



Complete Peace Trilogy



**Hardwired
for War**



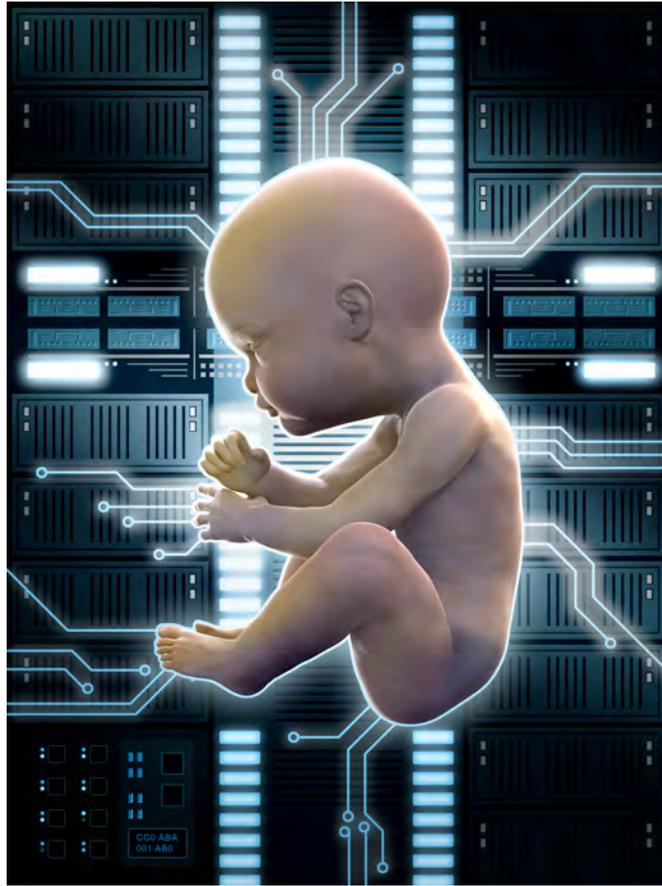
**Peace - What
Prevents It?**



**Peace - What
Creates It?**



**Are We Born
Hardwired
For War?**



IS COMBAT IN OUR DNA?

Most honest combat vets will tell you, perhaps not eloquently but in their own way, the same thing: essentially that combat is in our human DNA and demands to be exercised... The question is, Can we humans evolve peacefully, or will we succumb to instincts we can't transcend?"

- Quote from former Marine Corp helicopter pilot in Vietnam

“Instinct theory states that motivation is the result of biological, genetic programming. Thus, all beings within a species are programmed for the same motivations. At the heart of this perspective is the motivation to survive - we are biologically programmed to survive. And, all of our behaviors and motivations stem from biological programming. Thus, our actions are instincts. Through the process of natural selection, individuals who were even slightly predisposed to engage in adaptive social behaviors were the “fittest” and tended to survive longer and to be more successful in passing their genes along to future generations. Even though these tendencies may not enhance our fitness in today’s world, eons spent in harsher environments have left us genetically predisposed to perform certain social behaviors when situational cues call forth ancient instincts.”

Is Warfare a Genetically Driven Instinctive Survival Reaction?

Is Combat in our DNA and Demands to be exercised?

Is it possible that a genetically generated, misplaced biological drive for survival incites people to conflict?

Is it possible that survival is a faulty instinctual compulsion?

Are we being controlled by this genetically generated, misplaced biological drive for survival, to the extent that no amount of knowledge can free us from it?

In fact, is knowledge the cause of the conflict rather than the cure?

If we are basing each action on instincts that created the original conflict, in trying thereby to bring about peace, do we only continue to escalate conflict? Have we created opposing ethnocentric ideologies based on the conditioned notion that we have to psychologically identify with a group in order to have peace and security? Although at one time in our evolutionary history this worked, is it now preventing physical security due to the extensive divisiveness of these tribal ideologies? Does this mean that we can't have culture — the arts, music, and literature of a civilization that can demonstrate the wonderful diversity of the human race — which we so appreciate for its differences? Or is it only when it becomes what we call “ethnocentric” that we have trouble? The Oxford English Dictionary defines ethnocentrism as “regarding one's own race or ethnic group as of supreme importance” and “belief in the superiority of one's own ethnic group.”

If so, how does human relationship become ethnocentric and what can be done about it? Where does this deep-seated need to identify come from? What's holding it in place? Can we come upon this fundamental source of human conflict by creating a questioning environment – an active dialogue that brings a nonjudgmental awareness of this deep-seated conditioning to our attention as it happens in the moment?

Is there another deeper and more profound factor — one that allows us to create a potential for the brain to let go of its “drive to survive”? Understanding that at the core of instinctual survival we have a need to identify, can we put this demand into a temporary state of abeyance? Can our primary pattern for survival feel safe in this holding place, free of the usual provocations that keep the former, ethnocentric, conditioned patterns from repeating themselves?

The old brain's need for security is based on the freeze, fight or flight mechanism to protect itself from a perceived threat. If someone points a gun at us, then the threat is real and needs immediate attention. If however, someone is only holding up an image of a threat, or happens to look like someone of another ideological group that triggers a threatening feeling, then the threat is false and needs to be recognized and acknowledged as only an image. The image cannot hurt us as a gun can. Under certain image- -threatening situations, the old brain cannot tell the difference between real or supposed threats. It reacts to both fact and fantasy in the same way: fight or flee.

Hopefully, one is rational enough to be aware of this difference and will not react to a supposed threat without examining the reality of it. Unfortunately, many people have been conditioned for so long that they cannot be “rational,” cannot differentiate between the imagined versus the actual threat. Their conditioning is a reflexive response something akin to a doctor tapping our knee to see how quickly it jerks. The conditioned image of “the enemy” is usually equally firmly in place due to the constant reinforcement it has received over time.

Can an environment of self- understanding potentially change that deep-seated conditioning programmed into our brains?
We need first to see that this conditioning is not just behavioral and psychological, but also biological and physical — that it is genetic, ingrained in the physiology of the human brain for millennia.

What we are proposing is that this genetic structure for conflict, our being hardwired for war,” can be transformed by creating the right educational environment for intelligence to develop.

In order to free ourselves from our divisive conditioned state of mind, we need to realize one very important piece of the puzzle: at the primary level, knowledge has no place. Conditioned thinking has fragmented and hence separated the human race into opposing ideologies, but this is not a problem to be solved. Over and over, we have been trying ineffectively to solve the “problem” of conflict by finding a “solution.” In science and technology this problem-- solving process has a place. This is where knowledge has meaning for our physical survival. But in understanding what prevents peace, we are talking about what place it has in the psychological realm in changing behavior, in this case from one of violent reactions to one of peaceful behavior. Knowledge has a place at the secondary level in learning “conflict resolution skills,” and at the tertiary level in managing conflict when it has escalated beyond prevention or resolution. At the primary prevention level, however, knowledge has no place.

At the moment when the image of “the other” comes up in the brain, knowledge cannot solve it. As a matter of fact, it can only postpone properly addressing it, for when it is approached as a “problem,” then this means that sometime in the future it will be solved – through time. But psychologically there is no future. Chronologically yes – psychologically no. In other words, the conditioned image is always within one’s frame of reference, ready to react to any stimulus that evokes it, such as the image of one’s “enemy.” Any method or system of knowledge only postpones bringing the immediate sustained awareness that is necessary to “deactivate” this genetic database, this hardwired biologically programmed pattern that is at the root of human conflict.

Think of this biologically hardwired “primary program” as a hard drive in the primitive brain. One could also use the analogy of a car without a driver. It has the capacity to go forward, but without a driver, it can’t move at all. Now the software, the disk, is the driver. It represents the cultural ethnocentric conditioning. When “inserted” or “instilled” into the brain, it activates the hard drive or car and off it goes along the same road that it has traveled for eons.

By continuing to depend on identifying with the particular group or community that our old software has been “written” or conditioned into, it is basing our psychological survival needs on a really outdated program. In other words, the disk or software is corrupt. It’s maladapted, for it has not adapted to the present and correct situation, one that will really insure survival.

While trying to “bring about peace,” we continue to recreate conflict, simply because we are unaware of the deep-seated program that keeps fight and flight in place.

How have we conventionally tried to “solve the problems” of human conflict? Most of the attention and resources to this end are at the tertiary level in managing conflict. Very little is given to the secondary level of resolving the conflicts we have. Therefore the violence continues to happen. This is because we have not paid attention to the primary prevention level in this genetically and hence biologically based primary program and the ethnocentric software that continues to reactivate it in this maladaptive way. We have to some extent looked at the behavioral or psychological aspects, but rarely if ever have given attention to the foundation of it in the physiological makeup of the brain. So we go on trying to “solve the problem” of conflict through knowledge.

We continue to dwell in this mindset, that if we just had more knowledge about why we fight, we could stop fighting. But behavior can only be changed now, in the present moment.

Conventional academic approaches to peace only confuse and intimidate us and therefore postpone real insight into the causes as they are happening in the moment. For it is only in the moment that we can free ourselves of this conditioned ethnocentric mindset. In other words, we will never be able to end war and find perpetual peace at some time in the future, for psychologically there is no future. We need to understand what prevents peace now — and not “how” to bring it about. The “how to bring about peace” is based on illogic that got us into the conflict in the first place.

If we try to bring about peace, whose peace are we advocating as the one that will do it? Are we saying that “all paths lead to peace” and therefore we need to embrace all “paths of peace”? Aren’t these “paths,” these widely varying ideological survival expectations, the very thing that fragments the human race, dividing us into opposing parties and therefore creating conflict? If this is so, perhaps we need to take the “negative approach,” and through a process of elimination of what prevents peace, come upon peace.

Can we look at how we approach “solving the problem” of conflict conventionally so we can see if this is possibly the very thing that prevents it? Can we look at the multilevel academic approach to peace education that is supposed to lead us through this problem-solving process to the resolution of conflict? Can we look at what prevents peace through the eyes of academia, through its myriad academic interpretations – through anthropology, sociology, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, and so on and on, to find at some point “The Answer” to the “Problem” of conflict?

The various academic departments in universities involved in teaching peace education are trained to look through their own limited specialized academic areas of expertise and in only seeing that particular restricted viewpoint they fragment peace education into differing scholastic subdivisions. Academia then requires students to digest this scholarly fragmentation, each professor touting his or her own specialty as if it were the only one needed, or they combine their pedagogical efforts in a hodge-podge fashion and though this pooled effort confuse students even further.

Here are some examples of these basic tenets of conventional peace education college programs:

- **The Founding Premise of Peace and Conflict Studies:** War and other forms of violence, despite their omnipresence, can be mitigated and transformed through the application of knowledge.
- **The Nature of Violence and Its Causes:** As these are complex and multifaceted, students are expected to approach their studies from a number of interdisciplinary perspectives.
- **The Causes of War and the Causes of Peace:** An exploration of the entire conflict process associated with war from a variety of theoretical and methodological angles, including rationalist and behavioral models that examine the concept of war and why wars begin.

Can we question this deeply held belief that “the application of knowledge” or “studies from a number of interdisciplinary perspectives” or “a variety of theoretical and methodological angles, including rationalist and behavioral models” can bring an end to human conflict? We are proposing that they cannot, because their basic premise is incorrect. The “knowledge” or prejudice I have about you and that you have about me – and the divisive image this creates of “the other” – creates human conflict. This “knowledge” includes the images and attitudes that we have been indoctrinated into. As it is genetically based, it resides in the memory of all human beings.

How can “knowledge” put an end to the knowledge that is creating conflict? Do we need more knowledge to counter the information that is dividing us and creating conflict?

Please remember we are addressing the primary prevention level of conflict, understanding what prevents peace. At the secondary or tertiary level of conflict resolution or management, certain academic disciplines can bring clarity, but they do not, nor have they ever, stopped conflict that is knowledge-based at the primary prevention level. Since knowledge is comparative by nature, and comparisons create conflict through judgment and ideals, this approach has no place in the prevention of conflict.

The questions below are commonly asked in university peace education programs on “Social Justice.”

- **What is social justice? What are human rights? What is peace? What are the origins of these concepts and how have they been interpreted across time and place?**
- **What causes social injustice, violations of human rights, conflicts and wars? What are the consequences of these for individuals and communities?**
- **How can social injustice, violations of human rights and conflicts be prevented? What are the conditions that create justice, peace, and respect for human rights?**
- **What are the origins, strategies and aims of social movements seeking justice, peace and respect for human rights?**
- **What are the philosophical, cultural, religious and political underpinnings of traditions of nonviolence and ethical behavior?**

As prospective students look at this typical page from a university's peace or social justice program, they soon discover that they'll be required to answer the above questions. The university's required 36 units explores answers from a broad sampling of courses of various intellectual disciplines including anthropology, sociology, philosophy, political science, history, psychology, economics, and many more.

