

Conflict Resolution

An Introductory Textbook

Dhammika Herath



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International Centre for Ethnic Studies
2019

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Dedicated to

Tudor, Michael and Camilla

I dedicate this book to Professor Kalinga Tudor Silva, emeritus Professor in Sociology, University of Peradeniya, Professors Michael Schulz and Camilla Orjuela, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Tudor was my undergraduate teacher at the Department of Sociology, University of Peradeniya. He is a role model for me not only in his capacity as a renowned academic but also as a magnanimous and mature human being.

Michael was my supervisor during my PhD studies in Peace and Development Studies, at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Michael was not only a supervisor; he was an excellent teacher and remains a close friend. I was always amazed at his generosity and his equanimity when I erred.

Camilla is a colleague in Peace and Development Studies, at the University of Gothenburg. Camilla has been a great inspiration for me in research and academic life in addition to being a very close personal friend.

Preface

This book is intended as an introductory textbook on conflict resolution. Readers interested in conflict resolution may find many interesting books on the market, especially, for readers in English. My contribution to this existing body of literature is to offer a textbook, which has social and cultural relevance to Sri Lanka. I have benefitted from existing literature in writing this book in addition to my experience in the field during the last decade. Therefore, I have attempted to contextualize the existing knowledge in order to make it appropriate and useful to a Sri Lankan audience, so that, readers not familiar with the general field will be able to make sense of the examples used. It is not easy to write a general introductory textbook, which is useful and relevant to a variety of readers. This book provides a basic understanding of conflict resolution by dealing with key concepts and theories, methods of behavioral change, approaches, as well as methods of communication.

However, a textbook on conflict resolution in Sri Lanka would be incomplete if it focuses primarily on the family and work place given the fact that Sri Lanka has been a conflict-ridden society for the last three decades. Hence, this book gives significant attention to understanding the ethnic conflict and post-conflict reconciliation in Sri Lanka as well. This should make this text book a unique contribution because most of the existing books focus either on macro level conflicts such as war and violence between countries or state and non-state actors or on conflicts between individuals. I have attempted to bridge this gap.

I begin this book with an introduction to the emergence of peace and conflict studies traditions in Europe and North America. The first chapter discusses the early roots of peace and conflict studies, precursors, and founders of the field. The second chapter moves on to discuss key concepts and theories in peace and conflict because a firm grasp of concepts and theories is fundamental to any pragmatic application of knowledge for conflict resolution. Chapter three deviates from the first two chapters because it introduces concepts of ethnicity and ethnic conflict given their relevance and significance to Sri Lanka. The knowledge

gained from the first and second chapters should help the reader understand the roots and development of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. The fourth chapter is a continuation of the third chapter in that it provides an introduction to the concept of social reconciliation and prospects for reconciliation in Sri Lanka. This chapter also highlights other conflicts cases, primarily, that of Rwanda, in order to shed comparative light on the process of reconciliation. A chapter on reconciliation becomes necessary for this book because Sri Lanka, as a post-conflict country, demands serious attention on reconciliation between different ethnic and religious communities. In the final chapter, I provide an introduction into negotiation and mediation along with practical examples and exercises. This chapter is expected to provide hands-on skills in handling conflicts at various levels. The conclusion provides a brief synthesis of the previous content.

This book may be of use to a wide range of audiences such as university students, school teachers, social workers, police officers, non-governmental personnel and for the general public interested in non-violent conflict resolution. Conflict resolution has become a profession in many countries and experts are called upon to mediate in conflicts in the family, workplace, community, and between or among states in the world. There are very few books on conflict resolution written specifically for a Sri Lankan readership. I have benefitted significantly from existing textbooks on conflict resolution but have infused this general knowledge with the Sri Lankan experience and examples. Through this book, I have tried to make the peace and conflict studies and conflict resolution practice relevant to the case of Sri Lanka. It is my expectation that this introductory book will encourage readers to further study conflict resolution and apply conflict resolution skills for better management and resolution of conflicts.

