

Peacemakers in Action Podcast Series: Discussion Guide

This guide is a complement to the *Peacemakers in Action* podcast. It includes discussion questions, engagement activities, and additional resources about each featured *Peacemaker*. These activities facilitate deeper enrichment and engagement with the podcast in educational settings, specifically targeting college- and graduate-level classrooms. This guide is adaptable; pick and choose the components that best fit the needs of your student population.

Pedagogical Goals:

Expand Knowledge and Reflect

- Review the story shared in the podcast and demonstrate comprehension.
- Learn more about the historical and current events referenced in the podcast.
- Expand self-knowledge with a focus on personal motivations and experiences.

Develop Skills

- Think critically about broad concepts explored in the podcast, such as conflict, peacebuilding, and religious and cultural identity.
- Connect the podcast material with themselves, their experiences, and their community.
- Identify how peacebuilding tools transform conflicts in their communities, nation, and world.

Take Action

- Take action for peace in their own communities.
- Use resources related to the *Peacemakers*, Tanenbaum, and other concepts in the podcast.

Resources for Facilitating Discussion:

- [Video](#) on facilitating discussion from the NDSU Office of Teaching and Learning.
- [Guide](#) for facilitating discussion from the OSU Teaching and Learning Resource Center.
- [Guide](#) for learning through discussion from the CU Center for Teaching and Learning.
- [Guide](#) for discussing difficult or high-stakes topics from the U-M Center for Research on Learning and Teaching.
- [Handbook](#) for facilitating difficult conversations in the classroom from UF.

Peacemaker in Action Dishani Jayaweera

Episodes Covered in this Section:

Episode 2: Conflict is a Flower: Dishani Jayaweera, Sri Lanka

Episode 3: More on Dishani Jayaweera and Sri Lanka

Discussion Questions:

Reflections on Dishani's Story

- Dishani did not follow a set timeline in her peacebuilding career – she tried law school and other areas before entering the field. What can we learn from Dishani's winding path? Is there a set timeline for finding the right fit for your personal or professional path?
- How did Dishani's parents and childhood experiences impact her later work in peacebuilding? How did your early experiences impact your understanding of justice?
- Dishani's Buddhist faith informed her approach to peacebuilding. Everyone holds beliefs that inform their approach to life, yet such beliefs vary from person to person. How have your beliefs – religious or nonreligious – affected how you think about conflict and peace?
- When Dishani was awarded for her peacebuilding work, some critics said Jay should have been recognized instead. Do you think Jay should have received the award? Why or why not? What can we do to recognize and uplift underrepresented voices in peacebuilding?

Conflict and Peace Analysis

- What role did power structures play in the conflicts of the Sri Lankan civil war? What implications do such structures have for peacebuilding efforts?
- Dishani analogizes conflict to a flower that can bloom into peace. Exploring metaphors like this can help us understand well-known concepts more deeply and see them in a new way. What are some other metaphors for conflict, peace, or peacebuilding?
- We hear from Rev. Susan Hayward that CPBR employs a non-linear approach to their programming, understanding that peace is not a linear process but rather multidimensional and iterative. Why do you think this approach is important or effective in peacebuilding?

Approaches and Strategies

- Dishani develops deep relationships with individuals in addition to communities. What value does the development of individual relationships have in peacebuilding efforts?
- The Sri Lankan civil war is a complex conflict that involves several ethnic and religious groups. What is the role of cultural competence as peace actors like Dishani work to transform conflict among diverse communities?
- In what ways did the People's Forum advance peace in Sri Lanka? Rev. Susan Hayward points out that a lot of groundwork and time went into preparing for the Forum and setting the stage for productive conversations. Why is extensive groundwork, relationship building, and thoughtful planning necessary for an event like this? Can you think of any other settings in which a forum like this could be advantageous?

Classroom Activities:

Reflections on Dishani's Story

- Assign a project (paper, presentation, poster, etc.) asking students to further explore an aspect of Dishani's story from a historical, religious, political, or sociological perspective, as you find appropriate for your class's needs and focus.
- Dishani facilitated an activity to help people of different religions better understand each other's values, such as mercy, justice, and forgiveness. Task students with researching the core values of one or more religions and exploring how those values have historically informed that religious groups' involvement and actions in conflict and peacebuilding. Alternatively, they can reach out to local houses of worship or faith centers to learn more about a particular religion.

