

Centerpeace Project

Empowering Individuals ~ Mobilizing Communities

FOUNDATION'S GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Centerpeace Foundation Community Project (Centerpeace Project) is focused on empowering vulnerable communities in conflict areas around the world, by developing conflict resolution programs and social service initiatives that are culturally relevant. The philosophy of Centerpeace is such that in order to facilitate healing in individuals who have experienced trauma, conflict and war, interventions for peace building must be aligned with indigenous culture. Also, communities must have authority to develop interventions that are inclusive of local beliefs, customs and practices. Culturally sensitive programs that pay homage to community traditions, will allow individuals to feel safe, respected and valued, inspiring them to take ownership of their individual and community welfare.

WHY NOW?

Due to advancement in technology and increased international cooperation, local, national, and international borders have been shrinking. The blurring of borders has produced communities that are more interconnected than at any other time before in human history. As people learn to deal with this new world reality, the shock of becoming integrated with peoples of different cultures, religions, communication styles, and perceptions, can confuse and scare people. As seen in daily news reports, conflicts continue to persist throughout communities worldwide. Some of these conflicts are decades old, if not older. Learning to respect and work with diverse cultures can mean the difference between peaceful co-existence, and living with conflict, exploitation, and war.

OUR BELIEF

In order to end inter-community conflicts and foster respect and tolerance between people, inter-community dialogue and projects based on common goals must take place. These dialogues should build bridges between people so they humanize each other rather than demonize one another. By dispelling faulty myths about cultures and traditions, inter-community dialogue will promote trust rather than contempt, thereby creating venues for breaking patterns of hatred and violence.

As well, individuals living in conflict areas who have experienced exploitation, conflict, and war, may experience trauma, shame, fear, anger, anxiety and depression. These individuals typically require holistic healing that incorporates a myriad of interventions. Typical examples of intervention include: Trauma counseling, psycho-spiritual education and counseling, ancestral healing, and mind/ body oriented healing practices (yoga, meditation, drumming, dance, art), etc. While Centerpeace brings with it primarily Western based modalities and practitioners, it is our core belief that individuals within each environment need to be held in a culturally appropriate and respectful setting. Thereby, Centerpeace incorporates traditional healing systems and practices alongside the Western models for health and well being.

Centerpeace believes in uniting healers, teachers, therapists, artists, musicians, religious figures and social workers, from each community and culture. We train these local leaders to lead efforts to bring healing to individuals in the community, and between theirs and other communities.

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of Centerpeace is to help people live a higher quality, more peaceful life, by resolving conflict that begins within them and extends out into the world. Starting from 1st grade all continuing through 12th grade, children will learn about healing that begins within the self, then extends interpersonally, then extends to the environment and around the globe.

Centerpeace will open centers, and the goal of each center is to teach children and young adults the nature of conflict, how it manifests, and how it affects their personal lives and their environment. Centerpeace is committed to creating a safe environment that teaches peaceful co-existence through the use of the following modalities:

- Education on one's native background, heritage, and ancestry
- Effective, research-based Western educational and therapeutic models for conflict resolution, and the healing of intergenerational trauma
- Traditional and Western practices for building community
- Technology (please see below)

Technology will play a key role in the work of Centerpeace. Our locations around the globe will be linked so that children and adults may communicate and collaborate virtually on group projects.

The Objectives of Centerpeace are to empower children and young adults, by instilling in them the tools they need to:

- Resolve and manage conflict
- Work through trauma
- Learn principles of nonviolence and peaceful coexistence within their communities and the world at large
- Discover and implement sustainable solutions to co-existing in harmony with each other and the environment

Centerpeace will purchase land where a facility to house operations will be built. The facility will be fully monitored by a security system, which will be included in the safety and emergency plan per each state's regulations.

WHO WE ARE

Centerpeace is a grassroots organization founded by Dr. Ellie Zarrabian and run by a passionate, multi-cultural group of educators, psychologists, healers, and artists committed to promoting peaceful co-existence between communities. Centerpeace is a nonprofit organization that collaborates with local individuals, and community centers that provide education, psychotherapy, and healing, to people in areas experiencing civil unrest, war, or ongoing tensions with bordering countries or neighborhoods. Centerpeace utilizes a democratic leadership style and is guided by

the philosophy of building community by empowering underserved or oppressed individuals within society.

Centerpeace will provide training and resources to help communities in conflict regions develop their own centers equipped with resources for healing trauma, building community, and empowering individuals. Centerpeace will develop local leaders from within the community, because they are most familiar with their community members' needs.

WHERE WE WORK

The Centerpeace flagship center will open in 2016, in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. Pine Ridge is a historically traumatized area that has been subject to immense conflict between the Sioux nation and the United States government. This flagship center will demonstrate success, and then grow through a franchising model with the goal of opening a second center in 2017 near the border of Israel and Palestine. Subsequent centers will be opened on a yearly basis.

LOCATION

Centerpeace will operate from its headquarters in Los Angeles, California.

DELIVERABLES AND SERVICES

Centerpeace Project will provide trauma healing and nonviolent conflict resolution training for children and adolescents aged 6 to 18 years old. Trainings will be delivered using didactic and experiential methods in real-life settings and in classrooms located in on-site facilities. Each facility will maintain an organic garden, and operate a healing center that provides psychological counseling, yoga, meditation, and mediation services.

The healing center will provide therapeutic options for children and families who have endured mental, emotional, spiritual, physical, historical, and/or cultural trauma. The healing center will offer traditional (native), and Western models of health and healing. Healing services will be provided by healers who volunteer at the center at least 4 hour per week.