

Committed to Peace



Offer for:

Accompaniment & support for groups wanting to address conflicts

Are you part of a group or a community that is facing internal conflicts or tensions with stakeholders? In this case, you might want to read more about our offer to support groups in developing their conflict transformation skills:

Tensions and conflicts occur in every group or community and are particularly prevalent where people work on changing (social) systems. Tensions and conflicts are not a problem in themselves but rather a signal for where we want to put our attention to come to mutually beneficial solutions. However, they can cause great pain and suffering when avoided or left unaddressed. In that case, frustration can turn into physical, emotional, structural, or other forms of violence.

At forumZFD, we believe that individuals and groups inherently possess the capacities to deal with conflicts and that sustainable solutions can only come from within. With this initiative, we would like to invite groups (like - but not limited to - local communities, youth or women groups, public or educational institutions, penal institutions, rehabilitation centers, activists, NGOs or social movements,...) to contact us for potential accompaniment and support in addressing tensions and conflicts within the group or with other stakeholders. For example, a school might want to address violence between students or a municipality might want to have more constructive consultation processes with its constituency or a social movement might want to increase its strength by addressing conflicts within the team.

What we offer:

We will not try to 'solve' any conflict from the outside. Much rather, we can support your group to learn new skills and unleash existing capacities to address conflicts yourselves. This might require some training or workshops but more likely reflection and continuing support while your group analyses the issue(s), tries to understand feelings and needs, develops common understandings, develops strategies, addresses the challenges, and potentially changes its approach to conflict. Our support will be based on the concepts and methods of Nonviolent Communication (see page 2 for a short info on that) and we will provide trainers, coaches, or mentors to support your group with tailored activities over a period of several weeks or months.

What your group would need to bring:

Since we are interested in enabling your group/community to develop its own skills and capacities, we are happy to collaborate if at least some of your members are willing to invest some time in learning, reflecting, practicing and addressing conflicts together over a period of some weeks or months.

About forumZFD Lebanon:

In Lebanon, forumZFD works on Dealing with the Past, Community Mobilising, Peace Education and Nonviolent Communication. The international and local team collaborates with partner organisations and external trainers, consultants, and experts to support conflict transformation and civil peace on grassroots level.

What is Nonviolent Communication?

NVC is an approach based on empathic listening which helps to create a better understanding of oneself and others and, hence, supports people to communicate with more authenticity, honesty, and compassion. It helps to create connection and understanding through a rather simple method of using four steps to identify observations, feelings, needs, and concrete requests.

NVC has been applied in education, business, conflict transformation, psychotherapy, prisons, and many other settings and has helped people to:

- Understand reasons for tensions and conflicts
- Find tools and structure to transform conflicts
- Increase confidence and courage to address conflicts
- Resolve long-lasting tensions by creating understanding of underlying needs
- Create safe spaces for honest expression and deep listening
- Increase (self-) acceptance through an understanding of feelings and needs
- Increase compassion and understanding for oneself and others
- Liberate oneself from painful (self-) judgements
- Gain more competencies in dealing with difficult emotions (anger, guilt, shame...)
- Become aware of choices and gain a sense of self-efficacy and empowerment
- Create connection and community and a sense of interconnectedness

NVC is based on the following assumptions:

- That all human beings have capacity for compassion and empathy and people only resort to violence (or behaviour harmful to others) when they do not see more effective strategies to meet their needs.
- That all human actions derive from attempts to meet universal human needs (like safety, compassion, freedom, care, etc.) and that those **needs are never conflicting with each other**.
- That the **strategies** which human beings use to meet their needs **can indeed lead to conflicts**.

Hence, NVC suggests to first identify the needs of all parties involved and then develop and use strategies which ensure that everyone's needs are met.

NVC aims to support change on three interconnected levels: within oneself, between individuals, and in groups and social systems. NVC is taught as a process of reflection and interpersonal communication to improve compassionate connection to others.

Are you interested?

Please send us an email with some information about the group and its aspirations towards conflict transformation and/or the challenges faced to froehlich@forumZFD.de.