Conflict and Peace Analysis

- Several attempts at peacebuilding in Sri Lanka failed. Ask students to choose a failed peace attempt, either historical or contemporary. Have students identify reasons the peace attempt failed and propose how peacebuilding could have been more appropriately approached and sustained in the conflict's context using some of the lessons from Dishani's case study.
- Assign students to identify someone in their local community who has built peace in some capacity or context and interview them. Students could write a paper or give a presentation on this experience, or even create their own podcast using audio clips from the interview.

Approaches and Strategies

- Ask students to listen to the podcast and articulate, either verbally or through a written assignment, tools for peacebuilding presented in Dishani's case study. Additional focus areas could include applying these tools to another conflict or comparing/contrasting with other peacebuilding efforts.
- One reason Dishani's work was so powerful was her focus on relationship building as foundational for peacebuilding. Ask students to find and analyze case examples (local, national, or international) of the importance of relationship building in conflict transformation and peace negotiation.

Connect to Your Community

- The podcast mentions a CPBR youth program oriented around photography. Ask students to create and share a photo series capturing what peacebuilding looks like in their local community.
- Invite someone from the local community who builds peace or advances social justice – activists, community leaders, etc. – to come speak to the class. Afterwards, facilitate a discussion to draw connections between the speaker's work for peace and the techniques, tools, and/or lessons from Dishani's story.
- Ask students to identify a conflict that has affected their life or their community in some way and work in small groups to develop ideas for building peace between the opposing sides of the conflict. For a more in-depth project, ask students to implement the peacebuilding ideas they developed.

Resources for Learning More:

- [Profile](#) of the Center for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation on the Peace Direct website.
- [Short video](#) by the Coexist Foundation on Dishani's peacebuilding work.
- [Report](#) detailing Dishani's work and Tanenbaum's *Peacemakers in Action Network* intervention in Sri Lanka.
- [Profile](#) of Rev. Susan Hayward.
- [Article](#) providing information about the Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action Network*.
- [Meet the Peacemakers](#): Information about and pictures of the Peacemakers in Action.
- Profiles of two new *Peacemaker in Action* Awardees:
 - [Yeny Gloribel Nolasco Quijada](#)
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- Links to purchase two volumes of case studies on the lives of Tanenbaum's *Peacemakers in Action*:
 - [Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution](#), edited by David Little (Volume I)
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- [Peacemaker Interventions](#): Information about *Peacemakers in Action Network* interventions, in which Tanenbaum collaborates with *Peacemakers in Action* to build peace.
- [Click here to donate](#) to support Tanenbaum's work.

Peacemaker in Action Rev. Jacklevyn (Jacky) Frits Manuputty

Episodes Covered in this Section:

Episode 4: Provoking for Peace: Rev. Jacky Manuputty, Indonesia

Episode 5: More on Jacky Manuputty and Indonesia

Discussion Questions:

Reflections on Jacky's Story

- Jacky felt deep regret for initially condoning violence in his community, so he worked to reconcile those communities through compassionate peacebuilding work. What role do you think self-forgiveness has in conflict and peacebuilding efforts?
- Jacky and other Christian community leaders collaborated with Muslim community leaders to forge a path forward for peace. What is the benefit of interfaith discussions after a conflict and/or as a proactive practice? How and how often do you think interfaith discussions should be facilitated?
- Jacky mentioned that while COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating in many ways, it has also brought the Muslims and Christians of Indonesia together. What role can tragedy or natural disasters play in ongoing conflict? What other examples of this do you know of?

Conflict and Peace Analysis

- At first, Jacky thought of the Muslim community in Indonesia as “the other” - a group different from himself that he could not trust - which contributed to the growing conflict. When have you found yourself “othering” certain people or groups? How do we grapple with another person or group regarding us as “the other”? How can we break down a sense of “otherness” to explore commonality and create peace?
- Jacky spent much of his career building peace in his hometown of Maluku, but later in his career he became an advisor to the president in Jakarta. Do you think peacebuilding is most impactful at the local, state, or national level? Why? What are the advantages and disadvantages to all three?
- Jacky's “Bakudapa” philosophy emphasizes the importance of connecting with and checking in on neighbors and community-mates, but Lailatul noticed that was less commonly practiced in American society, with its focus on individualism. How might peacebuilding look different in societies that are primarily collectivist vs. primarily individualist? In what ways do local cultural philosophies inform peacebuilding efforts?

