

Leap, Twist, Spy, Listen: Doing Nonviolence



Teacher's Manual

By Tobin Miller Shearer

Published by the Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee

P.O. Box 173

Orrville, OH 44667-0173

Phone/fax 330-683-6844

e-mail mcpjc@sssnet.com

<http://www.MennoLink.org/peace/>

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Session One

Leaping

Purpose

To demonstrate the principle of leaping toward conflict through scripture and stories that show how nonviolent initiatives have been effective not only in the past, but also today.

Scriptural passage

II Kings 6:8-23

Teaching objectives

- Engage youth in a discussion of effective nonviolent initiatives with stories from scripture, the past, and the present.
- Encourage youth to examine how they can respond to the violent world in which they live by leaping toward conflict.
- Challenge youth to act out their faith through proactive nonviolent initiatives.

Prayer

Option A: Ask for God's direction and strength as you begin your study on nonviolence.

Option B: Use a can of bubble liquid to blow bubbles. Instruct youth to pray for someone who is dealing with violence either locally or on the national scene for as long as the bubbles last. Blow bubbles again with another name.

Gathering activity

Option A: Have everyone who is able stand up and leap in place. See how high and far members can leap. Leap with them.

Option B: Bring enough wooden clothespins (the kind with springs) for every member of the class to have one. Have a clothespin-jumping contest. See who can make their clothespin leap the farthest.

Option C: Ask for guesses: What is the highest leap from a standing position ever recorded? See how close the answers are to the record of 6' 2 ½" set by Rune Almen of Sweden on May 3, 1980.

Biblical text

Option A: Assign eight readers to read the opening scripture story as written, one reader per scene. Encourage expression and drama.

Option B: After assigning group members to read II Kings 6:8-23 from their Bibles, compare and contrast their Bible version with the paraphrased story in the student booklet.

Entering the text

Option A: Read **Leaping Defined**. Assign groups of two or three to write a sentence defining nonviolent leaping in their own words. Read the definitions out loud. Ask the entire group to show how the opening story exhibits the principle of leaping. (Look for reliance on God, courage, creative options, moving toward the conflict before it can grow worse, etc.)

Option B: After reading **Leaping Defined** act out the **Role-Plays** in the **Resource** section of this Teacher's Guide using the guidelines provided there. If your group has previously used the role-plays, play the following line-up game to gauge personal levels of experience with violence in the room.

Call out the following instructions in a room or hallway. Adapt instructions according to your assessment of the group's ability to be vulnerable with each other. Do not ask for more self-exposure than the group is ready for.

- Stand on this side of the room if you like vanilla ice cream, that side if you prefer chocolate, in the middle if you don't like ice cream.
- Stand here if you prefer summer sports; there, winter sports.
- Stand here if you like apples; there if you like oranges; in the middle, grapes.

Create your own additional warm-ups.

- Stand toward this side of the room if you have witnessed a murder on television or in a movie, that side if you have not.
- Stand toward this side of the room if you have seen real-life violence that upset you, that side if you have not.
- Stand on this side of the room if you know someone who has been violently attacked, that side if you do not.
- Stand on this side of the room if you have been violently attacked, that side if you have not.
- Stand on this side of the room if you know someone who experiences violence against them personally as a common part of their life, that side if you do not.
- Stand on this side of the room if violence against you personally is a common part of your life, that side if it is not.

Create your own assessment questions.

Option C: Play a simple leaping game. Divide group in half. Side A calls out a sentence scenario. (Choose ones from below that are appropriate for your group.) Side B has 30 seconds to agree on a leaping response. First ask youth to recall what a "leaping response" is. (A "leaping response" is one that proactively and nonviolently enters conflict as a way of acting out Christian faith.) Switch sides. Score by awarding a point for each creative answer. Winning group gets to leap frog over losing group.

Sentence scenarios for Option C:

- Every day for a week, you watch a group of popular athletes knock a new student's books to the floor.
- A male student snaps the bra of a female student in front of you in the hallway.
- An angry sibling grabs a hunting knife and walks out the front door muttering, "He can't say that about me and get away with it."
- Colombian Mennonite churches send a letter asking U.S. Mennonites to help stop U.S. government funding of the drug war in their country by withholding taxes.
- Members of your youth group propose wearing "We love the USA" T-shirts during a mission trip to Mexico even though local hosts have asked you not to wear T-shirts with political messages.
- On a downtown street, you and a friend pass by a group of aboriginal (native) youth standing on a corner. Your friend starts to mutter about "stupid, drunken Indians."
- At a Remembrance Day ceremony at your school, one of your teachers talks at length about the great sacrifice made by Canadian soldiers in defense of freedom and democracy during WW1 and WW2.

