

Workbook

HOW TO



TRANSFORM



CONFLICT

Dr. Scilla Elworthy

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INTRO

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WHY

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THE

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MIGHTY

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HEART

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Scilla Elworthy wrote this guidebook to offer you the experience of people who have been preventing and resolving conflict for decades. Some of them work at the front-line - at the sharp end of armed violence. Others support their relatives to bring peace to family issues, to help stop bullying in their children's schools, or to assist their colleagues in reducing stress in the workplace. Yet others mediate peace negotiations between warlords.

The secret, known to wise people through the ages, is that it is the heart which transforms. Here you will find practical, non-technical guidance for how to build your own 'Mighty Heart' which can turn anger into compassionate action. Using this guidebook you can build the capacity to generate your own energy for change, and develop the skills needed to transform conflict by deep listening, by engaging your feminine intelligence (available equally to men as to women), by understanding how to work with and tame your inner critic, by knowing how to use anger as a fuel for transformation, and most importantly how to be fully present when a crisis erupts.

Dr Scilla Elworthy, three times nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, founder of Business Plan for Peace and Peace Direct, and adviser to Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Sir Richard Branson in setting up 'The Elders'. Awarded the Niwano Peace Prize in 2003 and the Luxembourg Peace Prize in 2020. Her TED talk on non-violence has been viewed by over 1,500,000 people on TED and YouTube.

**“TO BRING PEACE TO THE WORLD, TO END ALL WARS, IT TAKES A REVOLUTION IN THE INDIVIDUAL, IN YOU AND ME. NO POLITICAL LEADER WILL GIVE US PEACE, NO GOVERNMENT, NO ARMY, NO COUNTRY. WHAT WILL BRING US PEACE WILL BE AN INTERNAL TRANSFORMATION THAT WILL LEAD US TO EXTERNAL ACTION.”**



## ENDORSEMENTS

This is the current evolutionary process that most people don't yet see: namely that the desired outer changes cannot come about without the inner change, as Einstein said. The quality of your awareness will directly affect the quality of the results you produce. The book demonstrates - steadily and sensibly - how anyone can develop this inner power to build their own personal contribution to the future, and to a world that works for all. It will wake you up to the challenges now facing the planet, and inspire you with sparkling accounts of what people are already doing to meet those challenges. It will show you how to build your own vision of the kind of future you want for your children, and the energy to make that vision real.

**Archbishop Desmond Tutu**, *Nobel Peace Laureate, Civil Rights Activist*

Scilla explains in very clear and simple language how to heal, from the individual to the globe. It starts with ourselves and our capacity to love.

I recommend this book as a must for those who wish their lives to be a positive force, either in their family, their work or as a change-maker. I think what I like best about this book is how practical it is.

**Steve Killelea**, *Founder, the Global Peace Index and the Institute for Economics and Peace*

Ever wonder what it takes to be a peacemaker? The answer is *The Mighty Heart*. This book is a practical toolkit for how to effectively transform conflict or, even better, how to prevent it. It begins with the mighty heart, the amazing capacity of the human for compassion, and moving forward with self-understanding. Filled with inspiring quotes and stirring examples of how conflict turned into understanding or peace, this is a book you will always want within easy reach to refer to it again and again. For me it is an important resource when dealing with conflict with students, parents, colleagues and also with internal conflict. Want to resolve conflict? The first step is to recognize your 'Mighty Heart', 'because the heart is the secret to all transformation'.

**Judith Cunningham**, *Chief Strategic Officer, Montessori Model United Nations*

*The Mighty Heart* is an efficient masterpiece, honing 50+ years of conflict experience into a vital essence - what you need to know about transforming, resolving and preventing destructive conflicts, from interpersonal disputes to violent armed conflicts, and, beginning with yourself. It's a MUST for everyone



who is passionate about conflicts -which means almost everyone!  
Reading this book is like enjoying an empowering and intimate conversation with Scilla herself.

**Susanne Schuler**, *director at the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)*

In *The Mighty Heart*, Scilla Elworthy helps the reader to understand that within oneself and in those with whom one is trying to negotiate, there resides a defensive 'fear' mechanism, that fights to protect the self. There is however a more evolved heartfelt reaction which is sympathetic, compassionate and a vital skill for those who work for peace. This book not only explains the latter, but shows how to live and act in a more enlightened way - productively, proactively and co-operatively.

**Andrew Stone**, *Baron Stone of Blackheath, member of the UK House of Lords*

I have enjoyed the profound simplicity in which highly valuable content is presented with practical hands-on orientation... While reading, one can sense the wisdom contained in the pages and in between the lines, also understand that it is in the practice of those fundamentals, starting with the authentic self, that anyone can act and become a force for peace.

**Maria Reig Florensa**, *humanist & executive coach*

This book is full of practical experience and pithy guidance about dealing with all sorts of difficult situations. Unlike many such books which can seem rather technical, this is highly personal and the reader will want to pick and choose the techniques and practise the skills discussed here which, as the stories which fill the book illustrate, have transformed conflicts in real life.

**John Sturrock Q.C.**, *Mediator of the Year, The Law Awards of Scotland 2009*

This is a profound book. I hope our leaders read it.

**Sir Mark Rylance**, *Academy Award winning British actor*



## CONTENTS

Why the Mighty Heart?

This book is for you if...

## THE SKILLS NEEDED IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

### Modules:

1. What breaks your heart?
2. Transforming a conflict by listening
3. Non-confrontational communication
4. Taming your inner critic
5. Cleaning anger as fuel for transformation
6. Developing presence for a crisis
7. Right Brain Intelligence to break the cycle of violence
8. Growing your Mighty Heart
9. Taking a stand
10. Being in service

## WHY THE MIGHTY HEART?

The purpose of this book is not to be idealistic or futuristic. It is to be pragmatic, to offer you tools and human skills that can help address whatever part of the current crises you have to face. Why is this useful? Because every single one of us has a heart, and when that heart can exercise its compassionate nature, we feel better. One of the most effective ways we can do this is by healing - healing first ourselves, and then healing the conflicts that rage or growl around us. Healing may not seem very glamorous, but it does do something astonishing - it transforms lives.

Healing ourselves means we live longer, have more glow in our skin, more fun in our lives. Healing family feuds releases our relatives from bitterness that causes heart-break. Healing anger in our community brings a massive sigh of relief and a shedding of burdens. Healing legal disputes means more sleep for all concerned. Healing environmental catastrophe is the modern version of heroism. Healing political arguments is a very much better plan than going to war. Caring for the rights of minorities enables children to sleep safe in their beds. Healing trauma can enable people who have seen horror, to sleep free from nightmares.



Being able to be fully present when a crisis strikes can stop people being killed, as we shall see...

Doing any of these things requires one capacity above all - a Mighty Heart. All our greatest heroes and heroines have gone through the process of painfully opening their hearts - stretching that massive organ until it can hold not only their own pain, but also the pain of others.

Then comes the payoff - the joy of loving. You can feel it - the joy of loving that transforms your heart. Anyone, anywhere on the planet, can grow a bigger and more mighty heart, and be the kind of human being that our world needs now.

These times we're living through are profoundly challenging. Tensions we hadn't even believed possible suddenly erupt. People are being obliged to live in ways we had not imagined - for some this means working from home at the same time as coping with children missing school; for others it means being continually exhausted, working unimaginable hours; for others it means the loss of their entire livelihood. We depend on desperately over-stretched health systems, cannot travel, cannot reach home, cannot socialise, cannot visit sick relatives, and we cannot properly say good bye to those who die.

Yet, daily we are witnessing acts of great kindness. People find it in themselves to share what they have, to serve their community in quiet ways, to imagine what a neighbour might need. Instead of just taking, the impulse to give suddenly erupts. Some homeless people are finally being given a roof over their heads, however temporary. We discover that relating to others online can achieve positive results, without the stress of travel. Time alone offers space to contemplate, to go outside, to go inside, to ask for help from sources we had forgotten about, or have never known. Those in rich countries are learning, albeit unwillingly, that we can survive on much less.

People in wealthy countries are learning about what's happening in places they may never have heard of, and how people there are dealing with much, much worse conditions. People have not only lost members of their families, their homes, their livelihoods, their food and water, their jobs - but all possibilities of recovery seem hopeless. They cannot call on health services, nor anyone to prevent looting or rioting, nor even ways to bury their dead. Their governments are utterly unable to cope with the pandemic, and cannot or will not help them.





We're seeing a global picture, daily, of how humanity across the planet is suffering, faced with these unprecedented challenges.

Yet it is possible, just possible, that this crisis can bring in a new global future. This global awareness could mean a combined willingness to act on an issue that currently threatens human survival on the planet, namely climate change. This may be happening right at the last moment that we can actually begin to reverse global warming. If we as a human race can rise collectively to that challenge, bringing all our ingenuity and skill, we could also reverse the increased floods of migration in coastal areas everywhere, that will inevitably result from rising sea levels.

If there were such a massive conscious shift to interconnectedness, it would profoundly change the way we do business, which could move from a passion for competition to a passion for collaboration - just imagine all the transformation that would require. It could shift the consciousness of the human race to what the original people of southern Africa call UBUNTU - meaning, as expressed by Desmond Tutu, 'I am, because you are'. There is more about this at the end of this book.

## **THIS BOOK IS FOR YOU:**

- If you are afraid in this time of huge global turbulence
- If you are having to cope with eruptions of family disputes
- If you want to stop fighting with your partner
- If you want to heal trauma that may have come down through generations
- If you are facing fear for your own and your children's future
- If you would like to resolve conflicts in your community
- If you have witnessed violence on the streets
- If you have spent huge sums trying to use the law to resolve a dispute
- If you are heart-broken by a family feud that has been tearing relatives apart
- If you feel there must be a better way to resolve environmental disputes
- If you are struggling to assert your human rights
- If you are tired of formal methods that don't succeed in stopping armed conflict.

Part One introduces the ten key skills needed in conflict situations, and they apply whether you are a parent, a teenager, a politician, a lawyer, a soldier, a student, a leader of a gang or a business. That means anybody who is faced with



the gut-wrenching job of stopping people hurting each other - mentally, physically or spiritually. Each module has an exercise to enable you to practise the skill, and a journal for you to note your own progress and your questions. Many modules have a real-life story from the corporate world, or from the sharp end of armed violence.

Part Two explains how to apply these skills in different situations, whether it's a conflict between individuals, between groups, or anger at top down decisions, or even an argument between governments. These chapters will work best for you if you have absorbed the modules in Part One, because your own personal skills, your self-knowledge, your compassion and your presence when a crisis hits - these are the strengths that are going to make change possible and prevent injury.

A personal note: parts of this book are, well, quite personal. I took the decision to be very open about my own experiences, because I firmly believe that the inner work we do has a profound effect on how effective we can be in our work in the world. Therefore the text doesn't attempt to be objective and strictly rational, but rather to be as honest and transparent as possible.

**“THE BREEZES AT DAWN HAVE  
SECRETS TO TELL YOU. DON'T GO  
BACK TO SLEEP! YOU MUST ASK  
FOR WHAT YOU REALLY WANT.  
DON'T GO BACK TO SLEEP!  
PEOPLE ARE GOING BACK AND  
FORTH ACROSS THE DOORSILL  
WHERE THE TWO WORLDS TOUCH,  
THE DOOR IS ROUND AND OPEN  
DON'T GO BACK TO SLEEP!”**

MODULE 1

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WHAT  
BREAKS  
YOUR  
HEART?

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## THE SKILLS NEEDED IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

So many young people today are saying: "The world seems chaotic. The future looks terrifying. And I have no idea what I can do to change it."

What helps many of them is to answer three simple questions.

The first question is: **What breaks your heart?**

[It could be conflict at work or at home, or bullying on the internet, or child refugees...]

The second question is: **What are your skills?**

[Do you like gathering information? Are you good at writing? Are you a natural communicator? An artist? Do you like crowd-funding?]

