

2-day Intensive Workshop on Conflict Transformation

Fundación Botín - Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Madrid, March 1-2, 2018

Rationale

In the West, we are generally trained to base our approach to managing conflicts on rationality: “People will agree when it’s in their interest to agree.” Tools typically focus on what is measurable and quantifiable. We “separate the people from the problem” and “insist on objective criteria.” If only we could see the tangible benefits of cooperating, we are taught, we simply would.

Over Wolf's 20 years as a facilitator and scholar working through and studying conflicts over shared water resources around the world, he has come to appreciate both the limitations of the rational models on which we in the West base our understandings of conflict and cooperation and the wisdom, constructs, and practical tools of the world's faith traditions in working toward deep and healthy interactions around contentious issues.

Wolf draws lessons from a diversity of faith traditions to transform conflict. True listening, as practiced by Buddhist monks, as opposed to the “active listening” advocated by many mediators, can be the key to calming a colleague's anger. Alignment with an energy beyond oneself, can change self-righteousness into community concern. Shifting the discussion from one about interests to one about common values can be the starting point for real dialogue. These and other practical lessons will be shared with participants.

Objectives

The two-day workshop will help participants to explore about the roots of conflict in different cultural settings and contexts and provide them with hands-on techniques to transform them.

Contents

Introduction to Conflict Transformation

Transforming Internal Conflict

Transforming Interpersonal Conflict

Transforming Group Disputes and Managing Group Dynamics

Schedule and Venue

March 1, 2018: 9.30am to 6pm

March 2 2018: 9.30am to 5pm

The course will be held at Fundación Botin, c/ Castelló, 18, Madrid

Registration fee

60 euros/person. Coffee breaks and lunches included.

The course receives financial and logistic support from the Water Observatory of the Botin Foundation.

About the Trainer

Aaron Wolf is a professor of geography in the College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences at Oregon State University. He has an M.S. in water resources management and a Ph.D. in environmental policy analysis. His research focuses on issues relating transboundary water resources to political conflict and cooperation, where his training, combining environmental science with dispute resolution theory and practice, has been particularly appropriate.

Dr. Wolf has acted as consultant to the US Department of State, the US Agency for International Development, and the World Bank, and several governments on various aspects of international water resources and dispute resolution. He has been involved in developing the strategies for resolving water aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict, including co-authoring a State Department reference text, and participating in both official and "track II" meetings between co-riparians. ~~His~~ His most recent book (2017) "*The Spirit of Dialogue: Lessons from Faith Traditions in Transforming Conflict*" is the result of two years traveling the world and eight intervening and subsequent years of reading and discussing about different approaches to conflict transformation with practitioners from a variety of the world's faith traditions and with those who have negotiated conflicts in a breadth of settings.

Dr. Wolf, a trained mediator/facilitator, directs the Program in Water Conflict Management and Transformation, through which he has offered workshops, facilitations, and mediation in basins throughout the world. He developed and coordinates the Transboundary Freshwater Dispute Database, which includes a computer compilation of 600 water-related treaties, negotiating notes and background material on fourteen case-studies of conflict resolution, news files on cases of acute water-related conflict, and assessments of indigenous/traditional methods of water conflict resolution (www.transboundarywaters.orst.edu). He has received the prestigious Heinz Award for his work on conflict transformation (<http://www.heinzawards.net/recipients/aaron-wolf>).