- You have just learned that a Canadian oil company is involved in major oil explorations in Sudan and is providing the revenues the Sudanese government uses to wage a repressive war against opposition forces.
- You have saved up your money for weeks for a pair of Nike shoes. All your friends consider Nike shoes and clothing really phat. Then you discover that, even though Nike pays millions to leading athletes for endorsements, its workers are not even paid a living wage.
- A discussion in your geography class is about the pros and cons of Canada allowing more immigrants to enter the country. Most of your classmates argue that there are too many immigrants arriving and they are taking away jobs from real Canadians.
- Your best friend invites you to spend Friday evening playing war games on his state-of-the-art PlayStation.
- Your history teacher assigns you a term paper on "Great Wars of the 20th Century."
- As you are walking home you see two young men dressed in stocking caps accosting an elderly woman.
- For the last week the local newspapers have reported that the U.S. President has repeatedly said "we must prepare to defend ourselves against terrorists."
- A member of your youth group proposes that you play "paint-ball" war games for your next social activity.
- A number of the white hockey players in your class are talking about "beating up the natives" in their next game against a team on a nearby reserve.
- During a discussion on sexuality, an acquaintance of yours says that God created AIDS to kill all the sinners.
- You are at camp, and you are about to play a quick game of tag while waiting for lunch. One counselor begins counting off campers with "Eanie, meanie miny moe..."
- Your church gives each of the Youth in your class a Bible which contains a picture of a blond-haired, blue-eyed Jesus.
- A boy in your youth group tells his younger brother "you throw like a girl!"
- You hear a woman yell for help in a park. It's daytime and you are with your best friend.
- Someone's wallet goes missing at school. Your home room teacher immediately assumes that Terry, one of the few black students in your class, is involved.
- Your Canadian History textbook begins with a heroic description of *Jacques Cartier's* exploration of the New World. It skips the pre-contact history on this continent and doesn't even mention that Cartier kidnaped two Iroquoian boys in 1534, and 10 people from the Stadacona Nation in 1536.
- In your Sunday school class, someone says "the Jews killed Jesus."
- The Prime Minister announces that Canada will be supporting America's new Star Wars project, called National Missile Defense.
- A group of young women from your school start pushing another student around. One of the group pulls out a knife.
- A Hispanic family you have never seen before shows up at your church one Sunday. The first person to greet them is an older white man who asks "where are you from?" When one of the family members answers "Canada," the greeter says, "no, I mean, where are you *really* from?"
- A white missionary or MCCer does a report in your church about their trip to Nigeria. They talk about 'Africans,' and they have your congregation sing East African songs in Swahili; and South African songs in English, but never songs from Nigeria itself.
- A new, trendy restaurant opens near your house. You apply for a job waiting tables there and get a spot in a group interview. The interviewers have all the women in the room

line up along a wall and hand them stickers marked “A+”, “cute” and “inadequate”. The interviewers have done nothing with the men yet, and haven’t yet asked anyone any questions.”

Experience

Have youth read **Leaping in the Garden** and **Leaping at High School** out loud. Ask youth to compare the first story with other stories they have been taught about resistance to the Nazis. Also compare Katie Spearman's approach to nonviolence with their own approach.

Reflection

1. Think about Jesus' life as recorded in the Gospels. Where do you see him leaping? Look especially at the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7. How do his words support or call into question a proactive, courageously creative approach to nonviolence? What other verses in the Gospels show Jesus choosing options other than violence? Ex.: the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11), Jesus eating with tax collectors (Mark 2:13-17), Jesus healing the servant of a Roman oppressor (Matthew 8:5-13), etc.
2. When is leaping practical and when is it impractical? How does it work in the real world where automatic guns, knives, and bombs are daily realities for some people? In what ways is nonviolence more or less practical than violence?
3. Is leaping easy? Is leaping natural? How does one learn about leaping? How does one maintain the ability to keep on leaping when one grows tired? Discuss the importance of community support, people working together, history of many working for a common good, etc.

Response

Option A: Discuss these statements:

The only way nonviolence can work is if God intervenes miraculously.

The only way nonviolence can work is if people intervene continuously.

The only way violence can work is if people agree to allow it.

The only way violence won't work is if people agree to stop it.

Option B: Think back your opening exercise on leaping. How did it feel to leap/to make the clothespins leap/to discover how high one person has leapt? Discuss the similarities and differences between physical leaping and leaping toward violence.

Option C: Write down prayers asking for courage to leap in the face of violence. Pass prayers around on papers (or clothespins) and read aloud. Return to owners as keepsake reminders to leap toward conflict.

Background

The II Kings 6 passage is not unique in the Old Testament. Additional passages that proclaim God's nonviolent way include: Exodus 23:28, Deuteronomy 7:20, Joshua 24:12. In each case God fights the battle in ways that confound the nations around Israel and, many times, Israel itself.

Leaping toward conflict as articulated in this section is a way of describing the pro-active way of peacemaking. Some youth may not be familiar with nonviolent measures that include active, involved resistance to evil. Too often nonviolence gets confused with passively sitting back when evil surrounds others or us. This movement toward violence is in keeping with the Mennonite church statement on violence that reads, "We define violence as the human exercise of physical, emotional, social or technological power which results in injury or harm to oneself or others." The statement goes on to encourage many forms of active peacemaking.¹

Use examples from the list below when discussing leaping with members of your group.