We can recognize an admirable search for effective peace and justice, but with such enormous questions, each having endless potential answers, how is it possible to succeed in selecting and mutually agreeing from such a myriad of choices?

What would it take to investigate these questions in the totality of what they mean? If it were even possible, how long would it take to find the answers to these incredibly complex questions? Wouldn't it take immense research in only one of these areas, such as "What are the religious underpinnings of traditions of nonviolence and ethical behavior?" to find the answers to these particular questions? There are thousands of religious traditions of nonviolence, every one of them saying that its belief system is dedicated to peace. How about cultural, philosophical or political traditions of nonviolence and ethical behavior? Many, many thousands of such traditions go back perhaps to the beginning of recorded history.

In the first group of questions above, asking for concept definitions and their origins, how can we discover and agree upon effective answers to all these highly complex questions? Many lifetimes of extensive research by hundreds of “experts” in these fields could provide some “theories” for possible solutions to these questions – which is what we have done – but to no avail. Finding useful answers is literally impossible. In the meantime, wars continue to rage as we continue to try, and continue to fail, to come up with effective answers to any one of these questions.

In checking the reference pages of each book on the theories of peace education, we can find literally hundreds of other titles. Each of those references in these authors' books most often contains hundreds more references. Exponentially, that can quickly climb to millions, considering that some of the references go back many years, some even centuries.

Thus we are caught in an endless labyrinth of thought, never finding any conclusive answers that address these questions in a way that actually bring about peace.

All these questions seem to do is postpone any immediate action to end conflict, when, in fact, conflict can be ended only in the moment. The moment is all there is.

This leads us to realize that we have for millennia been looking in the wrong direction, to thought as a means to resolve the conflict that unknowingly thought has itself created. In other words thought is not aware of what it is doing. It still thinks that the “problem” and its “solution” are “out there.”

In examining the view that thought is the answer to the problem of conflict, we now have a case for demonstrating that thought used in this way will only lead to more thought, that will lead to more thought, that will lead to more thought – ad infinitum – incessantly and in a frenzied and disordered, fragmentary manner. Whenever we approach peace in this way, our search grows more and more frenetic and anxious until it simply grows out of control.

This is especially true now that we have access to endless knowledge on the Internet, because we begin to see that this “problem solving” maze of thinking just isn’t working. Instead, it is a form of violence in itself.

Blindly we go on thinking that maybe we just haven't dug deep enough. So we keep researching endless theories of endless authorities, hoping that one day we will have enough "evidence" to "prove" our theories. But which evidence, which proof and for which theories? That's what got us into conflict in the first place – my theory versus your theory, my belief versus your belief – each trying to dominate the others to be recognized as "The Answer."

We have to see the illogicality of this. As we observe, we begin to see how the pursuit of peace is preventing the very peace we so strongly desire. Those trying valiantly to understand find themselves caught in definitions, explanations, hypotheses and beliefs (which, ironically, means “to act without sufficient evidence.”) As they attempt to navigate this maze of speculations to try to prove their theories, they have to conclude it still hasn’t worked. In a form of madness, incessantly trying the same or slightly different “cures,” they continuously repeat the same results – because they have never really addressed what prevents peace.

All this seems reminiscent of the preposterous and nonsensical Red Queen's race in Lewis Carroll's book *Through the Looking Glass*. This sequel to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, involves the Red Queen and Alice constantly running – but remaining in the same spot:

“Well, in our country,” says Alice, still panting a little, “you'd generally get to somewhere else – if you run very fast for a long time, as we've been doing.”

“A slow sort of country!” says the Queen. “Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place!”

If knowledge applied at the primary prevention level ironically prevents peace, how can we clearly state what place knowledge has – and what place it doesn't – in peace education? Can knowledge solve the problems knowledge has created?

It seems that we are living in a house of mirrors of contradicting and opposing self- images that knowledge has created that fragment and divide the human race into opposing ideologies hence creating conflict.

All animals have a hardwired survival instinct genetically built into the DNA, including humans. But the difference between humans and other animals is that humans can think, we can create images of the “enemy,” the adversary, leading to the destruction of millions and millions of us by us in our mistaken drive to survive.

But the tragic irony is that these images are illusions, they are not real, they are only images, and they are therefore only figments of our imagination.

They have been made up at some point. Any nationality, religion, culture was created by thought driven by the biological brain in it's drive to survive, it's need to find security in a particular group, tribe, clan. But there is no real security in thought, in images. We are deceived by them, misled into believing that they are real and that they will protect us. All they do is fragment the human race into opposing ethnocentric arrogances, each competing for dominance, power and control. These images are extremely dangerous for they are the basis of war when it comes to defending them.

If we were not conditioned into these images of who we think we are and whom we think others are can we create an enemy and hence create war? Yet these images continue to exist due to the biological instinct for survival. Are they real or just imagined? Are they necessary or are they invented to protect us?

The primitive biological brain is the source of the supposed conflict, instantaneously preceded in a domino effect by the image triggering fear then triggering the fight or flight system. There is no need for thought to enter here to remedy this situation, to find a solution, an answer to this “problem.”

Thought is necessary to convey this reaction through words but it's not the process that corrects the conditioned state of mind reacting in that moment. The words come from the experiencing, from the actual fact of the immediate awareness of the conditioned reaction. But the words are not the thing, the description is not the described, the explanation or examples are only words, abstractions that too often creating a lofty reality that can appeal to our intellect, to our need to have another answer or solution to solve the problem of human conflict.

Knowledge, and its continual pursuit, only postpones immediate insight in the moment that is capable of dispelling the divisiveness of prejudicial conditioned thinking.

Children are free of most prejudicial conditioned thinking when they are young. But they do have a basis for this conditioning in what can be called a “primary program,” that has been established genetically in the brain for the assurance of having one’s physical survival needs met. It has been called “social stratification,” in that a child is biologically conditioned to identify with one group over another to be assured of having their physical needs safely met.

Over tens of thousands of years, this identity structure has been built up in us through the reinforcement of our need to survive, thus creating a genetic or inherited basis for it. Because it is based on instinct, this primitive program holds a strong natural impulse, an automatic and involuntary reflex when aroused or challenged.

In contemporary studies of the influence of genetics and hereditary on behavior, psychologists include Instinct Theory, which asserts that all our behavior and motivation stem from biological, genetic programming. As each species is hardwired with the same motivations, the strongest program being survival, our actions all stem from our ancient instincts. Via natural selection, individuals with even a slight tendency to adapt their social behaviors were the “fittest,” usually surviving longer and being more successful in passing their genes along to future generations.

“Even though these tendencies may not enhance our fitness in today’s world, cons spent in harsher environments have left us genetically predisposed to perform certain social behaviors when situational cues call forth ancient instincts.”

What are these “social behaviors” that call forth ancient instincts? Aren’t they a process of “natural selection” that ensures our survival? And how is our survival ensured? Is it a “primary” biological or genetic program that says it will provide safety in the group, provide physical security if we identify and conform to certain tribal ideologies?

Now the essential question arises. Is it pure instinct that motivates us to survive in this way, meaning it's no one's fault when conflict results from this biological program? If so, it's therefore not a moral concern, for in this biological, genetic view there is no good or bad behavior — just conditioned behavior that is instinctually programmed into us for our survival.

If this is true, are we condemned to be controlled by this obsolete program and hence be at war with each other endlessly? Some call this “social Darwinism,” meaning that we are biologically caught in an evolutionary time warp that will take millions of years to bring to an end. Or can this dilemma be ended instantaneously?

Conditioned, ethnocentric, divisive thinking is genetically in place to ensure our physical survival – yet ironically, it seems now to be the very thing that is threatening our survival. So is our current task to address this underlying, old- -brain, genetic disposition to survive that is now threatening the survival of the human race? Can we understand that “primary program” and free ourselves from its effect?

Firstly, what is sustaining that primary program? Let's use again the analogy that this primary program is a hard drive, like a car, but without a driver to tell it what to do. The driver, or the disk or software that drives the car, tells it where to go and what to do. It reinforces the "ethnocentric attitudes" that have for thousands of years mistakenly tried to "ensure" our survival. Is it possible to be free of this programmed behavior?

What's being suggested is that it can end in a nanosecond, without time, if we approach this condition with the correct perspective - sustained awareness of how thought controlled by the primitive biological brain has created and sustained this conflict. We have rarely questioned our ongoing notion that thought carried this biological program on and that through knowledge we can free ourselves from its destructive effects that knowledge has created. We have for millennia approached ending conflict through knowledge, hence through time psychologically. Unwittingly yet obligingly, time has marched on, through war after war, conflict after conflict.

We are again challenging this notion that knowledge, at the primary prevention level, can alleviate the suffering caused by human conflict. Instead we are asking for thought to be “proprioceptive,” which means that thought needs to be aware of itself, since it’s not aware of its own background or participation. And that’s the dilemma. Generally thought makes understanding conflict a “problem” and then thought says the answer to it is “out there.” In this manner, thought thus projects away from us the responsibility for understanding conflict created by conditioned thinking. As it is instinctual, we are generally unaware of this process.

How paradoxical that in the process of using thought to try to solve our social problems created by thought we are actually causing continual conflict. Thought, being driven by this erroneous survival strategy, doesn't want to see what it is doing because that would upset eons of conditioning.

Since this primary survival strategy has been in operation for so long and seemingly has guaranteed our survival, then we would naturally ask, “Why should that be changed?” So we defend against seeing what it’s doing, creating an apparent “comfort zone” from the assumed security emanating from the conformity to the tribal community. Any challenge to this is seen as a threat to security. We have great resistance, for example, to questioning our society’s conditioned viewpoints. It also feels uncomfortable looking at oneself since thought, and the seeming security it creates, has established an endorphin comfort zone, protecting us from feeling insecure. We certainly don’t want to feel uncomfortable.

What this maladjusted genetic instinct drives us to do is to acquire what it thinks is necessary for our own independent need to survive being the unrelenting acquisition and expansion of worldwide territories and profitable possessions from others who themselves are also ironically tenaciously seeking what they deem is necessary for their own survival.

What has been created in this distorted drive to survive is an extremely abnormal craving for anything valued that would allow for the continuous expansion of the individual ethnic group over all else, to compete obsessively to gain these necessities to sustain the continued existence of one's group over others. Thus we see nations invading each other in this reactionary and primitive determination, the strongest martial force of any nation state dominating others to get what it deems necessary for its continued existence. This enviously creates a financially feasible war in the name of "economic prosperity". This obsessively driven primitive survival for the individual group over all others is destroying us all, paradoxically in the name of survival.

To use an analogy, we humans are much like ants, fighting for gain, promoting the colony's (our tribe, our nation's) survival. Ants are hardwired to battle, to monopolize food resources, to protect their nest, to gain or protect territory or to stop other insects from stealing their food. How much are ants and humans alike?

So what do we do? Surprisingly it is not “doing” as we know it — it is an “undoing.” Undoing means understanding what prevents peace, and by a process of elimination, freeing ourselves from the confines of this unnecessary conditioned thinking and all the ideological belief systems that keep us bound to it. It’s as though we had each been stuffed into a glass jar with the lid screwed on tight, so that as we grew, we suffocated. As we approached adulthood, our lids were screwed on even tighter, preventing our own lives from flourishing. When this happened, we died because there was no air, no nourishment, and like dying plants, we had nothing to help us grow and thrive. So where do we start?

We need to start with young people, because children are fresh and have not yet been encapsulated in the prisons of their thinking even though they, like all of us, are potentially imprisoned by the primitive biological brain. Not just thinking, but also feeling dies inside those jars whose lids are screwed tight. Hence life cannot flower. For most adults it's too late because we intellectualize all this, creating elaborate and complicated explanations. We cannot see through the miasma of this confinement of our thinking about thinking incessantly. Like a Chinese Finger Puzzle, adults are caught in this no-win dilemma.

Even though we are victims of this biological malfunction, we are responsible for understanding its implications and educating our children of its consequences, both individually and socially. We need to respect our children's innate ability to be intelligent, support them to observe the differences between an image and reality, let them truly be aware when an outmoded survival program has mistakenly been conditioned into their brains. We need to encourage them to have an inquiring mind that invites dialogue without judgment.

How do we present the importance of understanding conditioned thinking? In what context can it be openly explored? And in what setting can it be observed? The keys to these questions is the context of bullying – from the playground to the battlefield.