Acknowledgments

I would not have managed to write this book without the contribution of some very close people. I am grateful to my colleagues at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg for introducing me to the field of peace of conflict studies. Michael Schulz, Camilla Orjuela, Mats Friberg, Björn Hettne and other colleagues in Gothenburg were important in making me familiar with the field and developing my interest in issues of peace and conflict. I would also like to thank my friends and colleagues at the Department of Sociology especially, Kumari Thoradeniya, Susantha Rasnayake, Thushara Kamalathne, and Kowsalya Duraisamy for supporting me and creating a conducive work environment in which I have produced this book.

Reviewers offered very constructive comments, which helped me not only to improve the theoretical and pragmatic contribution but to also contextualize the text to fit with the Sri Lankan readership. Therefore, I would like to thank their voluntary dedication of time and effort to read the book carefully and provide very useful comments. Ezechiel Sentama from the Center for Conflict Management at the University of Rwanda provided important insights into the conflict and reconciliation process of Rwanda. I am grateful to Sassanka Rambukwella for designing the cover for this book at short notice.

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Chapter One: Peace and Conflict Studies

This chapter introduces the field of peace and conflict studies by delineating the origins of the North American conflict studies tradition and North European peace studies tradition. The chapter briefly describes the precursors of the field and then moves on to introduce the key founders. Some of the early theories, roots and concepts are briefly brought forward to make the reader familiar with the field. The chapter also talks about the nature of conflicts, the role of state, other actors and individuals and various approaches in which conflict can be confronted.

Origins of Peace and Conflict Studies

Conflicts are based on actual or perceived differences but not all differences cause conflicts. In fact, differences are entirely natural in nature and of course, in human relations. In the human world, people think and perceive differently and interpret things in a myriad ways. A single phenomenon may trigger a variety of emotions and responses in different people. The needs, interests and positions of different individuals vary. While some of these differences can lead to conflict, others may be resolved without conflict. Therefore, the presence of differences is not a problem as differences do not constitute or cause conflicts between individuals or groups. Most critical factor, which decides on unfolding of a conflict is how people perceive and handle differences (Glasl, 1999, P. 17). What is a conflict? In very broad terms, a conflict can be defined as *the pursuit of incompatible goals by two or more parties* (Galtung, 1996, Glasl, 1999, Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1999). This is a commonly used definition in many books of conflict resolution.

While the origin of conflict studies or conflict research tradition is credited to Kenneth Boulding, who belongs to the North American pragmatist tradition¹, the origin of peace research is credited to the works of Johan Galtung whose seminal

¹ Pragmatism is a North American philosophical tradition that began in 1870s and emphasises on practical utility of philosophical constructs concepts, language etc.

work is associated with the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo. While the conflict research tradition emphasized the prevention of war and limiting the extent of damage, peace research has advocated a broader scope and agenda (Lawler, 1995). Peace studies as a field has emphasized not merely getting rid of violence but addressing causes of violence including confronting of unjustified, exploitative and harmful relationships and building wholesome and equitable relationships. However, most textbooks on conflict resolution, including the present book, consider peace studies and conflict studies as an integrated field of study, although these have different origins. Therefore, presently, *peace and conflict studies* is a single academic discipline from which the practice of conflict resolution emerges. It is important to mention practice of conflict resolution existed before peace and conflict studies in terms of negotiation and mediation in industrial relations and other fields but it is the academic discipline of peace and conflict studies which developed conflict resolution as a professional practice. Today, nevertheless, it is not uncommon to see academic degrees being offered in conflict resolution as well. Thus, there is significant overlap between these fields both in academic studies and in practice.

Peter Wallensteen (1995) defines conflict resolution as a “a situation where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other’s continued existence as parties and cease all violent action against each other“ (P. 8). He further explains that conflict resolution involves an agreement, which can be formal in the case of conflicts involving large parties, casualties etc but it can be informal in other settings. The parties accept each other’s continued existence and agree to cease violence. Conflict resolution is more than the limited definition of peace and it is more than the absence of war. The parties are agreeing to respect each other and prepare for living together with one another.

