continuously weighing opportunities (or the lack of opportunities), and strengths (or their failing), and finding optimal solutions. In a conflict situation, in negotiations, setting too high levels for expected outcomes could be disastrous. Hope is not an illusion borne out of misguided daydreaming or wishful thinking, but a strategy of successful adaptation.

Let us revisit Eve and Adam. Adam undermines Eve's social support network. She is to live for him alone. He systematically humiliates her and destroys whatever confidence is left in her by telling her that nobody but him could love her. She is to be worthless without him and his love. Both believe that this strategy, if only intensified sufficiently, will lead to a happy relationship—however, it brings only violence and tears. Their therapist reformulates their definitions and strategies of hope. Slowly, Adam understands that by inducing hopelessness in Eve, both lose. The therapist rekindles Eve's confidence in herself and Eve's life begins to flourish. The therapist also helps Adam to gain pride in his ability to keep a strong woman as a partner and enjoy her fresh zest of life—rather than be frightened by her newly won strength. Both learn to nurture higher hopes for their relationship and work for newly defined, shared goals.

To conclude, we need to learn hope and develop cultures of hope and institutions for hope to support us as we strive for constructive conflict transformation. This means creating more alternative goals, more potential pathways, and more endurance, both in us, for us and in our societies. If we succeed, we will have people gravitating to wider social networks that benefit everyone. Positive emotions will follow. Ironically, pessimists are oblivious of these insights. By lamenting, they indulge in increasing the burden of conflict instead of lessening it and thus risk tipping the situation toward downfall. It is wiser to learn constructive optimism and hope, because only this will render beneficial framings. A cancer patient, if told that she is in deep crisis, might survive if mobilizing maximum hope. She might die if surrounded by pessimists. For the world, we need constructive hope that models emergency and crisis as a challenge rather than as the end of the world.

### **Confidence and Warmth, and How They affect Conflict and Are Affected by Conflict**

What sets worlds in motion is the interplay of differences, their attractions and repulsions. By suppressing differences and peculiarities, by eliminating different civilizations and cultures, progress weakens life and favors death.

– Octavio Paz

The amygdala maintains close connections with the insular cortex, which is more adapted for social behavior that involves empathy and functions at a higher cognitive level. Frans de Waal (2009) carried out seminal research on empathy, highlighting its anchoring in maternal care. De Waal's research confirms that *Homo sapiens* is not a narrowly self-interested *Homo economicus*, but a social being, even a *Homo amans*, a "loving" being (Max Scheler's term). During the first 95 percent of human history, prior to the Neolithic, humans evolved in a context that nurtured social connections (see, among others, Ury, 2009, or Lindner, 2006, 2010). For the first, and largest, part of human history, "The Hobbesian view of humans in a constant state of 'Warre' is simply not supported by the archaeological record" (Haas, 2001).

However, times changed. Throughout the past millennia of human history, neighboring groups in a fragmented world were always potential enemies, and war was frequent. What political scientists call the *security dilemma* was often very strong. In such a context, the motto of *Homo bellicus*, "if you want peace, prepare for war," was all definitorial and sayings such as "the best defense is a good offense" or "attack is the best form of defense" made sense. Gandhi's recommendation that "there is no path to peace; peace is the path" had little space to manifest. "Loving your enemy" was unforgivably unpatriotic. Men were trained to foreground the human capacity to be aggressive, namely, toward hostile out-groups, while women were asked to nurture and maintain the relationships within the in-group. The *dominator model* of society was ubiquitous, a male-dominant "strong-man" rule, in both the family and polity, with hierarchies of domination maintained by institutionalized and socially accepted violence ranging from wife- and child-beating to aggressive warfare on the larger tribal or national level (Eisler, 1987).

At the present point in history, former out-groups merge into one single global in-group or "global village" (or, as anthropologists would phrase it, the human tribes are *ingathering*). This gives the *partnership model* of society (Eisler, 1987) a window of opportunity to manifest (Lindner, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2012a, and 2012b). The traditional female role script for maintaining relationships within an in-group can and must now be projected onto the global level. Both men and women, together, can collaborate as a global family, rather than compete for global enmity. The exploitative and divisive aspects of globalization can be harnessed by a new global culture of care that is intentionally shaped. That human nature is on our side—it is social and cultural—is the hope-inducing message from new research.

The problem, however, is that coming together in a common in-group (such as a global village) does not automatically create positive feelings. Humans also share a strong tendency to split into in- and out-groups. New closeness may bring not joy but negative feelings, creating whole new fault lines. The *contact hypothesis*, or the hope that mere contact can foster friendship, is not necessarily true, particularly not when the world becomes frightfully “liquid” (Bauman, 2010) and our selves become “protean” (Lifton, 1993). Or, even worse, when globalization exposes to humiliation from empty human rights rhetoric.

Psychologist Maureen O’Hara argues that the globalization era is “new, fraught with both anxiety and creative opportunity and will need (and produce) a new psychology” (in a personal communication, October 25, 2012). In the light of the insight that globalization may intensify conflict, indigenous psychologist Louise Sundararajan exclaims: “I am left with the feeling that the nice lessons on emotions—such as having positive emotions, and so on—are not going to cut it, any more than lessons on running will save us from a Tsunami” (Sundararajan, in a personal communication, October 29, 2012). Sundararajan suggests that indigenous psychologies can help. Her argument builds on recent work by sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2010).

The world I call “liquid” because like all liquids, it cannot stand still and keep its shape for long. Everything or almost everything in this world of ours keeps changing: fashions we follow and the objects of our attention (constantly shifting attention, today drawn away from things and events that attracted it yesterday, and to be drawn away tomorrow from things that attracted us today), things we dream of and things we fear, things we desire and things we loath, reasons to be hopeful and reasons to be apprehensive. And the conditions around us, conditions in which we make our living and try to plan our future, in which we connect to some people and disconnect (or are disconnected from), keep changing as well. Opportunities for more happiness and threats of misery flow or float by, come and go and change places, and more often than not they do that too swiftly and nimbly to allow us to do something sensible and effective to direct or redirect them, keep them on course or forestall them... (p. 1).

Anthony Marsella (2012) writes about psychology and globalization. He recommends heeding Robert Lifton (1993) and his warning that the stresses associated with global changes are bringing about a sense of uncertainty, unpredictability, and fear that individuals and societies may have little control over their lives and destinies. Lifton writes (1993):

We are becoming fluid and many-sided. Without quite realizing it, we have been evolving a sense of self appropriate to the restlessness and flux of our time. This mode of being differs radically from that of the past, and enables us to engage in continuous exploration and personal experiment. I have named it the “protean self,” after Proteus, the Greek sea god of many forms.

The protean self emerges from confusion, from widespread feeling that we are losing our psychological moorings. We feel ourselves buffeted by unmanageable historical forces and social uncertainties... Enduring moral convictions, clear principles of action and behavior: we believe these must exist, but where? Whether dealing with world

problems or child rearing, our behavior tends to be ad hoc, more or less decided upon—as we go along. We are beset by a contradiction. Schooled in the virtues of constancy and stability—whether as individuals, groups, or nations—our world and our lives seem inconstant and utterly unpredictable. We readily come to view ourselves as unsteady, neurotic, or worse (p. 1).

If we want to nurture equal dignity and rights both locally and globally, in a liquid and confused world, what do we need to learn? Our task is to adapt our cultural norms and imageries, and learn new social and psychological scripts and skills. As long as we lived in isolated, homogenous cultural spheres, we could usually intuit correctly what our fellow human beings were trying to tell us with their words and actions. We tended to behave with a certain amount of “confidence.” However, this is an illusionary definition of “confidence,” which is not necessarily beneficial to us, particularly not in times when the world’s cultures move ever closer together. If we reflect for a moment, we know that even our children and our spouses represent “other cultures.”