The third question is: **Now can you marry the two?**

- Marry your passion with your skills...
- Apply what you love to do, to what you most care about.
- And then see what bubbles up in the way of ideas.

Within a few days, others will be curious, maybe drawn to join your passion. Within a few months you could have a team and a full-blown plan in action.

Your passion is where your energy resides. If you can locate what you really care about, and bring your skills to bear on that, then your path in life can be revealed to you. It does take courage to look deeply into your heart, and see what moves you. It does take courage to dare to believe that your skills are needed. But then, courage lives in your heart.

My experience is that those who offer themselves most whole-heartedly into service for humanity, those who take risks, those who act from pure love...

- become the most effective world changers that I know, having started in this way.
- They are the people who have a lot of joy in their lives...
- They agonized, they cared, they dreamed of possibility,
- **And then they acted.**

If you want to know how the strategy works - people following their heart-break and acting - have a look at **[www.wemove.eu](http://www.wemove.eu)**



You'll see how a small group of determined people managed to get members of the European Parliament to vote a new EU law banning some of the worst offender plastics in the whole EU. <sup>01</sup>

01  
[https://ec.europa.eu/environment/efe/news/european-parliament-votes-single-use-plastics-ban-2019-01-18\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/efe/news/european-parliament-votes-single-use-plastics-ban-2019-01-18_en)

**“UNTIL ONE IS COMMITTED THERE IS HESITANCY, THE CHANCE TO DRAW BACK, ALWAYS INEFFECTIVENESS.**

**CONCERNING ALL ACTS OF INITIATIVE AND CREATION, THERE IS ONE ELEMENTARY TRUTH, THE IGNORANCE OF WHICH KILLS COUNTLESS IDEAS AND SPLENDID PLANS. THE MOMENT THAT ONE DEFINITELY COMMITS ONE'S SELF, THEN PROVIDENCE MOVES TOO.**

**ALL SORTS OF THINGS OCCUR TO HELP THAT WOULD NEVER OTHERWISE HAVE OCCURRED. A WHOLE STREAM OF EVENTS ISSUES FROM THE DECISION, RAISING IN ONE'S FAVOUR ALL MANNER OF UNFORESEEN INCIDENTS AND MEETINGS, AND MATERIAL ASSISTANCE WHICH NO ONE COULD HAVE DREAMT WOULD HAVE COME YOUR WAY.**

**WHATEVER YOU CAN DO OR DREAM YOU CAN, BEGIN IT. BOLDNESS HAS GENIUS, POWER AND MAGIC IN IT.”**

**JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE  
1749-1832**



**So, here's how someone in the Congo built the skill:**

Henri Bura Ladyi was a child-soldier who managed to escape his captors in the rogue militias operating in the Congo. What broke his heart was knowing the terror that child soldiers were put through, often forced to kill members of their own families. As he recovered, he began to risk his life to free other children. He manages to raise a little money from Peace Direct, gets on his motorbike and rides into the bush, buys a herd of goats and drives them to the camps where the militia are hiding. Henri knows he's taking his life in his hands going into militia camps, because they're trigger-happy, high on drugs and don't like strangers. But he also knows they're desperate for food.

He manages to trade one goat (price \$5) for one child, and takes the children home to their parents. Then the hard work of reintegration starts, because these children are so severely traumatised. He and his friends organise manual work for them, to help their communities accept them back.



Henri Bura Ladyi with child soldiers in Congolese militia.  
Photo credit Peace Direct



**NOW HERE'S YOUR FIRST EXERCISE:**

Ask yourself:

**What breaks your heart?** Feel the ache. Feel the power of it.

Feel the passion. Take a moment, and then write it down here: \_\_\_\_\_

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The second question is:

**What are your skills?** What are you really good at? What do you love to do?

I'm really good at \_\_\_\_\_

And \_\_\_\_\_

I just LOVE to \_\_\_\_\_

And \_\_\_\_\_

The third question is:

**Now can you marry the two?** Here's how I could marry my passion with my

skills \_\_\_\_\_

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This is what I could invent \_\_\_\_\_

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This would make me feel fulfilled \_\_\_\_\_

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Here are the friends who might join me \_\_\_\_\_

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We could have a great time, and be in service at the same time!



**“I TELL YOU THIS TO  
BREAK YOUR HEART  
BY WHICH I MEAN  
ONLY THAT IT BREAK  
OPEN AND NEVER  
CLOSE AGAIN TO THE  
REST OF THE WORLD.”**

**MARY OLIVER**





MODULE 2

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TRANSFORMING  
A CONFLICT  
BY LISTENING

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## TRANSFORMING A CONFLICT BY LISTENING

The key to transforming a conflict is to focus on INTERESTS rather than POSITIONS. This means that rather than the opposing parties sitting opposite and each clinging to their position, they gradually move round (metaphorically or actually) to sit side by side seeing the issue from their mutual interest. This concept is radical and brilliant, and is at the heart of the best book I have ever read on conflict resolution 'Getting to Yes' by Roger Fisher and William Ury.

More conflicts are prevented or resolved by the *ability to listen*, than by any other means.

Most of us think we are good listeners, and most of us are not. When we are apparently listening, we are spending most of our time thinking what we're going to say next, or judging the other person, or interpreting - and thus we are simply not able to be present.

Your full undivided attention is the greatest gift you can give another person, *especially in an argument* (when it's especially difficult). To listen fully is to show respect. A person who feels truly heard can start to relax. Better still, if the listener is concentrating hard enough to begin to hear the emotions behind the actual words, all sorts of information emerges that can be vital to healing.

During lockdown, there were a number of influential Dutch celebrities that vocalised their frustration with the way things were going in the Netherlands regarding COVID. They found that the government wasn't taking account of the grave consequences the policies had on youth, and they decided to collectively post on social media with the hashtag #ikdoenietmeermee (#countmeout, literally „# I no longer participate“).

One of those celebrities was 21-year-old influencer Famke Louise. Of course, her saying „count me out“ was incredibly dangerous, as it could be interpreted to be an invitation to her entire 1 million followers also not to 'participate' any longer in government regulations to end this pandemic. Famke Louise was invited to a late-night talk show to explain where she was coming from. At the table sat also Diederik



Gommers, Head of the National Institute for Intensive Care. What was so special about him was that he didn't scold her, but instead respectfully *listened to her*. He was able to listen to what drove her to do what she did, while also very calmly explaining to her why it is so essential not to 'opt out' as a citizen in this crisis. He then invited her to visit him in the hospital to continue their conversation. After they met again and she understood better what COVID entailed, they started a COVID campaign together. The campaign invites young people to ask questions regarding the virus on social media, that Dr Gommers can answer directly.

This is an example of fantastic leadership and how it works. Dr Gommers is now the person that people want to listen to, and trust, because he is able to truly connect in a respectful way. AND, would you believe, Dr Gommers started his own Instagram and had 300,000 followers within a week.

**“I’VE LEARNED  
THAT PEOPLE WILL  
FORGET WHAT YOU  
SAID, PEOPLE WILL  
FORGET WHAT YOU  
DID, BUT PEOPLE  
WILL NEVER FORGET  
HOW YOU MADE  
THEM FEEL.”**

**MAYA ANGELOU**



## SO, HERE'S HOW TO BUILD THE SKILL:

If you have a conflict with someone and want to develop your listening skills, you could use the magic four words: *"Would you be willing?"*

So you could ask that person: *"Would you be willing to spend 30 minutes with me, so that we can understand what's between us?"*

Explain that for the first 5 minutes you will listen to how they feel about the issue, asking if they would be willing to speak in the first person, without pointing fingers - and then you will feed back what you have heard for a couple of minutes, including if possible what you sense of the *emotions* behind the words. If you have missed something important, or misunderstood, the speaker can correct you.

Then you swap over: you will speak for about 5 minutes, and the other person will listen, attentively enough to be able to repeat back to you what you have said, and any clues they may have to your feelings.

What normally happens in this process is that you shift from the *mind*, which says: "I'm right and you're wrong!" to the heart, which says "Oh my goodness, is **that** how you feel?"

At that point you may both be able to talk about your *needs* - the deeper reasons for your anger or fear or jealousy. Then you may be able to suggest how the other person could meet your needs, and he or she can then respond.

Let me offer an example from the corporate world:

Working with the global executives of a major international company, I asked them if they were good listeners. "But of course," they said, "we spend our lives listening to our staff..." "OK," I said, "let's just check."

I asked them to undertake an exercise sitting in pairs opposite one another for 40 minutes. They were required to uncross their legs and arms, keep eye contact, and listen intently while their partner answered a question like: "Tell me [name of partner] what is your highest potential?"

At first they hated it. Bodies squirmed with the embarrassment of eye contact and personal honesty. Brows furrowed. Sighs of impatience... Then, as each partner took a turn answering the question, I encouraged them to go well below the cognitive to



the heart level. As each took a turn listening, in order to be able to feed back what they had heard and understood, they realised that this meant giving absolute attention.

By the end of the third round, they had developed an entirely new take on the power of listening. They were engrossed by what they were learning about another person, and about themselves. After using the exercise at work for a few weeks, the CEO told me: "What you taught us about real listening enables us to resolve in 15 minutes, what would previously have taken four hours of argument, and still not been resolved."

Just as those executives discovered, it is through practising these exercises that we are enabled to see their effect and their value, and that in turn leads to the honing of the skill. In other words, *by doing the exercise your whole system adopts a new skill.*

**SO, NOW HERE'S YOUR SECOND EXERCISE:**

Please think of someone you know - in your family, at work, in your community, or even in politics - with whom you have a disagreement.

Use this skill-building exercise and ask if that person would be willing to sit down with you for 30 minutes, just to talk. You gather your courage and ask this person: *"Would you be willing to spend 30 minutes with me, so that we can understand what's between us?"*

You explain that for the first 5 minutes you will listen to how s/he feels about the issue, asking them to speak in the first person and without pointing finger.

The rest of this exercise is for you to note what happened:

This is what I felt as listened \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Then I fed back what I had heard - including some hints of the emotions I picked up behind the words. This felt \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



And I noticed some expressions on the face before me: \_\_\_\_\_

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Then we swapped over and it was my turn to speak for about 5 minutes,  
and it felt like \_\_\_\_\_

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The other person did listen, attentively enough to be able to repeat back  
to me what I had said, and some clues they picked up about my feelings.  
This made me feel \_\_\_\_\_

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Afterwards we talked, and agreed that we \_\_\_\_\_

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MODULE 3

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NON-

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CONFRONTATIONAL

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COMMUNICATION

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## NON-CONFRONTATIONAL COMMUNICATION

*Nonviolent Communication (NVC)*<sup>02</sup> is the most effective way I have come across to enable people to realise when they are unconsciously being aggressive or provocative, and to change the way they communicate. NVC is based on the principles of nonviolence - the natural state of compassion when no violence is present in the heart. NVC begins by assuming that we are all compassionate by nature and that violent strategies - whether verbal or physical - are learned behaviours taught and supported by the prevailing culture. NVC works well for all ages, and is now taught in schools.

02  
[www.nonviolent-communication.com](http://www.nonviolent-communication.com)  
 4-part-nvc

**“I DID MY FIRST NVC TRAINING WHEN I WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OLD AND HAVE ACTIVELY PRACTISED IT EVER SINCE. ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL TOOLS I’M AWARE OF!”**

**FRITZ LENSCH**

NVC also assumes that we all share the same basic human needs, and that all actions are a strategy to meet one or more of these needs. People who practise NVC have found greater authenticity in their communication, increased understanding, deepening connection and conflict resolution.