Bullying is a behavior everyone can relate to. Discussing it can be a practical, relevant, hands- -on way to explore conditioned thinking that is at the root of human conflict. Some people may think that bullying is just a process of growing up, like the notions when we were young that “boys will be boys,” and that you should just learn how to fight the bully. But exploring bullying provides a more profound means to explore the entire underlying structure of conflict, the nature and structure of conditioned thinking.

The compulsion to bully is a biologically and genetically based instinct built into us for survival, to protect us from a person or group we believe is a threat to us. We therefore see this prejudicial bullying as paradoxically necessary for our survival, survival of the fittest.

Also, anyone within the group who seems weak becomes a threat to the survival of the group and is perceived as someone who needs to be eliminated, or bullied out of the group. We shun, intimidate, bully, all in the misguided name of survival. What will free us from this destructive compulsion of the survival of the fittest? As we have seen it's not knowledge that will free us, but rather seeing the actual movement of this compulsion within ourselves in the way we've been conditioned to think and act in this divisive prejudicial way.

Knowledge, motivated by the primitive biological brain, is prejudice. The prejudicial image I have been conditioned to think about you and the prejudicial image you have been conditioned to think about me is what separates us and creates conflict.

It's not who the enemy is, but how it is created - born in the brain. Understanding this we cannot blame the "other" for the "other" is a conditioned image of whom we have been taught is our enemy, when in reality the "enemy" emanates instinctively from the primary primitive brain in us all. Therefore we need to look at this phenomenon in each one of us as the biological source of conflict and not project it out on the "enemy" we have been programmed to think is a threat to us.

Conflict created by this biological bullying system is no one's fault - it is not a "personal moral shortcoming" - it's not my fault or your fault - it's the fault in the brain's system, its malfunctioning primitive biological make up that is not working correctly.

It can be called a systemic defect in that the human brain is defective, operating on an archaic program driven to survive that is unaware its causing conflict. It's also like a collective virus for it affects the whole human race because we are born with this "fault" in our brains, a primitive defect that is corrupt, contaminated. This survival mechanism thinks it's doing the right thing. It just doesn't understand that it is misguided, that it's not working to guarantee our survival any longer.

What is of upmost importance is to see that conflict created by prejudicial conditioned thinking emanating from the primitive biological brain is the same in all human beings.

In other words - conflict is conflict.

It is essentially the same in everyone since the human brain is basically the same structurally. It operates anatomically the same for everyone. The content may be different in each one but since the human brain is structurally alike in all human beings conflict created by conditioned thinking happens in the same way to us all.

Self-understanding is understanding the whole human race, for we are the world and the world is us. We can look at the basic anatomical structure in all our brains collectively seeing the similarity in each. In this holistic perspective we are looking together. Then we can look without blame, without condemnation, without attack.

This fundamental maladaptive drive to survive has been going on since humans started their journey on this earth, trying to stay alive in world that was harsh and threatening. Humans have been at war with themselves in this way since the start, having biologically inherited a brain with an inborn hard drive that is driving the human race to its destruction.

The innate human faculty that can rectify conditioned thinking is called “proprioceptive learning.” It is noncumulative learning as opposed to knowledge, which is accumulative learning, the gathering and analysis of information to arrive at a certain intellectual theory or conclusion, to create a solution to the problems created by the effects of this conditioning.

Proprioceptive learning is the state of non-cumulative observation that sees conditioned thinking without judgment, without trying to change it.

Proprioceptive learning is an innate capacity for psychological self-correction. This faculty of intelligence is self-operating in that it sees what is unhealthy in the thinking process and in the moment of intelligent awareness it nullifies the effect of the conditioned thinking, thus making it ineffective.

One doesn't need to do anything, for proprioceptive learning is self-corrective in and of itself. But in order for proprioceptive learning to come into effect, the education of the young person has to address the nature and structure of conditioned thinking emanating from the primitive biological brain that is preventing this capacity from performing its innate capacity.

As Quantum Physicist Dr. David Bohm states, “*We could say that practically all the problems of the human race are due to the fact that thought is not proprioceptive. Thought is constantly creating problems that way and then trying to solve them. But as it tries to solve them, it makes it worse because it doesn’t notice that it’s creating them, and the more it thinks the more problems it creates, because it’s not proprioceptive of what it’s doing.*”

“One gives close attention to all that is happening in conjunction with the actual activity of thought, which is the underlying source of the general disorder. One does this without choice, without criticism, without acceptance or rejection of what is going on. And all of this takes place along with reflections on the meaning of what one is learning about the activity of thought.”

Babies don't like those who are different - UBC psychologist "shocked" by results

Babies, just like adults, may have a mean streak, says a new study out of the University of British Columbia Centre for Infant Cognition.

Psychology professor and lead author Kiley Hamlin found infants who were as young as nine months old favored those who brought harm to people who were different than themselves.

She said adults, similarly, tend to like people who harm individuals who are different.

"We wanted to see if we could tell whether infants had that same kind of judgment," said Hamlin in an interview.

"It was shocking how robust the results were."

The study, published in the journal *Psychological Science*, looked at two groups of infants aged nine months and 14 months and the food they preferred – green beans or graham crackers.

The infants watched a puppet show, with two puppets demonstrating a like for green beans or graham crackers. More puppets then joined the production, demonstrating nice, neutral or mean behavior towards the original two puppets.

The study showed that the babies later preferred the puppets who harmed the puppet with the opposite food preferences.

One baby even gave a kiss to the harmful puppet.

The study said the desire to treat badly those with differences was more widespread in the age group of 14-month-old infants, suggesting an increase in bias with age.

Hamlin said almost all of the babies tested acted the same, which was an unexpected result.

“(Babies) like nice puppets really strongly. That’s in line with our intuition. Other studies have shown they like punishers if somebody was bad before, but that’s also in line with our intuitions.

“If someone’s bad they might deserve punishment. This one is not in line with our intuitions.”

Are babies born bullies? UBC study shows infants learn social stratification as early as nine months

Babies today are all about blankies, bottles and ... bullying?

A new University of British Columbia study done by the Centre for Infant Cognition suggests naptime may be the new frontier in the war on bullying.

Bullied children may bring exclusion on themselves with gene-linked behavior, study says

The episodes of bullying that mar early grade school years for hundreds of children may be a partial result of the victim's DNA, a new study suggested Wednesday.

The behaviors that most often lead to exclusion and victimization in the classroom or schoolyard have their roots in a student's genes, the study said, arguing that children's genetic makeup has a direct impact on the quality of the interactions they enjoy with their peers.

The findings were published on the website of the journal *Child Development*.

Michel Boivin, lead researcher and psychology professor at Laval University, said a child's genes will often dictate the way they act,

which will in turn shape their experiences both in and out of the classroom.

In experiments conducted by UBC psychology professor Kiley Hamlin, babies aged nine to 14 months were found to take pleasure in the bullying of individuals they saw as different from themselves.

The study, in a terrifying preview of the social minefield that is the high school cafeteria, offered the infants a choice between a snack of graham crackers or green beans. The children were then shown a video of two puppets. In the video, one puppet favored the same snack as the child while the other puppet made a food faux pas by choosing the snack the child had passed on. The children, when asked which of the puppets was their favorite, selected the puppet with similar tastes.

The experiment takes a slightly sinister turn when the children are shown videos of the puppets bullying each other. Not only did the children not mind when their favorite puppet picked on the puppet who chose differently from them, they also showed favoritism to new puppets who bullied the puppet that liked different snacks from the infant.

While the study's findings could inform future anti-bullying strategies, for now they are a mere chilling peek-a-boo into the world of baby bullies, and how infants learn to make their way in the world.

[Via the Vancouver Province]

Atrium Society
Brave New Child Peace Museum
<http://www.bravenewchild.org>



PEACE – WHAT PREVENTS IT? UNDERSTANDING THE CONDITIONED MIND

“It’s not who the enemy is, but how it is created – born in the brain. Understanding this we cannot blame the “other” for the “other” is a conditioned image of who we have been taught is our enemy, when in reality the “enemy” emanates instinctively from the primary primitive brain in us all.”

Three Levels of Conflict Resolution

Too often, understanding human conflict has been conventionally addressed in a remedial, reactive way, at what we call the secondary level of “resolution” — through therapeutic or moralistic means, for example in the case of individual conflict, or through diplomatic or political intervention, as in the case of social conflict. Or we have addressed human conflict at the tertiary level of managing it, through judicial or military intervention. These remedial, reactive approaches attempt to *fix* something that’s already happened. They

do not address conflict at the primary prevention level, which involves understanding and avoiding the fundamental factors that create conflict because of how we have been conditioned to act. They are therefore ineffective because they do not *prevent* conflict from happening in the first place.

The Foundation of Conflict

Realizing that what is necessary for the prevention of conflict at this level, one has to go beyond the surface of conditioned thinking to explore the foundation of the conflict created. This leads to the discovery that we humans are essentially hardwired for war, that we are, by design, rooted in the genetically programmed physical makeup of our brain, which gives rise to the fight-or-flight survival mechanism.

What triggers this biological hardwired automatic survival reaction is the instinctive fear of who and what we think is a threat to “our” survival. In the case of war, it is the image of “the enemy,” that ethnocentric ideological nemesis – “them” – that is in competition with “us” for our survival. The conditioned image of “the enemy” is solidly in place due to the constant reinforcement it has received over time. This image creates what you could call a biological self-defense blueprint, like a computer database, that over time has created an inborn or inherited pattern in the brain’s physical structure. This pattern has been created in order for us to feel protected and to therefore ensure our survival. It acts automatically, on its own, without our consciously doing it. It acts like a robot, instinctively, to ensure its existence, so that we feel secure deep inside us. We have inherited this tendency at birth for what we mistakenly believe will help us to survive. Our brain is a puppet that has someone else pulling the strings. Rather than guaranteeing our continued existence, it actually threatens it.

Our Primitive Brain

The information that has been put into our brain is like a software program full of information about the culture you live in, telling you what to do, how to act and who might be your so-called enemy. It is like a corrupt computer program that creates a deadly virus. It’s like a car telling its driver where to go and doesn’t see that it’s heading off a cliff. When confronted by a potential conflict due to what appears to be a threat, our primitive biological brain automatically prepares for combat. Off we go, on the same road to war we’ve been on since time immemorial — inherited from generations of people before us.

That computer program keeps in control of our brain because we are used to it being there, even though it doesn’t work for our survival any longer. It is maladapted — not able to adjust to what is necessary. It doesn’t work correctly. And being maladaptive it continues to activate inappropriately the old primitive brain to protect us when that is not necessary. This happens because it cannot tell the difference between a real threat and a supposed one. It reacts to the image of a threat that the program has been designed to say is real.

Knowing this then, we can see that conflict created by this biological genetic program is no one's fault – it is not a “personal moral shortcoming” – it's not my fault or your fault – it's the fault in the brain's system, its malfunctioning primitive biological makeup, that isn't working correctly. The human brain operates defectively, operating on an archaic program driven to survive, while not being aware that it's causing conflict. Thinking it's doing the right thing; this survival mechanism doesn't understand that it's not working to guarantee our survival. It is a collective virus, for it affects the whole human race because we are all born with this “fault” in our brains. Being so, it is our responsibility to look at it, to pay attention to it as it arises in the moment and to not react out of it. If we can do this, then it has no place to go, and our collective survival becomes more reachable.

We Are the World

What is of utmost importance is to see that conflict created by conditioned thinking emanating from the biological brain is the same in all human beings. It is essentially the same in everyone since the human brain is basically structurally identical in all of us. It works alike for everyone. The content may be different in each one, but the brain is anatomically equal in all human beings; thus, what happens to me happens to us all. Self-understanding is understanding the whole human race, for we are the world, and the world is us.

This fundamental maladaptive drive to survive has been going on since humans started their journey on planet Earth, trying to stay alive in a harsh and threatening world. Humans have always been at war with ourselves in this way, having biologically inherited a brain with an inborn hard drive that is driving the human race to its destruction. As an old saying goes, “We have met the enemy, and he is us.” Technologically and scientifically, we have advanced at great lengths, but psychologically we are still in the cave of ignorance.

Is it possible that a genetically generated, misplaced biological drive for survival incites people to conflict? Is it possible that survival is a faulty instinctual compulsion? Are we being controlled by this genetically generated, misplaced biological drive for survival, to the extent that no amount of knowledge can free us from it? In fact, is knowledge the cause of the conflict rather than the cure? If so, what are the factors that create and sustain this conflict? Are they based on this misdirected biological and instinctual necessity for survival that is paradoxically preventing it?