What is mandatory to learn in a globalizing world is to be confident in uncertainty rather than clinging to imagined certainties. We have to become what Carl Rogers called *persons of tomorrow*. We have to become confident *voyagers*, as David Matsumoto, Seung Hee Yoo, and Jeffery LeRoux (2007) would call them, rather than rigid *vindicators*:

Those people who cannot control their emotions reinforce and crystallize their pre-existing ethnocentric and stereotypic ways of dealing with the world that are limited. This is a no growth model, and these individuals are not engaged in a journey. This is a model of stagnation, with no growth potential inherent in such a process. We call these people “vindicators,” because their worldviews are established solely to vindicate their pre-existing ethnocentrism and stereotypes, not to challenge them and grow (p. 18).

We must learn to tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity confidently. When we do not understand our counterpart, jumping to conclusions out of a need to “be sure” will produce failure. Guessing what our spouses (or terrorists) “want” and basing our actions on such speculations simply does not work. We have to learn to stay calm while we use our frustration creatively, with imagination and inspiration, and for that we need curiosity, courage, and patience (Satoshi Nakagawa, personal communication from Jacqueline Wasilewski, June 25, 2005).

Intercultural communication scholar Muneo Yoshikawa (1987) has developed a *double-swing model* that conceptualizes how individuals, cultures, and intercultural concepts can meet in constructive ways. It relates to what Peter A. Levine (1997) calls *pendulation*, the swinging back and forth between our own point of view and that of the other that allows us the potential for understanding each other. Successful pendulation can produce solidarity and social integration; without it, we have alienation and lack of social integration. Double-swing pendulation—from you to me, back to you, back to me, and so on—has to be conducted with warmth and respect for all conflict parties. Respect and warmth are the glue that keeps people together while they move back and forth. Respect and warmth do not befall us; it can be learned.



How can it be learned? How can we muster to stay calm and loving, while globalization also entails the potential to intensify feelings of humiliation and create new conflicts? How did Mandela survive twenty-seven years in prison without becoming enraged and vindictive? How did he acquire his unique mixture of humility and pride? Perhaps there is no recipe, but we still can learn from his experience.

The important role played by indigenous psychology in the globalization era—both for Western and non-Western psychologies—is articulated by James Liu in the paper he presented at the 2012 International Conference on New Perspectives in East Asian Studies, at the National Taiwan University, June 1–2, 2012:

It behooves each indigenous psychology to consider elements of its sacred or core values and the cultural affordances they provide against the liquefying forces of globalization. For if all that is solid within an indigenous society melts into air, the people will have nothing left of spiritual value to sustain them, and they will have a severely compromised social order bereft of a coherent morality and ethics. They become utilitarian tools at the periphery of a neo-liberal world order with Western values and Western states at its core, constantly struggling against one another for short-term instrumental gains that are not sustainable. The past of a people is a critical symbolic resource for constructing what of a people's identity should be maintained amidst change (p. 5).

Anthropologist Alan Page Fiske (1991) found that people, most of the time and in all cultures, use just four elementary and universal forms or models for organizing most aspects of sociality. These models are: (1) communal sharing, CS, (2) authority ranking, AR, (3) equality matching, EM, and (4) market pricing, MP. Family life is often informed by communal sharing. Relationships of trust, love, care, and intimacy can prosper in this context. Authority ranking involves asymmetry among people who are ordered along vertical hierarchical social dimensions—it may be expressed by a good parent caring for her children, or a bad ruler abusing her underlings. Equality matching implies a model of balance such as taking turns, for instance, in car pools or babysitting cooperatives. Market pricing builds on a model of proportionality with respect to ratios and rates.

In my work, I suggest that we need to reinstate communal sharing as the leading frame, globally and locally, since the current primacy given to market pricing eats into our humanity and diminishes it at all levels and in all contexts (Lindner, 2010, Sundararajan, 2012a). Also Sundararajan warns of the disappearance of relational contexts when market pricing is the driving forces of globalization:

All emotions are relational; our brain is not evolved to interact emotionally with strangers. Globalization changes that. Sales clerks are trained to wear a smile for all. This is fine so far as superficial emotions go. But real emotions in the stranger context tend to become aberrant—sex with strangers is either rape or prostitution; weakness or inferiority in front of strangers turns a quotidian experience of humbling into that of traumatic humiliation. Of the four types of relational cognition that Alan Fiske delineated, Market Pricing, the type of relational transactions among strangers, has the least capacity to sustain a meaningful relationship—yet this is the type of relational

context we are left with when all the other, richer relational contexts liquidify with globalization” (Sundararajan, in a personal communication, October 29, 2012).

According to my observation, it is not the ingathering aspect of globalization that poses the biggest problem; on the contrary, this ingathering represents a unique historically unparalleled opportunity. The most significant problems flow from our currently reigning economic frames, which are unhelpful both locally and globally. They offer illusionary solutions, needlessly create and intensify conflicts, and hinder the transition to equality in dignity (Lindner, 2012a). In this situation, a window of opportunity stands open, yet, instead of recognizing it, most people overlook it. It is unfortunate that so many people confound the negative and positive sides of globalization. As a result, the promise that the in-gathering trend entails is being overlooked even by those who have the capabilities and resources to harness and develop it intentionally. Through their passivity they leave the global space open to being misused by others (social media, for instance, covertly instrumentalizing it for profit, is only one of the more harmless examples).

The world becomes liquid, confusing, and fear-inducing for people born into a secure cultural anchoring when they feel that the floor under their feet dissolves through globalization. Displaced people, refugees, and many indigenous peoples, however, have always tasted the insecurity that globalization now brings also to the rest now.

Allow me to share my personal experience. I have never had the privilege of secure anchoring. My family was displaced and lost everything they owned. I was born into a painful sense of non-belonging, of not being part of the human family. My parents could not teach me their local tongue. Their cultural memories will disappear with them. Until I was about 45 years old, my identity was one of social-exclusion, of “here where I am, I am not at home, and there is no home for me to go to.”

I have healed the pain of displacement by living globally, by now for almost forty years (Lindner, 2006, 2007c, 2012b). I am embedded into many cultures on all continents, far beyond the “Western bubble.” My kind of global citizenship is the opposite of global business people dashing from one international hotel to the next, with the aim to force also the last remnants of communal sharing hiding on the globe into market pricing. I do understand that many people feel the world becoming liquid, confusing, and fear-inducing. To me, however, building family-like relationships globally provides the stark opposite of confusion: a great sense of security, trust, and confidence. After all, our forefathers were continuously surprised by new discoveries, while I have a lived experience of how small a planet Earth is, and of how social human nature is. Only mysteries such as dark energy and dark matter are still as unknown as our planet was until recently. Therefore, my path to a sense of confidence through global living is interesting not just for me personally, I believe. It suggests that it may be worth investing in global unity-in-diversity building for humankind at large not just as a precondition for sound global action, but also as a path to decreasing fear and increasing joy. Let me therefore explain my experience in more detail (see also [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin.php)).

*Sunflower identity* is the name I coined for my global unity-in-diversity identity (Lindner, 2012b). Through my global life, the core of my identity (the core of the sunflower so to speak) is more securely anchored in our shared humanity than any human

identity had the occasion to be anchored ever before; the reason being that technological opportunities to reach the limits of our globe in comprehensive ways are only available now. My experience indicates that it is psychologically feasible to relate to all human beings as if they are family members and that most people are able to respond in kind. I agree with indigenous psychologist Louise Sundararajan who calls for preserving the relational contexts that our emotions are evolved for, of which a rich source of information is found in many traditional societies.

