



Nurturing Hope



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At the end of the annual Nurturing Hope Learning Journey, the question of how to initially create spaces through which to experience “the intimacy of our honest differences” always arises. The Pathway to Peace is a tool for starting this practice. Give it a go and let us know what you learn!

Contact us

- Website: www.nurturinghope.net
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Who We Are

1. Nurturing Hope is a project of The Understanding Conflict Trust (UCT) and members of the Corrymeela Community of Reconciliation.
2. UCT aims to promote a better understanding of the relational and societal dynamics of conflict-affected societies as well as the dynamics that promote peace and hope through learning events, group work resources, and research.
3. Based in Northern Ireland, Nurturing Hope works with a network of partners around the world. Pathway to Peace is a collaboration with YouthAction NI.

www.nuturinghope.net

Authorship

Dr Martin McMullan has developed the ‘Pathway to Peace’ game with design and editorial support from Darlee McCombe. This edition was developed with Nurturing Hope. Contact: www.nurturinghope.net

Any referencing of the game should acknowledge:
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Context:

The 'Pathway to Peace' game has been developed to stimulate discussion and deliberation among young people, adults who work with young people, parents, carers and those with an interest in addressing conflict and growing peace.

As well as prompting reflection and dialogue, it also supports participants to identify practical ways of moving forward on the 'Pathway to Peace'.

Much of the content has been taken from the Northern Ireland / Ireland context using findings and perspectives from young people and adults. The game, however, is transferrable to other parts of the world and prompts reflection and discussion on wider global issues.

Target group:

This has been developed specifically for young people aged 14yrs+ and adults to delve deeper into issues associated with conflict and peace-growing. The level of reflection and discussion will depend on the nature and ability of the group. Some of the discussions can be complex and challenging so the facilitator will need to help to facilitate the discussion.

The following are suggested dialogue rules and guidelines

(Community Dialogue: Dialogue Facilitation 2021)

Rules

1. Treat what you hear in confidence.
2. Others have the right to believe and feel differently from you.
3. You don't have to respect beliefs you disagree with, but treat those holding them with respect.
4. When others share; don't interrupt.
5. Don't share on behalf of a wider group, share your personal views.
6. Don't pressurise anyone into speaking.
7. All participants' views have value.

Guidelines

1. Dialogue is a two-way process; it involves balancing deep listening and open honest sharing.
2. People who listen more than they speak often have more of value to share.
3. Risk trusting others with your experience, feelings and views.
4. Share what feels comfortable; don't go beyond that.
5. You don't need a clear position or to be an expert; it is okay to be confused or to change your mind.
6. Question what you hear and what you think and keep an open mind.
7. Dialogue is not about agreement it is about deepening understanding.

The spirit of the game

Peace-growing recognises that many people may have never had the opportunity to confront issues that are often suppressed or left to chance; 'Pathway to Peace' provides a space for them to consider and discuss such issues. As some of these issues may be sensitive or contentious, it is thus important that participants feel safe, secure and supported. While some of the issues can be personally challenging or emotive, we have devised the game in a way that also has more light-hearted elements. By using a game format this can be less intimidating for people to engage with.

While most games tend to have an end and winner, it should be noted at the start that growing peace is ongoing and involves compromise and concessions rather than necessarily winners and losers.

It is important that the facilitator should clearly set safe group-work conditions with the participants (see rules and guidelines above). As the facilitator you will understand what may work best with the group.

Facilitator preparation

We recommend that you:

- Familiarise yourself with the game in advance. You may want to edit or amend some of the card categories to suit your group.
- Consider the group that you will facilitate the board game with. Are there specific issues or factors that you need to consider in advance? If you have played the game with them previously it is important to shuffle the card categories to allow for new areas of thought, dialogue and deliberation.
- Clarify that this game is a mechanism to talk about how the past permeates the present and to also consider how we can create cultural and attitudinal change as well as social, economic and political change.
- Emphasise the practice of curiosity and questioning. It is ok to 'not know' or have an answer, but to ask further questions to help understanding.
- Highlight challenge as an important function throughout the game and that it is carried out in a way that respects others.
- Encourage the group to take responsibility in both actively listening to others and sharing their own insights.
- Incorporate a sensitive balance of discussion and fun/humour. While the issues explored can be sensitive, try to have appropriate laughter along the way.
- Be conscious of the amount of time that you allocate to the game. We suggest 90 minutes but this may vary according to the group concentration and level of abilities. Having a time deadline can be good as this is often how many peace accords have come about. The game can also be revisited at a later time with the group.
- Highlight how the board game will involve moving forward, remaining static and possibly moving backwards at times. Recognise how this often reflects many peace-growing processes.



Guide to playing

The game should take about 90 minutes. This can be broken up with a break depending on the specific nature of the participants.

Preparation

- Lay out the playing surface.
- Shuffle and place each of the category cards face down in the relevant section of the board. Some of the cards may require further prompting by the facilitator, such as 'What do you take from this quote/statistic? Are you surprised? How does it make you feel?'
- Locate playing pieces for each player. These can be small everyday items (coin, ring, earring, paperclip, key, pen lid etc.) Players may also want to pair up, as they may feel more supported and less exposed in this way.
- Place playing pieces on Start section of the board.

The content

- Explain to the group that the game has 40 tiles/steps that involve reflection and discussion. They are:



1. **Me:** personal reflection cards such as likes, interests and hopes



2. **Quotes** from young people, adults and literature



3. **Questions**



4. **Insight** (statistics, surveys and polls)



5. **Global**



6. **Group** Deliberation (agree/disagree)



7. **Courage**



8. **Actions**

Setting the scene

- Clarify how the game involves reflections, discussion and identifying possible actions.
- Discuss the 'spirit of the game' with the group (see key points above under 'rules and guidelines' and the 'spirit of the game' section).
- The goal is to reach the final tile/step (Commitment) where the participant will be asked to reflect on the discussions throughout the game and to commit to one key action to build peace.
- If the group do not complete the game (reaching the final step) within the allocated time you can ask the player(s) that are closest to the final tile to move their piece to the final tile/step (Commitment).
- Re-emphasise that while this process may appear complete, peace requires ongoing effort and commitment.

Playing the game

- Each player or players throw a dice and move the playing piece according to the number displayed.
- Once the player(s) land on one of the cards they pick it up, read it to themselves, consider their response, read it aloud to the group and give their thought or perspective. The facilitator may have to prompt the individual/group with questions such as 'do you agree or disagree?' After responding to the card, the player(s) move forward one space on the board until their next turn.
- Some of the cards may require further prompting by the facilitator, such as 'What do you take from this quote/statistic? Are you surprised? How does it make you feel?'
- If the player lands on 'Group Deliberation' – the players must all discuss the statement and decide if they collectively agree or disagree with it. At this point you may wish to ask the group to 'take a position' at either side of the room – one side 'Agree' and the other 'Disagree'. A consensus must be reached before moving on.
- If the player lands on 'Courage', they are asked to read the Courage card aloud. This involves all group members and is important for maintaining light hearted fun and laughter. This is important in peace-growing as it presents hope and togetherness in the face of much adversity. It also demonstrates that courage can be needed to advance peace.
- If the player lands on 'Commitment' at the end of the 'pathway' they will be asked to complete the statement 'my commitment to peace-growing is...' and share this with the group. If the group recognise this as a realistic and achievable commitment, they also provide suggestions as to how they can help the player to achieve their goal.

Review

- On completion of the game, the facilitator should explore key learning and understanding among the group. Suggested questions may include:
 - What did they like/not like? Was it challenging? What do they now know? What will they now do?
- The facilitator may wish to probe further reflections to include:
 - Are there 'winners' & 'losers' in peace settlements?
 - How did it feel to progress, watch others progress or/and watch others go backwards?
 - Are there blocks on the road to growing peace?
 - Are there opportunities to enhance peace?
 - How does it feel to give and receive different views and perspectives?
 - How challenging is consensus and agreement?
 - Does it help to share insight and perspectives?