If we are basing each action on instincts that created the original conflict, in trying thereby to bring about peace, do we only continue to escalate conflict? Have we created opposing ethnocentric ideologies based on the conditioned notion that we have to psychologically identify with a group in order to have peace and security? Although at one time in our evolutionary history this may have worked, is it now preventing physical security due to the extensive divisiveness of these tribal ideologies? Does this mean that we can't have culture — the arts, music, and literature of a civilization that can demonstrate the wonderful diversity of the human race — which we so appreciate for its differences? Or is it only when it becomes what we call “ethnocentric” that we have trouble?

If so, how does human relationship become ethnocentric and what can be done about it? Where does this deep-seated need to identify come from? What's holding it in place? Can we come upon this fundamental source of human conflict by creating a questioning environment — an active dialogue that brings a nonjudgmental awareness of this deep-seated conditioning to our attention as it happens in the moment? Understanding that at the core of instinctual survival, we have a need to identify, can we put this demand into a temporary state of abeyance? Can our primary pattern for survival feel safe in this holding place, free of the usual provocations that keep the former, ethnocentric, conditioned patterns from repeating themselves?

A Threat: Is It Real or Simply Perceived as Real?

The old brain's need for security is based on the freeze, fight or flight mechanism to protect itself from a perceived threat. If someone points a gun at us, then the threat is real and needs immediate attention. If, however, someone is only holding up an image of a threat or happens to look like someone of another ideological group that triggers a threatening feeling, then the threat is false and needs to be recognized and acknowledged as only an image. The image cannot hurt us as a gun can. Under certain image-threatening situations, the old brain cannot tell the difference between real or supposed threats. It reacts to both fact and fantasy in the same way: fight or flee.

Hopefully, one is rational enough to be aware of this difference and will not react to a supposed threat without examining the reality of it. Unfortunately, many people have been conditioned for so long that they cannot be "rational," cannot differentiate between the imagined versus the actual threat. Their conditioning is a reflexive response something akin to a doctor tapping our knee to see how quickly it jerks. The conditioned image of "the enemy" is usually firmly in place due to the constant reinforcement it has received over time.

How can an environment of self-understanding potentially change that deep-seated conditioning programmed into our brains? We need first to see that this conditioning is not just behavioral and psychological, but also biological and physical — that it is genetic, ingrained in the physiology of the human brain for millennia. What we are proposing is that this genetic structure for conflict, our being hardwired for war, can be transformed by creating the right educational environment for intelligence to develop.

In order to free ourselves from our divisive conditioned state of mind, we need to realize one very important piece of the puzzle: at the primary level, knowledge has no place. Conditioned thinking has fragmented and hence separated the human race into opposing ideologies, but this is not a problem to be solved. Over and over, we have been trying ineffectively to solve the "problem" of conflict by finding a "solution." In science and technology this problem-solving process has a place. This is where knowledge has meaning for our physical survival. But in understanding what prevents peace, we are talking about what place it has in the psychological realm in changing behavior, in this case from one of violent actions and reactions to one of peaceful conduct. Knowledge has a place at the secondary level in learning "conflict resolution

skills,” and at the tertiary level in managing conflict when it has escalated beyond prevention or resolution. At the primary prevention level, however, knowledge has no place.

Ethnocentrism

At the moment when the image of “the other” comes up in the brain, knowledge cannot solve it. As a matter of fact, it can only postpone properly addressing it, for when it is approached as a “problem,” then this means that sometime in the future it will be solved — through time. But psychologically there is no future. Chronologically yes — psychologically no. In other words, the conditioned image is always within one’s frame of reference, ready to react to any stimulus that evokes it, such as the image of one’s “enemy.” Any method or system of knowledge only postpones bringing the immediate sustained awareness that is necessary to “deactivate” this genetic database, this hardwired biologically programmed pattern that is at the root of human conflict.

Think of this biologically hardwired “primary program” as a hard drive in the primitive brain. One could also use the analogy of a car without a driver. It has the capacity to go forward, but without a driver, it can’t move at all. Now the software, the disk, is the driver. It represents the cultural ethnocentric conditioning. When “inserted” or “instilled” into the brain, it activates the hard drive or car and off it goes along the same road that it has traveled for eons. By continuing to depend on identifying with the particular group or community that our old software has been “written” or conditioned into, it is basing our psychological survival needs on a really outdated program. In other words, the disk or software is corrupt. It’s maladapted, for it has not adapted to the present and correct situation, one that will really insure survival.

At one time in our evolution, this old program could guarantee our physical survival, but now it is obsolete and threatening our physical security. Originally, it was limited by the circumstances it needed to ensure survival. With fewer people, it did not present a significant problem as it adapted and was confined by those particular sociological times. But as the human race grew, it became a problem trying to ensure the survival of all the groups that were now confronting each other, competing for the limited resources available. Each group was driven to have its own group survive over others. This can lead to what is called “ethnocentrism.” The Oxford English Dictionary defines ethnocentrism as “regarding one's own race or ethnic group as of supreme importance” and “belief in the superiority of one's own ethnic group.” While trying to “bring about peace,” we continue to recreate conflict, simply because we are unaware of the deep-seated program that keeps fight and flight in place.

As we questioned before, how have we conventionally tried to “solve the problems” of human conflict? Most of the attention and resources to this end are at the tertiary level in managing conflict. Very little is given to the secondary level of resolving the conflicts we have, therefore the violence continues to happen. This is because we have not paid attention to the primary prevention level in this genetically and hence biologically based primary program and the ethnocentric software that continues to reactivate it in this maladaptive way. We have to some extent looked at the behavioral or psychological aspects, but rarely if ever have given attention

to the foundation of it in the physiological makeup of the brain. So, we go on trying to “solve the problem” of conflict through knowledge. We continue to dwell in this mindset —that if we just had more knowledge about why we fight, we could stop fighting. But behavior can only be changed now, in the present moment.

This proposal affirms that conventional academic approaches to peace only confuse and intimidate us and therefore postpone real insight into the causes as they are happening in the moment. For it is only in the moment that we can free ourselves of this conditioned ethnocentric mindset. In other words, we will never be able to end war and find perpetual peace at some time in the future, for psychologically there is no future. It is an illusion. We need to understand what prevents peace now — and not “how” to bring it about. The “how to bring about peace” is based on conventional illogic that got us into the conflict in the first place.

Please remember we are addressing the primary prevention level of conflict, understanding what *prevents* peace. At the secondary or tertiary level of conflict resolution or management, certain academic disciplines can bring clarity, but they do not, nor have they ever, stopped conflict that is knowledge-based at the primary prevention level. Since knowledge is comparative by nature, and comparisons create conflict through judgment and ideals, this approach has no place in the prevention of conflict.

It is this automatic built in genetically hardwired instinct for survival that comes into play when our existence, real or supposed, is threatened. There is also the image we have of ourselves, the sense of self, of one’s identity, one’s conditioned view we have gained over time through the cultural and societal inculcation that occurs as we are being fit to belong to whatever tribe, clan, ethnic group we were born into. And this image of self again is the source of conflict when coming up against those who are not of that same self-image. It seems that we are living in a house of mirrors of contradicting and opposing self-images that fragment and divide the human race into opposing ideologies, hence creating conflict.

All animals have a hardwired survival instinct genetically built into the DNA, including humans. But the difference between humans and other animals is that humans can think, we can create images of the “enemy,” the adversary, leading to the destruction of millions and millions of us by us in our mistaken drive to survive. But the tragic irony is that these images are illusions, they are not real, they are only images, and they are therefore only figments of our imagination. They have been made up at some point. Any nationality, religion, culture was created by thought driven by the biological brain in its drive to survive, it’s needed to find security in a particular group, tribe, clan. But there is no real security in thought, in images. We are deceived by them, misled into believing that they are real and that they will protect us. All they do is fragment the human race into opposing ethnocentric arrogances, each competing for dominance, power and control. These images are extremely dangerous for they are the basis of war when it comes to defending them.

I remember a young friend years ago who escaped from Bosnia just as the war started. The night before the war broke out, she was having a party with her friends who were all different

ethnic representations of the groups there at the time. The next day when the war broke out, she was perceived as the “enemy,” being of that minority that was conceived as a threat, was attacked by the very friends the night before she was partying with. She barely escaped with her life. These images caused this separation, this division and violence. If we were not conditioned into these images of who we think we are and who we think others are can we create an enemy and hence create war?

These realizations made me ask the question, *“Does this happen to everyone? Is this what drives people to kill those they think are a threat to their lives?”* I realized then that the primitive biological brain was the source of the supposed conflict, instantaneously preceded in a domino effect by the image triggering fear then triggering the fight or flight system. I realized that there was no need for thought to enter here to remedy this situation, to find a solution, an answer to this “problem.”

Thought was necessary, as I am doing here, to convey this reaction through words but it is not the process that corrects the conditioned state of mind reacting in that moment. The words come from the experiencing, from the actual fact of the immediate awareness of the conditioned reaction. But the words are not the thing, the description is not the described, the explanation or examples are only words, abstractions that too often creating a lofty reality that can appeal to our intellect, to our need to have another answer or solution to solve the problem of human conflict.

I also understood in that moment that this freedom from conditioned thinking was what we are all looking for. Ironically, we hadn’t been able to “find it” because we were too busy stepping outside the moment, looking for it elsewhere, seeking solutions to the problems of conflict in knowledge, in methods, in ways, in definitions, in explanations. The essential question is: Can we bring insight to this maladaptive means of survival and therefore be free of this self-destructive genetic inheritance or *“will we succumb to instincts we can’t transcend?”*

This is really quite simple when we think of children. They are free of most social conditioning that creates these psychological barriers. But they do have a potential for this conditioning in what can be called a “primary program,” that has been established genetically in the brain for the assurance of having one’s physical survival needs met. It has been called “social stratification,” in that a child is biologically conditioned to identify with one group over another to be assured of having their physical needs safely met. Over tens of thousands of years, this identity program has been built up in us through the reinforcement of our need to survive, thus creating a genetic or inherited basis for it. To ensure this primary program’s survival, it is attached to the primitive instinct of the fight or flight mechanism in the limbic system of the brain. Because it is based on instinct, this primitive program holds a strong natural impulse, an automatic and involuntary reflex when aroused or challenged.

In contemporary studies of the influence of genetics and hereditary on behavior, psychologists include Instinct Theory, which asserts that all our behavior and motivation stem from biological, genetic programming. As each species is hardwired with the same motivations — the strongest

program being survival — our actions all stem from our ancient instincts. Via natural selection, individuals with even a slight tendency to adapt their social behaviors were the "fittest," usually surviving longer and being more successful in passing their genes along to future generations. Even though these tendencies may not enhance our fitness in today's world, eons spent in harsher environments have left us genetically predisposed to perform certain social behaviors when situational cues call forth ancient instincts.

What are these "social behaviors" that call forth ancient instincts? Aren't they a process of "natural selection" that ensures our survival? And how is our survival ensured? Is it a "primary" biological or genetic program that says it will provide safety in the group, provide physical security if we identify and conform to certain tribal ideologies? Now the essential question arises; is it pure instinct that motivates us to survive in this way — meaning it's no one's fault when conflict results from this biological program? If so, it's therefore not a moral concern, for in this biological, genetic view, there is no good or bad behavior — just conditioned behavior that is instinctually programmed into us for our survival. If this is true, are we condemned to be controlled by this obsolete program and hence be at war with each other endlessly? Some call this "social Darwinism," meaning that we are biologically caught in an evolutionary time warp that will take millions of years to bring to an end. Or can this dilemma be ended instantaneously?

Freeing Ourselves via Proprioception

To summarize this paradox: conditioned, ethnocentric, divisive thinking is genetically in place to ensure our physical survival — yet ironically, it seems now to be the very thing that is threatening our survival. So is our current task to address this underlying, old-brain, genetic disposition to survive that is now threatening the survival of the human race? Must we — and can we — get to that "primary program" and free ourselves from its effect?

Firstly, what is sustaining that primary program? Let's use again the analogy that this primary program is a hard drive, like a car, but without a driver to tell it what to do. The driver, or the disk or software that drives the car, tells it where to go and what to do. It reinforces the "ethnocentric attitudes" that have for thousands of years mistakenly tried to "ensure" our survival. Is it possible to be free of this biologically programmed behavior?

What's being suggested is that it can end in a nanosecond, without time, if we approach this condition with the correct perspective — sustained awareness of how thought has created and sustained this conflict emanating from the primitive biological brain. We have rarely questioned our ongoing notion that thought created this and that through knowledge we can free ourselves from its destructive effects. We have for millennia approached ending conflict through knowledge, hence through time psychologically. Unwittingly yet obligingly, time has marched on, through war after war, conflict after conflict.