## SO, HERE'S HOW TO BUILD THE SKILL:

*"With Nonviolent Communication (NVC) we learn to hear our own deeper needs and those of others. Through its emphasis on deep listening - to ourselves as well as others - NVC helps us discover the depth of our own compassion. This language reveals the awareness that all human beings are only trying to honour universal values and needs, every minute, every day.*

03

Marshall Rosenberg,  
Nonviolent Communication - a Language  
of Life (Puddle Dancer  
Press) 2015

*NVC can be seen as both a spiritual practice that helps us see our common humanity, using our power in a way that honours everyone's needs, and a concrete set of skills which help us create life-serving families and communities."*<sup>03</sup>

The form is simple, yet powerfully transformative. It takes us through the stages of *observations, feelings, needs and requests*, so that we learn to notice when and how a strong emotion has arisen, to communicate with the heart, express our needs clearly, and make a request to the other person. The process has been practised and refined over decades, and the NVC community is active in over 65 countries around the globe. It offers 2-day foundation trainings, which have provided invaluable skills to peace builders across the world, and you can find out more at <https://www.cnvc.org/learn-nvc/what-is-nvc>. I heartily recommend it to anyone and everyone engaged in transforming conflict and building peace.

During the first *Mighty Heart Online Course*, we had the privilege of being guided by an exceptional teacher of NVC, Liz Kingsnorth. Even if it was only for 90 minutes, it was entirely clear from the quality of the feedback that Liz had opened a power-house of skills for us all. Afterwards, when Liz and Fritz met online to de-brief, they were so energised that they decided to record an EXTRA episode for us all - and now for you - on the issue of '*Circuit Breakers*' and '*Responding to Hostility*'.<sup>04</sup>

04

<http://bit.ly/mightyheartNVC>

**Circuit Breakers** are what we tend to do when someone is telling us something vital that has happened to them, and we don't listen. Instead we either go into "Oh yes I know what you mean, I've had one exactly like that..." which entirely breaks their flow and almost insults their need to be heard. Or we try to 'help' - we come up with advice, or an exercise, or some brilliant teacher or therapist they must surely consult. *I blush for how often I have done this!*



Here are a few:

- **INTERRUPTING** and **TELLING SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF** e.g. a similar experience you have had; or an even **WORSE** experience!
- **GIVING ADVICE...**
- **COMPENSATING:** "At least your sister is at home."  
(when someone tells how they miss their brother). Or "At least you still have a job!" (when hearing about someone's tough work conditions).
- **DISMISSING:** "Oh come on, it's not such a big deal". "Let's have a coffee and forget about it".
- **RATIONALISING / JUSTIFYING:** "Well, it was expected, wasn't it". "I guess he didn't have the time".
- **PREACHING:** "It will make you a better person." "You shouldn't behave like that with the boss."
- **CONSOLING:** "Never mind, it wasn't your fault".
- **TELLING NOT TO FEEL:** "Don't be angry/sad etc."
- **PITY:** "Oh, you poor thing..."
- **INTERROGATING:** "But why did you do that?"

*Also be aware of non-verbal circuit breakers, i.e. if you show impatience or if you are restless or bored, or your blank eyes show that you are thinking of something else, then the person will feel uncomfortable and probably stop speaking.*

**In the face of hostility**, we are likely to want to defend ourselves. We may do this in a number of ways: we may feel like fighting back with aggression, we may want to retreat, we may feel like crumpling, we may try to placate ... and so on. All these reactions will disconnect us from the other person/s and are unlikely to lead to understanding, harmony or co-operation.

What matters is that we find ways to sustain connection between us so that we can keep open the possibility of dialogue leading to understanding, and thus the potential for a fruitful co-operative relationship - whether short- or long-term. When we are in connection, it becomes possible to find ways to meet everyone's needs.

To keep connection in the face of hostility requires us to listen in a different way, to intend to understand what lies beneath the hostile behaviour. We need to listen and respond empathically. This is assertiveness with a difference, in that we endeavour to sense what the person is feeling and needing, i.e. what matters



to them in this moment, and to reflect that back to them.

This demonstrates our willingness to "understand before we are understood".<sup>05</sup>

05  
One of the 'Seven  
Habits of Highly  
Effective People' by  
Stephen Covey

The stronger the emotion, the more something matters deeply to the other person; it is valid to them. If we dismiss what their need or value is because it seems to be in conflict with ours, we are likely to alienate them. So our task is to find language that connects with their feelings and needs.

#### **A note on "NO":**

When someone says "NO" to you, while it is often difficult to take, it's essential to realise that they are saying no because *they have a different need*. So, it's helpful to ask what it is that they need right now; in other words, to move from FURIOUS to CURIOUS.

### **HERE'S HOW IT CAN WORK:**

"You think you can just come here and tell us what will work - you're in cloud cuckoo land!" Response: *"Are you feeling exasperated because it's really matters to you that there is understanding for what it's like to work in this organisation?"* "You bet it matters! We've worked damned hard for long enough before you came with all your fancy ideas!" Response: *"Right. You want to make sure that all you've put into this is recognised and taken into account?"*

"Of course. No-one ever thinks of asking us about anything!" Response: *"Are you angry because you need to be fully included when decisions are being made that affect you?"* "Yes, and are we going to be this time then?" Response: *"Yes, let's talk about how we can do this".*

### **SO NOW HERE'S YOUR THIRD EXERCISE:**

1. Identify a friend or colleague who has been through a difficult time, and whom you usually find a bit 'tiresome' or verbose, or who 'goes on a bit'. Give that person a call and ask how they're doing; you need to do this as a genuine enquiry, at the same time as you exercise your skills in empathic listening. Have the list above in front of you so you can observe when you *might* just go into one of those responses... Notice what happens when you listen fully for the feelings that the person needs to express. Notice what you can say that shows, in your own words, that you have understood.



When the conversation ends, write down here what you learned: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Search your mind for someone who is angry or upset with you. Give that person a call and say something like: "When we last talked, you expressed your feelings, and when I look back, I don't think I listened very well. I may have been a bit distracted and I'm sorry. If you're willing, I'd like to ask you if you can recall those feelings, even the remnants of them, and say them again to me now, and I will listen attentively. This is so that I fully get what you were trying to say." When the conversation ends, write down here what you learned: \_\_\_\_\_

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**"OUT BEYOND IDEAS  
OF WRONGDOING, AND  
RIGHT-DOING, THERE  
IS A FIELD. I WILL  
MEET YOU THERE."**

**RŪMĪ**



MODULE 4

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TAMING

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YOUR

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INNER

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CRITIC

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## TAMING YOUR INNER CRITIC

In the days before Covid 19 when we could meet live in person, I used to ask large audiences "Does anyone here NOT have an Inner Critic?"

Silence.

Some shuffling.

Not a single hand ever went up.

Within every one of us there are critical forces that can crush our imagination and cripple our energy. If it's an important occasion, the Critic can suddenly shrivel our ideas, freeze our brain and reduce us to helpless inaction. Or, in the dark of the night, the Critic will wake us up and bully us with threats of what we haven't prepared, or castigate for the mistakes we have made. I'm told that even the most successful people - business tycoons, top civil servants, even military generals - suffer from what is called '*imposter syndrome*,' meaning they fear that they will be un-masked as frauds.

These inner criticisms are disabling. They can also be the forces that breed anger inside us. Why? Because when we cannot face what our critic constantly tells us is wrong with us, we tend to 'project' this inadequacy onto others, in the form of criticism or accusation.

So these are the forces we need to face and transform. It certainly is hard work facing our Inner Critic, but there is a bonus hidden in this work - because the Inner Critic often has a secret for us, below all the carping. There is a diamond under the claw of the fire-breathing dragon...





## SO, HERE'S HOW TO BUILD THE SKILL:

This is the practice that works for me, to discover that diamond. It may seem mad, but do give it a try....

Let's suppose that the Inner Critic gets traction in the following way:

- You have a major challenge coming up, and doubt of your abilities takes over.
- You are suddenly ambushed by an incident in your past, perhaps where someone made you look foolish, embarrassed you, or you felt inadequately prepared.
- A carping voice sits on your shoulder saying: "You don't belong", "You're not good enough to do this", "They don't love you", "You're a fraud"...

The Inner Critic can sabotage any of us at any time with these mutterings. So here is one way to transform it, using your courage to actually "meet the dragon". So, when it next wakes you in the middle of the night:

- Breathe deeply and calmly for a few minutes
- Set out two cushions or chairs
- Sit on one, and speak to your Inner Critic as if it was sitting opposite
- Ask it why it is bothering you. Ask "What do you want of me?"
- Then get up and actually go and sit in the Inner Critic's chair, and answer as if you are the Critic itself. It may feel a little strange but you will find that if you give it a chance, it will speak very clearly - possibly in a voice you didn't know you had. But at first it will probably just repeat the same kind of accusations.

If it does, go back to your own chair or cushion, and tell the Critic: "You're not being very helpful! Please tell me what I need to know!"

[You have to be very tough and assertive with ANY Inner Critic, as it will have gained a lot of strength over the years!]

- Then go across to the Critic's place, and answer again, in the Critic's voice. It will start to give you more practical and friendlier advice.
- Continue the process, insisting on knowing what your Critic knows, until you hear something that *you didn't know you knew*. This is the surprise, this is the diamond.
- Then see if you can agree a plan with the Critic, to use this diamond in your life. This may take a little while, but it may well bring key changes in how you feel about yourself.



In this process, if I can keep going, I have always found that the Critic has exceptional wisdom - *it knows something that I need to know in that situation*. Ultimately the fire-breathing dragon, having been fearful, becomes a friend and guide.

**"WE HAVE NO REASON TO DISTRUST OUR WORLD,  
FOR IT IS NOT AGAINST US.**

**IF IT HAS TERRORS, THEY ARE OUR TERRORS.  
IF IT HAS AN ABYSS, IT IS OURS.**

**IF DANGERS ARE THERE, WE MUST TRY TO LOVE  
THEM. AND IF WE WOULD LIVE WITH FAITH IN THE  
VALUE OF WHAT IS CHALLENGING, THEN WHAT NOW  
APPEARS TO US AS MOST ALIEN WILL BECOME OUR  
TRUEST, MOST TRUSTWORTHY FRIEND.**

**LET US NOT FORGET THE ANCIENT MYTHS AT THE  
OUTSET OF HUMANITY'S JOURNEY, THE MYTHS  
ABOUT DRAGONS THAT AT THE LAST MOMENT  
TRANSFORM INTO PRINCESSES.**

**PERHAPS ALL THE DRAGONS OF OUR LIVES ARE  
PRINCESSES WHO ARE ONLY WAITING TO SEE US  
ACT JUST ONCE WITH BEAUTY AND COURAGE.**

**PERHAPS EVERY TERROR IS, IN ITS DEEPEST  
ESSENCE, SOMETHING THAT NEEDS OUR  
RECOGNITION OR HELP."**

**RAINER MARIA RILKE**  
Letters to a Young Poet



## **FOR YOUR FOURTH MODULE EXERCISE:**

### **STEP 1: MEETING YOUR INNER CRITIC**

- Please close your eyes and take 4 very deep breaths, in and out.
- Now connect with your Inner Critic (most probably a voice at first?)
- Listening to that voice, please identify the strongest phrase it uses, the one that makes you shrink..
- Now please see if there is an image - it might be an animal, a person, a painting, a film character... does it have a gender?
- Can you see an image at all? Clearly? Notice if you feel fear, anger, repulsion...
- Keep the image, feeling or voice in your consciousness as we proceed.

### **STEP 2: STARTING THE CONVERSATION**

- Imagine your own Inner Critic as it next sits on your shoulder muttering at you, or grabs you by the throat, or wakes you in the middle of the night...
- Breathe deeply and calmly for a few minutes.
- Actually set out two cushions or chairs. Sit on one, and have the Inner Critic sit on the other in your mind's eye, so you can speak to it as if it was sitting opposite.
- Ask it why it is bothering you. Ask "What do you want of me?"
- Then get up and actually go and sit in the Inner Critic's chair, and answer as if you are the Inner Critic. It may feel a little strange but you will find that if you give it a chance, it will speak very clearly - possibly in a voice you didn't know.