At the periphery of my identity (the petals of the sunflower, so to speak), it is profoundly enriching to find safety in learning to “swim” in the flux of life rather than “cling” to illusionary certainties. The mastery of movement provides a superior sense of security than depending on fixity. Rather than seeking safety in one particular local culture, what healed me, was to proceed toward a new level of safety through building loving relationships globally. It is a pleasure to be a voyager and continuously pendulate in the spirit of *nondualism* (a philosophical orientation with roots in the East). A global-scope unity-in-diversity identity, if nourished by enough people, can nurture a global unity-in-diversity culture. Unity in diversity is not a win-lose game but a win-win game. Both can and must be increased: more unity means also more diversity (under the condition that unity means acknowledging our shared humanity and respecting equality in dignity). Unity in diversity is the stark opposite of dissolving diverse cultural identities into global uniformity; it is the opposite of being uprooted or homeless. It is the building of a more secure sense of home, a home of local diversity in global unity.

I admit, I am a pioneer—I have not yet met another person who intentionally develops a global life design like me—yet, I can attest that my path can be embarked on by many more. Clearly, the human rights tenet that “every human being is born free and equal in dignity and rights” has not yet been realized. So far, only Western passports open all doors also to those with little monetary resources—and I was privileged enough to happen to be born into such a passport—while the rest is trapped in their countries by the severe visa requirements surrounding them. Not to speak of even graver barriers; I know them only too well.

Yet, there is also the inverse trap of hiding one’s lack of dedication and courage behind fictional barriers. Refraining from accumulating possessions beyond what one can carry in one bag is a good start. I have moved about not just by plane, but by foot, bus, ship, and train; I know the desert on horse, donkey, and camel; I also have trained to build and fly simple gliders. And there is no need to become a hyperglot like me either; I have successfully communicated by simply being human. Global citizenship is no intrinsic part of casino consumerism. On the contrary. It can be used as a path to avoiding unnecessary consumerism and bringing indigenous gift economy to the entire human family.

Our migratory forefathers prior to the onset of sedentary life may now become our teachers (see for a “story-line” of human history Lindner 2006). I resonate with what indigenous Native American leader Sitting Bull (1831-1890) said: “White men like to dig in the ground for their food. My people prefer to hunt the buffalo... White men like to stay in one place. My people want to move their tepees here and there to different hunting grounds. The life of white men is slavery. They are prisoners in their towns or farms. The life my people want is freedom.” Clearly, I do not hunt buffalo, and I do not have a

teepee. Yet, I refrain from defining a small geographical locality as “my home” and the rest as “not my home.” My home is the entire global village,

René Wadlow, President of the Association of World Citizens sent the following *affirmation of human oneness* for 2013: “I am a member of the human family; I am a citizen of the world. My destiny is bound to that of all my fellow human beings. The achievements of women and men throughout the ages are our heritage. Thus what we jointly create is our gift to future generations. May our use of the earth preserve and protect Nature for future generations.” (René Wadlow, in a personal communication, December 28, 2012).

What is useful, furthermore, is to learn about the best approaches to communication and cooperation. Nowak and Highfield (2011) have studied the “win-stay, lose-shift.” I apply the appreciative communication style of what I call the “indirect power” of always acting with love, rather than re-acting or retaliating. What is needed thereafter is the courage to maintain the humility of awe and wonderment for the breathtaking vastness and magnificence of our universe. Then patience is necessary to uphold a maximal level of curiosity for all manifestations of the creativity of life, be they to be found in the slums of this world, in its wildernesses, or in its palaces. Most importantly, in times when narrow self-interest is being idolized, when love has lost its standing, the courage must be mustered to nurture and stand up for love, not just love for one’s immediate family or community, or love in the form of charity, but rather love for all human beings and their humanity, love for living creatures and the miracle of life itself (Lindner, 2010). This is serving self-interest much better, because it has a much broader and much more fulfilling scope. The ideology of narrow self-interest is a manipulation by ulterior interests who use it as a strategy of divide and rule.

Since many years, in the Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies network, of which I am the Founding President, we encourage all members to open their homes as Human Dignity Dialogue Homes so as to nurture a sense of global family in our network. Nowadays, the couchsurfing.org website brings my kind of global life experience to many young people. Increasingly, during the past couple of years, I meet young people around the world who use couchsurfing.org and who agree with me that global family building is hugely enriching.

I join Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa in his call for a shift from a *machine principle* to a *life principle*, not just in architectural designs. Rigidity needs to give way to process and complexity (Lindner, 2009, chapter 8). Maureen O’Hara had the floor earlier; she calls for a new psychology in times of globalization. Seeing *multiple truths* and engaging in *respectful humility* is the new approach to competence, culture, and organization in the 21st century (O’Hara and Leicester, 2012). *Social identity complexity* can and must be nurtured—when we acknowledge and accept social identity complexity, our identity structures become more inclusive and our tolerance of out-groups increases (Brewer and Roccas, 2002). Michel Serres (1997) uses the metaphor of the “educated third,” which, to Serres, is a “third place” where a mixture of culture, nature, sciences, arts, and humanities is constructed. Kwame Anthony Appiah (2006) makes a “case for contamination.” He says “no” to purity, tribalism, and cultural protectionism, and “yes” to a new cosmopolitanism. Emmanuel Lévinas (1985) highlights the Other, whose face forces us to be humane; terms such as *métissage*, or intermingling, mean that both I and the Other are changed by our contact.

I suggest “harvesting” those elements from all world cultures that foster relationships of loving mutuality and respect for equality in dignity—be it from the African philosophy of *Ubuntu* or indigenous knowledge about consensus building (Lindner, 2007b). Not least “democracy,” as it stands now, is still too rigid and risks undermining sustainable consensus building. In Nepal, for example, consensus building collapsed as soon as elections were envisioned (United Nations conflict prevention specialist Monica Rijal in a brown bag presentation at the United Nations, New York, November 29, 2012). There are many alternative cultural practices and concepts that merit further exploration if we want to improve democratic practices—*ho‘oponopono, musyawarah, silaturahmi, asal ngumpul, palaver, shir, jirga, minga, dugnad, sociocracy* is an arbitrary collection of terms I personally came across at different corners of the world. They all point at less confrontational and more cooperative ways of arriving at consensus and social cohesion than Western concepts of democracy stand for. New forms of *collaborative leadership* are the new pathway.

Not surprisingly, power elites fear such fluidity and complexity, because it makes for disloyal underlings. In the context of the security dilemma, the dualism of “good in-group” versus “evil out-group,” if maximized, paved the path to “victory.” The West used this method with great success, and conquered the world as colonizers. At the current point in history, even though this approach becomes increasingly dysfunctional, the West still draws on accumulated power from colonial times in many ways (from unfair global trade rules to using up the world’s resources, the list is long).