Ten quick examples from a list of 98 effective nonviolence initiatives in history²

- 1350 BCE Hebrew midwives [Shiprah and Puah] commit the first recorded act of civil disobedience by refusing to carry out Pharaoh's order to kill Hebrew babies.
- 26 CE Pilate introduces idolatrous Roman standards in Judea. Jews by the thousands prostrate themselves around his house for five days. When Pilate threatens to kill them all, they offer their necks to the sword but will not move. Pilate removes the standards.
- 30-312 Christians martyred for disturbing the peace, and for refusing to worship the emperor, to serve in the army, or to engage in war.
- 1623 Eméric Crucé proposes a United Nations Assembly to settle international differences by compulsory arbitration.
- 1878 Kusunose Kita in Shikoku, Japan, protests having to pay taxes while being denied the vote as a woman.
- 1923 French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr is withdrawn after German noncooperation makes the occupation too costly politically and economically, despite severe repression.
- 1944 Two Central American dictators, Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez (El Salvador) and Jorge Ubico (Guatemala) are ousted as a result of nonviolent civilian insurrections and general strikes.
- 1957 Ghana wins independence after a ten-year nonviolent struggle.
- 1963 Atmospheric nuclear test-ban treaty signed after six years of demonstrations and public pressure.
- 1983 On May 11, at 8 p.m., the Chilean copper miners' union calls a countrywide protest. People respond by banging on pots and pans and blowing whistles, and discover for the first time that the vast majority oppose the dictator, General Pinochet. Peruvian women use the same tactic when a man starts beating his wife.



Session Two Twisting

Purpose

To provide youth with ideas for specific options to twist in the face of violence (doing the unexpected, using humor, refusing to accept the role of victim, creating options where none had been before)

Scriptural passage Matthew 5:38-42

Teaching objectives

- Engage youth in a discussion of Jesus' new way of responding to violence.
- Provoke discussion about what twisting looks like in their lives.
- Generate ideas for practicing twisting on an ongoing basis.

Prayer

Option A: Invite two youth to lead in prayer for the evening with one opening and the other closing.

Option B: Have group members informally talk about a prayer request. When finished, the group responds in unison, "Lord, hear our prayer."

Gathering activity

Option A: Bring enough "twistees" (i.e. garbage bag fasteners) so that each group member can have three. Use twistees to shape a sculpture symbolizing nonviolence. Play music by *Sweet Honey in the Rock* or another group while making sculptures. Invite youth to describe sculptures to each other in small groups.

Option B: Watch a scene from a martial arts or self-defense video that demonstrates using the momentum of an attacker against him. Ask, "Is this form of twisting nonviolent?"

Option C: Do "the twist" to an appropriate song (Chubby Checkers, "Do the Twist" works especially well). Ask dancers how it feels to "twist like this."

Biblical Text

Option A: Read Matthew 5:38-42 without commentary. Ask students what they have been taught about this passage previously. Then have students read the factoids as written. What new information do they find?

Option B: Invite volunteers to stand before the group and create still-life drama scenes demonstrating the meaning of each verse. Scene 1: Show turning the other cheek and the surprise on the slapper's face when he/she must treat the other as an equal. Scene 2: Show consternation on a soldier's face when a Jewish person keeps on going the second mile. Scene 3: Show embarrassment at nakedness (pretend only, please) when someone is left holding the inner garment as well as the outer.

Entering the text

Option A: As a group or in pairs re-write the three verses from Matthew 5 in contemporary terms as examples of twisting in the face of violence. Examples:

- If someone flips you the finger while driving, pull over to let him or her pass.
- If someone steals from your locker, leave it unlocked and put a plate of cookies with a "please help yourself" note attached inside.
- If someone calls you a _____ (nasty, foul, demeaning name), invite her or him on the spot to let you buy them lunch the next day.

Read **Twisting Defined** for other ideas.

Option B: Take each of the examples in **Twisting Defined** and expand it. Add details. Example: What would it really look like, feel like, sound like to walk away from a taunter, challenge a military recruiter, ask the teller of a racist joke why the joke is funny?

Ask youth to draw a picture with crayons or make a sculpture with modeling clay to further flesh out the scenario.

Option C: If members of your group are facing a decision about whether or not to join the military use information from *Alternatives: Getting Post-High School Education and Training without Joining the Military*³ to brainstorm options as a youth group.

Experience

Read **Twisting in the Military** and **Making a Choice to Twist** silently. In small groups compare and contrast the two stories. Are the decisions made by Conrad and Tammy the same? Different? If so, how?

Reflection

1. Where is it possible to learn how to twist? Martial arts training takes years. What kind and amount of training is needed to twist in the face of violence?
2. Do you agree or disagree with Tammy Sutherland's contention that first you must know yourself as strong, capable, and confident before you can live out a life of nonviolence? In what ways is self-defense compatible or contrary to nonviolence? To Jesus' teachings?
3. What would happen in your church if someone stood up and said that they were taking self-defense courses? Would people object? Accept? Ignore? What would happen if someone said they were teaching nonviolence lessons? Would anyone come?