### **STEP 3: GETTING TO TRUTH**

If it is only accusations you hear, go back to your own chair or cushion, and tell the Critic: "You're not being very helpful! Please tell me what I need to know!" [You have to be very tough and assertive with ANY Inner Critic, as they have gained a lot of strength over the years!]

- Then go across to the Critic's place, and answer again, in the Critic's voice. It will start to give you rather more practical and friendlier advice...
- Continue the process, insisting on knowing what your Critic knows. By doing this, you are overcoming your fear of criticism by moving towards it.
- Soon, you will hear something that you didn't know you knew. Some truth about yourself that is new. This is the surprise; this is the diamond.
- Allow yourself a moment to absorb this. It is deeply precious. You have earned it. Breathe...



See if you can agree on a plan with your Inner Critic, to be able to use this diamond in your life. This may take a little while, but I'm ready to bet it will change your life and how you live it from now on.

How did you feel in this exercise?

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Did you manage to identify your Inner Critic?

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Did you have an interaction, and how was it?

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**“ONE DOES NOT  
BECOME ENLIGHTENED  
BY IMAGINING FIGURES  
OF LIGHT, BUT BY  
MAKING THE DARKNESS  
CONSCIOUS.”**

**CARL GUSTAV JUNG**  
1875-1961



MODULE 5

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USING  
ANGER AS  
A FUEL FOR  
TRANSFOR-  
MATION

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## **USING ANGER AS A FUEL FOR TRANSFORMATION**

There's no doubt that we're being faced by the challenges of our time - man-made financial, societal and environmental crises - that seem to get worse. Many people feel angry today, that pandemics are spreading like wildfire, that waste is polluting our oceans, that little is being done about global warming, and that human beings are harming the planet and each other.

**“USE YOUR INTELLIGENCE AND MAKE NOTE OF YOUR MENTAL REACTIONS. WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY, YOU ARE ANIMATED BY A BLIND ENERGY THAT ECLIPSES THE ASTONISHING HUMAN ABILITY TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN WHAT IS TRUE AND WHAT IS FALSE.”**

**HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA**  
A Call for Revolution

The people I love and admire are those who have transformed anger into courage - the courage to act, to do something however small or grand, to change what seems overwhelming. I revere those who speak out about what is clearly wrong, and face any criticism they get from vested interests. I respect those who find good practical solutions and get on with carrying them out. In this time of confusion, I love and admire their courage and their wisdom.

And why do I love them? Because I believe that's what we all are, underneath the surface. We are all made of love, every single body is a miracle, everything we might not like is ultimately capable of transformation, and every time we look at a flower or a tree, all we see is love at work.





## SO, HERE'S HOW TO BUILD THE SKILL:

Anger is like gasoline. If you spray it out over people and then light a match, there will be an inferno. People will get hurt.

But if you put it in your engine, as a fuel contained in a carburettor, it can drive you forward. It can enable you to pick yourself up when everything goes wrong. It can get you up in the morning when you feel too tired to go on facing the music.

So we need to be constantly aware of our anger, constantly keeping it inside, and constantly *cleaning it*. By that I mean watching carefully to see that the anger is not personalised, that it is not directed at an individual, but at an action, at some wrong that is being done.

Then it will be clean, and can cut through the rationalisations and explanations, and can demand change. That is anger working on behalf of love.

This module links closely to Module 2, on Listening. Why? Because when we're in a confrontation and able to listen for our opponent's fears and pain, we are suddenly able to make a shift, and not react. One wise friend of mine says:

*"the only thing that can change my mind, is my heart."*



Louise Bourgeois, whose vast bronze and steel arachnid was the first to grace the Tate Modern when it opened in London in 2000. In her work, anger was a way of responding to fear: it was generative. Early critics were disturbed by the rage in her works, yet she created some of the most powerful sculptures of her time, and as understanding developed, it has been recognised that "anger was not a restraint but a driving force for Bourgeois."



# “ANY PROGRESS IS A LOT OF PROGRESS WHEN REDUCING FEAR. BE PATIENT.”

**SHEVA CARR AND ROBERT BROWNING**

Here's what happened to me one day in August 2020. I had had a terrible disagreement on the phone with one of my closest friends. I was left seething with frustration, accusation, self-pity, and red-hot fury. There was a ball of pain in my solar plexus. I could not face doing anything 'constructive' like going for a walk or working in my garden.

Eventually I sat down to ask myself "What is at the root of my fury?" and what came next was an entire surprise to me. I can only suggest that the "answers" below - while clear and cogent - must have been coming from my higher self or guide.

**Me:** "What is at the root of my fury?"

**Answer:** *Not getting what you wanted. Unreliable friends. Facing loneliness...?*

**Me:** "But what am I supposed to learn from this?"

**Answer:** *Re-learn where your centre of gravity is.*

**Me:** "What?... What IS my centre of gravity?"

**Answer:** *Base on the ground, direct line vertical to the infinite.*

**Me:** "What does the infinite really mean, what does it give?"

**Answer:** *Global view. See what's actually happening. Lift your sights.*

**Me:** "When I look, I see all this PAIN... terrified pregnant migrants in dinghies on the channel. Lebanese people blasted when they have nothing, searching for their children. Why? When it's not their fault. Their rulers are corrupt. Why should innocent people



suffer so much? I want to know what it means!"

**Answer:** *What do we all have to change, to live harmoniously? Let go of your ego. Dissolve 'me', 'mine' and 'what I need'... including judgments.*

**Me:** "But that's what women do, habitually. Then others will just take advantage, take more... what progress is that?"

**Answer:** *The need, the anger, the revenge, needs to be held in your own energy, quietly, until it changes. It will.*

**Me:** "OK. I'm holding it in my solar plexus... (pause) I feel confronted with my need for friends, fear of aloneness, my need to be needed, my need to be a 'teacher', to be 'right', to be popular. If I watch those needs now, they feel like they're going round in a tumble-drier... (pause). Then I find I want to do something normal like 'go for a walk'... (pause). Who with? Then I find I want to come out with "Would 'I' be enough? Go for a walk just with 'me'?"

**Answer:** *Who is the 'me' you'd like to go for a walk with?*

**Me:** "When I realise these pushes and pulls, what's left in the middle is a sort of pillar, like a Greek column, but silvery and standing firm.

**Answer:** *Is it outside you or inside? Do you lean against it, or are you it?*

**Me:** "It's the 'connector' between earth (grounded) and heaven (infinite) that we humans are born to be, to live as. But I don't quite feel like 'it' yet because it is stone and smooth and solid, and doesn't seem to move. It's too smooth to climb."

**Answer:** *Just try 'being' it for a moment.*

**Me:** "I felt hands reaching up to heaven to bring down gifts, and feet drawing nourishment from the ground."

**Answer:** *Where's the heart? You got the nourishment coming up and the magic gifts coming down - what's in the middle?*

**Me (astonished):** "A roaring fiery furnace of love, transmuting, burning up smallness, powering engines, a whole glorious mechanism for being human, supported by my Mother the earth, and gifted by my Father sky."



**YOUR FIFTH MODULE EXERCISE IS QUITE BRISK AND SHORT, BUT IT HAS TO WAIT FOR THE NEXT TIME YOU FEEL ANGRY:**

So, as soon as you feel furious, seething (or 'just plain irritated' will do),

- Feel the fury, the anger, the irritation.

- Where is it in your body? \_\_\_\_\_

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- Go somewhere where you are alone and can't be heard, and belt it out. Swear, curse, yell, jump up and down, moan, shriek, pound your fists.

- Now come back to this book and ask yourself "What am I supposed to learn from this?"

- Go quiet. Listen.

- Listen again (the voice of truth often speaks in a whisper).

- Write down what the voice of truth said: \_\_\_\_\_

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- All of it: \_\_\_\_\_

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Act on it. It's fuel for your engine.

**"TELL ME, WHAT IS  
IT YOU PLAN TO DO  
WITH YOUR ONE WILD  
AND PRECIOUS LIFE?"**

**MARY OLIVER**



MODULE 6

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# DEVELOPING PRESENCE

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## DEVELOPING PRESENCE

Today many magazines and news outlets feature "presence" to mean the effect you make when you enter a room, connecting it to glamour, pzazz, charisma, and a fair bit of *pretence...*

**Pretence** is not the point.

The point is to help you build **PRESENCE** - the quality that will enable you to be so fully present is a crisis - could be a family fight, a boardroom brawl, or a knife fight in the street - that you will remain *grounded*. Being grounded means you are not seized by fear or anger [because you have already faced your own fear frequently in your inner work, Module 4, and your anger, Module 5]. Instead you know how to breathe and remain calm enough to see what is needed in the situation.

Breath. This is the key ingredient to use when we want to return to our centre of gravity, to become balanced and be present. It only takes 5 minutes to practice, so that it becomes an automatic reflex when the crisis occurs suddenly. If you practise two or three times a day, it will give you a sense of ease and confidence, so that when exterior pressures become heavy or distracting, your breath can quickly enable you to return to your own true wisdom.

### SO, HERE'S HOW TO BUILD THE SKILL:

Sit comfortably with legs and arms uncrossed, feet on the ground.

It's very simple:

Breathe in for a count of 5,

pause for a moment,

breathe out for a count of 6,

pause for a moment.

*Repeat as often as you have time for.*

When you have got used to doing the breathing, I find it helpful and inspiring to memorise this short poem, used daily by alert, aware people all over the world:

*I tune inward to the subtle frequency of silence.*

*The vibrations of truth are the highest, most subtle vibrations.*



*I let silence fill my mind... and rest for a moment in the truth of my existence.*

*I become aware that there is an eternal view of me,  
beyond my present state,  
showing me the breadth and depth of myself.*

*I begin to see the truth of myself,  
the qualities inside that run deep and true,  
that have been with me always,  
that endure even in hard times.*

*The truth of me is... beautiful.*<sup>06</sup>

This last line was very hard for me to say, for a long time.  
I hope you can get used to it too.

06  
This meditation  
is courtesy of the  
Brahma Kumaris  
[www.brahmakumaris.org](http://www.brahmakumaris.org)

### **How Presence works in a crisis - two stories for you:**

The first is from the US in the summer of 2020. During the Black Lives Matter protest in Flint, Michigan, County Sheriff Chris Swanson ordered his deputies to lower their batons and joined in a peaceful protest on May 30. The group was demonstrating against systemic racism re-surfacing through the killing of George Floyd, who died in police custody in Minneapolis in May 25.

"We want to be with y'all for real. I want to make this a parade, not a protest," Swanson said. "These cops love you. You tell us what you need (us) to do." He then was greeted with chants of "walk with us", and he shouted "let's walk", motioning to the road.<sup>07</sup> Flint protests remained largely peaceful.

The second is from 2003, shortly after the invasion of Iraq. US Lieutenant Colonel Chris Hughes was leading his men down a street in Najaf, in the days when US soldiers could still go on foot in the streets. Suddenly people came pouring out of the houses lining the street, surrounding the troops. These local people were furiously angry, screaming and waving their fists. The heavily armed soldiers, most of them still in their teens

07  
A Parade, Not a Protest': Genesee County Sheriff Joins Black Lives Matter March in Flint, Storyful, 1.6.2020.

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/news/michigan/2020/05/31/a-parade-not-a-protest-genesee-county-sheriff-marches-with-flint-demonstrators-in-support/>  
(it's a little down the page on this link).

Or direct on Facebook with this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/avissword/videos/3486864431342904/?t=70>





and speaking no Arabic, had no idea what was happening. Chris Hughes instantly strode into the middle of the crowd, raised his rifle above his head, pointed the barrel at the ground, and shouted an order to his men that they had never heard in their lives before: "KNEEL". The bewildered troops, burdened by their heavy body armour, wobbled to the ground and pointed their rifles into the sand. The crowd quieted in disbelief, and there was absolute stillness for some two minutes. And then the crowd dispersed.