Precursors and foundations of Peace and Conflict Research

Although, the period between 1950s and 1960s is taken as the formative years of peace and conflict studies, the work done by social psychologists in the 1920s

onwards have been the precursors to conflict studies. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of Indian freedom struggle, is an early inspiration to the origin of peace studies. Gandhi believed in the right to life not only of humans but also of animals long before the emergence of discourses of human rights. Gandhi made extensive use of the concept of *Ahimsa*, which he borrowed from Hindu and Buddhist spiritual traditions. Ahimsa is a broad concept and has deep foundations in eastern philosophies but for practical purposes, is translated to mean non-violence. Gandhi opposed the use of violence even for removing violence and he advocated non-violence to fight violence. Galtung acknowledges that Gandhi's writings have inspired the concepts of positive peace and structural violence, which are elaborated later in this chapter. Although Gandhi never used the terms direct or structural violence, Gandhi opposed violence directed at the individual as well as inequality, which leads to discrimination and poverty. Galtung considered poverty as a form of structural violence (Weber, 1999).

Gandhian thought influenced the development of the academic discipline of peace studies in many ways. Gandhi's conception of human needs lays out his philosophy about equality and exploitation. He stated that any one, who claims as his or her own, more than what is necessary and due for him or her, is committing theft. He maintained that the nature provides for every being sufficiently and that if every human being only claimed what he/she should reasonably claim, there would be no poverty in the world. He indicated that wealth and resources must be shared and if there is indeed inadequacy, those who have resources, should live frugally (Weber, 1999). Mary Parker Follett was also important among the precursors. There were important social movements such as the Quaker movement, and religious traditions such as Buddhism that were instrumental in founding peace and conflict studies.

Studies by Kurt Levin (1935) pioneered several studies on cooperation and competition and psychological conflicts. These were followed up by many of his students and followers especially on individual and group outcomes of cooperation and competition (Deutsch, 1949). The publication of 'Theory of Games and Economic Behavior' by von Neumann and Morgenstern in 1944

is an important contribution to the emergence of conflict studies. According to Deutsch, (2006), game theory highlighted that a conflict had both cooperative and competitive processes and parties to a conflict are interdependent on each other for resolving the conflict. The emphasis on cooperative elements in a conflict against a traditional view that conflicts are competitive struggles is an important contribution.

The field of conflict resolution has evolved through many decades of scholarship and drew inspiration from many disciplines such as sociology, psychology, political science, international relations, law etc. Conflict resolution as a field of academic study emerged in the 1950s and 60s. Academics in different disciplines had thought that conflicts, whatever its form or size, from international wars to disputes at work place, or even home, have some core qualities and features. So, they thought by the application of practices, which had been developed in the field of industrial relations and community mediation, resolution of conflicts in other settings would be possible. By the 1950s and 60s, the study of conflict or conflict studies emerged as a separate academic discipline. New professorships, new academic journals, university centers etc had begun to be established in Europe and North America and scholars and practitioners were actually making an impact across the world in many conflicts. One important development after the end of the cold war and that of the dissolution of the Soviet Union was that instead of having a single conflict that dominated the whole world, we began to see lot of internal conflicts, ethnic conflicts, conflicts over recession and power struggles within countries. It took time before the established academic disciplines accepted the new interloper of conflict studies as an academic field of study (Miall, Ramsbotham and woodhouse, 1999).

Kenneth Boulding, Johan Galtung and John Burton are the three most important founders of *peace and conflict studies* and later to the enrichment of the practice of conflict resolution. Among the second generation of scholars, Herbert Kelman, Roger Fisher, Willian Zartman, Adam Curle, and Elise Boulding are key figures. Kenneth Boulding was at the University of Michigan in the United States and was the founding editor of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* in 1957. Boulding

wanted to found knowledge that would help in preventing war. He argued that the concept of Nation State was archaic and that the existing international system would not be able to prevent the recurrence of war between sovereign states and hence advocated a reorganization of the international system. Boulding was of the view by collecting data on social, economic and political conditions of countries in the world, one would be able to predict occurrence of conflicts. This would have been similar to modern early warning systems (Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 2003).

In the late 1960s Galtung put forward the seminal idea of a conflict triangle and today every conflict resolution student learns it as a basic and essential concept of the discipline.