To conclude, to avoid unnecessary conflicts and wage necessary conflicts as “good conflict,” we must design our efforts in ways that keep the double swing connected, not just within our immediate social environment but globally. Healthy “identity in unity” and pendulation is interdependent—neither engulfed in dependence nor independent and isolated. All parties in conflictual relationships must avoid going too far, “walking over” the other or allowing the other to “walk over” them. Adam walked over Eve and Eve allowed him to do so. Through therapy, both understand that when all players in a conflict learn to invest respect, warmth, and calm confidence rather than frantic righteousness, conflict can be framed benignly. In the beginning, Eve and Adam threw monologues at each other and tried to prove to the therapist that the respective other was evil. Then, slowly, they began to listen to each other. They tried to grasp the other’s feelings and thoughts. They learned using both sides of the double swing. Finally, they emerged mutually enriched. Now, they recognize that their conflict was based on solipsistic misperceptions of the other, due to each of them looping in only one side of the double swing. They know, furthermore, that their conflict continued because of their immature and self-defeating conflict-solving strategies. And finally, they understand that they suffered from a high degree of normative confusion. In a haphazard manner, they had jumbled together the contradictory normative frames of ranked worthiness as opposed to equal dignity, helplessly oscillating between the contradictory emotional scripts that are related to those normative universes. Today, Eve and Adam no longer wish to participate in any ranking of “higher” over “lesser” beings (with Adam at the top and Eve at the bottom), but attempt to treat each other as worthy of equal dignity.

Not only Eve and Adam’s conflict, but also community conflicts and global conflicts can be conceptualized along similar lines. Not least, Germany has gained international respect by apologizing to the world and acknowledging the disaster that Hitler brought to

the world by his strategy of presenting himself as arrogant “savior” and by responding to perceived humiliation with mayhem.

A dignified future for the human family on its home planet is only imaginable if all necessary conflicts are put on the table and addressed in constructive ways by us, the human family, in collaboration. Necessary conflicts are those, for instance, that arise from the fact that unsustainable economic strategies both hollow out our resource base and turn most of humankind into colonized subjects, either through direct oppression or through co-option.

Howard Richards, philosopher of social science, has reflected on a dignified future for humankind for more than five decades. He borrows from South African activist Gavin Andersson terms such as *unbounded organization* (Richards, 2012; Andersson 2013) A definition of *unboundedness* is that it transcends the historically given constitutive rules of the here and now. Richards (2012) writes:

Freire tells his readers at the beginning of *Pedagogy* that the key problem of our times is “dehumanization,” not as a philosophical possibility but as a concrete historical reality. A problem-posing, dialogic, humanizing education is one that calls forth the human ontological vocation to join with others in changing the world, in creating culture. It is consciousness-raising (*conscientização*). The core meaning of *conscientização* is eliciting awareness that the currently dominant social order is not natural. It is a cultural construction. It can be deconstructed and reconstructed (pp. 14-15).

Richards decries that the voice of Paulo Freire and Neville Edward Alexander are no longer heard in today’s South Africa. Neville Edward Alexander (1936–2012) spent ten years on Robben Island as a fellow-prisoner of Nelson Mandela. Even though Paulo Freire’s unbounded pedagogy was an integral part of the liberation struggle, sadly, now, it is being put aside:

The new *idées forces* bore names like: “qualifications,” “economic growth,” “human resource development,” “international competitiveness,” “productivity and profitability,” “lifelong adaptation to the needs of the global economy,” “certified expertise.” Alexander’s “using alternative methods for an alternative society” was crowded off the centre of the stage, although –and surely this is among his most significant contributions—Alexander has been among those who have kept alternative education alive and preparing for a comeback during its eclipse. Bounded thinking proliferated. It was bounded in the precise sense that its horizons were those of political economy. It was bounded in the precise sense that it thought inside the historically given constitutive rules of the here and now (Richards, 2012, pp. 14-15).

As it seems, freedom from oppression goes too far when it is defined as “might is right.” It goes too far when it creates a brand of Western individualism (which is enforced by the collective) that leads to a new kind of oppression in a rat race. It goes too far when it leads to “freedom” from the cohesion of dignified human relationships. As Richards points out, the equal rights scripts are associated historically with anomie, Western imperialism, the loss of the *Gemeinschaft*, *Entzauberung*, capitalism, suicide (Émile Durkheim), people being forced off their tribal land and forced at gunpoint to work in the

mines for wages (Mies, 1986). As things stand the human rights ideology is contradictory. Rights can undermine dignity; rights can humiliate. Equal dignity is not the same as equal rights; sometimes the latter undermines the first. A world of dignity and decency goes beyond rights. Richards seconds: “Rights guarantee property rights and market freedoms that make it impossible to achieve inclusion and equality... The very concepts of first generation human rights make it impossible to realize third generation human rights” (Richards, in a personal communication, January 1, 2013, and Richards, 2008). Indeed, when we talk about “empty human rights rhetoric” then this includes overlooking this intrinsic incompatibility and using rhetoric to advance the first (rights) by appearing to mean the other (dignity).

Gandhi’s economics did not work. It proved to be impossible to sell the products of the spinners at a high enough price to pay the spinners more than a miserable pittance. Mandela’s did not work either. He succeeded in building a non-racial society to an amazing degree. But the problems of inequality and poverty have not been solved. Joanna Swanger and I argue in our book (2006) that if we combine Gandhi’s ideas with other ideas we can get a humanistic economics that will work.

In general I think economics needs to be rethought in the light of the ideas in this chapter, psychology, anthropology (Howard Richards, in a personal communication, January 1, 2013, see also Gandhi, 1997, or Kent, 2010, and Richards and Swanger, forthcoming).

In indigenous societies we can observe that hierarchical relationships often have aspects of benevolent patronage as well as malevolent oppression. Liberation from the latter should not lead to the discarding of the first. Children need good parents, rather than no parents. In extension, we need new responsible leaders, who nurture collaborative leadership in the interest of the common good, rather than no leaders or only self-interested leaders. Only relationships of responsible loving care, based on mutual respect for equal in dignity, retain the social cohesion provided by benevolent patronage in hierarchical societies, while protecting personal freedom against oppressive manifestations of hierarchy. Also the solidarity of siblings, of lateral belonging and recognition, is crucial. Altogether, we should refrain from throwing out the baby with the bathwater—liberation from oppression, if translated into “liberation” from human relationships, only ends in isolation and anomie. Emancipatory psychology must hold hands with relational psychology; otherwise social cohesion is lost. As to liberation strategies, liberation from humiliating domination must be conducted without perpetuating new cycles of humiliation; otherwise dignity is lost. And social cohesion and dignity are needed if we want to cooperate as a global family to face our global challenges with our diversity as a source for our creativity. The good news is that while it is crucially important in today’s times of global crises to embark on global family building, it also has the potential to be hugely rewarding psychologically and culturally.

## HOW TO INTERVENE IN CONFLICT, CONTROL NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, AND FOSTER POSITIVE EMOTIONS

More than an end to war, we want an end to the beginning of all wars. Yes, an end to this brutal, inhuman and thoroughly impractical method of settling the differences between governments.

– Winston Churchill

When will our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it?

– Eleanor Roosevelt

You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

—Buckminster Fuller

Earlier, we discussed that our mental short-term “go” system might be counterproductive when we are trying to achieve broad, long-term objectives. To meet complex long-term challenges, we need to entertain superordinate regulatory loops in our higher brain structures. We need to slow down our thinking processes so we can critically assess them. We need to get in touch with deeper feelings, thoughts, and factors outside of our dominant mental and sensory models. We have to tap into the largely unconscious, automatic, parallel-distributed processes that supply us with creativity. It is wise to recognize that everybody has “hot buttons” that, if triggered, will stir up strong and hot emotions such as anxiety, anger, rage, fear, depression, or withdrawal. It is valuable to know the other’s hot buttons so as to avoid pressing them. And it is important to know one’s own hot buttons and how we tend to react when they are pressed, so that we can control our reactions if that happens.