This gesture of respect averted a bloodbath; no-one was killed, no weapons were needed, no shots were fired, no revenge was required.<sup>05</sup>

Most of the research and the action I have seen in half a century shows me that the main cause of fighting is humiliation. And the best antidote to humiliation is respect, as demonstrated here by a US policeman, and an American serving officer. The keys to successful prevention of armed violence, I would suggest, are speed of reaction, showing respect, and demonstrating the presence of a mighty heart.

05  
From the introduction to *The Business Plan for Peace* (2018), abridged from an article by Dan Baum in the *New Yorker*, 17 January 2005.

**"WHAT DOES THE HEART EXACTLY SIGNIFY? CALL IT BY ANY NAME, GOD, SELF, THE HEART OR CONSCIOUSNESS, IT IS ALL THE SAME. THE POINT TO BE GRASPED IS THIS, THAT HEART MEANS THE VERY CORE OF ONE'S BEING, THE CENTRE, WITHOUT WHICH THERE IS NOTHING WHATEVER. THE HEART IS NOT PHYSICAL, IT IS SPIRITUAL... THE HEART IS THE CENTRE FROM WHICH EVERYTHING SPRINGS."**



## SO HERE'S THE EXERCISE FOR YOUR SIXTH MODULE:

Nicholas Janni who has been delivering transformational leadership development to leaders and teams worldwide for over fifteen years, says: "The quality of a person's *Presence* is a fundamental part of his or her capacity to listen to, engage and inspire people... Working with presence brings individuals and teams into a much higher coherence of mind, heart and body, and opens powerful levels of connectedness and energy. It becomes the foundation for new ways of navigating complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty, transforming them into valuable gateways rather than obstacles. Previously unimagined levels of insight, creativity and innovation naturally open."

In order to develop your own Presence, we can recommend two short meditations offered by Nicholas. His wisdom can take us deeply into the body-felt awareness of presence. I suggest you do the short 5-minute meditation every morning: <https://www.nicholasjanni.com/5-minutes/> and the 15-minute meditation every evening for a week: <https://www.nicholasjanni.com/15-minute-meditation/>

My sense of my own Presence today:

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After a week has elapsed, what's my sense of my own Presence now:

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**“THERE ARE MOMENTS  
WHEN ONE HAS TO  
CHOOSE BETWEEN  
LIVING ONE’S OWN  
LIFE FULLY, ENTIRELY,  
COMPLETELY - OR  
DRAGGING OUT SOME  
FALSE, SHALLOW,  
DEGRADING EXISTENCE  
THAT THE WORLD IN  
ITS HYPOCRISY  
DEMANDS.”**

**OSCAR WILDE**



MODULE 7

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RIGHT BRAIN  
INTELLIGENCE  
TO BREAK  
THE CYCLE OF  
VIOLENCE

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## RIGHT BRAIN INTELLIGENCE TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

Nowadays everyone has heard of Emotional Intelligence (known as EQ), first identified and researched by Daniel Goleman. He has highlighted the importance of EQ and how it has supplanted IQ as the marker of real success in work and leadership. Now a new intelligence is making itself known. At this time of crisis and 'Strong-man' sabre-rattling, it is no coincidence that this new intelligence - called Right Brain Intelligence or YQ - is increasingly used to prevent and defuse the violence many people are experiencing, be it mental, emotional or physical.

Time to offer some background on the word 'Yin' that we often use in contrast to the word 'Yang'. The *yin yang* symbol shows a balance between two opposites making a whole (with a portion of the opposite element in each). Taoist metaphysics has a way of seeing the world and all that is in it as a balance of complementary opposites - night and day, winter and summer, male and female, heat and cold. So, the duality of *yin and yang* is an indivisible whole, there is always some yin in yang and vice versa.

YQ is, of course, available equally to men as to women and all gender identities. There is a growing recognition from all quarters that left-brain, linear (Yang) reasoning is inadequate to engage with the complexity of today's globalised world. Many observers, such as James Arbib and Tony Seba,<sup>09</sup> conclude that linear reasoning has been a major cause of the crises we face today. A desire for rebalancing is gaining ground. YQ is now emerging as providing the necessary qualities for a world that is networked, complex, uncertain and volatile. YQ wisdom and intelligence includes empathy, compassion, collaboration, deep listening skills, using our intuition, inclusivity, caring for the planet that sustains us, and replacing the notion of 'power over' with the use of 'power with' - for example mediation to resolve conflicts.

09  
'Rethinking Humanity' published by the RethinkX Project, 2020 <https://www.rethinkx.com/humanity/download>

## CURRENT EXAMPLES OF RIGHT BRAIN INTELLIGENCE AT WORK AT NATIONAL LEVELS

The example that follows features women leaders using YQ, although as I have said, any of us can access it. Early in the pandemic, examples of true leadership came from presidents and prime ministers of Iceland, Taiwan, Germany, New Zealand, Finland and Denmark, where women stepped up to show the world an

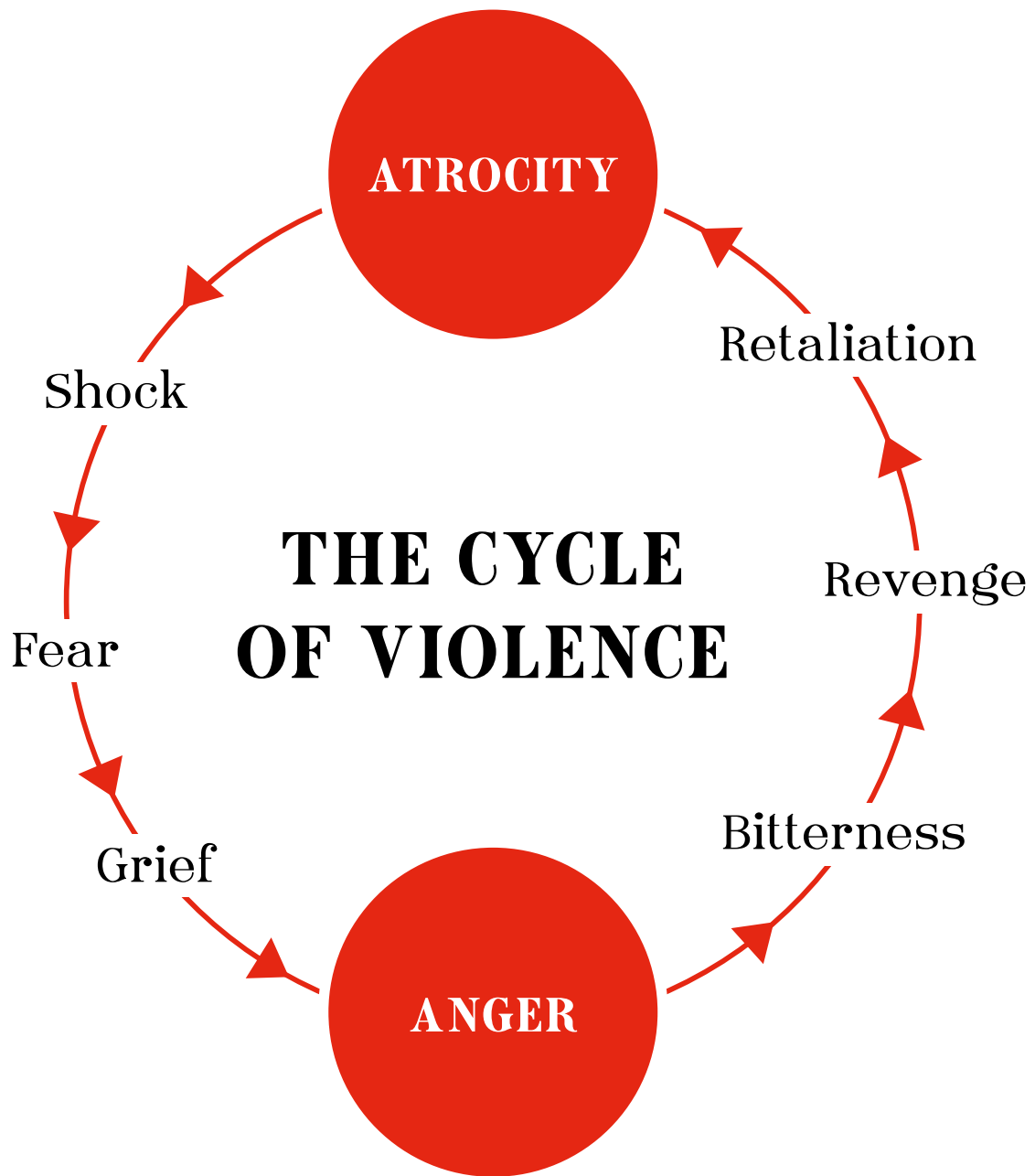


10  
Avivah Witten-  
berg Cox: What Do  
Countries With The  
Best Coronavirus  
Responses Have In  
Common? Women  
Leaders' Forbes,  
April 13, 2020.

attractive alternative way of wielding power, while keeping their national death tolls the lowest in the world. Angela Merkel calmly asked the German public to "take it seriously" and they did. Testing began right from the get-go. At the first sign of the new illness in January 2020, Tsai Ing-wen in Taiwan introduced 124 measures to block the spread without having to resort to the lockdowns that have become common elsewhere. Norway's Prime Minister, Erna Solberg, had the innovative idea of using television to talk directly to her country's children, holding a dedicated press conference where no adults were allowed. She responded to kids' questions from across the country, taking time to explain why it was **OK to feel scared**. The originality and obviousness of the idea takes one's breath away. How many other simple, humane innovations would more female leadership unleash? <sup>10</sup>

This translates into a United Nations initiative to enable more qualified women to take their place in negotiating peace agreements. Why? When women are included in peace processes, there is a 35 percent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years longer. Why? Because male negotiators (often previous combatants) are primarily concerned with territory, resources and positions of power, while women bring to the table the concerns of orphans, the injured, the bereaved and the traumatised. When these issues are addressed, the result is that the cycle of violence can be more effectively interrupted and turned around.

The cycle needs to be interrupted before anger turns to bitterness, revenge and retaliation. The system can be calmed and the cycle can be stopped from repeating. Those who have developed YQ need to be encouraged to come forward when mediation is required. Very often such people under-estimate their qualities and need to be 'proposed', so it's helpful when those aware of their skills can bring their bio or CV to the notice of those trying to prevent or resolve conflict. All experience to date shows that anyone with these skills can make a big difference. In formal negotiations they can bring the local experience required for particular situations.







11  
The Women and Foreign Policy Program of the US Council on Foreign Relations reported in 2020 that including women at the peace table produces better outcomes, but women are often excluded from formal peace processes. "We found that between 1992 and 2019, women constituted, on average, 13 percent of negotiators, 6 percent of mediators, and 6 percent of signatories in major peace processes around the world. Nearly seven out of every ten peace processes still did not include women as mediators or signatories."

12  
WeMove Europe is an independent and values-based organisation that seeks to build people power to transform Europe in the name of our community, future generations and the planet.  
<https://www.wemove.eu/why-we-need-act>

When both men and women access and express their Right Brain Intelligence fully, a healthy balance will be restored in our workplaces and in public governance. Decisions will be made based on both data and intuition, our interactions will be enlivened by both competition and compassion, our workplaces enriched by both discernment and inclusivity, listening will be valued as much as speaking in the boardroom. People will come to understand the value of the fundamental *interdependence* of all genders. Business, the law, politics, the media, the arts - all will be the better for the rebalancing impact of Right Brain Intelligence. <sup>11</sup>

*"European leadership is based on a system of domination of power by men. This is not about the actions of individual men, but a deeply entrenched and flawed system. It is based on the values of competition, control and hierarchy and it replicates itself over time. Women, people of colour, youth and many others are missing from the leadership picture. It is said that doing the same things over and over again and expecting a different outcome is the definition of insanity. But so too is doing the same things with the same people and expecting a different outcome. New kinds of leadership can lead to the emergence of different ideas and outcomes."*<sup>12</sup>



## SO, HERE'S HOW TO BUILD THE SKILL:

The YQ skill-set includes many of those already discussed, including deep listening, non-confrontational communication, taming your Inner Critic, and using anger as a fuel rather than as an explosive device. So you are off to a good start.