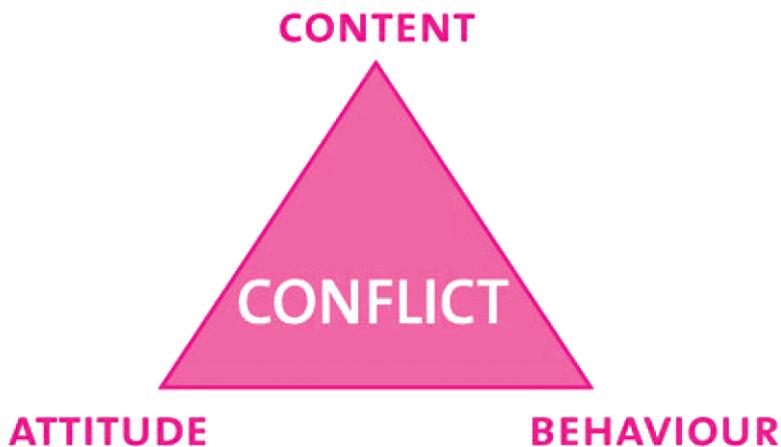


Figure 1: modified version of a figure of Conflict Triangle, Galtung 1996, P. 72).

Every conflict has three dimensions, which include **attitudes, behavior, and contradiction** as its vertices. In this case, the contradiction refers to the underlying conflict, that is, the **incompatibility of goals** (Galtung 1996). **Attitudes** refer to our perceptions, misperceptions, feelings, norms, values and so on. Attitudes can be positive or negative but in conflict situations, we tend to have demeaning views about our opponents. Attitudes are often influenced by

emotions such as fear, anger, hatred and malice and so on. **Behavior** is about how we behave in conflict situations. We can threaten, ridicule, or cooperate or coerce others or we can try to understand, talk, negotiate and solve conflicts. According to Galtung, for a conflict to occur (manifest conflict) these three features must be present. The absence of one of them would mean that the conflict has not manifested itself yet. If behavior or attitudes are absent, then, you may have a latent conflict.

The concept of conflict triangle is pivotal in the study of conflicts. Conflict resolution involves de-escalation of conflict, a change in attitudes and transforming the relationship or clashing interests, which are at the core of conflict structure. This notion of a triangle is also related to the typology of violence introduced by Galtung; direct, structural and cultural violence. You stop direct violence by changing behavior, structural or indirect violence by removing structural contradictions or injustices, and cultural violence by changing attitudes. Galtung extends the concept of triangle to the global trade as well. He sees the global trade as a form of structural violence as in the form of some Northern countries having the most challenging (and rewarding) aspect while some countries in the South having the routine activities. The former can go to the extent to using direct violence to preserve this system while mainstream economic theories can justify the whole system.

Galtung's concept of negative peace and positive peace brought peace research into a broader scope. Negative peace has the same meaning as absence of violence proposed by Boulding. Positive peace is much more than absence of violence; it is about dismantling discriminatory, unequal, inequitable and unjustifiable relationships and developing conditions necessary for peaceful, harmonious, equitable and happy life. Peace research is not just about preventing war or violence but could be applied to different social layers and dimensions; the possibility for peaceful relations between different classes, dominant and weak groups, rulers and the ruled, men and women, and so on. Importantly, Galtung found inspiration from Gandhian ideas. Galtung was also the founding editor of the *Journal of Peace Research* (Galtung, 1969).

Galtung asks the important question of what upholds the war. He mentions of three reasons: the patriarchy, the state system with its monopoly on violence and the super-state system with the ultimate monopoly of the hegemons. There should be alternatives to the use of violence by states and the world should become more democratic through alliances between non-hegemonic countries and by developing a global mechanism of decision making through one country one vote power structure irrespective of whether countries have military power (Galtung 1996).