Now as it has been said before, we are challenging this notion that knowledge — at the primary prevention level — can alleviate the suffering caused by human conflict. We are asking for

thought to be “proprioceptive,” which means that thought needs to be aware of itself, since it’s not aware of its own background or participation. And that’s the dilemma. Generally thought makes understanding conflict a “problem” and then thought says the answer or solution to it is “out there.” In this manner, thought thus projects away from us the responsibility for understanding conflict created by this conditioned thinking. As it is instinctual, we are truly unaware of this process.

How inappropriate, as we have said, that in the process of using thought to try to solve our social problems, we actually cause continual conflict due to the paradox of our maladjusted, biologically based program trying to ensure our survival in this erroneous, illogical way. It doesn’t want to see what it is doing because that would upset eons of conditioning. Since this primary program has been in operation for so long and seemingly has guaranteed our survival, then it would naturally ask, “Why should that be changed?” So, it defends against seeing what it’s doing, creating an apparent “comfort zone” from the assumed security emanating from the conformity to the community. Any challenge to this is seen as a threat to security. We have great resistance, for example, to questioning our community’s knowledge. It also feels uncomfortable with looking at itself, since thought, and the seeming security it creates, has established an endorphin comfort zone, protecting us from feeling insecure. We certainly don’t want to feel uncomfortable.

What this maladjusted genetic instinct drives us to do is to acquire what it thinks is necessary for our own independent need to survive being the unrelenting acquisition and expansion of worldwide territories and profitable possessions from others who themselves are also ironically tenaciously seeking what they deem is necessary for their own survival. What has been created in this distorted drive to survive is an extremely abnormal craving for anything valued that would allow for the continuous expansion of the individual ethnic group over all else, to compete obsessively to gain these necessities to sustain the continued existence of one’s group over others. Thus, we see nations invading each other in this reactionary and primitive determination, the strongest martial force of any nation state dominating others to get what it deems necessary for its continued existence. This enviably creates a financially feasible war in the name of “economic prosperity”. This obsessively driven primitive survival for the individual group over all others is destroying us all, paradoxically in the name of survival.

So, what do we do? Surprisingly, it is not “doing” as we know it — it is an “undoing.” Undoing means understanding what *prevents* peace, and by a process of elimination, freeing ourselves from the confines of this unnecessary conditioned thinking and all the ideological belief systems that keep us bound to it. It’s as though we had each been stuffed into a glass jar with the lid screwed on tight, so that as we grew, we suffocated. As we approached adulthood, our lids were screwed on even tighter, preventing our own lives from flourishing. When this happened, we died because there was no air, no nourishment, and like dying plants, we had nothing to help us grow and thrive. So where do we start?

We start with young people, because children are fresh and have not yet been encapsulated in the prisons of their thinking. Not just thinking, but also feeling dies inside those jars whose lids

are screwed tight. Hence life cannot flower. For most adults it's too late because we intellectualize all this, creating elaborate and complicated explanations. We cannot see through the miasma of this confinement of our thinking about thinking incessantly. Like a Chinese Finger Puzzle, adults are caught in this no-win dilemma.

How do we present the importance of understanding conditioned thinking? In what context can it be openly explored? And in what setting can it be observed? The keys to these questions are the context of bullying — from the playground to the battlefield. Bullying is a behavior everyone can relate to. Discussing it can be a practical, relevant, hands-on way to explore conditioned thinking that is at the root of human conflict. Some people may think that bullying is just a process of growing up, like the notion of when we were young that “boys will be boys,” and that you should just learn how to fight the bully. But exploring bullying can provide a more profound means to explore the entire underlying structure of conflict — the nature and structure of conditioned thinking. The entire curriculum of the Atrium Society — Youth Peace Literacy — was produced to address this critical situation. What it takes to rectify this maladaptive process is the right education to look anew at the old program. We need to see that it creates conflict by mistakenly trying to protect us from what seems to be a real threat to our survival when it is only an imagined one. In this fresh awareness, free of intellectual suppositions, one can see what is, without prejudice — without trying to correct or solve it. Conflict is not a problem to be solved but a reality to be observed.

In today's world there is prejudice that creates bullying everywhere — at home, at school, in offices, among nations. There are ongoing attempts to stop the bullying that prejudice creates yet it still goes on. The question we need to ask is what creates this prejudice? Is the cause outside myself — with the “other” — or does it begin in my brain?” Once we understand how prejudice begins, where it starts — we can stop acting out of it. If we see that we're the source of this prejudice, we won't put the responsibility to understand this on other people. The truth is that the only way to prevent bullying from happening is to begin inside ourselves — to actually see the cause of it in our brain in the way we've been conditioned to think. Due to the divisively destructive nature of ethnocentric superiority, prejudicial conditioned images of “the enemy” are what create war. Surprisingly the source of this conditioning comes from our primitive brain's reaction to feeling a threat to its survival.

As this book has said before, the compulsion to bully is a biologically and genetically based instinct built into us for survival — to protect us from a person or group we believe is a threat to us. We therefore see this prejudicial bullying as paradoxically necessary for our survival — survival of the fittest. Also, anyone within the group who seems weak becomes a threat to the survival of the group and is perceived as someone who needs to be eliminated or bullied out of the group. We shun, intimidate, bully — all in the misguided name of survival. What will free us from this destructive compulsion of the survival of the fittest? As we have said it's not knowledge that will free us, but rather seeing the actual movement of this compulsion within ourselves in the way we've been conditioned to think in this divisive prejudicial way. Knowledge, motivated by the primitive biological brain, is prejudice. The prejudicial image I

have been conditioned to think about you and the prejudicial image you have been conditioned to think about me it is what separates us and creates conflict.

It's not who the enemy is, but how it is created – born in the brain. Understanding this we cannot blame the "other" for the "other" is a conditioned image of who we have been taught is our enemy, when in reality the "enemy" emanates instinctively from the primary primitive brain in us all. Therefore, we need to look at this phenomenon in each one of us as the biological source of conflict and not project it out on the "enemy" we have been programmed to think is a threat to us.

As we said before conflict created by this biological genetic program is no one's fault – it is not a "moral shortcoming" – it's not my fault or your fault – it's the fault in the brain's defective system, its malfunctioning primitive biological make up that is not working correctly. It can be called a systemic defect in that the human brain is defective, operating on an archaic program driven to survive that is unaware its causing conflict, for it affects the whole human race because we are born with this "fault" in our brains, a primitive defect that is misguided. This survival mechanism thinks it's doing the right thing. It just doesn't understand that it is malfunctioning, that it's not working to guarantee our survival in this way.



Peace – What Creates It? The Awakening of Intelligence

By Terrence Webster-Doyle

**Can we bring about peace
by pretending to be nonviolent?**

The world is fragmented, divided, and, hence, in conflict. My country versus your country, my religion versus your religion, my beliefs versus your beliefs. This fragmentary way of living is destroying us! Person against person, nation against nation – the world is being torn apart by conflict. What is the *root* of this conflict? Through enquiring into the nature and structure of conflict, can we come into direct contact with all that which prevents peace?

“Can peace be brought about through political reform, or the aggressive assertions of opposing ideologies, or through one Utopian theory dominating another?”

“Do we create conflict and prevent peace by conditioning our children to pledge their allegiance, obey, and defend their country without question?”

“Can peace come about through conventional religious belief and practice, belief that divides and separates people into sects and denominations, each asserting that theirs is the chosen way and their God the True God?”

“Can the patriot, our paragon of national virtue, bring about peace? Or is he or she, by the very fact of his or her commitment to and identification with the fragmented nationalistic view, paradoxically the enemy of peace?”

PEACE – What Creates It? does not offer solutions, methods, conclusions, or hopes about peace. It does not advocate any political, philosophical, economic, or religious reform to solve the problem of war. This book raises essential questions concerning what prevents peace and, by so doing, evokes insight into that which creates conflict, individually and globally.

In this book I will not be approaching the issue of peace, or any issue of human behavior, in the conventional manner. I am not writing an intellectual dissertation on the subject of peace. I am not a scholar, nor am I advocating a study of peace. I am not suggesting that I am an expert in the field of human relations; I am only a human being who is serious about these issues. I am not advocating any political response to this issue of peace, nor am I encouraging any religious perspective. I am not asking anyone to believe in a particular philosophical ideology, and I am not interested in economic revolutions. Nor am I concerned with creating Utopian communities in which to live. In essence, I am not promoting any “way.” As I see it, all ways are contrivances, avoidances of the *fact* of who we are and what we are *actually* doing.

I am attempting to look simply, without any judgment, comparison, or evaluation, at what is true and what is false – to see the actual, the real, the thing itself. This may sound either too radical or too simplistic. It is neither: It is the only thing we can “do” – and by this I do not mean the traditional “doing” that we are used to. We have been conditioned to think that we can “do” something to bring about peace and to end war. I am seriously questioning this assumption. I am proposing – with utmost urgency – that what we think of as creative and noble action aimed

at bringing about a change in behavior, as in the case of war and peace, is *destructive*. I am not asserting this; it is not a conclusion. It is simply the subject of our observation.

What this book asks is simple yet difficult: that we suspend our beliefs, opinions, and educated knowledge to look anew. We cannot approach understanding what it means to live in peace, in the absence of war, through the past. The roots of conflict can only be approached in the present, as it occurs. The conflict that we call war, the militarized aggression that kills human beings, is rooted in us, in our brains, in the way we think, feel, and act. Internal conflict is projected outward and creates global conflict. We create the world; we are responsible for devastation and a vicious, competitive, divisive way of life. Assigning the state of the world to any outside force is a mistake.

As the author of this book, I feel an urgent concern for us to address the issue of war and peace directly in ourselves. Some people have said that my “appeal” is too emotional and not intellectual enough. One must feel! Feeling, not emotionalism or sentiment, is the outcome of direct contact with life.

This is not an intellectual book. This book offers observations on the nature and structure of human behavior and how we create and sustain conflict through our usual habitual conditioned approaches to life. My hope is that the reader will be challenged to question what is being said, not to accept or reject what the author is sharing, no matter how assertive or opinionated it may seem. I feel that we need to stop and seriously reflect on our conventional solutions to the problems of life, to see if we are, paradoxically, creating further conflict in the name of peace.

The intent of this book is to bring about an understanding of conflict: It is not an attempt to create peace. This understanding is not arrived at through an intellectual comparison of ideas on the subject, no matter how noble, eloquent, or inspirational the ideas might be. Understanding intellectually involves time: “Peace will come in the future if we just . . .” The intent of this book is to stimulate or awaken insight into what prevents peace – not in the future, but now.

Peace cannot come through time, through a process of analysis. The cause of conflict, that which prevents peace, exists in us each moment and is acted out only in the moment – now. Understanding uncovers the movement of conflict as it reveals itself in our daily lives. War is the outward manifestation of the inward

disorder and discord of the divided, fragmented human being. Life, as it is lived now, is a battlefield – a competitive “cutthroat,” aggressive process of self-attainment. Conflict must be looked at in our day-to-day living. We are at war in ourselves, in our relationships. Peace is only an ideal, that which we wish for.

Observations into the nature and structure of conflict are offered mainly as “working hypotheses” for the reader to use to look for him or herself, to see if these are true or accurate reflections of what actually creates disorder, war. In traditional literature on human behavior, the reader is presented with a thesis and then must read on through pages of substantiation intended to prove the validity of the thesis. Here, observations or insights are offered mainly as questions, so that the reader might engage in a process of directly finding out for him or herself if what is being said is true – or not.

A question holds the intellectual mind in abeyance. If an immediate answer were given, that would cut off the process of enquiry. A question, if held, will lead to observation. Observation, or enquiry, is that faculty of mind that looks anew at life, without the intervention of what one already knows, which is the past. What is needed in understanding that which creates conflict is not more information on conflict, but rather insight into its immediate cause. As one questions, there is an immediate temporary cessation of conditioned reactive thinking and beliefs. It is this cessation of reaction – when conditioning is in abeyance – that frees the brain from its habitual, divisive compulsion for violence. The question breaks the pattern that drives the brain in its relentless fixations.

As one questions, as one observes what that questioning reveals to the mind, to awareness, one has the opportunity to be free of conditioned thinking and action. This allows a space for intelligence to enter, so that there can be profound insight into one’s own behavior. So questioning, observation is vitally important in understanding what causes war and prevents peace! Once one is questioning, enquiring without concluding, the process takes on a life of its own. One doesn’t need to read more about it; one simply observes, directly, one’s own conditioned state of mind – the conditioning that creates and sustains conflict individually and globally. Then one can put down this book, at any point, and look for oneself. All this book can do is to stimulate one’s observation and point to what creates conflict, not intellectually but actually. In this moment of observation, there is immediate insight into the causes of war, at the source.