The skill included here is the skill of using your intuition. The biggest mistakes I have made in my life have been when I over-rode my intuition, relying instead on my brain. So the secret is to notice what's going on inside you, seeing where your internal decision-making is taking place:

- When you have to make a decision, or take a course of action, pause before you jump.
- Let your senses calm down, give your brain a break, and look inside for where you probably have what we commonly call a *hunch*.
- Listen, as Mac Macartney says, *carefully*.
- Your hunch may situate itself in your gut (as in "I have a gut feeling that...") or in your heart.
- Breathe slowly and allow this hunch a bit of space, let it flower.
- Allow yourself to express it, however haltingly, to yourself or to another person who is involved. Don't feel self-conscious, because some of the world's greatest physics problems have been solved by nothing more than what started as a hunch.
- This may be your personal Eureka moment. Honour it.

The age we are living through desperately needs people with the skills of Right Brain Intelligence and any one of us can develop them. But in order to do that we have to wake up. Waking up means more than mindfulness or meditation. It means staying highly aware of what's happening in the moment. That means not just what's happening to you, but what's happening to all of those around you.

Intuition and all the other aspects of Right Brain Intelligence, as well as the implications for *policy development* now are set out in a longer version of this book in chapter 6 on **How the future could be, given our current potential...**



One day soon after I moved into a new house, I opened what I thought was an empty cupboard, and out rolled an ancient-looking scroll. It turned out to be a picture of Kwan Yin the Chinese goddess of compassion, worshipped all over China, and currently over many parts of Asia. I tried to get a translation of the script that appears down the right side of the scroll, but my Chinese friends said it was too ancient for them to decipher.



I was mesmerised by the picture of this calm, poised woman with her bare feet standing steady on the spiky back of a great red dragon, thrashing his way through a raging storm. I knew that in China the red dragon represents supernatural power, wisdom, strength, and hidden knowledge. Over the years it has gradually dawned on me that this picture is so magnetic because it shows graphically how Yin and Yang can work in harmony.

I asked why is she holding a willow wand and apparently pouring fluid into the sea, and in the direction of the dragon's mouth? It turns out that willow signifies healing, and that what she is pouring is ... compassion.



**HERE'S THE EXERCISE FOR YOUR SEVENTH MODULE:**

Please write down what Right Brain Intelligence means to you:

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When did you last apply Right Brain Intelligence?

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**“THE CORE OF THE QUAKER TRADITION IS A WAY OF INWARD SEEKING WHICH LEADS TO OUTWARD ACTS OF INTEGRITY AND SERVICE. FRIENDS ARE MOST IN THE SPIRIT WHEN THEY STAND AT THE CROSSING POINT OF THE INWARD AND THE OUTWARD LIFE.”**

**PARKER**  
Quaker Faith and Practice 10/19



A series of 28 horizontal lines for writing notes, spaced evenly down the page.

MODULE 8

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BUILDING

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THE

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MIGHTY

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HEART

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## BUILDING THE MIGHTY HEART

The challenges that are facing us now, as humans, are massive. Experts warn that if we do not change our habits in very significant ways, the human race may not survive.

Wise people feel that, rather than just being a threat, the gravity of the situation we now face is a vast invitation to us, to *wake up*. Pandemics are jolting us in that direction - to slow down, to look around and see how we're living, to stop consuming, to spend more time in nature, to think of others and help them, to take action. Daily, we're being faced by situations that stretch us - systems that no longer work, colleagues losing their jobs, older people who are lonely and terrified, teenagers who feel suicidal, children having nightmares, people hungry and homeless.

In all these situations we could simply shrug, and the mind could rationalise: "It's just how it is..." or "It'll be solved somehow..."

Alternatively, we could look into the heart instead of the mind. You or I could ask our heart, "What can I do, in this unprecedented moment in history?" "How can I be useful?" "How can I be of service?" Try it. Put your attention in your chest and see how it feels when you ask the question.

Such questions demand an openness to possibility, and awareness of potential and quite a sturdy sense of purpose - in other words, all that's contained in the Mighty Heart that you have been building. This is a heart that is willing to stretch, to expand, to imagine, to be available.

## TAKING THE HEART FOR GRANTED

For much of my life I couldn't really feel my heart. I knew it was there of course, sometimes I could hear it beating, and I was vaguely grateful that it kept on doing its job. Only later did I really begin to feel my heart. I'm not talking about heart breaks (plenty of those) or heart stopping moments (plenty of those too), but actually sensing the power of my heart. Gaining this knowledge was quite a lot to do with an organisation called HeartMath.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup>  
<https://www.heart-math.com/science/>



I was helped by HeartMath and here's what I learned from HeartMath:

- Most of us have been taught to assume that the heart is constantly responding to 'orders' sent by the brain in the form of neural signals.
- But it is now known that the *heart actually sends more signals to the brain* than the brain sends to the heart!
- Moreover, these heart signals have a significant effect on brain function - influencing emotional processing as well as higher cognitive faculties such as attention, perception, memory and problem-solving.
- In other words, not only does the heart respond to the brain, but the brain continuously responds to the heart.

14  
<https://www.heartmath.com/blog/health-and-wellness/taking-care-of-yourself-and-each-other/>

I was amazed. I have now learned that the heart is a source of wisdom, spiritual insight, thought, and emotion, and that really putting out love and compassionate care benefits not only the health of others, but your own *health*.<sup>14</sup> I learned this from my very dear friends Sheva Carr and Robert Browning. Sheva is the architect and Director of HeartMath's HeartMastery Program, and CEO of Heart Ambassadors, and Robert is Co-Director for HeartMath Healthcare and a Senior Master Trainer, having trained more than 10,000 individuals in heart-based living.

15  
The Pocket Project was founded in 2016 by the spiritual teacher Thomas Huebl and the Israeli artist Yehudit Sasportas. Its mission is to contribute to the healing of collective and intergenerational trauma, and to reduce its disruptive effects on our global culture.  
<https://thomashuebl.com/about/pocket-project/>

The real strength needed for world-change today demands that we grow our hearts. This may first entail:

- *Cleaning House*: for example owning up to our part in family anguish. A big growth process for the heart is in healing the traumas that may have been passed down through generations. These very traumas may now be ready for us to trace them, look into them, and allow them to transform. For expert help in this you might go to Thomas Huebl's Pocket Project<sup>15</sup> or you might work individually with Nicholas Janni using his exceptional transformational coaching.<sup>16</sup>
- *Shedding trivia*: For the heart to grow it needs time and attention. So we need to make space and concentrate on what expands and nourishes us, not what merely distracts.
- *Hearing your heart*: most of the time I still take my heart for granted. Yet when I listen to it, it's like Rumi's *breezes at dawn*, it has secrets to tell me: basic truths - some hard to hear - as well as wondrous, exquisite, shining insights.

16  
<https://www.nicholasjanni.com/transformational-coaching/>





**“DO NOT TRY TO SAVE THE  
WHOLE WORLD OR DO ANYTHING  
GRANDIOSE.  
INSTEAD, CREATE A CLEARING IN  
THE DENSE FOREST OF YOUR LIFE  
AND WAIT THERE PATIENTLY, UNTIL  
THE SONG THAT IS YOUR LIFE FALLS  
INTO YOUR OWN CUPPED HANDS AND  
YOU RECOGNISE AND GREET IT.  
ONLY THEN WILL YOU KNOW HOW  
TO GIVE YOURSELF TO THIS WORLD  
SO WORTHY OF RESCUE.”**

**MARTHA POSTLEWAITE**

*Daily practice*

This work of heart expansion and transformation cannot be done without some kind of daily practice. Why? Because that is the only way you can really become self-aware. This is like developing a helicopter hovering above your head, noticing *what you're really up to!* Daily practice gives you the self-knowledge that is the strength and insight needed transform conflict.

Self-awareness and self-reflection is what Mandela developed in 27 years on Robben Island. It enabled him to treat his jailers with dignity and respect, and eventually he and his fellow inmates taught the illiterate guards to read, write and study. When he was released, it enabled him not only to listen to the leaders of a vicious regime, but to persuade his colleagues, who had suffered so cruelly under that government, to negotiate political transformation rather than resort to civil war. To do that, they had to grow mighty hearts.



That's what's being asked of us now. To grow.

It is peculiarly difficult to express in words what happens in meditation. I recently found this exquisite description by Tim Parks in his very funny book *Teach Us To Sit Still*. The first half of the book is attractive to his male readers who may be concerned about their aging masculinity and prostate problems - which is an intelligent way of engaging them in meditation in the second half of the book. This is when his real genius emerges, when he finds words to articulate what can actually happen in meditation:

*"But, as words and thought are eased out of the mind, the self weakens...." "Self, as it turns out, is an idea we invented, a story we tell ourselves. It needs language to survive...." "...but here, for a little while, there is no story, no rhetoric, no deceit. Here is silence and acceptance; the pleasure of space that need not be imbued with meaning.. Intensely aware of the flesh, the breath, the blood, consciousness allows the 'I' to slip away."*<sup>17</sup>

17  
Tim Parks, *Teach Us  
To Sit Still*, Vintage,  
2011, p.330

## SO, HERE'S YOUR EIGHTH EXERCISE

1. If you don't yet have a daily practice, you need one. Investigate the following possibilities:

- Walking in nature, very slowly, noticing your breathing, your mind and your surroundings. Try to keep the noticing going for 5 minutes at a time, and then do it again. It feels expansive, grounding, very nice.
- Thich Nhat Hanh is a Vietnamese Thiền Buddhist monk, peace activist, and founder of the Plum Village Tradition. He has published many, many books. Try *The Miracle of Mindfulness* - now available in audiobook.
- Yoga of different kinds...
- Qi-gong (pronounced chee-gong) is an ancient Chinese exercise and healing technique that involves meditation, controlled breathing and movement exercises. [Tai chi, a widely practiced mind-body exercise, is sometimes referred to as a form of qi gong.] I'm no expert, but there is a simple 5 minute sitting meditation here, that might be a place to start:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdFjs2sFWLQ>



- Pema Chodron is an extraordinary Buddhist nun, author of many deeply helpful books, including: *How to Meditate: A Practical Guide to Making Friends with Your Mind* and *When things fall apart: heart advice for difficult times.*
- HeartMath offer 'First guided practice' 'Quick coherence technique' 'Inner Stillness' and many other reliable, easy, friendly ways to learn: <https://www.heartmath.com/blog/heartmath-tech/new-guided-heart-meditations/>

2. If you do already have a daily practice, or when you establish one, it helps to write down the following:

My self-awareness practice is \_\_\_\_\_

I do this every day at \_\_\_\_\_

I sometimes find it hard to keep a routine because \_\_\_\_\_

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What I discover by doing it is \_\_\_\_\_

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It gives me joy because \_\_\_\_\_

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MODULE 9

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TAKING  
A STAND

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## TAKING A STAND

This module is a good example of how the heart can stretch and grow. Think about the kind of challenge you may have to face - for example when you know you must stand up in a meeting and own your deepest values, not shared by others there. Or when you have to say something difficult to an employer, a teacher or even to a colleague. That's precisely when we forget to breathe, our brain freezes up, we can't find the right words, and we feel fragile - instead of steady and grounded. When I tried to do this with nuclear policy makers in the early days, I made all these mistakes - I stumbled and blushed and lost my train of thought - and often gave myself a very hard time afterwards.