Response

Option A: Propose that your group host a nonviolence training. Invite a peace practitioner to explore nonviolent response to personal attack. See the list of groups to contact in the resource section. Have the youth plan who will make contacts, do research, arrange funds, etc. Consider joining with another local youth group or two to host the event.

Option B: Make a twist list. Identify different ways one can twist in the face of violence. Remember these forms of twisting: doing the unexpected, using humor, refusing to accept the role of victim, creating options where none had been before. What does twisting look like:

- in the face of a taunter;
- when someone physically attacks you;
- when the police are violent (ex.: racial profiling or border official harassment);
- when your own government is violent (through the death penalty, military expenditures, etc.);
- when in war time an enemy attacks?

Option C: Hand out more twistees. Invite group members to wear a twistee around their finger as a reminder to twist in the face of violence. Have each member identify one thing they will do to twist in the face of violence as they place the twistee on their finger. Ask them to think of twisting each time they see a twistee from now on.

Background

The Jewish community daily felt the impact of Roman occupation. For the poor, Roman oppression shattered lives. Instead of provoking armed rebellion, which would have been a disastrous choice in the face of armed Roman power, Jesus encourages nonviolent response that restores dignity and opens up new options. ???It is the epitome of twisting, using the enemy's own energy against him or her. Walter Wink adds, "Nothing less could halt or reverse the economic decline of Jewish peasants than a complete suspension of usury and debt and a restoration of economic equality through outright grants, a pattern actually implemented in the earliest Christian community, according to the Book of Acts."⁴



Session Three Spying

Purpose

To demonstrate the need to analyze society's assumptions of redemptive violence

Scriptural passage Luke 22:49-51

Teaching objectives

- Equip youth to identify popular culture acceptance of redemptive violence.
- Show youth the results of redemptive violence.
- Practice spying on origins of redemptive violence.

Prayer

Option A: Divide group into pairs. Assign situations of violence for them to pray about: i.e. Middle East, other international conflicts, domestic violence, situations from your local paper, etc.

Option B: Sing songs of praise as prayer. Choose songs with peacemaking themes.

Gathering activity

Option A: Set out news magazines (*Time*, *Newsweek*, *US News and World Report*, etc.), popular culture magazines (*People*, *Entertainment Weekly*, etc.) and/or newspapers. Assign youth to cut out any and all pictures showing violence of any kind. (Review the meaning of violence from Lesson One.) Cut pictures so as to remove all captions and headlines.

Option B: Show a battle scene clip from *Glory*, *The Matrix*, and/or *Saving Private Ryan*.

Option C: Ask youth to list on a 3" x 5" index card all the movies or television shows they have ever seen in which a good person or character uses violence to defeat evil. If they have not seen any, ask them to identify where they have read of this happening.

Biblical text

Option A: Have one youth read the "comic book" section about Jess (our super hero) from the student booklet. When finished, have a second youth read Luke 22:49-51. Ask what differences they noted between the comic book reading and the Bible text.

Option B: Read Luke 22:49-51 and ask youth to draw cartoons of the events. Assign specific scenes to pairs or individuals and string the drawings together to make a wall-length comic book.

Entering the text

Option A: Read **Spying Defined** and examine the magazine and newspaper clippings for evidence of the myth of redemptive violence. What forms does it take? What images are used? What settings? Who is the good person/character? Who is the bad? Does the group notice any stereotypes of sex, race, nationality, hat color, or class?

Option B: Look again at the movie clips after reading **Spying Defined**. How have assumptions in the group changed about how "cool" violence looks? What do youth notice about the messages that the movie sends? If you use more than one clip, compare and contrast how the directors have chosen to portray violence.

Option C: Take the lists generated in the Gathering Activity, Option C, above. Ask youth to mentally recall one image from a movie, television show, or news report that showed "good guys" using violence to overcome the "bad guys." Have them visualize everything they can about the scene: facial expressions, setting, lighting, dialogue, sound effects, special effects. How did the image look? Has it affected the youth in any way? How do they know whether or not

it has? Read **Spying Defined** and have them look at the scenes again. Ask for new observations and comments.

Experience

Have youth read **Spying the Unseen** and **Spying with the Holy Spirit**. Remind them that these stories are designed to help them develop the skill of spying (analyzing) the many, often subtle, forms that violence takes in our society. Encourage youth to discuss where they see violence in both stories. Discuss additional options to either situation of violence. Do the stories open up new options and avenues for nonviolent response?

Reflection

1. In your own words, explain what "the myth of redemptive violence" means. Give examples of where you see it. How would you share this insight with a friend who is not a member of your church or youth group? How would you explain what this means during a discussion at school? What tools do you need to find the courage to share these understandings with your peers?
2. Discuss what Jesus' example has to say about the myth of redemptive violence. How would a super hero have responded to a sword attack? How are Jesus' actions different than or similar to the heroes worshipped by our culture (military figures, sports heroes, entertainment stars, etc.)?
3. What difference can spying make? What if more people had been spying in post World War I Germany? Would they have been able to expose Hitler's acts before they became worse? Where else in contemporary society is spying on violence needed? Discuss the need for spying on: treatment of immigrants, treatment of welfare recipients, ridicule and harassment of gays and lesbians, oppression of people of color, treatment of enemies of our country, abuse and harassment of women, etc.