How do we slow down and cool down? Let us assume, we have just quarreled and are “out of our mind” (the old brain has taken over). Modern brain imaging yields evidence of the effectiveness of meditation techniques. Buddhists claim that destructive emotions can be greatly reduced (in contrast to the common Western assumption that our biological programming for emotions is fixed).

Some Tibetan Buddhists think it is possible and advisable to overcome, even eliminate emotions such as anger or hostility, which Western philosophers see as “natural and immutable” (Kabat-Zinn, 2011). There are Buddhist concepts such as *mindfulness* and the concept of *sukha* (“a deep sense of serenity and fulfillment that arises from an exceptionally healthy mind”).

We find similar approaches in many fields of inquiry. Victor Frankl’s concept of *self-observation* in the framework of *logotherapy* is comparable. In a more general way, Erving Goffman, an “ethnographer of the self,” has described how people negotiate and validate identities in face-to-face meetings and establish *frames* within which they



evaluate the meaning of their encounters. To return to Eve and Adam's therapy, they embark on a wide panoply of "cooling" approaches—from relaxation techniques to dream journeys and to considering the futility of petty goals when they see it in the frame of the shortness of life.

Let us assume that we have slowed down and gained inner distance by using any approach that suits us, be it meditation or new larger framings. Now, we are ready for the next step. We have to constructively channel and manage our negative emotions of anger, fear, and distress because they are the "gatekeepers" of any communicative effectiveness. "If we cannot put our inevitable negative emotions in check, it is impossible to engage in what is clearly higher order thinking . . ." say Matsumoto, Yoo, and LeRoux (2005, p. 9). They explain that four main ingredients to personal growth are key to successful handling of conflict, namely, Emotion Regulation (ER), Critical Thinking (CT), Openness (OP), and Flexibility (FL). These psychological processes are the *psychological engine* of adaptation and adjustment.

A host of tools is available that helps regulate negative emotions. Earlier, we discussed hope. Maintaining high hope means engaging in very specific strategies of approaching the world. One such strategy, for example, is the "glass-is-half-full" approach. Lamenting over whatever is yet unaccomplished only drains energy. Lamenting makes it more difficult to conceptualize what is missing as a challenge, as a next step that has to be approached with enthusiasm, motivation, and courage. Eve and Adam have to go beyond wallowing in pain and filling their lifetime with decrying their misfortune—they have to envision with excitement the experiences of growth that lie ahead of them.

Let us assume we have managed to dampen our negative feelings to constructive levels. Now we can embark on nurturing positive emotions. Barbara Fredrickson, Robert Levenson, and Christine Branigan (1998, 2001) study positive emotions. They offer an interesting theoretical perspective, which they call the *broaden-and-build model*. This model questions common assumptions of emotion theory, namely that emotions must necessarily entail action tendencies and lead to physical action. Rather than physical action, positive emotions seem to facilitate changes in cognitive activity. What negative emotions are to threat, positive emotions are to opportunity. As we have seen, traditional action-oriented models for negative emotions indicate that negative emotions narrow a person's momentary thought-action repertoire, an effect that is adaptive in life-threatening situations that require quick action. In contrast, positive emotions broaden a person's momentary thought-action repertoire. Positive affects and emotions promote intuitive-holistic (right hemisphere) mental strategies, while negative affects and emotions further analytic-serial (left hemisphere) mental strategies. It has been shown that coping and resilience are associated with positive emotions even under the chronic stress of, for example, care-giving and bereavement. For Eve and Adam, panicky actionism, fueled by pain, has to give way for calm reflection and firm resolve in an atmosphere of hope and courage.

We should not conclude, however, that negative emotions are altogether maladaptive and ought to be avoided. It is rather a question of avoiding any "too much" as well as any "too little." "Keep smiling" is no solution. Negative emotions can be functional, not only in emergency situations. They further also effective learning. Successful conflict transformation often requires a considerable amount of conceptual change for which negative emotions can be crucially instrumental. Studies did not find a clear relation

between positive affect and conceptual change. More so, rather than avoiding conflict, “blissful ignorance” may create or maintain it. Learning to “be happy” within abusive systemic frames, makes for “useful idiots.” Paulo Freire’s conscientization has its place here. We do not wish to become “resilient” in the face of abuse; rather, we need to muster the courage to foster systemic change so that abuse no longer occurs. Apartheid needed to be dismantled, not placated by way of creating “positive feelings.” And this had to be done in dignified ways. “Never again!” is a call that is directed at all of us, to help create a dignified world, a world without acts and structures of mistreatment and humiliation.

Suppose we have now calmed down, calibrated negative emotions so that they inform us but do not overwhelm us, and fostered positive emotions. What else can we draw upon? Earlier we discussed the benefits of mature mutual love, of anger harnessed in constructive resolve, of humility and hope, of the confidence of a voyager, and the warmth that we need to mutually connect us all. There are many other insights we can heed.

For example, the benefits of cooperation have to be made known widely. Those who preach competition are often well aware of the advantages of cooperation; otherwise there would be no cartels. Preaching competition to others, while cooperating among one’s own, is a well-known “divide and rule” strategy. Those who fall for such manipulation deny themselves the benefits of cooperation.

*Deutsch’s Crude Law of Social Relations*, stipulates that “cooperation induces and is induced by a perceived similarity in beliefs and attitudes, a readiness to be helpful, openness in communication, trusting and friendly attitudes, sensitivity to common interests and de-emphasis of opposed interests, an orientation toward enhancing mutual power rather than power differences...” (Deutsch, 1999, pp. 19–20). In contrast, unhelpful competition induces and is induced by coercion, threats, deception, suspicion, self-serving biases, poor communication, and attempts to enhance the power differences between oneself and the other.

Matsumoto’s voyager needs what Barnett Pearce (2005) calls *cosmopolitan communicative virtuosity*. For a *cosmopolitan communicator*, disagreement is an opportunity for learning and constructing new realities. Disagreement is a dilemma—rather than a catastrophe—that calls for further exploration to find creative solutions. *Virtuosity* means (a) a “grand passion” for what we are doing; (b) an ability to make insightful distinctions; and (c) engage in skilled performance.

So, what we need for a world that engages constructively in conflict is “grand passion,” passion for developing new forms of communication that entail a careful and skilled balance between what we discussed earlier, namely the broaden-and-build capacity of positive emotions and the conceptual-change capacity of negative emotions.

In order to achieve communicative virtuosity, it is necessary to unlearn some unhelpful beliefs about intelligence and learning. Intelligence is not *fixed*, it is *malleable* (the *incremental* theory of intelligence). People who believe intelligence is fixed develop an *ego-oriented performance* orientation. They are “façade-polishers” who wish to satisfy expectations of others, avoid mistakes, or look smart. When they cover up for hazardous mistakes, they risk endangering others. Those with *task-oriented learning-mastery* goals, on the other hand, desire to learn new things, even if they might get confused, make mistakes, and not look smart. Research shows that people with mastery goals are

basically more successful. In extension, conflict benefits from being approached with a task-oriented mastery orientation: we learn together from our mistakes.

To keep social cohesion intact in a relational world of partnership (rather than a world of domination), we need Gandhi's concept of firm respect and warmth—*satyāgraha* (nonviolent action), a term that is assembled from *agraha* (firmness/force) and *satya* (truth-love). This is the social glue of “Big Love” that Western individualism has delegitimized and literally “sold out,” and that we have to regain (Lindner, 2010). The sense of serenity that is expressed by the word *sukha* has kinship to many concepts that point at appreciation, caring, communal sharing, appreciation of compassion, faith in shared humanity, and the experience of divinity through awe and wonderment in the face of the magnificence of our world. Concepts such as personhood, dignity, rights, character, autonomy, integrity, shame, humility, and entrustment are all intertwined here. We also have a duty for self-respect. We cannot be moral citizens if we violate our own dignity.