### **So, here's how to build the skill:**

First, get clear about three or four things you want to say. **Write them down.** Keep it simple, and give an example of what you mean. Practice the words in front of a mirror, **out loud if you can.** Note your posture, note the tone of your voice. Is that how you want to sound? Practice being who you really are. *Your strong authentic self.*

Just before the event, go somewhere quiet and take a few moments to simply breathe deeply, because this will enable blood to flow to your brain, and your voice will deepen, giving you authority. When you meet, keep breathing.

If at all possible, stand up to speak. Ground your feet on the floor as if you were standing on bare earth, and pull energy up through your body with deep breaths.

Know that you are taking a stand for others as well as yourself, for fairness, for better understanding. Deliver what you have to say, looking calmly at the person you wish to influence. Then listen to what they say in response, listen with ease and openness. This can lead to a useful dialogue, instead of a bitter stand-off.

Your courage and clarity will make you a good leader, because you will have enabled good communication to take place.

It can be hard to tell the unpalatable truth if you are a member of the establishment; hard too if you are an outsider and want them to take your views on board. If you do, it is often perceived as trouble-making - which means you become marked out as "not one of us", which means you don't get invited to important meetings, which means no-one even hears what you have got to say. *But if you don't tell the truth,* you betray yourself and possibly also the future of



your company or organisation, or your family for that matter. Quite a trap, for all concerned - a trap for the establishment because if the truth is never told, decisions progressively deteriorate, and the emperor ends up going around without his clothes. Remember the story in Module 1 about how a small group got organised on the issue of single use plastics, and amplified the voices of people across Europe to speak truth to power in their own languages and on their own terms? In 2019, they got a new EU law passed, banning some of the worst offender plastics in the whole EU.<sup>15</sup>

18

<https://www.wemove.eu/why-we-need-act>

In the 1980s and 1990s I frequently felt like Daniel in the lion's den, having often been made to feel like a pariah when I wanted to ask a question about secrecy and lack of accountability in British defence decision-making. Once I was invited to Britain's main military think tank to witness their discussion of Britain's new Trident nuclear weapons system. It was held in the huge Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, with an audience of about 200 senior men from the military, the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office. There were only six women present, besides me, all of them in uniform. (I was later told that once when a woman appeared at one of these meetings, a senior military officer remarked loudly: "There's a woman! Who is she? Is she somebody's wife?"). The discussion turned to the costings for the new system. I knew from our studies in Oxford Research Group that the costs of decommissioning the weapons had not been included in the estimates. At a certain point, I knew I must raise this, as it was a very significant omission in terms of the millions of pounds needed to deal with the uranium and plutonium, lethal to all life on earth for thousands of years. So I put my hand up. I needed to preface my question with two sentences of explanation as to why it was so important. Before I even finished one sentence, the chairman banged his gavel hard and shouted "QUESTION!" I shook. I blushed. I stammered out my question: "Why have the de-commissioning costs of the new system been left out?" Total silence. And then "SIT DOWN, madam." I was so shaken and disoriented that I'm afraid to say I did. I did sit down. At the lunch break I was shunned, given a wide berth by every person in the room.



Afterwards it took me a long while to absorb the shock, the shame I felt for not having stood my ground, and the shuddering anger deep inside - that my countrymen could not own up to a lie being perpetrated, not just on British voters, but on the future of the planet.

**“THOUGH I AM GONE, I URGE YOU TO ANSWER THE HIGHEST CALLING OF YOUR HEART AND STAND UP FOR WHAT YOU TRULY BELIEVE.”**

**SENATOR JOHN LEWIS**

The US civil rights leader who died on July 17 2020

**SO HERE'S THE EXERCISE FOR YOUR NINTH MODULE:**

1. Please write down, right now on this page, notes of a courageous conversation you want to have: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Before you go into the meeting where you feel you must say something challenging, stand in front of the mirror. Practice the words you plan to say, out loud. [Before you start, you could make yourself laugh by anxiously trying to assert your points, with squeaky voice and nervous hands, holding your breath.] Then breathe, see yourself actually standing on the ground, feet firmly planted and feeling the energy going upwards through the body,





MODULE 10

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BEING

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IN

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SERVICE

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## BEING IN SERVICE

Here's where we come to the final module of your course. This is where you get the full reward for all the work you've done so far. Time to review:

- You have identified what breaks your heart, and thought about the skills you can apply to that passion, and the friends who might join you;
- You have delved deep into the results that can come from transforming a conflict by listening;
- You have absorbed the remarkable powers of non-confrontational communication;
- You have had the courage to meet your inner critic, and develop a dialogue with it, and gone on to meet your shadow;
- You realised that by cleaning up your anger, you can use it as fuel for transformation;
- You investigated how to develop the presence you might need for a crisis;
- You have begun to see how aspects of Right Brain Intelligence can break the cycle of violence;
- You are stretching and building your Mighty Heart through your regular daily practice;
- You know how you can prepare to take a stand for your values.

And now here we are, talking about service.

What does it mean, to 'be in service' to the world?

According to Richard Barrett <sup>19</sup>, service is the highest attribute of human being - higher than survival, higher than learning, higher even than making your way in the world. He says that a visionary leader (you) is living their purpose, creating new futures, taking a long-term perspective, using ethics, wisdom and social responsibility.

<sup>19</sup>  
Richard Barrett,  
The Metrics of  
Human Conscious-  
ness (London, Lulu  
Publishing Service),  
2015.

Being in service means being 100% present to what's needed in the moment. That means having a quiet ego so that your energy is attuned to others, not to you. That's where you will find your real friends, your allies, your combined power. *That's why you're here.*

What does this mean, 'having a quiet ego so that your energy is attuned to others, not to you?' In this age of constant consumption and 'me, me, me', it's rather delicious to be liberated *away* from that constant bombardment of 'what do I need?' *toward* the freedom of 'what's needed here, how can I be of use?'



If the mantra of last century was "What can I get?"

The mantra of this century has to be "**What can I give?**"

Your Mighty Heart, which you have been building steadily throughout this course, has already expanded. You will probably have observed that you are more generous in the way you listen, that you have more time and space for others, that you can get a perspective on your own suffering, that you can help prevent verbal or other types of violence, that you have a new idea of what growth really means. All this indicates that you are experiencing your own **Inner Power.**

Your own Inner Power is much needed in the world we live in, and for the challenges we still have to face. You now have the skills to help in the universal task of transforming conflict, whether it be in the home, at work, at your child's school, in your community or with your government. That means being alert to what is brewing, observing who is involved and what they may need, bridging the gaps between all those involved, engaging them in dialogue, helping to find imaginative ways forward.

As I'm sure you have noticed by now, all this requires one skill above all, and that is to breathe, to come from your heart, and to do whatever you do with love.

**"LIVING YOUR  
PURPOSE IN LIFE IS  
ONLY POSSIBLE IF  
YOU'RE IN SERVICE  
TO THE WORLD."**

**STEFFEN STÄUBER**



Being in service doesn't have to be grandiose; it can be very simple...

Here's what happened in my village during COVID 19 when the local primary school was shut down. The kids were getting a bit bored at home, and missing their friends. So I asked Jack, aged 6: "Would you like to learn to grow your very own beanstalk?" Jack said yes he very much would, and it so happened that he told his friends. The instruction was to go online on Zoom, with a plastic pot and some compost, the following Monday. Jack's mum whizzed around distributing bean seeds. At 2pm the following Monday, 16 children were glued to screens in their homes with their parents, some compost, a bean seed and a plant pot. As the elderly gardener I gave solemn instructions, stressing most particularly that each child must talk to their bean as they planted it, and then every day for a week, encouraging it to grow.

This they did. And at 2pm the following Monday they were jumping up and down at the sight of tiny shoots already peeking through the compost. And the following week we planted cress, and the following week we planted tomato seeds... and in no time their parents had been badgered into digging up the back yard. Gardens began to flourish all over the village, with the children teaching their parents the sudden vital importance of actually eating super greens - not to mention tottering towers of runner beans.



## SO HERE'S THE EXERCISE FOR YOUR TENTH MODULE:

All the great teachers say, in some way or another, that the secret of a Mighty Heart lies in the ability to love our own self. Paul Tillich calls it to be "capable of a great and merciful divine love towards ourselves"...

1. So please find any piece of nature - a flower if you can, or a fruit, or a leaf - and put it in front of you in a place where you can sit quietly for a few minutes.
2. Look at it and drink in its energy, its beauty, its perfection. This is the same quality as your own energy, your own beauty, your own perfection. Difficult to absorb, but please persist, and write what you make of it: \_\_\_\_\_

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3. As you do this, your shoulders will drop, your breath will slow, your eyes will soften, the corners of your mouth will tilt upwards, and you will find yourself smiling. This is the feeling of love in you, love for you. Have your words for this? \_\_\_\_\_

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What you're feeling, is love that does not depend on anyone else.

This is the feeling of your heart expanding. It is vital for your well-being, your health, your life. Because, if we don't have love in ourselves and for ourselves, how can we really - without neediness - love others?



**“HE WHO IS ABLE TO LOVE HIMSELF IS ABLE TO LOVE OTHERS ALSO; HE WHO HAS LEARNED TO OVERCOME SELF-CONTEMPT HAS OVERCOME HIS CONTEMPT FOR OTHERS.”**

PAUL TILLICH

This, dear friends, is the end of the course. We trust you have absorbed a lot, and that your practice will support all your relationships - at home, at work, in your community, in the world.

**The *Mighty Heart* is a running mate or 'twin' for the *Business Plan for Peace*,** because our experience, and that of all our colleagues over five decades, is that *those who have faced their own fear are the most effective peacebuilders*, able to achieve results in preventing and stopping armed violence.

**The unique contribution of both the *Business Plan for Peace* and the *Mighty Heart* lies in the realisation that inner work and self-awareness are essential ingredients in the transformation of conflict.**

This is why all our work in preventing war is based on self-knowledge, self-reflection and the willingness to examine our own darker sides. Our unique contribution is to maximise training for leaders - in business, government and particularly with young entrepreneurs - in these skills of preventing and transforming conflict. In this sense, the personal is most profoundly political.

**Mighty Heart follow-up course:**

There is the possibility of a follow-up course for graduates of the initial course to enable them to apply these skills in different situations. It will offer practical advice and actual steps you can follow for successfully handling the kind of situations you may find yourself in, whether in

- inter-personal conflicts,
- antagonism between groups,
- grassroots anger about top down decisions,
- international or inter-governmental conflicts.



**“WE NEED  
INDIVIDUALS LIKE  
DR. ELWORTHY TO  
START THE WORK  
OF PREVENTING WAR.  
THIS HAS BEEN MY  
PERSONAL DREAM  
FOR MANY YEARS.”**

**HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA**





## HOW THE FUTURE COULD BE, GIVEN OUR CURRENT POTENTIAL...

Even though there is currently so much suffering and so many vast challenges, globally a quiet energy appears to be rising. It is the Feminine, rising to achieve a new balance. The Feminine energy is subtle. It is beneath everything, the base energy, and what many people term the 'mother' energy. It is not loud, nor forceful, nor overbearing; it draws power from harmony. An example of this is the poised, calm conduct of female prime ministers during the pandemic, described in Module 7.

I prefer to call this energy Right Brain Intelligence, gradually coming into balance with Yang Intelligence and reasoning which has proved inadequate to engage with the complexity of today's globalised world. When in touch with Right Brain Intelligence, which is available equally to men as it is to women, we are blessed with incredible gifts, every one of us. Above all we have empathy for others. We can feel what's uppermost for other people. That sensitivity sometimes means we have to learn how to back off a bit, finding a way to maintain our own energy. But what if everybody had that awareness? Can you imagine a world in which people thought as much of other people as they think of themselves? That is the direction we're just starting to move in now, as Right Brain Intelligence takes hold.