Response

Option A: Sketch pictures showing alternatives to the violence shown in the photos cut from magazines and newspapers. Make a collage of other photos symbolizing nonviolence. Bless the drawings with a prayer for courage to enact such nonviolence wherever youth members find themselves.

Option B: Show a clip from *Ghandi*, *Eyes on the Prize*, or *The Long Walk Home* that portrays nonviolent response to oppression. Close in prayer for courage to act as these super heroes have.

Option C: Together spy on the myth of redemptive violence in

- messages about violence in the morning paper;
- violent expressions in the course of daily conversation;
- racial violence shown when white victims and perpetrators of color respectively receive disproportionate positive attention and harsher sentencing;
- the myth of redemptive violence among your family, friends, and church.

Choose one way your youth group can respond to the violence you've identified. Writing letters, boycotting, having one-on-one conversations, and organizing nonviolent opposition are all possible methods of response. Pray for God's guidance.

Background

Walter Wink, upon whose keen analysis much of this resource is based, adds further commentary on the myth of redemptive violence. He notes, "The myth of redemptive violence is the simplest, laziest, most exciting, uncomplicated, irrational, and primitive depiction of evil the world has ever known. Furthermore, its orientation toward evil is one into which virtually all modern children (especially boys) are socialized in the process of maturation."⁵

Popular culture carries many, many subtle yet effective messages about the myth of redemptive violence. Peace and justice professor Mark Chupp notes, "The desensitization and glorification of violence as entertainment on television, in movies and music, while not new, have reached an all time

low. The bloodiest, most gruesome parts of movies no longer bring screams of horror, but the greatest cheers and laughter from the youthful audience. The heroes are those who use violence to survive to the end. The impact is chilling as Columbine High School students reported that the killers laughed as they shot students."⁶

Breaking through the desensitization and socialization to violence will not happen in the course of a single nonviolence forum or follow-up session. Do not be surprised if youth express cynicism or are impervious to the effects of this myth in their lives.

During a youth Bible study on violence, several high school students defended their enjoyment of violent video games by maintaining that "it's all in fun. We know it's not real." As quoted in the student booklet, an ex-Marine present that night responded, "It may not be real, but once you've learned how to be violent, you can never unlearn it. You can only keep it under control." Youth need to understand that they are learning an attitude toward violence that they may not be able to keep under control even if they want to.

Likewise, the section on **Spying the Unseen** may prove particularly challenging to youth who have not thought of the violence involved in taking away someone's language. Felipe Hinojosa, quoted in this section, refers also to a quote by Ray Gwyn Smith, "Who is to say that robbing a people of its language is less violent than war?" (as found in *Borderlands/La Frontera* by Gloria Anzaldua). Keep the youth focused on their own connection to this contemporary expression of violence. In many, many communities this is not a far off reality, but present and nearby.



Session Four Listening

Purpose

To show how listening can lead to profound actions of nonviolence.

Scriptural passage Judges 7

Teaching objectives

- Connect the scripture story with nonviolence principles (how Gideon listened to the enemy, listened to God).
- Explore stories showing listening in action.
- Invite youth to make a public commitment to living out a life of nonviolence.

Prayer

Option A: Have a silent prayer. Close with Amen.

Option B: Have a drawing prayer. Hand out crayons and paper. Invite youth to draw their prayers to God. Pictures can be abstract, concrete, monochrome, colorful. Those who want can share their drawing with the entire group or their neighbors.

Gathering activity

Option A: Play "Whisper Down the Lane." One person whispers a sentence into the ear of another. Repeat until the last person says the sentence aloud. Try playing again with someone tapping a rhythm on the wall, others talking loudly, someone shaking keys, another person singing a song. Were the results any more accurate?

Option B: Sit in complete silence for three full minutes. Ask group to listen carefully to what they heard. Report. Discuss how the length of time felt. Was it harder or easier to listen to "silence" than group members thought it would be?

Option C: Have everyone talk at full volume (not screaming or yelling, but talking as loudly as possible), at the same time, to the person sitting across from them in the room. Assignment is to tell the person about your favorite dessert. After one minute ask people to identify what, if anything, they were able to hear. Was it possible to listen and talk at the same time?

Biblical text

Option A: Assign one class member to be Gideon; another, a reporter. After a third youth reads the text out loud, have the reporter interview Gideon about what happened with the Midianites. Reporter may *ad lib* but should be sure to include the following questions. The youth playing the part of Gideon should read **Too Many Soldiers** before being interviewed:

- 1) Why didn't you take on the Midianites with all your soldiers?
- 2) What did your soldiers say when you gave them jars, trumpets, and torches instead of electric lanterns, light sabers, and energy shields?
- 3) How did you come up with your ideas on how to defeat the occupying army of the Midianites?

Option B: Have half the class read Judges 7 without reading **Too Many Soldiers**. Have the other half read **Too Many Soldiers** without reading Judges 7. Quiz them on the following five questions. They should answer as a team. They may not refer back to their Bibles or booklets once the quiz begins.

