

Name _____ Date _____

Researching Religious Peacemakers

What religion are you focusing on? *Buddhism* What peacemaker have you identified? *Dishani Jayaweera*

Directions: Record your research notes and findings in the graphic organizer below. Keep a list of your sources on the back of the page.

<p>1. Basic facts and information about this religion (e.g., how many people practice it, where it is practiced, what are its central beliefs).</p> <p><i>Est. 488 - 535 million, worldwide</i></p> <p><i>Follows teaching of Siddharta, but not as a deity; three main principles: Buddha (awakened one), Dharma (teachings), Sangha (community)</i></p> <p><i>Main truths: all living beings suffer, the cause of suffering is selfish desire, one can stop suffering by following the Noble Eightfold Path.</i></p> <p><i>Life is to be lived in moderation, avoiding harm toward others and cultivating good will toward all.</i></p>	<p>2. Identify a prominent contemporary peacemaker within the religion (historical or contemporary) who is motivated by religious faith to work for peace and justice. Describe this peacemaker's mission and work.</p> <p><i>During the civil war in Sri Lanka, Dishani Jayaweera left the legal profession to work for an end to violence and mistrust.</i></p> <p><i>With her husband, she founded the Centre for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation (CPBR) in 2003 to train young people and religious leaders in dialogue and conflict analysis and resolution.</i></p> <p><i>CPBR's interfaith work promotes understanding among previously divided groups: Sinhalese Buddhists, Tamil Hindus, Muslims, and Tamil and Sinhalese Christians. It has created a large grassroots network of peacebuilders.</i></p>
<p>3. What challenges and dangers has this peacemaker encountered?</p> <p><i>In 2006 and 2007, the security situation in Sri Lanka deteriorated and human rights and peace activists faced death threats. Dishani and her husband continued their work in during these frightening times, even when it took them to the most dangerous parts of Sri Lanka, where irregular armed groups were operating.</i></p> <p><i>Though Sri Lanka's civil war ended in 2009, serious tensions remain. Many of those who advocate peace are ostracized, particularly Sinhalese Buddhists like Dishani who are viewed as traitors by some other members of the Sinhala majority.</i></p>	<p>4. What techniques, methods and approaches has this peacemaker used? What has this peacemaker achieved?</p> <p><i>CPBR convenes interfaith conferences and other collaborative efforts aimed at reconciling Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians. CPBR draws on the teachings of each religion and engages youth, community leaders and clergy from each faith. This interfaith work promotes personal relationships between members of different faiths.</i></p> <p><i>In 2014 CPBR launched a new project to train female clergy and community leaders from war-affected regions. 40 female religious leaders and 90 other women from different faiths learned peacebuilding and livelihood skills.</i></p> <p><i>In 2014 alone, over 33,000 Sri Lankans participated in CPBR peacebuilding events.</i></p>