Finally, Aaron Lazare (2004) asserts:

One of the most profound human interactions is the offering and accepting of apologies. Apologies have the power to heal humiliations and grudges; remove the desire for vengeance, and generate forgiveness on the part of the offended parties. For the offender, they can diminish the fear of retaliation and relieve the guilt and shame that can grip the mind with a persistence and tenacity that are hard to ignore. The result of the apology process, ideally, is the reconciliation and restoration of broken relationships” (p. 1).

To conclude this section, it is important that we know what our “hot buttons” are and, if pressed, find a way to “slow down and cool down” so that we can think and act in a manner that will foster a positive emotional rather than a negative emotional climate for resolving the conflict. It is important to be aware that negative emotions have to be managed particularly cautiously. The ability to constructively channel and manage negative emotions is the “gatekeeper” to communicative effectiveness. It is desirable to dampen strong negative emotions and use their energy to foster constructive positive emotions. Meditation is but one way among others to “slow down and cool down.” With regard to opponents, it is advisable not to hit the others’ “hot buttons” but to attempt developing a mutually respectful, caring and cooperative relationship that is characterized by “cosmopolitan communication virtuosity.”

Now we are prepared to embark on good quality meaning making. Louise Sundararajan (2012b) uses the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce to create an integrative theory of the connection between belief, emotion, and health. Meaning making consists of continuously looping from feeling and experience to abstract concepts and back to experience. Charles Peirce describes this as a dynamic and dialectic interaction between two opposing movements of thought (Lee, 1997): one movement reaches out to interpretations of higher levels of abstraction, away from experience, the other reaches back to touch “the ground” of experience in a “reflexive undertow” (Wiley, 1994, p. 27). This can also be described as a “vertical integration” between the cortical systems and the limbic core, with meaning emerging as neural network patterns traverse in both directions (Tucker, 2007). As mentioned above, it is an integration of

subsymbolic and symbolic systems (Bucci, 1997) through two modes of information processing: direct versus buffered (Teasdale, 1999).

We encounter an inherent conflict here, an intrinsic opposition of structural forms: optimal meaning making only occurs when the looping efforts are sufficiently extended, recursive, and progressive (Tucker, pp. 224-225). Individual health is impacted if this process is carried out suboptimally. For example, Louise Sundararajan refers to the problem of overgeneral autobiographical memory (Williams et al., 2007). This is a retrieval strategy which gives preeminence to categorical memories over event specific details—for example, “birthdays make me happy,” rather than giving specific contextual details of a particular birthday. “Cast in the framework of Peircean semiotics, overgeneral retrieval strategies are symptomatic of a lack of integration between the sub-systems, with the experience-distant symbolic mode running on overdrive, at the expense of the reflexive undertow (Wiley, 1994) that integrates concepts with experience” (Sundararajan, 2012b, p. 979).

In philosophy, the concept of the *reflective equilibrium* is congenial (John Rawls, 1971). Philosopher Otto Neurath’s metaphor of a ship can illustrate it. Formerly, scientists assumed that science only was science when a dry dock could be found or at least the pretension that dry docks existed. Today, the insight grows that we must humbly accept and live with the fear-inducing uncertainty that human understanding of the world is limited. There is no dry dock. What we may think of as certain, will always be threatened by yet undiscovered insights and discoveries. The solution is to circle through the reflective equilibrium and create understanding and action from this movement. This means continuously rebuilding the ship while at sea. It means creating just enough structure to keep the ship afloat, but never too much rigidity, which would cause the ship to break and sink.

At all levels, at the level of neurons and the level of epistemology, what is important, as it seems, is avoiding rigidity, staying clear of getting stuck. Ideological rigidity must be avoided, or the refusal to move down to the level of experience again, but also the hesitation to move up to higher levels of interpretation is detrimental. It means creating a culture that allows for and encourages a continuous reflective movement of meaning making. Incidentally, it is precisely here that dynamics of humiliation have destructive effects, since they risk locking people into “we” against “them” positions that exclude parts of the entire range of possibilities from their looping efforts.

Earlier, we looked at the link between individual health and meaning making, and now, we are ready to address the link between meaning making and the health of societies. If we are in favor of decency, we face the challenge of finding ways to make decency feasible. At this point, social psychological research of the role of framing is interesting. When students are asked to play a game where they have the choice of cooperating or cheating on one another (the prisoner’s dilemma game) and are told that this is a community game, they cooperate. They cheat on each other when told that the same game is a Wall Street game.

When we look at cooperation and framing in combination, we can conclude that the notion of global consciousness, if grounded in human rights ideals of equality in dignity, is the only frame that has the power to lift cooperation and its benefits from a haphazard to a systemic level. Only when our consciousness, our scope of justice, our actions, and our global institutional frames become globally inclusive, can cooperation become the

cultural norm also at local levels and put competition at its service. Only when we manifest the fact that we are one single family of humans, who, together, have to be the stewards of our home planet, will we survive. Only then can we end the present competitive race to the bottom that drives long-term social and ecological destruction. To achieve this we need to envision deep paradigm changes, beyond putting bandages on symptoms.

Howard Richards writes:

I think we see this in the current fiscal cliff crisis in the USA. Some think Congress should just forget the deficit and concentrate on growth. Others think they should face the fact that huge cuts in spending (gutting social programs, as in Greece) are necessary. I agree with those who think there are deep issues here that show that there are no solutions within orthodox economics. Neither are there solutions in fascism nor in violent revolutionary class struggle. The desirable social democratic solutions prove not to be feasible (see Richards and Swanger, 2006, including Mandela's approach, see chapter 10). I think findings from psychology are crucial to building a dignity economics. So we have our work cut out for us (Howard Richards, in a personal communication, January 1, 2013).

Richards summarizes the message of this paper into two phases:

Phase A: Cool down the animal spirits from the older limbic system, cool down fear and anger and the power behind humiliation, and integrate behavior into constructive well-intentioned social relationships that use the newer cerebral cortex and at the same time find better uses for the more ancient animal spirits. This brings people at least to something like Lawrence Kohlberg's stage 3, or generally to the conventional level of following social norms (stage 3 or stage 4, Kohlberg, 1969, see also Gilligan, 1982; we mean is Kohlberg's general idea of a higher level of morality that not only obeys norms but improves them). One could also say that it achieves the "civilizing process" of Norbert Elias (1969–1982). In terms of the old Soviet psycholinguistics one could say it "brings motor behavior under verbal control," or social control. But thus achieving civilization by successfully socializing people to respect conventional norms only gets us half way when the prevailing conventional social norms are themselves seriously flawed.

Phase B: At present, conventional social norms in the most powerful contemporary societies systematically prescribe individualism and profit maximization, and exclude a *precariat* (Standing, 2011). Consumer confidence and investor confidence required for "economic growth" make consumerism and materialism a psychological attitude people need to make the system work. In Kohlberg's terms we need to move on to post-conventional stages 5 and 6, where we are both civilized to follow conventional norms and working to change the particular norms our particular civilization happens to have. In Gandhi's terms we might employ nonviolent disobedience to the law not because we are lawbreakers but because we are so law abiding that we obey a higher moral law. To do so we need to become aware of the need to nurture social relationships, not just with friends, but also across fault lines of

hostility. And we need to become aware of the clash between present conventional norms and physical reality. We as a species must make a transition to sustainable relationships among ourselves and with the biosphere (Howard Richards, in a personal communication, January 4, 2013).