- 1) How many soldiers did Gideon send home?
A) 40,000

- B) 31,700
300
D)
E) None of the above.
How many camels did the Midianites have?
- A)
B) 31,700
Lots and lots and lots.
D)
E) None of the above.
- 3)
A) Because he was hungry.
Because he was a lunatic.
C)
D) All of the above.
None of the above.
- 4) reaking their pots?
"For God, gold, and country!"
B)
C) "Ouch!"
All of the above.
E)
- 5) Why did God have the 300 Israelites make war with the modern-flowerpots, and electric guitars?
A)
B) Because the Israelites often took the credit away from God.
Because God wanted to be clear that only God can deliver the Israelites.
D)
E) None of the above.

Answers: 1) B; 2) C; 3) C; 4) B*; 5: D.

*Although they very well may have said "Ouch!" The Bible doesn't tell us.

Entering the text

Brainstorm a list of unconsidered options like those referred to in the last paragraph of . First write down a list of "enemies" of people sitting in the classroom and

Option B: Invite an adult from within or outside the congregation to describe a time that they listened to an enemy. Consider inviting war veteran penalty activists, farm worker supporters, people who have been involved with Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs (VORP), teachers who work with difficult students, etc. If y from *Twelve Becoming Peace Be With You*.

Option C: **Listening Defined** and identify what form prayer takes for youth in the room. Discuss feel outcast or different from their peers? Included and accepted? Certain of what God would violence. Use prayer calendars from mission agencies, the Peace and Justice Committee of the M and justice groups to ask for a list of prayer concerns that the youth can pray over.

Experience

Read **Listening to Skinheads** and **Listening to an Intruder** once as written. Read a second time substituting the names of youth in your group for "Dave" and "Angie." Have youth write down alternate descriptions as if they had actually been present. How would they have listened?

Reflection

1. What do you expect made the difference between Angie acting as she did and Angie acting as a victim and potentially getting raped? Where did she get the strength she needed to respond as she did? Are most people able to act as she did?
2. What seemed to make the difference in Dave's response to Eric? How was he able to listen? Is it ever appropriate to respond in a more direct manner to someone who is publicly acting in racist and sexist ways?
3. What are the similarities between Gideon's God-led response to the Midianites and Angie and Dave's respective responses? Was God at work in Angie and Dave's responses like God was at work for the Israelites? Describe other contemporary examples of people responding to violence by listening.

Response

- Option A: Take the peace pledge in the student booklet **Response** section. Talk together about ways of being held accountable to each other to see that the work gets done.
- Option B: Go around the circle and have each person identify one thing they will do in the next month to either leap, twist, spy, or listen in order to be nonviolent.
- Option C: Use 3"x5" cards to record one thing that each youth can do for peace. Look at the **Resources** section of the student booklet for concrete ideas. Ask youth to list a specific date when the action will be completed, who they will ask to check with them to see if they have done it, and what they will do to celebrate when they have completed the action. Consider celebrating together with a peace party where everyone brings a story about what they did to leap, twist, spy, or listen. Have music, food, banners, and balloons.

Background

As with all of the principles expressed in this booklet, listening is expressed in many cultural forms. When working with youth in the midst of conflict, be sure that cultural style is taken into consideration. For example, the traditional structured mediation process popular in many Anabaptist congregations, communities, and institutions does not fit the cultural norms of many African-American and Latino communities. At times use of an intermediary, allowing for full expression of emotion, and avoiding direct confrontation may also be appropriate. Contact Mennonite Conciliation Services at 717-859-3889 for more information.

Listening can also be confused with meekness. In her excellent book, *Back Off! How to Confront and Stop Sexual Harassment and Harassers*, Martha J. Langelan tells story after story of women who listened profoundly to the needs of the attacker and then stopped the assault without violence. For instance, she opens her book with a description of a bus scene. A woman calmly gripped the hand of the man behind her who had been feeling her rear end, held his hand in the air, and said "in a loud, clear, commanding voice . . . 'What was this hand doing on my ass?'" The man turned bright red because he knew he had been caught and left the bus when it next stopped.⁷

All of the principles in *Leap, Twist, Spy, Listen* demand proactive approaches to violence to seek nonviolent ends. Listening is no exception. As you discuss the content of this fourth principle with the youth, be sure to clarify with them that listening does not mean sitting still. It means moving forward, listening for the underlying issues, acting on them, listening to previously unconsidered options, and listening like Gideon, Dave, and Angie to the enemy and to God.

Resources

Hasl e Line Rol e-Pl ay By Mark Frey and Chris Buhl er

How to Run a Hasl e Line

Purpose

To give participants an opportunity to practice time-limited, one-on-one encounters that engage situations of violence or abuse.

Preparation

Clear a space in the center of the room big enough so that participants can form two parallel lines facing each other; there should be adequate space for participants to stand in their line side by side comfortably, and with about three feet between the two lines.

Time required

Allow about 20 minutes for this exercise, which includes time to debrief the experience. You will run the role-play two times, debriefing after each time. Each time should take about 10 minutes total.

