

N O V E M B E R 3 , 2 0 1 5

the
Center for Ethical Leadership
Leadership Practice for Healthy Inclusive Communities

Fall Greetings!

*Hla Yin Yin Waing
Executive Director*

Last week while attending a Townhall event for Sherry Turkle and her new book, "Reclaiming Conversation," I was struck by how relevant the Center for Ethical Leadership's work remains for the social needs of today. Turkle suggested that the social mores of a digital age have eroded our ability to allow ourselves to be fully vulnerable, and fully present to the feelings of others. Her big idea that, "...we face a crisis in empathy and we can cure it with conversation," excited me. I recognized the many ways in which the Center and our partners are facilitating this cure in our communities of engagement. An inspiring Facebook post by Melanie Roper, a Peacemaking Planning Team member, exemplifies this. Melanie eloquently paints a picture of how the peacemaking principle "focus on self and not on fixing others" can be enacted. Her post is included in this newsletter with permission. A key premise of the Center's Peacemaking and Healing Initiative is that we need healthy change makers in order to create healthy change. A simple yet profound clarity. We specialize in creating gracious space for brave conversations in which empathy can flourish. The ripples of these conversations flow

into our daily lives, work and collective consciousness. Melanie is one of a team of thoughtful, wise souls working with the Center, and our community is deeply fortunate to have their compassionate leadership. Thank you, Melanie. Our world needs more leaders like you!
~ Waing Waing



Our Peacemaking and Healing Initiative Program

By Keiko Ozeki

It's been more than 3 years since Center for Ethical Leadership launched our Peacemaking and Healing Initiative. The first event was a 6-day racial healing circle in July in 2012. I was in that circle with 17 other people. The experience transformed my life, from feeling like an outsider to a community member. Since then, with Saroem Phoung, as a teacher of Peacemaking Circle, the Center has been introducing Peacemaking Circle process and Peacemaking Principles to the communities and institutions locally, nationally, and even internationally. (Con't on page 3)

Save the Date!

Immigrant & Refugee One Day Circle November 14, 2015

This circle creates space to enrich cultural understanding, retrieve authentic self, build trust and deeper relationships and learn intercultural communication.

Intro to Peacemaking December 3,4 & 5 2015

Participants do their own healing work, develop deeper understanding of others and create stronger relationships.





Rachel Rosenman experienced her first Peacemaking Circle focused on Healing Racial Relationships in June of 2013.

Healing Racial Relationships Circle

By Rachel Rosenman

It was June 2013 when I sat in my first Peacemaking Circle held on the campus of the Bush School. While we hardly scratched the surface of the circle's focus: "Healing Racial Relationships," I was not at all disappointed in my experience. In fact, I was profoundly affected by engagement with the *process* itself. Since then, I have sat in several more 3-day Introductory Circles, participated in the Keeper's Training Circle, attended multiple reunion and monthly Keeper's circles, written and spoken extensively about Peacemaking Circle Process throughout my graduate studies in Organizational Development at Antioch University Seattle, and most recently, had the unique and blessed opportunity to help keep circle for the Garfield High School staff.

As I continue to strive to be the best version of myself that I can, I reconnect again and again with Peacemaking Circle Process because I have the opportunity within that space to let go of my own failings, listen deeply to the stories that others share, embrace the silent moments when they happen and be reminded that we are all doing the very best we can at any given time.

I am convinced that as we navigate how to share the burden, blessings and responsibilities associated with doing whatever work we are doing with others, Peacemaking Circle Process offers us a different way to be together. It offers a way out of the mechanistic models that we are more accustomed to, a method to bridge cross-cultural communication, build trusting relationships with others, and empathetically connect to spirit and our shared humanity. I have no doubt that the world would be a better place and that our communities and organizations would be strengthened and more deeply empowered to continue to face the challenges we all experience by having first-hand knowledge of this powerful process.

It may be "simple" to list the many elements of living, working and breathing in the socially just ways that are important to me (i.e. practices that for me really emerge from Peacemaking Principles): listening with compassion, listening without judgment, checking in with my own assumptions and feelings, noticing where tension is building within my own internal systems, but it is certainly not "easy" to do. And so it is with Peacemaking Circle Process; *simple* but not *easy*.



Health Matters: Healthy Change-Makers Make Healthy Change

By Melanie Roper



"Been feeling pretty beat down lately. I want to make the world a better place... but goddamn. It's exhausting and thankless and I spend too much time feeling bad for myself. Today in the shower this poem popped into my head. The first time I heard this was a coworker's daughter. He had recorded her reciting it for her preschool graduation and something about her tiny voice speaking these words was powerful: *as we are liberated, our presence automatically liberates others.*

So...it has occurred to me: what if my only job was to heal myself? What if my primary focus was to liberate myself from fear, to heal, to love.

Then I would no longer be an instrument of hurt. I wouldn't be dwelling in my own unresolved pain and flinging it at others. And when others direct their pain at me, I could look at it with compassion, instead of just dwelling on how much they hurt me. And when people see that their words and actions don't hurt me, that I don't return their hurt to them—that rather I set it gently down and instead respond with love and dignity—might they also be liberated?

I think so much of the time we are so wrapped up in our own story of pain, in our own unresolved grief, that we knowingly and unknowingly harm others and let others harm us back. We are all sitting around, tossing our pain back and forth like a ball. But what happens when people decide to stop playing that game? I can't prevent another person from throwing the ball, but I can choose not to catch

it, not to toss it back. If each of us focused on our own healing, on resolving our own issues, on caring lovingly for our own wounds, then who would be left to fight with? So I'm going to try to think of this.

When I feel overwhelmed, when I get frustrated that I cannot change others, that I cannot force someone to choose to not hurt me and others, I want to remember that what I can focus on is my own healing. I can't choose for others, but I can choose for myself.

It is true: my liberation depends on yours and yours on mine. And since I can't liberate you from your own suffering, I do what I can. I liberate myself. Or try to at least. This is my life's work - not to change others, but to transform myself."

~ Melanie Roper



Keep in Touch!

Thanks for being part of the CEL community, a vast international workshop. We'd love to hear from you in the coming months, and don't be surprised if you hear from us! Our communications office is ready to welcome your stories as we strengthen our connections with each other.



Sustainability

The Center for Ethical Leadership welcomes your financial partnership in growing our potent work of cultivating transformative ethical leadership through Gracious Space and Peacemaking Circles...here in Seattle, Tokyo, and beyond. Please take a moment to make a donation at www.ethicaleadership.org or click the button:

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We await your partnership!

Join us in making more healthy, just, and inclusive communities.