Therefore, this book is written in such a way as to enhance this faculty of observation and insight, so that as one reads, one will not accumulate more knowledge but will, rather, begin to actually observe – come into direct contact with conflict as it is, and, in so doing, learn about its origins. This learning is not the storing of facts in memory, as one would do when studying math or botany. This non accumulative learning sees the fact of conflict and ends it in the moment.

The words used in this book are direct and uncomplicated. There is no reason to use complex jargon. The words are not important; they are only descriptions used to communicate what one sees. The seeing, the actual observation, is the important thing. Too often, books on peace have been written about peace using sophisticated verbiage that seems to create an understanding of the issue. But this is only a mental game, an exchange of lofty-sounding ideas that beguiles readers into thinking they know more about peace. Unfortunately, we fall in love with our words and, in so doing, create the illusion of understanding.

This book does not offer solutions, conclusions, or hopes about peace, and it does not present a particular method for achieving peace, nor is it an historical dissertation. It is meant only to initiate the process of enquiry, to begin to awaken, so to speak, insight into the core of conflict, not to expound voluminously on the seemingly endless theories and speculations that the overly educated brain has created in its search for “the answer” to the problem of war. Nor is this book offering any new philosophical, psychological, religious, or political approaches to solving the problems of war.

All this book intends is to motivate the reader to look in a completely different way, to stimulate one’s own enquiry into the causes of war – what prevents peace – so one can begin to question, to look anew at this tremendously urgent concern, and to begin to observe the nature and structure of conflict within oneself – that self which is all humankind. We have traditionally looked for the solution to war within a particular context or limited perspective. We have either approached war intellectually (abstractly) or emotionally, in reaction to its horrors. This has not brought about peace but has, rather, created further conflict. We have been looking in the wrong direction.

As we begin to focus on the issue of peace, we need to look at how we have traditionally approached it. In what ways have we tried to bring about peace? Have these various approaches worked or have they, paradoxically, created more

violence? It is important to look at how we have tried to bring about peace and understand war previously – to see how we might approach this differently now. If we don't, then we are left with what we already know, the timeworn theories and speculations on what will end war and create peace, those idealistic Utopian schemes that have only created confusion and more conflict.

Again, the intention of these observations is to raise fundamental questions about war and peace, to see how we have conventionally tried to solve this seemingly immeasurable problem, and to look from a radically* new perspective at what creates conflict, the substructure of war. For this to occur, we need only to begin the process. As we question, our sense of enquiry will take on a life of its own, and we can stop reading to observe directly – beyond the written word – what is actually happening.

**Radical means "at the root," to observe the cause or source of war and peace.*

So, one must first observe what is – what we are actually doing now to create war and to bring about peace – without judgment, condemnation, or justification. This is not an intellectual endeavor, but a real look at ourselves. Where do we begin? How have we traditionally approached bringing about peace? What means have we used? What are we trying to accomplish in this book? Our main intention is to look at, observe, go into that which prevents peace, that which is not peaceful, and by a process of elimination of that which is not peaceful, we will come upon the positive – that is, peace, or freedom from conflict, war.

The conventional approach of creating the ideal of peace and emulating that ideal, as we shall see, only creates more conflict and, hence, war. The process of affirming peace through ideals is destructive! We will take another view, a radically different perspective, and challenge the traditional method of achieving peace by offering another approach – that of enquiry, the process of investigation by putting aside all that which is not peaceful. Understanding the difference between these two approaches is of paramount importance!

Now, where do we start with our investigation or enquiry into what is not peaceful? First, we need to look closely at the process we have conventionally used to bring about peace, to make sure that we are not merely advocating these same views in a different form in this book. One of our deeply held assumptions about how to create peace is that we must understand history, the past. We have approached

the understanding of war, the absence of peace, by examining history, the past, but has this aided us in ending war?

In schools, we teach history, and we study past human interactions. The subject of history is marked by the succession of wars that mankind has produced throughout the centuries. Many historians assert that through the study of history, we can learn by our mistakes. If this were true, wouldn't we have understood how to end war hundreds of years ago? How many more wars will it take for us to find out how to end war?

Can we learn about war by acquiring knowledge about dates, names, and historical perspectives? When we teach history to our children, what are we asking of them? We require memorization, the taking in of information to add to the knowledge they already have about the subject. Some people reason that if we accumulate enough information on the subject of war, at some point in the future we will understand how to end it. We have created libraries on the subject, and volumes on why we war and why there is no peace. We believe that the conventional process of learning, analyzing, and synthesizing information will create a solution. In science and technology, this type of thinking has a place, but we are attempting to understand human behavior and not a scientific or technological problem.

This book is not a political dissertation on peace. It is not advocating any political, economic, or social "revolution." This does not mean that we should ignore the symptoms of war. We have created tremendous suffering and inequality in the world through hostile efforts to control and dominate others. This issue must be actively pursued and corrected. But we are ultimately concerned with ending conflict and bringing about lasting peace, not a temporary respite between conflicts. We are concerned with the understanding of war itself, not a particular war.

Can peace be brought about through a political movement? What is political reform? Is it the domination of one idea over others? Is it a way of thinking that screams, "This is the way!" Ours is the ideal!" Doesn't this mean that other ideas are inherently in conflict with this "right" one? We have created socialism, communism, capitalism, totalitarianism, fascism, and other theories for the "good" of humankind. But each was based on separatism, resulting in the few controlling the many, or the few benefiting from the labors of others.

We are all human beings, but we don't see ourselves as being alike. Why is there a need to devise conflicting ways? We are so caught up in our differences that we perpetuate division into groups, with each reinforcing their own way. Why do we insist that we are different? And what does this have to do with war and the absence of peace? There are many who will die for their differences, for their ideals, in the name of peace! They believe that war is peace, and that conflict solves conflict. Utopian idealism creates a divided world and, hence, conflict.

Philosophy means "the love of truth" – not my intellectual idealism versus your idealism, stimulating the brain into pleasurable contemplation. In philosophical argument, we just go around and around in a maze of thinking.

Psychology presents various perspectives on the human condition. Freudians assert that we must analyze our past to see where the causes of conflict lie. Behaviorists say that we need to change our conditioning and set up new punishments and rewards to motivate us to live differently. The pioneers of Humanistic Psychology recommend peak experiences and self-actualization, which often results in self-indulgence. And there is a new movement in psychology called "Transpersonal" – consisting of rebellious outsiders to the mainstream world of clinical psychology who advocate various methods of self-transcendence, mainly supported by techniques from the Orient. Again, there are differing opinions, theories, conjectures, and, hence, a lack of understanding of what universally creates and sustains conflict.

Can peace come about through conventional religious belief and practice? Established religious thinking, based on judgment and ideals, creates the struggle of good over evil. Traditional religious practice, regardless of sect or denomination, is founded on belief. Can belief solve the problem of war and bring about peace? Or does belief, whether it be religious, political, philosophical, or psychological, create fragmentation – a world divided in thinking, a brain divided in itself? Belief is destructive for it is based on hope or faith and is a postponement of the acceptance of the actual. We hide behind belief, afraid to confront who we are because of the pain of the contrast between our actual behavior and that of the ideal.

Again, we are not asking anyone to believe in what is written here. We are only encouraging each one's own questioning. Even though this book makes strong statements, these are meant only to stimulate questioning. If one can enquire for

oneself into the truth of what is being said, then one's mind is active, alive, and intelligent. If one engages in this process and discovers the falseness of what is said, the mind is also sharpening.

We are not asking anyone to join an "alternative" community dedicated to peace, or to rebel against society in any way. Rebellion is reaction and will never lead to understanding. Understanding is facing the fact directly without judgment, looking without prejudice – at society and ourselves. We are not proposing "New Age" idealism, for there is no New Age! That is only an invention of our minds, an outcome of hopes based on fears. We are deluding ourselves if we imagine that we are any different than we have been for thousands of years. We remain tribal and primitive, violent, competitive, and warlike. Technologically, we are advanced. Socially, we are undeveloped, retarded.

We are not advocating cynicism. We are interested in what is occurring in our lives each day. For a life as it really is – not as it should or should not be – is a reflection of truth. We are saying over and over again that peace cannot come about through any idealistic means – which includes belief, hope, or faith in any form. Belief divides. Belief means to "act without sufficient evidence." We are saying that there is a capacity that can understand conflict and eliminate war. However, to say that this process will bring about peace is dangerous, because we are so conditioned to be idealistic.

Again, it is important to remind ourselves that we are enquiring into the conditioned assumptions and timeworn beliefs we have about creating peace. We are not moving toward some conclusion, so that at the end of all this we will have "the answer," "the solution," "the Utopian plan." On the contrary, we will have no answer, no solution, and no plan. All answers, solutions, plans are based on belief and, therefore, are divisive, and only create more conflict. What we will have is nothing. Our conditioned thinking assumes that change produces something. But we are taking away, not building up.

Are we making sense? Or are we just advocating our own view, in competition with other views on the subject of peace? Are these observations fact or opinion? When is a statement an opinion or the author's philosophy, and when is it fact? Why are we so afraid of the facts of life? When we hold that there are only opinions about the causes of war, aren't we asserting that we know that there can only be opinions, that no one can understand what war is? This is a form of reverse

arrogance, of asserting the negative: that there “cannot be.” This “I don’t know, so no one can know” belief becomes that person’s truth and doesn’t allow for the possibility that there can be an understanding and ending of war.

Can we consider, for a moment, that it might be possible for us to understand the cause of conflict, of war, and actually become free of it? Can our minds be opened to the possibility that there may be a fundamental cause of conflict, of war? Or have we become so convinced that we are “right” in the conclusion that no one can ever understand war that we have given up enquiring?

Have we spent such a tremendous amount of energy in the political, religious, philosophical, and psychological pursuit of peace that we have become cynical and apathetic? Or are we just too lazy or preoccupied to really question if there is a cause of war and the possibility of a lasting peace? Can we honestly look at these questions, or do we merely give intellectual lip service to them, entertaining these questions exclusively in the abstract?

Are we conditioned to believe that only an educated authority can answer these questions? Do we feel incapable of seriously considering that we may really be able to end war – not in the future through accumulating sophisticated knowledge – but now, through the direct perception of the roots of war within ourselves? Who do we look to for help in understanding problems? Why do we look to them?

What is the process of finding out if questions/ statements are true? Do we expect another to answer our questions for us? And where or who are they who can answer? What are we doing when we look to experts? Can politicians bring about peace? Are they, by definition, divided in their views, this party against that party, in a power struggle over who is going to be on top? The politician is conditioned by his or her allegiance to a constituency of people, a nationalistic stance, and a particular brand of social justice – and, due to this divisive “loyalty,” he or she is a perpetrator of conflict.

Can the general bring about peace? Isn’t he or she dedicated to peace through war? However, the generals themselves wouldn’t state it this way. They, like so many “experts,” have created a special language (double-speak) that clouds the mind and creates the illusion of something else. In fact, the general is a warrior who believes that peace comes through the display or use of military might. When will we go beyond this illogical and destructive mentality? When does he or she stop being

the general so there can be peace? If the logic is to create peace through strength, will peace come when each “side” is so powerful that one dare not attack the other, lest all are obliterated in war?

We are waiting for the “other,” “them,” to take the first step, to drop their defenses. But there is no other, no them! There is only us! So, who will take the first step?

Can the priest, the religious leader, bring peace? One would think so since they profess to be dedicated to its pursuit. But in actuality, they too are divided in their ranks and levels of hierarchy, trying to establish who is the holiest within the particular religion or between different religious groups. At least military people are obvious in their expression of ironic, contradictory ideals! The religious pretend to be peaceful, following the ideals of their commandments, but they are at war within themselves, caught in the tangled judgments of good and bad. Each religion has its own brand of morality, each creating conflict. In essence, traditional religious practices reinforce the foundation of war through the conditioning nature of religious beliefs.

Can the doctor, the physician, bring about peace? Some people consider conflict a physiological disorder that can be cured with symptomatic remedies. Others believe that the problem is psychological and can be cured by analysis or mind-altering drugs. Is this true, or are we again avoiding the central issue: that conflict is created by resistance to the fact of who we actually are? Resistance creates defensiveness, and psychological defensiveness creates social defensiveness. This social defensiveness manifests itself in competitive individualism, or in a collective group mentality. Either way, there is conflict inwardly and outwardly.