Procedure

1. Divide participants into two groups with the same number of people in each; if there is an odd number of participants in the group, ask one person to help observe the process or enlist an additional person to participate.
2. Have the groups form two parallel lines facing each other down the center of the room; each person should pair off with the person standing directly across from them.
3. Assign roles to each line of participants; for example: "Line A, you are at a bus stop and just heard someone harass another person. You confront them. Line B, you all are playing a male harasser." You may prompt Line A with some ideas if the role is unfamiliar to them.
4. Have participants take a moment of silence to center and get into their roles; explain that they will have one minute for this interaction from the time you say "Go" until the time you say "Stop."
5. Say "Go;" call time after one minute.
6. Debrief the experience by having each side talk about the interaction: what worked well, what didn't work well, what was particularly effective or moving, what was unclear or confusing. This is where the real learning can happen.
7. Have the lines switch roles and repeat steps 4-6.
8. After giving both lines a chance to play both roles, and after debriefing, distribute the youth handout "Guidelines for Confronting Sexual Harassment."

Hasl e Line Rol es

People in Line A: You are at a bus stop. You just witnessed a man (several feet from you) tell a "joke" about a rape. He is laughing. You don't know the man, but you know that what he said is very offensive and has made the women at the bus stop very uncomfortable. You decide to intervene.

People in Line B: You are a man and a harasser. You think that women are getting "too many rights" and are "taking over" the world. You get some satisfaction from making women uncomfortable in public places and at work. You are used to (and enjoy) getting women to feel humble and "in their place." You just told a "joke" about rape that has made the women around you very uncomfortable. Some jerk is now confronting you about it!

Fish Bowl Role-Play

By Chris Buhler and Mark Frey

How to Run a Fish Bowl

Purpose

To give a small group of participants an opportunity to engage in a role play while a larger group learns through observation of the role play (thus the image of the fish bowl in which the “outside” circle forms the bowl for the “fish” inside to carry out their activity).

Preparation

Ahead of time, copy and cut apart the roles on the accompanying role description sheet so that you can hand them out to the volunteer players.

Procedure

1. Ask for volunteers to play the roles. Put them in the center of the circle. Hand out the papers describing their roles and ask them to read and think seriously about how to play the roles.
2. Instruct the observers in the outside circle to carefully watch what happens in the simulation so during later discussion they can identify what works and doesn't work to defuse the situation.
3. Explain to the role players that they should try to be as serious as possible during the simulation. Explain to the observers that it is important not to interrupt once the time has started, even for informational questions. Interruptions will make evaluation more complicated and destroy the sense of “reality” that the role players need. Laughter and discussion among the observers will also be disruptive to the role-play.
4. Allow the role-play to run for 10-15 minutes, or until it looks like it's come to an end.
5. Ask for observations, first from the outer circle and then from the “fishes” themselves.
6. If time permits, ask for different volunteers and run the role-play again.

Either before the first fish bowl, or as you discuss responses afterward, you might want to review ways to leap into conflict. A few beginning ideas:

- say something creative, out of the blue, that throws off the bully;
- do something weird: dance around, sing a song;
- ask the bully questions (expect, though, that you might become the target of the bully's aggression.).

The basic concept is to be open and allow God's creativity to work through you.

Fish Bowl Roles: Bully Intervention

Instructions: This role-play has four characters, any of which may be played by males or females. Hand out the roles to each of the participants. Tell Pat and Terry that they should discuss ways to engage (leap into) a bullying situation, like when they come upon Cory picking on Alex. Start the role-play with Cory picking on Alex. Keep Pat and Terry off to the side for 20 seconds while the situation develops, then nudge them into the center to deal with Cory.

1. **Cory.** You are a bully. You consider yourself to be one of the toughest kids in your school. You like to feel in control of people, and you like people to be a little scared of you. You like to hassle Alex, who is a real nerd. Besides, s/he is always a reliable source of income for you by bringing lunch money to school (although sometimes it takes real work to get it out of him/her). Anyway, control over Alex, and not the money, is your primary motivation for picking on Alex--taking her/his lunch is one effective way of doing this.

2. **Alex.** You are a student with low self-esteem. You feel clumsy around many people in general, and find comfort in books. You do have a few friends at this school, but they also get picked on. You are used to being pushed around by Cory and other bullies in the school. You desperately want to avoid confrontations with Cory, and have tried being nice to her/him. Lately s/he keeps demanding your lunch money, and you give it to her/him, hoping that it will appease him/her. Today you forgot this money, and aren't sure what to do. You want her/him to like you and mostly to leave you alone.

3. **Pat.** You are a student at this school. You have noticed that there is a fair amount of violence in your school, and that bullying seems to happen with alarming regularity. You have discussed this with your best friend Terry and have decided to confront bullying or overtly violent situations when either of you come on them. [You and Terry should take a moment to discuss what you can do when you come on Cory (a well-known bully in your school) and Alex (whom you barely know). Let them play out their confrontation for 10 or 15 seconds before you come on the scene.]

