

Center for Global Nonkilling

Summary of 2009 Leadership Academy

The potential for creating nonkilling societies is a new concept for most people. It is at the same time both provocative and engaging. More and more people are looking for answers about what can be done to stop killing in the world. In large part, this reflects the growing weariness associated with the senseless repetition of wars, mass atrocities, homicides and human suffering.

The Center for Global Nonkilling (CGNK) is seeking ways to reduce killing in the world and help people realize that it is possible to change the prevailing attitudes and conditions which lead to killing. One essential strategy is to help leaders realize the possibilities and support their efforts to incorporate nonkilling principles and practices into their spheres of influence.

To that end, from October 4 to 16, 2009, CGNK convened the first Nonkilling Global Leadership Academy in Honolulu, Hawai'i. The intent was to challenge young leaders from around the world, representing different faiths, ethnicities and backgrounds, to consider how they might become part of making killing-free societies a reality. Away from their day-to-day responsibilities, in a setting designed for intense learning and reflection, these young leaders explored with world renowned leaders and CGNK faculty how to make real the possibilities of a world where killing is no longer taken for granted.

The purpose and desired outcomes of the Academy included:

- Share personal experiences related to killing and nonkilling to generate new knowledge, insights and opportunities for nonkilling leadership
- Introduce knowledge and skills to support nonkilling leadership
- Evoke new ideas for action
- Create a network of engaged, mutually supportive nonkilling leaders.

This first Academy class included 12 participants from 11 countries. The seven women participants were: a Palestinian activist involved with the Free Gaza movement; a Kenyan education leader; an Indian social justice lawyer; a Thai human rights activist working to locate people who have "disappeared;" a Filipino leader of one of the country's largest human rights organizations; an Italian sociologist and anthropologist working on women's trafficking issues; and a Lebanese-American adviser to the U.S. military.

The five men were: a Western Sahara diplomat based in Spain (subsequently appointed as the Western Sahara Ambassador to the African Union); a Liberian community leader, award-winning photographer and Carter Center representative; a Bangladeshi Ph. D. student focused on rural development strategies; a Hawaiian community leader preserving local traditions and lands;

and a German linguist, artist, writer and founder of the Center for the Advancement of Nonkilling, Germany.

A wide range of information and ideas were introduced during the Academy to both challenge and equip participants. Major topics addressed included:

- Human nonkilling capabilities and potential
- Current and historical examples of women and men nonkilling leaders
- Fundamental approaches to nonkilling
- Understanding the major sources and causes of killing
- Global advances and trends toward nonkilling societies
- Resources to support nonkilling initiatives
- Identifying and overcoming barriers to nonkilling
- Overview of the latest research related to nonkilling
- Cultural and spiritual implications to nonkilling
- Theories of change and effective strategies for change agents
- Effective nonkilling leadership.

Equally important, participants shared their own experiences related to killing and nonkilling while reviewing lessons from pioneering nonviolence and nonkilling leaders, evaluating new discoveries related to nonkilling and reflecting on the implications for their work.

Several Academy faculty were involved via videoconferencing to share their unique experiences and knowledge. Dr. Bernard LaFayette Jr., a close ally of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the Civil Rights Movement, presented the core principles of nonviolence; Dr. James Mercy, Special Adviser for the Division of Violence Prevention at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, discussed global violence prevention efforts; Ms. Gretchen Wallace, founder and Executive Director of Global Grassroots, discussed approaches to affecting change and healing in post-genocide settings; Colombian Senator Yolanda Pinto, widow of Governor Guillermo Gaviria who was kidnapped and killed by the FARC, shared her first hand experiences with efforts to end killing; and Colombian rock star Juanes, discussed his “Peace without Borders” movement.

In addition to the CGNK Leadership Team faculty, CGNK’s founder, Professor Emeritus Glenn Paige, expounded on his decades long research and publications, the *Scientific Study of Political Leadership and Nonkilling Global Political Science*, and posed the challenge to 21st century leaders of promoting change toward a killing-free world. Four guest lecturers from the University of Hawai‘i College of Social Sciences also contributed insights about nonkilling from their respective disciplines (anthropology, futures studies, women’s studies and human rights).

Academy participants were also provided a variety of opportunities to meet with local community leaders in Hawai‘i. A team building event at a local

ranch, a tour of Oahu to observe and discuss Hawai'i's present and past military and peacemaking roles, and a celebration meal at a sustainable agriculture farm on the Waianae coast complemented the classroom experiences. Academy participants shared meals together and found time to share stories and learn more about each other during evenings and joint events.

During the last two days of the Academy, each participant began work on an individual Action Plan, describing how they would take the knowledge and insights gained, and incorporate this information into their future and ongoing work. These plans included a variety of initiatives, including:

- Introduce CGNK and nonkilling principles to colleagues at the Carter Center and other civil society organizations
- In Liberia, work through the media, schools, the National Traditional Council of Liberia (council of tribal chiefs) and women's groups to introduce and develop nonkilling initiatives
- In Kenya, work towards the development and introduction of nonkilling curricula and awareness in schools, and in parenting workshops, and work with groups like Solidarity with Women Living in Distress to introduce and partner projects to reduce killing from domestic violence
- In the United States, work with DOD civilians and military in cross-cultural training to introduce nonkilling strategies into military planning
- In the Philippines, develop a political platform and pact on nonkilling and nonviolence to be signed by political candidates in the May 2010 election
- In Thailand, through the Working Group on Justice for Peace, incorporate nonkilling principles into Village Volunteer Training (largely youth oriented)
- In occupied Western Sahara, work with human rights defenders (Aminatu Haidar & others) to incorporate nonkilling concepts and strategies into ongoing training workshops
- In Germany, using the arts, increase awareness about nonkilling by creating a nonkilling postcards collection and a stage show infusing nonkilling principles as the major theme of the story
- In Italy, conduct research on the contribution of the weapons industry in fostering conditions and activities that lead to killing, and develop strategies for supporting nonkilling principles.

It is expected that an expanding global community of nonkilling-oriented leaders will result from successive programs of the Academy. This network, which will be supported by CGNK on an ongoing basis, will provide a forum for sharing ideas, providing mutual support, encouraging creative solutions to eliminate killing, and discussing how to incorporate nonkilling principles more effectively into their work and respective spheres of influence.