## THE SKILLS OF RIGHT BRAIN INTELLIGENCE

Increasing numbers of women and men recognise and possess these skills. Here's the list:

- **Empathy** maximises *heart* energy, balancing the rationality of the mind by connecting it with the more powerful (and measurable) frequencies of the *heart*.<sup>20</sup> This develops a habit which allows a far greater width and depth of understanding - understanding of the other, of the self, and of the underlying emotive threads of any problem in question.
- **Compassion** goes one step further than empathy, in that it literally means "to suffer together". You could say that empathy is the *gateway*, and compassion is *the way*. It is the feeling that arises when you are confronted with the suffering of another, and feel motivated to relieve that suffering, *to take action* to help. Compassion embodies a tangible expression of love for those who are suffering.

<sup>20</sup> Heart rate variability (HRV), which is at the core of research conducted by the **HeartMath** Institute, is a **measure** of the naturally occurring beat-to-beat changes in heart rate/heart rhythms. It serves as a critical method for gauging human health and resiliency.



- **Deep Listening** is a key skill of Right Brain Intelligence. Giving another person your full attention is one of the greatest gifts you can offer, and this attention needs to be such that you can sense the emotions behind the words. This means that in an argument you can move from your brain, which says: "I'm right and you're wrong!" to your heart, which says: "Oh my goodness, is *that* how you feel...?" Deep listening is a key skill in transforming conflicts. Listening as a quality of interaction is very close to intuition (below), because the quiet intensity of really listening to another allows us to notice the intuitive voice, a voice that often gets drowned out by reaction, reason and argument.
- **Intuition** is the ability to understand something instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning. It is often felt as gut instinct, and because the body does not lie, it is reliable. Intuition is your immediate understanding of something; there's no need to think it over or get another opinion - *you just know*. Because of this, trusting your **intuition** is the ultimate act of trusting yourself. It is the 'gut brain' evolved over thousands of years, producing evolutionary information which has largely been lost to those immersed in the digital age.
- **Interconnectedness** stems from the understanding that humans are interdependent with and inseparable from each other and our environment. It motivates an urge to nurture and protect the planet and her resources. The arrogant celebration of 'man's conquest of nature' is replaced in Right Brain Intelligence by the realisation that we need to respect, protect, safeguard and help regenerate the planetary life of which we are a part. Humans can mirror the self-organising rules of biological systems, and can learn from Eastern philosophies that consistently underline the interconnectedness of everything.
- **Inclusivity** is the quality that means ensuring that the marginalised - the 'majority world' of those without a voice - are brought into decision-making. This can mean, as in the case of Germany's welcome of large numbers of refugees, confronting the anger of those who are afraid of diversity and would prefer to close borders and exclude those fleeing violence or persecution. This is the sharp end of inclusivity, but in small and large ways there are opportunities daily - to help and include rather than ignore or compete



with those who cross our path every day at work or in the street.

- **Regeneration**, as a quality of Right Brain Intelligence, is deeply concerned with the wounding of the Earth. Since it is grounded in the magnetic fields of Moon and Earth, it is often more accessible for those with a monthly reproductive cycle, which in turn can lead to the profoundly Yin experience of birth and motherhood. For the male, a choice must be made to attune to this connection with the rhythms of the Earth. Learning to care for young children - now more widely practised by all genders - depends on and maximises a multitude of skills associated with Right Brain Intelligence. When this happens, awareness goes out beyond concepts of sustainability, or corporate social responsibility policies that often fail to generate action. Indigenous leaders have long been telling us that decisions must be made not in the interests of the next quarterly figures but with the *interests of the next seven generations in mind*.

**OUR CHILDREN SHOULD GROW UP WITH THE IDEA THAT DIALOGUE, NOT VIOLENCE, IS THE BEST AND MOST PRACTICAL WAY TO SOLVE CONFLICTS. THE YOUNG GENERATIONS HAVE A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THE WORLD BECOMES A MORE PEACEFUL PLACE FOR ALL. BUT THIS CAN BECOME REALITY ONLY IF WE EDUCATE, NOT JUST THE BRAIN, BUT ALSO THE HEART.**



## **WHAT IF YOU WERE TO IMAGINE YOUR WORLD IN FIVE YEARS' TIME...**

### **Imagine.**

Imagine, for example, that the urgent need for a vaccine enables us humans to realise that this cannot be a competition, with nations racing against one another, for the simple reason that unless a vaccine is made available equally to all, rich and poor, immunity simply cannot work. The virus, for all its brutal reality, could turn out to be a great teacher.

Imagine that the lessons we have had to learn about travelling have taught us that we don't need to jump on an aeroplane just to be at a meeting. In fact, we can create a sensitive space for checking in when we meet online, asking each the question: "Now, how are you... REALLY?" (and not just responding, 'I'm fine'). In that way we learn more about our colleagues than we would rushing into a busy room on the tenth floor after struggling through immigration. So, we have the possibility to begin those meetings more attuned to how everyone is feeling. This makes for surprisingly different outcomes...

## **YOUR IMAGINATION, YOUR VISION, YOUR FUTURE**

Imagine a world of people relieved and overjoyed because their love for a world that is well once again has freed them from the fears which once fed and hosted the viruses of this world - both physical and emotional. Imagine a world which is settling into a kinder, more aware, more diverse and more caring 'normal'.

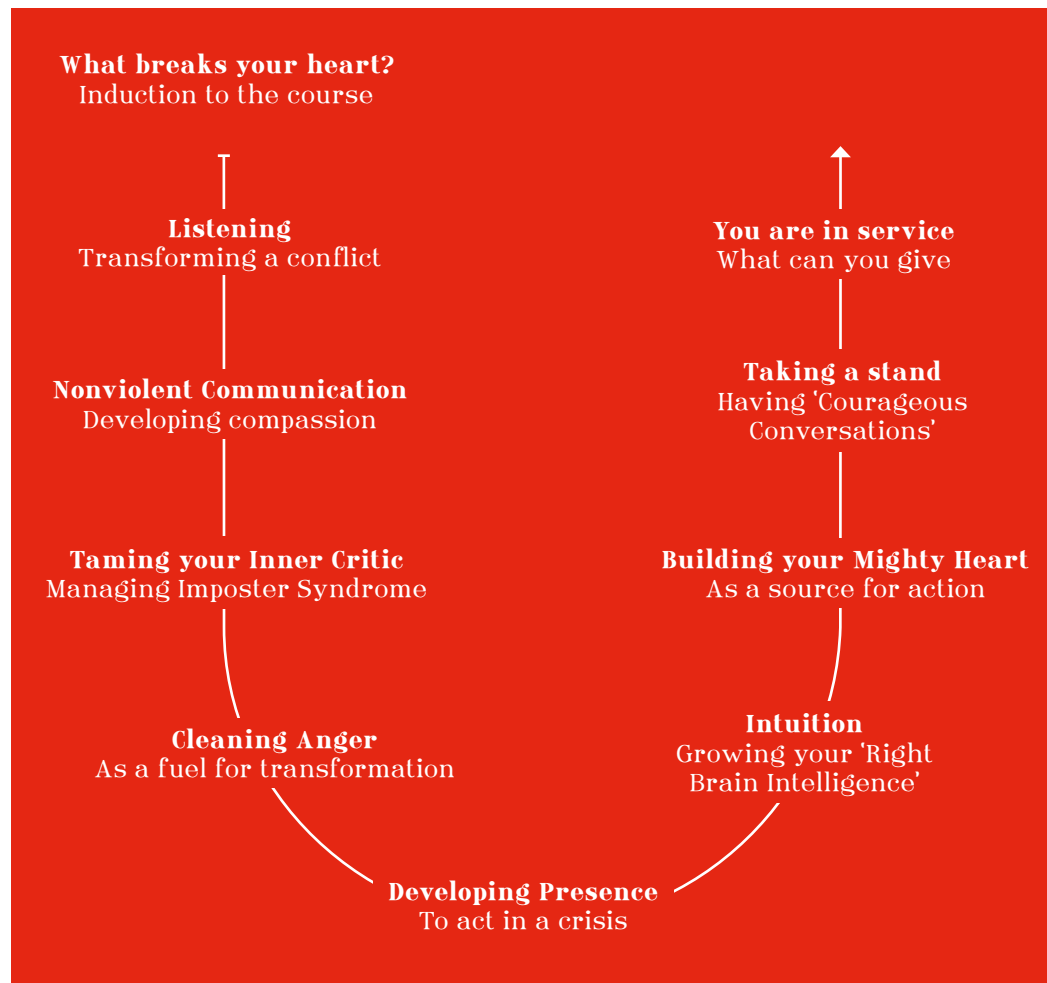
Within this vision, your personal dreams exist as well... your health, your vitality, your abundance, your joy. As you love that vision, by simply enjoying your here and now, you elevate your vibration, allowing your energy to flow out into your world. It is YOU who will bring about a kinder, happier, more harmonious and healthy world.

The more that you can empower this by going within and imagining it, indeed expecting it, the quicker you will find yourself in the new and improved reality. So right here and now, sit quietly and empower it... even for a few minutes. Find things to appreciate. Even those who have lost jobs may well be destined to find more meaningful ways of using their skills. We all have this opportunity to expand.





## MODULES





## MORE RESOURCES:

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- **Pema Chodron**, *When things fall apart - heart advice for difficult times* (Element Books), 2005
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- **Adam Curle**, *True Justice - Quaker peace-makers and peace-making* (Quaker Home Service), 1981, 1987
- **Scilla Elworthy**, *Pioneering the Possible - awakened leadership for a world that works* (North Atlantic Books), 2014
- **John Hamwee**, *Intuitive Acupuncture* (Singing Dragon, London), 2016
- **Anne Baring**, *The Dream of the Cosmos* (Archive Publishing), 2013.
- **Roger Fisher and William Ury**, *Getting to Yes* (RH Books) 2012
- **His Holiness The Dalai Lama**, *A Call for Revolution* (Penguin, Random House, London) 2017
- **Marshall Rosenberg**, *Nonviolent Communication - a language of Life* (Puddle dancer Press) 2015
- Local peacebuilding - what works and why, August 2019, on Peace Direct website
- **Simon Fisher**, *Ed, Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action* (Zed Books, London) 2000
- **John Paul Lederach**, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (Goodbooks) 2003
- **Gabrielle Rifkind and Scilla Elworthy**, *Hearts and Minds - human security approaches to political violence* (Demos, London), 2005
- **Scilla Elworthy**, *The Business Plan for Peace* (London, Peace Direct), 2018
- 'Inner Work Works' - Business Plan for Peace slide deck, showing how individuals, companies and governments can undertake transformation <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1>
- **Thomas Hubl**, is an experienced spiritual teacher who applies wisdom principles to the challenges of today. He offers many powerful and useful courses, for example the *Principles of Collective Trauma Healing* course, <https://thomashuebl.com/event/principles-of-collective-trauma-healing/2020-11-15/>
- **Richard Barrett**, *The Metrics of Human Consciousness* (London, Lulu Publishing Service), 2015



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE MIGHTY HEART:

**Dr Scilla Elworthy** turns vision into action: three times nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for developing effective dialogue between nuclear weapons policy-makers worldwide and their critics; and having founded the ***Oxford Research Group*** in 1982. ***Peace Direct*** goes from strength to strength under brilliant young leadership, founded by Scilla in 2002 to fund, promote and learn from local peacebuilders in conflict areas. Scilla was adviser to Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Sir Richard Branson in setting up The Elders, was awarded the Niwano Peace Prize in 2003, and the Luxembourg Peace Prize in 2020. In 2018 she wrote *The Business Plan for Peace: Building a World Without War*, and **Business Plan for Peace** was founded in 2019 to carry out initiatives outlined in the book. Her TED talk on non-violence has been viewed by over 1,500,000 people on TED and YouTube. [contact@thebusinessplanforpeace.org](mailto:contact@thebusinessplanforpeace.org)