4. **Terry.** You are a student at this school. You have noticed that there is a fair amount of violence in your school, and that bullying seems to happen with alarming regularity. You have discussed this with your best friend Pat and have decided to confront bullying or overtly violent situations when either of you come on them. [You and Pat should take a moment to discuss what you can do when you come on Cory (a well-known bully in your school) and Alex (whom you barely know). Let them play out their confrontation for 10 or 15 seconds before you come on the scene.]

Roles Handout -- to be cut apart and given to the volunteer role players

Fish Bowl Roles: Bully Intervention

1. **Cory.** You are a bully. You consider yourself to be one of the toughest kids in your school. You like to feel in control of people, and you like people to be a little scared of you. You like to hassle Alex, who is a real nerd. Besides, s/he is always a reliable source of income for you by bringing lunch money to school (although sometimes it takes real work to get it out of him/her). Anyway, control over Alex, and not the money, is your primary motivation for picking on Alex--taking her/his lunch is one effective way of doing this.

Fish Bowl Roles: Bully Intervention

2. **Alex.** You are a student with low self-esteem. You feel clumsy around many people in general, and find comfort in books. You do have a few friends at this school, but they also get picked on. You are used to being pushed around by Cory and other bullies in the school. You desperately want to avoid confrontations with Cory, and have tried being nice to her/him. Lately s/he keeps demanding your lunch money, and you give it to her/him, hoping that it will appease him/her. Today you forgot this money, and aren't sure what to do. You want her/him to like you and mostly to leave you alone.

Fish Bowl Roles: Bully Intervention

3. **Pat.** You are a student at this school. You have noticed that there is a fair amount of violence in your school, and that bullying seems to happen with alarming regularity. You have discussed this with your best friend Terry and have decided to confront bullying or overtly violent situations when either of you come on them. [You and Terry should take a moment to discuss what you can do when you come on Cory (a well-known bully in your school) and Alex (whom you barely know). Let them play out their confrontation for 10 or 15 seconds before you come on the scene.]

Fish Bowl Roles: Bully Intervention

4. **Terry.** You are a student at this school. You have noticed that there is a fair amount of violence in your school, and that bullying seems to happen with alarming regularity. You have discussed this with your best friend Pat and have decided to confront bullying or overtly violent situations when either of you come on them. [You and Pat should take a moment to discuss what you can do when you come on Cory (a well-known bully in your school) and Alex (whom you barely know). Let them play out their confrontation for 10 or 15 seconds before you come on the scene.]

Youth Handout for use with Role Plays

Hassle Line: Confronting Sexual Harassment

In the hassle line role-play, we did a quick simulation of confronting someone who has just said something that is sexual harassment. Following are other suggestions on how to engage similar situations when you encounter them.

Guidelines for Confronting Sexual Harassment

(Taken from Martha J. Langelan, *Back Off! How to confront and stop sexual harassment and harassers*, 125-6. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993. These guidelines are also for confronting sexual harassment towards you.)

1. Do the unexpected: Name the behavior. Whatever he's just done, say it and be specific.
2. Hold the harasser accountable for his actions. Don't make excuses for him; don't pretend it didn't really happen. Take charge of the encounter and let people know what he did. Privacy protects harassers, but visibility undermines them.
3. Make honest, direct statements. Speak the truth (no threats, no insults, no obscenities, no appeasing verbal fluff and padding). Be serious, straightforward, and blunt.
4. Demand that the harassment stop.
5. Make it clear that *all* women have the right to be free from sexual harassment. Objecting to harassment is a matter of principle.
6. Stick to your own agenda. Don't respond to the harasser's excuses or diversionary tactics. *His* behavior is the issue. Say what *you* have to say, and repeat it if he persists.
7. Reinforce your statements with strong, self-respecting body language: eye contact, head up, shoulders back, a strong, serious stance. Don't smile. Timid, submissive body language will undermine your message.
8. Respond at the appropriate level. Fine-tuning takes practice, but it's not usually necessary to blast the harasser. Use a combined verbal and physical response to physical harassment.
9. End the interaction on your own terms, with a strong closing statement: "You heard me. Stop harassing women."

Author

Tobin Miller Shearer is a free-lance writer and anti-racist educator and organizer in Lancaster, Pa. He is Cheryl's life partner, Dylan and Zachary's dad, and a child of God. Tobin enjoys reading science fiction, running, and baking spinach pie (which his sons actually ask for).

¹ "A Mennonite Statement on Violence: Statement Summary," 2. It is available from the Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee, 330-683-6844; mcpjc@sssnet.com; <http://www.MennoLink.org/peace/>

² Excerpted from Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1992, 244-248.

³ Available from Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; or www.mcc.org.

⁴Wink, 184.

⁵Wink, 22.

⁶ Mark Chupp, "Lessons from Littleton: Ten risk factors in the epidemic of youth violence and what we can do." Handout, 2. Originally printed in shorter form in *The Mennonite*, May 25, 1999.

⁷ Langelan, Martha J. *Back Off! How to Confront and Stop Sexual Harassment and Harassers*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993, 21.