Richards makes the point that many critical, progressive, and radical thinkers focus on the contradictions of the system addressed in Phase B. Since they tend to see the system as a fraud and as a way of keeping the exploited masses in line with lies, they favor anti-authoritarian and rebellious behavior because it is anti-systemic. From their point of view, it is a naive expectation that the powerful will give up their privileges just because they are converted to idealist philosophies or humanistic psychologies.

I suggest that re-actively negating a paradigm means staying within it, and maintaining it. *Anti*-movements unwittingly undermine their own aims, particularly as the world grows ever more interdependent. Switching between different versions of rigid dualism is a mindset adapted to the world of the past, a fragmented world caught in a strong security dilemma. It is a strategy for “victory” that might have been successful in the past, at least in some cases. Yet, this is precisely the state of affairs that can and needs to be transcended now. In an interdependent world such strategies risk unleashing unending cycles of humiliation and keeping the world fragmented where it has a chance to heal.

I advocate pro-active meta-transitions beyond merely switching between different versions of rigid dualism. I promote a meta-transition from dualism to nondualism, from rigidity to process. Working *for* something new is more effective than losing one’s energy in running *against* old walls. Old paradigms crumble by themselves as soon as people are attracted to the new and turn their backs to the old. Old power elites simply lose their platforms on which they can operate. As Buckminster Fuller said, “you never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.” And also the new paradigm is best protected not by keeping “enemies” out, but by inviting them to become friends, or, if they refuse, to contain them with dignity. This has nothing to do with appeasement or softness. On the contrary; it is the ultimate long-term sustainable version of firmness; in my work I call it *big love* (Lindner, 2010).

Let us revisit Eve and Adam to round up their case. Eve and Adam gradually learn that there are other definitions of love and happiness around, not just love defined as mutual dependence in submission/domination. Adam originally believed that only a weak partner would need him, so he kept Eve weak. And Eve tried her best to fit in. Now, both learn that love can flourish between two equally confident and strong partners who mutually enrich each other. It is a long learning process for Eve and Adam. It is like mastering a totally new language. All their hypotheses about “what works” and “what does not work” have to be redefined. Time and again they “fall back.” However, they do not give up.

They even attempt to achieve a global consciousness and conscience (Freire’s conscientization). It is the knowledge and awareness that humankind, in all its diversity, is interconnected, it is a sense of global ethical responsibility, and it is Pearce’s *grand passion*. It is the passion to join in and co-create a new future for our human family, a future that celebrates global unity in diversity in a conscious, intentional, and reflexive manner.

## CONCLUSIONS

We have the right to be equal whenever difference diminishes us;  
we have the right to be different whenever equality  
decharacterizes us.

– Boaventura de Souza Santos

The person who says ‘it cannot be done’ should not interrupt the  
person doing it.

– Chinese proverb

This chapter concludes with highlighting the challenges we face at the current historic juncture. In the early twenty-first century, the world finds itself in transition from a traditional culture of domination to a culture of collaborative creativity. Evidently, this transition is still very incomplete and a culture of power-over and might-is-right coercion is still prevalent, not only in traditional honor cultures but also in cultures of ruthless individualism and profit maximization. It is not just ugly, it is also profoundly unsustainable; this becomes ever more visible to those who are not co-opted. Its starkest most recent global outfall was the economic crisis that broke in 2008, while the insidious disintegration of ecological and social interconnectivity is slower and often more covert.

Ever increasing global ecological and social challenges require global cooperation for their resolution. Conflict and emotion are at the core of both the problems and the solutions. Social emotions at the global level are no longer defined and channeled by a few diplomats. They are felt and responded to by millions of people and become salient for conflicts in the “global village” in unprecedented ways. Global terrorism is one outfall, a terrifying one. Avoiding important conflicts for the benefit of unnecessary conflicts or denial is equally malignant. The world needs counseling. Psychology is bound to gain ever more significance at the global level, also for the field of political science. Political scientists deal with relations between states, a frame that moves into the background in tact with increasing global interdependence, a trend that is illustrated by the fact that terrorism defies national borders.

Is humankind prepared? Two processes stand out: globalization and the rise of human rights ideals. Currently, this mixture is a recipe for heating up feelings of betrayal, humiliation, and conflict. Rhetoric creates an expectation gap and reality widens it. While human rights rhetoric preaches equality in dignity and rights, in principle, economic inequality is on the rise on the ground, in reality.

Globalization entails both opportunities and risks. What anthropologists call ingathering helps us recognize and act on the fact that we are *one* human family that has to collaborate to survive on our *only* tiny home planet. “For the first time since the origin of our species, humanity is in touch with itself” (Ury, 1999, p. xvii). Morton Deutsch’s message is crucial here, namely, that in a cooperative situation the goals are so linked that everybody “sinks or swims” together, while in the competitive situation if one swims, the other must sink.

However, global cooperation can only succeed if we manage to constructively address the fact that simply coming together does not automatically lead to friendship. Globalization also opens new arenas for power abuse, and it increases levels of anxiety

and risks for misunderstandings. These dangers need to be addressed in ways that safeguard cooperation and avoid new divisions. Traditional in-group/out-group demarcations, for instance, must be overcome. In-group pride, if built on out-group enmity, is destructive when a globally united in-group is what is needed. “Enemies” are not motivated to cooperate with other “enemies.” And the raiding of resources, be they human or ecological, at the global level is as obscene as at the local level, even if it “out of sight” and leads to a division of motivation and resources (Lindner, 2009, 2012). We must create a global family and attend to our family problems in ways that good families do.

Concurrent with the ingathering of humankind another unprecedented social phenomenon radically questions old norms: the continuous rise of human rights ideals. The human right revolution (or transformation, movement, trend) affects our relationships with our children, spouses, and fellow human beings as much as world politics. The human rights revolution is fueled by feelings of humiliation and it fuels feelings of humiliation. And this happens in the global public arena as much as at home. At this point in history, at all corners of the world, formerly legitimate humbling turns into illegitimate humiliation.

This happens in myriad ways. When inequality is understood as a violation of human rights—rather than *karma*—the result can be violent conflict. Conditions such as poverty, inequality, and conflicts of interest can all be addressed constructively by cooperative “waging of good conflict”; enabling environments can be built jointly; scarce resources can be shared. It is when feelings of humiliation emerge that trust is destroyed and seemingly unbridgeable rifts are created. Double standards and empty human rights rhetoric compound this situation: “To recognize humanity hypocritically and betray the promise, humiliates in the most devastating way by denying the humanity professed” (Stephan Feuchtwang, personal note to the author, November 14, 2002). If feelings of humiliation are not overcome constructively, cooperation, at best, fails; at worst, violence ensues. Feelings of humiliation thus cross-cut other explanations of violence.

All this is occurring at a time when humankind remains blind to the fact that it is emotionally unprepared. Many believe that Mandela’s maturity cannot be learned, and that he is simply extraordinarily gifted. This might partly be true. But, we still have to try.

We have to learn to move back and forth, get into the others’ perspectives and feelings, and then step back into our own perspective. Contradictions can be a source of enrichment if approached courageously and constructively. We have to learn to stay calm and use frustration creatively with imagination and inspiration. For that we need to nurture qualities of curiosity, courage, and patience in ourselves and in others.