Approaches and Strategies

- Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer discusses the many complex roots of the Muslim-Christian conflict in Maluku. When a conflict is so multifaceted it seems insurmountable, where should peacebuilding begin? Where did Jacky begin?
- Jacky describes a hot porridge method for peacebuilding, in which people from opposing sides engage in low-stakes rapport-building activities then gradually move into more contentious topics. Is there a conflict you are experiencing right now that you could use this plan to influence? What is an example of a local, national, or international conflict that could be effectively approached using the hot porridge method?

- One peacebuilding strategy Jacky utilized was finding people on opposing sides of the conflict who had known each other beforehand and had a base of trust. How do you think conflict and peacebuilding play out differently when the parties already know each other vs. when they are strangers?
- The phrase “Peace Provocateur” was controversial because a “Provocateur” was often thought of as a negative label. Why do you think Jacky chose this word/phrase to describe the peacebuilding efforts of young Indonesian people? How does the language that is used to label or describe peacebuilding efforts impact people’s engagement?
- Jacky shared that music and dance were unifying forces between Christians and Muslims in his community. What power does music have in peacebuilding and social movements? What are examples of music that soothes people, or rises people to power and protest? Do you know of any peacebuilding organizations that use music?

Classroom Activities:

Reflections on Jacky’s Story

- Assign a project (paper, presentation, poster, etc.) asking students to further explore an aspect of Jacky’s story from a historical, religious, political, or sociological perspective, as you find appropriate for your class’s needs and focus.
- In his explanation of the hot porridge method, Jacky describes building rapport and identifying commonalities between opposing groups to initiate conflict transformation. One way to do this is through shared meals. Encourage students to identify a religious or cultural group that holds community meals and attend one such meal. Alternatively, host a classroom meal and discuss the dynamics of food-sharing in peacebuilding.

Conflict and Peace Analysis

- Ask students to create a paper or presentation on historical uses of child soldiers and explore different forms of reparations that were developed afterward (trauma classes like Jacky’s, monetary compensation, laws banning child soldiers, etc.).
- Ask students to do some research on Holy Wars, particularly between Christians and Muslims. Then, hold a discussion on the concept of Holy Wars and the role religion can play in conflict; the conflict in Indonesia and its political, cultural, and religious dimensions; and what might have motivated Jacky to initially sanction the conflict in his community.
- Assign students to identify someone in their life who has built peace in some capacity or context and interview them. Students could write a paper or give a presentation on this experience, or even create their own podcast using audio clips from the interview.

Approaches and Strategies

- Ask students to listen to the podcast and, either verbally or through a written assignment, identify tools for peacebuilding in Jacky’s case study. Then, ask students to compare and contrast these tools with those used in other peacebuilding efforts.
- Ask students to explore a conflict, perhaps in their local community or an area of interest, in which peacebuilding could begin with people who already know and trust each other. Who are the people involved, and how could their rapport impact the conflict dynamics?

- Another strategy Jacky used was mobilizing Indonesian youth to build peace in the Peace Provocateur movement. Help each student in your class identify, research, and present a case study of young people working together to build peace or advance social justice.

Connect to Your Community

- Ask students to research the efforts to preserve Aru Islands, then connect it with conservation efforts in their own country or community. For a more in-depth project, task them with applying Jacky's strategies for preserving Aru to the local conservation effort.
- Invite someone from the local community who builds peace or advances social justice – activists, community leaders, etc. – to come speak to the class. Afterwards, facilitate a discussion to draw connections between the speaker's work for peace and Jacky's story to contextualize learning in the local context.
- Ask students to identify a conflict that has affected their life in some way and work in small groups to develop ideas for building peace between the opposing sides. For a more in-depth project, ask students to implement the peacebuilding ideas they developed.

Resources for Learning More:

- [Article](#) in which Jacky speaks to the Jakarta Post about religion and conflict in the Maluku
- [Information](#) about Jacky's environmental campaign to save Aru Island
- [Video](#) of Jacky and other Peacemakers during *Peacemaker in Action* interventions in the Philippines and Indonesia
- Lailatul Fitriyah's [thesis](#) on Jacky's work
- Tanenbaum's [profile](#) of Jacky and his role as a *Peacemaker in Action*
- [Article](#) providing information about the Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action Network*.
- [Meet the Peacemakers](#): Information about and pictures of the *Peacemakers in Action*.
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