Can lawyers with their knowledge of arbitration bring about peace or do they, by their confusing “legalese,” distort the problems of relationship? Can the problems of relationship be solved through the courts, through expensive and emotionally exhausting legal means? We rely on lawyers and judges to bring criminals to justice, to deal with the symptomatic manifestations of conflict, but can they bring about an understanding of the causes of war? We are concerned about the roots of conflict, of understanding war – not this war or that war, but war itself. Symptomatic approaches create surface solutions or reforms, which only sustain conflict and assuage the need for a deeper enquiry.

Can teachers, educators, help bring about peace? One would think that they could since the essence of education is relationship. Unfortunately, educators have traditionally concerned themselves with the accumulation of knowledge; knowledge has a place in living, but we are interested here in understanding behavior, relationship. The educator who is concerned with the whole child, interested in the child's psychological well-being, as well as his or her intellectual advancement, will want to understand the fundamental causes of conflict. The educator is the most important one in society – next, of course, to the parent – in caring for the child's needs. And yet the educator is not respected, professionally and economically. The educator has the best opportunity to find out what the cause of war is, but this means that he or she may have to leave the conventional educational system and perhaps even create a new school, for very few existing establishments are seriously interested in this issue of peace. As it is today, most educators are conditioning children to be warlike, to compete, to be aggressive, to get into the “best” universities and the most prestigious positions.

Can the newscaster, the person who reports our current events, bring about peace? These are important questions, because we so look to experts for understanding our lives. Television creates the expert in almost everything; all we have to do is turn them on and follow their recommendations. There are dozens of talk shows that give advice, from how to prevent tooth decay or invest in the stock market, to finding a compatible sexual partner. Experts are everywhere, and they especially abound on television. Newscasters or “anchor persons” are becoming the most celebrated of these television authorities. Anytime, 24 hours a day, they will inform us as to what is going on in the world. Some special “news shows” create forums for these reporters to “analyze” the events of the day, assuming that they have an understanding of the world situation. When confronted with an immediate serious situation such as a brutal murder, most give worn-out sociological or psychological explanations, but must admit, when pressed, that the underlying causes remain a mystery. And now there is the Internet magnifying the potential possibilities instantly by billions. We have even made criminals, murderers, warmongers, corrupt politicians, and infamous “religious” leaders’ experts in understanding peace. Where is our dignity when we pay the criminal to tell us how to live?

Is the patriot an appropriate authority? Can the patriot, our paragon of national virtue, bring about peace? Or is he or she, by the very fact of his or her commitment to and identification with the fragmented nationalistic view, paradoxically the enemy of peace? The patriot believes fervently in his or her country, above all else.

He or she is the model of national pride, ideal defender of the faith and, by so being, is a powerful creator of conflict. As we have said before, conflict is caused by the divisive state of mind that separates human beings into self-protective entities. My belief versus your belief, my country versus your country – each side identified with a particular ethnocentric cultural habit, each locked into a particular way of life. The patriot is the one who defends, to the death if need be, that separation, that state of antagonism – thus preventing a global perspective and unification of understanding.

Are authors who write eloquent books appropriate authorities because their views are published? Books on gardening or physics or travel are educational, and we can benefit from this type of authority being available to us. However, we are talking here about the psychological authority that advises us as to “how to live” and peddles his or her methods of success.

And then there are the “nonprofessional experts” and their plans and solutions for peace. Again, we are not trying to damage those people or organizations dedicated to peace. We are only questioning the process and method(s) used in the attempt to attain peace, who work to bring about world peace by “visualizing” it? They believe that in order to have a wonderful world, we have to imagine one. They visualize a world different from the one we have and see that we do not have to accept what exists now. But doesn’t this “visualizing” create the ideal, the Utopia, the “should,” and hence contribute to the conflict between what is and what ought to be?

Then there are the “We are One” proclaimers who assert that we are essentially all one, and that the only obstacle standing in the way of world peace is the inability to see the simple truths of our “real” nature. But this is also believing in an ideal, for the fact is that the human race is divided and fragmented. However, this doesn’t mean that we should resign ourselves to this as inevitable and unalterable. Understanding the fact of that which divides us is the essence of intelligence and allows for freedom from division.

In the “peace” movement, we have “radical activists,” well-meaning people advocating involvement in politics and the protesting of war, hunger, pollution, and all the social ills of mankind. We do need to constructively cope with our social problems at the level of reform, but unless we address the cause at the primary level, these problems will plague us forever.

The “violent revolutionaries” are also concerned with ending war and poverty, but they believe the way to achieve this is through violence. This is not an intelligent approach, obviously, but they are oppressed and frantic, and are reacting in desperation. All they know is violence, and they have seen how it has worked against them. They hope it can also work for them.

The “intellectuals” have pondered the problems of war for centuries. They read, and they write, and they lecture, and they receive awards and degrees. They have high ideals, educated solutions, lofty views; their words mystify and inspire. Do their words create peace, or do they cloud insight and confuse us?

Can organizations, such as those dedicated to peace, bring us freedom from conflict? An organization produces organized thinking and is a vehicle for conducting business and carrying out administrative objectives. An organization is a practical, mechanical operation. Yet, many people become so identified with a particular organization, and so committed to its form and purpose, that the organization itself becomes the authority. Others give themselves over to an organization in their need for security in a world of chaos, and gain power and prestige through their association with the authority of a group.

Does looking at authorities in this way seem negative, cynical? Are we trying to tear them down with our critical observations, blaming them for our problems? Do we feel that they are responsible for our disorder, and that we are exempt? Is this what we are doing here?

Or are we looking at what prevents us from directly understanding our lives for ourselves? Can we, by a process of elimination, put aside all authorities that are unnecessary hindrances to self-discovery? Can we, through this process of elimination – or “negative” approach – come upon the truly positive? When we project an imagined positive, we create the authority and the need for emulation and worship of that authority. Can we look at our daily lives without the intervention of any authority whatsoever? Can we become aware of how we act or react, observing our thinking, attitudes, beliefs, customs, traditions, and all the habits that control our behavior? Is this what can free us from conflicts and the extremes of military war and the tyranny of authority? Being free, peace is there. Peace is not something to be sought; peace is a given, natural state of being. It is our conditioned way of thinking and behaving that prevents peace from occurring.

Are we using these observations as a mirror so we can see ourselves? We can either reject or accept what is being said, based on what we already know to be true, or we can use these observations as catalysts to look again at our assumptions. A simple, straightforward statement or question can awaken one's own perception to the truth or falseness of what is being offered. We are not trying to create more knowledge, accumulate more information on the subject of war and peace. As we read these words, what are our minds doing? Can we watch, as we read, to see how we are responding to these observations?

We have been looking at the various approaches to understanding peace and the conflict of war. We have also been examining the question of authority in relationship to the understanding of behavior. In essence, we have been exploring that which *prevents* peace, the viewpoints and the authorities that hold, assert, and maintain a particular perspective. In order to have peace, we must put aside all that which prevents it: all the intellectual rhetoric and psycho-double-talk, and any authority with a self-protective, vested interest. This is a serious matter. One cannot be "emotional" or resentful, yet one must feel deeply, for without feeling these are merely words. Feelings connect us with the crucial actuality of our daily lives. Feeling deeply, one is motivated to act, not out of emotionalism, but out of insight into the nature of the problem. Insight has its own emotional effect, which is not the sentimentality of nationalism, patriotism, religious or political fervor. Can we look at the root, the fundamental cause of conflict? In order to bring about peace, we need to understand conflict. Trying to create peace is idealistic and therefore creates conflict. Shall we explore this together?

What does peace mean? Let's start with the commonly accepted meaning. According to Webster's Dictionary (which is an agreed-upon, but not an absolute, authority), the meaning of peace is: "The absence of hostility, as in war; a state of harmony." Also, "Freedom from disquieting feelings and thoughts." These two meanings are related. One looks outward at hostility, "as in war," and the other looks inward at "freedom from disquieting feelings and thoughts." Both the inner and outer are connected by the definition, "a state of harmony." Let's follow this a little further. Peace also means "serenity," serenity meaning to be "still, silent" and "perfectly clear." Some synonyms for peace are: "order, union, reconciliation, unity." Unity means "oneness, indivisibility, inseparability, integration, wholeness."

The title of this book states that peace is the "enemy of freedom." In other words, the conventional approaches to peace prevent freedom. We shall explore this, but

first, let's examine what we mean by freedom. The commonly agreed meaning for freedom (according to Webster's Dictionary) is: "A state of being free of constraints." Constraint means to "keep confined, to restrain; arrest or use of force; compulsion; a restriction." A key word is compulsion, which means: "An irresistible impulse to act irrationally." Also, "coercive, obligatory."

We are looking at definitions, but we must be careful not to get caught in those descriptions. Words can be addictive, pleasurable. What we are trying to discover is another way to look at the problem, to find words that demonstrate the contradiction inherent in trying to bring about peace. Peace is "wholeness, unity, harmony" – a state of mind that is "serene, still, silent" and "free from disquieting feelings and thoughts."

Can we bring about peace? What does this imply? How do we go about it? The "how" implies a method, a way to bring something about. And does trying to bring about peace prevent freedom – freedom being a state without "constraints" or "coercive, compulsory" behavior?

Let's look at an example that reflects the contradiction of trying to bring about peace – that is, a state of order and unity – through the process of compulsion, that which is coercive, obligatory. The United Nations is an international organization whose intent is to create world peace, order, and cooperation. Is there an inherent irony in this approach? Has this organization succeeded in understanding and bringing about peace, or is it involved in a process that compounds the problem?

The word "united" means "one; whole." Can a unification of separate parts create a whole, as in the collection of nations coming together to create world order? Isn't there a contradiction in terms – united meaning "whole, indivisible, one" and nations meaning separate "groups of people organized as governments; tribes or federations"? Can we group "federations" into one undivided whole, while maintaining the isolated, fragmented tribal identification?

It seems simple enough to see that there cannot be wholeness when there is separation, that unity cannot come about when there is identification with the part. This defies logic and creates tremendous conflict. We think that by some magical means we can become one undivided human race, yet – at the same time – maintain our separation. This is a trick of the brain, an illusion. There can only be wholeness when there is wholeness. In other words, order, unity, one undivided

world free of conflict – that is, peace – can only come about when each person sees that they are holding on to, and identifying with, the fragment.

Why do we do this? This identification creates conflict and prevents peace. In order to have peace, we must examine why we think we need to identify with the particular, the nationalistic fragment.

There are some who believe in wholeness and identify with a greater good than that of nationalism. But they end up with “my God versus your God,” or a romantic tolerance that allows for all gods to be – in essence – one God, coexisting under the comprehensive ideal of wholeness. But again, there is separation caused by ideological thinking, no matter how expansive and universal the ideology seems to be.

What does identification have to do with peace preventing freedom? Can we look deeper into the structure of thinking that underlies this paradoxical statement? How do we create peace? What are we doing to bring it about? We have looked at the outer, the political, economic, religious, philosophical approaches to peace, and none of these have brought peace. Now, can we look more closely, beneath the surface, to see what the method for trying to bring about peace is inwardly?

We have touched upon identification as a factor that prevents peace. Let’s examine this further. We seem to believe that through identification we can attain security and therefore be at peace. We identify with that which provides strength in numbers. We identify with the greater good. Be it through the group, the nation, the culture, the religion, or the god, the process is essentially the same: the creation of, and adherence to, the good or that, which will keep us from the bad, the enemy of peace.

Where does this need for identification start? Does it begin in the classroom when we ask children to unquestioningly pledge their allegiance, to obey and defend their country against all foreign intruders? Or does it begin when we take children to a church, synagogue, or mosque, and condition them to believe in a particular god or religious way of life? Do we identify out of fear? What are we afraid of? Who are we afraid of? What is the enemy we fear? How does this fear come about? Can we go deeply into the structure of identification and its purpose to see how it functions? Can we observe, like scientists, its operation within us? Why do we need to identify, to “associate (oneself) closely with an individual or group”? To associate

means to “join, to combine, unite.” It also means, “to connect in the mind,” to “look in the imagination or mind.” Identification or association is the process of the imagination (mind) that “links oneself with another or others.” What effect does it have in the world when we identify ourselves with another or others, and form a separate unit?

Who do we associate or identify with? What are our ideals? Who do we want to be like? Who are our heroes? Are we identified with being an American, an Englishman, a Russian, a Jew, an Arab, or a Christian? Why? Do we think that this identification will give us security? And does it? Or does it sustain division and conflict? Is there security in a fragmented world? Does this create war? What is secure about that? If we see the illogical and destructive outcome of identification, of associating with a particular ideology, why do we continue to do it? Is it a deep-seated habit, a firmly implanted conditioned reaction in our behavior?