We must learn to nurture positive emotions, particularly in conflict situations, because they broaden our problem-solving capacity. This is a daunting challenge, but we can achieve it if we train to regulate our negative emotions first, knowing that they are the gatekeepers to our deeper, more positive capacities. However, “positive thinking” can also be overdone—we do not want to descend into “blissful ignorance.” A certain amount of negative emotions are a necessary—if unpleasant—component of conceptual change. We need to learn how to foster positive feelings that are firm and take from negative feelings what is constructive, without letting them dictate us. We need to learn to use *satyāgraha*, Gandhi’s firm respect and warmth, to proactively build feasible relationships rather than unfeasible fences and walls, both at home and in the world.



We must learn to “wage good conflict” through mutual entrustment and cooperative problem solving. This chapter offers guidelines. We need to profoundly change our mind-sets if we are to prevent and solve conflict at home and in the world. It is not a question of some experts possessing a collection of smart techniques. We, all members of the global community, the global street, so to speak, have to forge new practices and institutions locally and globally.

We need to learn that we no longer can continue to hope that strategies of domination and submission will bring peace, justice and love—at home or abroad. Rather than bringing peace and cooperation, an adversarial culture with combative communication styles of sending “messages of strength” to each other triggers the fight-or-flight avoidance system and deepens rifts. In a globalizing world, the traditional pathways of defense and security can be suicidal.

The shortest “hands-on” guideline for managing emotions in conflict would go as follows: Cool down—yourself and others. Down-regulate negative feelings—far enough to avoid tunnel vision, yet not too far, avoid “blissful ignorance.” Up-regulate positive feelings by invoking a positive long-term vision—ask: What kind of a world do we wish our children to live in? Urge a joint learning orientation for humankind. Forge new mature Mandela-inspired emotion scripts that connect us in cooperation even when circumstances are difficult and humiliation hurts. At the global level, promote a decent global village in the spirit of Avishai Margalit’s call for a decent society with decent institutions that do not have humiliating effects. Craft global cultural practices and institutions for the stewardship of our planet as a joint task based on Article 1 of the Human Rights Declaration, which states that every human being is born with equal dignity. Make clear that human dignity and human rights stand for a cultural transition toward decency in all its manifestations (it does not require everybody to agree with the validity of a natural universal and eternal order as described by 18th century Europeans).

If we use this guideline, we will use emotions and conflict optimally. Peace and security in a fragmented world meant keeping one’s own underlings down and enemy out-groups out. In an interdependent world unilateral action no longer stays unilateral; violence and humiliation no longer pacify, but come back in kind, like a boomerang. *Human security*, therefore, means keeping a formerly fragmented world united as a new global in-group, a global community, to address common challenges and give the survival of all humankind a chance. To reach that end, the available cultural diversity within the human family must be harnessed in unity. Elements that violate equal dignity or are divisive no longer have a place. Cultural diversity needs to be increased. It is as crucial to protect and nurture cultural diversity as it is to protect biodiversity. However, diversity enriches only when embedded into the unity of respect for individual dignity and choice, the unity of acknowledging that culture is neither fixed nor unequivocally “good” (since cultural difference can also humiliate or be the result of humiliation, Lindner, 2000b). Subsidiarity is the way to achieve this, or decentralization. *Subsidiarity* is a word that points at layered approaches, be it the loops in our brain at the micro level, or, at the macro level, the way to organize societal institutions. (The idea of subsidiarity should not be misused, though, as presently happens in the context of globalization, to limit democracy by making public law unable to govern private business activity; to make it impossible to create national welfare states or a global public law superior to private law that could coordinate necessary global efforts for ecological and social

sustainability, see Keynes, 1933, Gandhi, 1997, Kent, 2010, or Richards and Swanger, forthcoming).

We live in historical times when realistic optimism is warranted. Did our ancestors see pictures of our Blue Planet from the perspective of an astronaut? This image provides a powerful frame for collaboration. Were our forefathers able to see, as we do, how we humans are *one* species living on *one* little planet? Did our grandparents have access to as comprehensive a knowledge base as we have about the universe and our place in it? Mature global citizenship can overcome the security dilemma as well as the *commons dilemma* (the problem that commons are vulnerable to free-riders and raiders). The present ingathering of humankind opens a window of opportunity to manifest Gandhi's tenet that peace is the path. Yet, only if this window is being seen, understood, and used by us, the human family.

During my global life, I have always tried to observe where and under which circumstances true solidarity and cooperation emerges. And I have experienced it in all corners of our globe. True solidarity, as I define it, is based, first, on the notion of equal dignity, and, second, on a willingness to maintain a generous and loving attitude vis-à-vis other living beings, giving them the benefit of the doubt rather than looking for opportunities for confrontation. There are many ways to describe this orientation, and I have experienced it in all corners of our planet: Buberian *I-Thou* orientation, *connected knowing* (rather than *separate knowing*, Mary Belenky), *let-it-flow thinking* (rather than *verdict thinking*, S. M. Miller), *listening into voice* (Linda Hartling), *flourishing* (Martha Nussbaum, Amartya Sen), or *dialogue* (Paulo Freire).

I have coined the term *egalization* to connote the true manifestation of equality in dignity and match the word globalization to form the term *globegalization* (Lindner, 2006). "Let us co-operate for *co-globegalization!*" would be a call to become serious about global family love (Lindner, 2010). It means leaving behind all those unnecessary conflicts of the past, conflicts over ideological terms that drove cycles of humiliation rather than sound reality testing. Let me come with another suggestion: Why not move on from labels such as "socialism" and "capitalism"? Nobody knows anymore what these concepts are supposed to mean; they have degenerated to almost empty labels that simply elicit mutual hatred. After all, cycles of humiliation hinder proper reality testing. What about *dignism*? Dignism means nurturing unity in diversity, preventing unity from being perverted into oppressive uniformity, and keeping diversity from sliding into hostile division (Lindner, 2012a).

The Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies network (HumanDHS, [www.humiliationstudies.org](http://www.humiliationstudies.org)), and the World Dignity University initiative (WDU, [www.worlddignityuniversity.org](http://www.worlddignityuniversity.org)) are examples of initiatives that contribute to building a global culture of cooperation, a culture that advances the principles of mutual respect, equality in dignity, unity and diversity, and environmental stewardship, all progenitors of lasting peace. We work for a world where every newborn finds space and is nurtured to unfold his or her highest and best, embedded in a social context of loving appreciation and connection—a world where the carrying capacity of the planet guides the way in which everybody's basic needs are met, and where we unite in our respect for equal human dignity for all while celebrating our diversity, a world, where we prevent unity from being perverted into oppressive uniformity, and keep diversity from sliding into hostile division.

This is also the message of the International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution (ICCCR), which was founded by Morton Deutsch and is headed by Peter Coleman. Its message is that cooperation is superior to competition—not the cooperation of crime and terrorism, nor the cooperation that serves global exploitation of resources for special interests, but global cooperation for the common good of all, for a new ethics of mutuality and care, for a new definition of success, wealth, well-being, and fulfillment. This, in turn, can succeed only through understanding Deutsch’s reminder that in an interdependent world, fates are linked in a way that all “sink or swim” together. And this requires that we all, every member in the global family, develop a sense of truly responsible global citizenship. This requires new levels of consciousness and new skills.

In the final analysis, as Marshall McLuhan said: “There are no passengers on spaceship earth. We are all crew.” We cannot expect that our diplomats will foster sufficient global cooperation on the conflicts that we need to solve if we wish to survive as a species. We all have to step in. Traditional sources of love, such as parental or romantic love, friendship or charity, will not be enough. We must learn to nurture, intentionally and proactively, a new level of love to achieve global cohesion: the glue of worldwide interhuman love. There are no “strangers” on this planet; there is no “exotic” “abroad.” Let us learn to be the family we are on our tiny home planet.

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