How does identification, according to this type of illogical thinking, create peace? Let’s examine the bare honesty of it, the core of the structure. Is it our need to be good, to live a virtuous and ethical life, that creates identification? Does desiring to be moral create conflict? How do we become good? Let’s suspend our examination of peace for a moment to look at this issue of goodness. What is goodness? We all want to be thought of as “good.” We tell our children to be good – or else!

What is the process of attaining goodness? Some people believe that the child is “born in original sin,” that he or she is, in essence, immoral (“bad”) – and that what needs to happen is for the child to become “good.” So, in order to become good, one judges oneself and one’s actions as bad and in need of redemption. Then the ideal of goodness (that which we should be, in reaction to that which we should not be) is created. We now have a dual state of mind and the battle of good over evil begins.

The brain has created an inner judge that describes what is bad and what is good, and whose task it is to eliminate the bad in favor of the good. This is where identification occurs. Identification, or association, involves emulation: living up to the ideal image of good, acceptable behavior, whatever that may be in one’s particular culture. The brain is divided; on the one hand, it must suppress the bad and, on the other hand, it is obliged to be good. This process is the core foundation of conflict and is manifested in the world as global conflict. Look at this for yourself to see if it is true; observe yourself. One does not need to rely on an outside

authority, for this involves direct self- observation – as it occurs. The challenge is to observe the nature and structure of thinking as it attempts to create good behavior.

The good represents what we should be or what we should do. One of the things we should do is be “peaceful,” which is an ideal. The fact is that we are in conflict, divided within ourselves. Trying to be peaceful compounds the problem by intensifying the struggle between good and bad, which creates and sustains violent behavior. Peace represents identification with the good: the national, political, religious, or philosophical ideal. Identification is with others who’s ideal is similar to our own because we have been indoctrinated, or conditioned, to do so through a system of punishments and rewards. Each society insists that its people identify with a particular brand of ideological thinking, the leaders of that society using their authority to maintain the status quo, and offering stability, security, order. Yet there is always a new ideal that emerges and generates change, either peacefully or violently.

Freedom means the absence of constraints: the ability to think for oneself, unhindered by fixed ideologies. Freedom isn’t rebellion or the violent rejection of an old ideology in favor of a new one. Feeling coerced to be peaceful, or be good, is experiencing restriction. One is unfree when constrained by a particular way of thinking. Thinking itself involves the past and must always be challenged in the movement of life. When we are forced to act, as we should, to be good or peaceful, then that compulsion can lead to an “irresistible impulse to act irrationally.” Formulating rigid beliefs, systems to live by, does not lead to rational acts. Acting rationally involves the ability to think clearly, logically, and sanely – thinking that emanates from observation itself. Living according to the conditioned dictates of a particular society is not sane.

There is also the question of what happens to the bad or that, which is not ideal. What does the brain do regarding that which does not fit in with its ideal? It assigns power to something outside itself. In this way the “Devil” is created, an evil entity that causes the problem inside us. “It is the ‘Devil’ who’s doing this! I need to drive him out and bring ‘God’ back into my life.” This attributing of a quality of our own behavior as coming from an outside source (whether bad or good) denies responsibility for our own actions. We hold the view that IT (Devil or God) will either destroy or save us. We cannot see that we are creating this struggle of good over evil, and the conflict this produces. In the sociological or political context, we assign the bad to “them,” the enemies, the terrorists – and the good to “us”: the heroes,

the freedom fighters. But the war within, whether it manifests in religious, political, or sociological terms, is essentially the same, a struggle of the brain in a quest to be “good.”

Identification creates sides and heroes, with idealistic images of what a hero should be varying according to the culture. But the hero is usually the patriot, the one who carries the banner of goodness against all enemies, “foreign and domestic.” All sides see themselves as heroes and freedom fighters. And God, of course, is on the side of good – but each side sees itself as good. Don’t we see this paradox? Each “side” depicts the enemy as greedy, murderous, villainous, and out to rape, pillage, and plunder. Each side sees itself as the “victim,” defending itself against the “mad dog” enemy. Each side feels justified, in the name of their God and Holy Book, in protecting themselves and slaying the villain – for righteousness’ sake.

But this vision of the “enemy” is nothing more than the projected judgment of ourselves, the condemned image of how bad we think we are. What prevents us from coming into direct contact with this judgment, this self-condemnation, this “evil” person that we think we are is the fear of how others will regard us. We have created self-consciousness about our “bad” side, a conscience that guides us. The judgment of our behavior as bad is more than image or thought; it is also feeling. Feeling bad is painful, so it is no wonder that we don’t want to look at ourselves directly.

How is this process sustained? In the same way that we control the behavior of our pets: We subject ourselves to a system of rewards and punishments through conditioning. The ultimate reward is Heaven or the punishment Hell, if one is of that religious persuasion. Or the process manifests in social castigation and disapproval from our peers. The rewards bestowed by society are degrees, testimonials, wealth, and status. There are multifarious punishments and rewards. The particulars aren’t as important as understanding the basic need for, and process of, controlling behavior – which comes from needing approval and wanting to be liked as the projected self-image of the good person we think we should be.

It is easy to see the political or religious manifestations of idealization. The Arabs and the Israelis, the Russians and the Americans, the Iraqis and the Iranians, and so on, all divided into opposing ideological camps that are fundamentally rooted in the structure of trying to live according to a formulated Utopian system. Idealized projections are, essentially, the brain’s attempt to bring about good behavior. We

are not aware that the problem lies within us, and we approach the solving of war with the same technique that generates it – the creation of ideals.

So, the war within is created by the brain trying to produce goodness and virtuous living through ideals; it is thinking that is the cause of the problem. Thinking as a tool of measurement, comparison, and evaluation functions in the realm of science and technology as it should, but when this same form of thinking is applied unquestioningly to the psychological realm in trying to change behavior, there is perpetual conflict and violence. So, we are challenging the use of a comparative tool to change who we are psychologically. In the psychological area, as in the scientific, thinking does what it always does: It judges, compares, evaluates – thereby creating good and bad.

Fundamentally, at the root of conflict, is this destructive process of conditioned thinking that moralistically judges behavior in favor of some idealized image of correct and virtuous action. Trying to be nonviolent, to be “good,” as we have discussed, paradoxically creates conflict and violent behavior. So, our endeavors to be peaceful or nonviolent create the opposite effect. When peace or nonviolence becomes the ideal, judgment follows, and conflict ensues. This is fundamental.

We look at the symptomatic issues and attempt to solve our problems through reform. Rarely do we go beneath the surface to look at the root of the problem within ourselves. We are investigating conflict that is created by ideological thinking concerned with bringing about order, harmony, and unity – that is, peace. Are we beginning to see the paradox: that the conventional process of bringing about peace is conflict producing?

We started out by examining the traditional approaches to peace, the conventional ways to free ourselves of conflict. And we moved from there to examine how that process, through the emulation of, and adherence to, psychological authority only sustains conflict, inwardly and outwardly. We have been looking at all this anew, observing – at the same time – the brain’s reaction as we read these pages. So, we are learning as we go, not collecting information or knowledge on the subject of war and peace, but actually awakening observation into the brain’s workings, its nature and structure, as thought occurs each moment. This awakening of observation is the faculty of intelligence, not IQ, that has an inherent capacity to “know” what is true, right. It is this intelligence that will understand conflict and bring about peace – not through ideals, but actually – in the moment. And this

intelligence will have an effect on our relationships with others, and on the concern of humankind worldwide for global order and well-being.

Have we arrived at an understanding of what this book and these observations are intending? Do we need to read on concerning what creates conflict, how we bring about violence in our quest for a nonviolent way of living, how we kill the spirit of enquiry through our need for authorities in the area of relationship? As we said at the start, one can, at any time, stop reading and go beyond the printed word to observe the actuality of conditioned thinking as it occurs in us, for it is conditioned thinking, the process of changing behavior through ideals, that is at the root of conflict. But how will we know if this is true, or not? Who is there to tell us? Do we need to try all the conventional avenues before we can be aware of their dead ends? What is the correct thing to do? Or is this the wrong question?

If we have been following all this and have been actively questioning, creatively doubting, what the conventional, conditional views are and, at the same time, questioning what is being presented in this book, what is our state of mind now? Have we been able to put aside all that which is not peaceful? Has this “process of elimination” helped free our minds from the conventions of traditional, antiquated thinking? When one has clearly, step by step, enquired into that which is disorder, chaos, and confusion – that thinking which creates conflict, war – can there be peace of mind? Have we understood the significance of this process: that peace comes about when we put aside, through careful investigation, all that which creates conflict? Have we understood that the pursuit of peace – the creation, affirmation, and emulation of idealistic, “peaceful” behavior – paradoxically creates conflict, disorder, and – at the extreme – war? Have we seen to the depths of this, to the root within the makeup of how we think? If we don’t understand the cause, we cannot end the problem! However, if we are involved in this process, then peace, real freedom from conflict, is occurring – now! – as we are enquiring intelligently into life.

Where do we go from here? It seems that if one is observant and has questioned the underlying structure of what prevents peace and creates conflict, then there is a realization that reading about peace is not necessary. This book, or any book for that matter, can only reflect what is either true or false. It is ultimately up to the reader to see for him or herself the truth or falseness of the content. In this case, words written on a page are only pointers, metaphors, and symbols for what the author is asking the reader to look at. Many times, books on war and peace are

merely exciting (or boring) descriptions of symptomatic manifestations of historical perspectives; or fanciful projections based on the vivid imagination of the author, or highly obtuse, sophisticated, intellectually clever interpretations of the overly educated brain. Rarely do we look simply at the obvious reality of our everyday life and see that *we*, our conditioned attitudes prevent peace!

We are a collection of highly conditioned individuals seeking security in our own self-projected beliefs. We have been conditioned from birth to believe in our parents, teachers, religious and political leaders, in our country, flag, and our particular idiosyncratic worship of what we consider God.

This conditioning is who we are. It is an eclectic accumulation of information that forms our thoughts and behavior. Being conditioned, we are isolated in that conditioning; we are fragmented by solitary, self-serving beliefs. These belief systems make up our consciousness, and through that consciousness – that accumulation of conditioning – we act. And, in so doing, we create conflict in the world. When one becomes aware of that state and sees the futility of acting out of fragmentation and isolating, conditioned belief systems, what usually happens is that one reacts or rebels and, in so doing, more conflict is created. Or one finds another belief system to free oneself from the tyranny of a former way of life. Neither rebellion nor alternative belief systems can end conflict! Both, in fact, sustain it!

Reading through this book, one comes to the realization that the very process of enquiry, of really looking at the questions we are asking, creates a highly sensitive, alert, intelligent state of mind, a mind that is observant, cautious. It is this alertness, this cautiousness that recognizes one's own conditioned reactions to life and, in so doing, ends them as they arise. At first, this may require hindsight, becoming aware of how one has been in the past. But as one continues to explore, to enquire, time diminishes in importance and one can see the conditioned reaction as it is happening. If one stays alert, then that creative cautiousness makes it possible for the continuous dissipation of the tendency and compulsion for habitual, conditioned thinking.

Have we understood all of this? Have we seen the futility and destructiveness of identification, of belief systems? Have we understood the paradoxical nature of trying to bring about peace through idealistic thinking? Have we observed the creative potential for understanding what prevents peace by negating that which

is not peaceful and creates conflict? And have we felt the tremendous importance of what this can mean in our relationships worldwide? Or are we still convinced that we are right, that conventional approaches to ending war and bringing about peace are viable solutions? Which is it? For thousands of years, we have tried to end war and live peacefully – and for thousands of years this goal has not been reached. When will we end war – not a particular war, but war itself? It is not enough to temporarily contain conflict in some particular symptomatic instance. War is our way of life; it is everywhere. Unless we get to the root of conflict, it will remain with us forever. Does this make sense?

Where do we go from here? We start to question, to probe, to investigate the myriad of conditioned assumptions and prejudices about living. We create schools that put this vital challenge at the forefront of their curriculums. We help our children in not accepting war as a solution for creating peace. We help them to see the possibility of ending war, not for a limited time, but to end it permanently. Unless we keep ourselves open to this possibility, we will, by our resignation to the inevitability of war, keep conflict alive for our children, to be passed down century after century as it has been in the past. It is up to each one of us to look at ourselves, to understand how we prevent peace and therefore create conflict. And in so doing, conflict ends, and peace is there – naturally, without effort, because there is intelligence.