At the level of the individual, Galtung believes that there should be more equitable division of powers between women and men. Galtung looks at the male-female connection with violence-peace using a four-factor independent variable discourse of *body, mind, structure and culture*. Male-female connection is not 'biologistic'. The body represents the biological male and female; the mind can be of low or high empathy; the structure can be vertical or horizontal; culture can be centripetal or centrifugal. Galtung considers the female to be of high empathy, horizontal, centripetal and leading to peace. Patriarchy is an institutionalization of male dominance and brings together direct, structural and cultural violence. He considers patriarchy to be a form of cultural violence and advocates the peaceful negation of patriarchy, so that, there will be not the matriarchy but gender parity or equality. There is a very high correlation between gender and violence in which the male is predominantly responsible for committing violence, although females can also be part of warfare, decision making to use violence or criminal activity. The male is culturally moulded to espouse violence through childhood socialization. Unlike the female, the male is given less contact with mothers after some age and discouraged to show empathy and encouraged to demonstrate 'hardness'. Galtung advocates a mode of socialization in which the boys are socialized in a way similar to girls with more love, caring, skin contact with mother, and soft approach etc (Galtung 1996).

John Burton is also considered a central pillar in the development of conflict studies/peace studies. Burton is an Australian and once served as the Australian High Commissioner for Sri Lanka. He became the honorary secretary of

the Conflict Research Society in London. Burton is also credited with the development of controlled communication and the problem solving method in conflict research. He was the first director of the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict at the University College of London in 1966. One of Burton's important contributions was the concept of 'protracted social conflict'. Following the theory of Basic Needs by Maslow, Burton distinguished needs from interests. Interests are about material goods while needs are non-material such as identity, recognition or security etc. He stated that interests can be traded, negotiated or bargained but needs cannot be. However, he posited that non-material needs are not centered on scarce goods and therefore, can easily be addressed if proper means are followed (Deutsch, Coleman, and Marcus, 2006; Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 2003).

Nature and the causes of conflicts

Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (2003) point out that the nature of conflict has changed over the past centuries. If one looks at the ancient past, conflicts based on primordial alliances were the most common form of conflicts. These typically included conflicts between local kingdoms or between tribes within a country. Another important feature of these conflicts is the absence of professional armies. From around 16th century onwards, powerful kingships emerged in Europe and claimed the sovereignty. Conflicts emerged between these newly formed nations state and the international system of states had to find ways to maintain peace between and among countries. After the second World War, the United Nations was given the responsibility of preventing 'total wars' and it managed to fulfill this obligation. However, there were moments in which the rivalry between the super powers, the United States of America and former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) threatened total war. Wars between sovereign nations are termed 'Clausewitzean' wars.

The end of the cold war was witnessed by the emergence of new types of conflicts around the world in the 50s and 60s. These were 'internal wars' or intra-state conflicts fought over issues such as ethnic or religious identity or discrimination,

inequitable distribution of resources, etc. Some of these conflicts were about national independence and decolonization. According to Edward Rice (1988), these were ‘wars of the third kind’.

Quality	Clausewitsean	New wars
Targets	Enemy Soldiers, economic targets, military bases or equipment	Enemy Soldiers, economic targets, military bases or equipment’s + civilians, civilian institutions, religious places
Political goals	Foreign policy interests	Consolidation of new forms of power based on ethnic homogeneity
Ideology	Democracy, fascism, socialism	Tribal or communalist identity
Form of mobilization	Conscription, patriotism,	Fear, corruption, religion, magic, media
External support	Superpowers, ex-colonial powers	Diaspora, criminal groups, mercenaries
Mode of warfare	Formal and organized Demarcated front lines, heavy weapons,	Fragmented, dispersed, paramilitaries, child soldiers, light weapons, use of atrocity, famine, rape, siege
War economy	Taxation, state mobilization	Outside emergency assistance, unofficial exports, drugs sale, criminal rackets, plunder,

Adopted from Kaldor and Vashee, eds, 1997, 7-19, cited in Miall, Ramsbothem, and Woodhouse, 2003).

What has been referred to as ‘new wars’ by Rice are not new anymore and the nature of these intra-state conflicts have changed to a significant extent. Currently, there are many intra-state conflicts around the world fought between ethnic or religious groups, para-militaries belonging to a government and war lords, a government and drug-cartels, between proxies of external governments or rebel or terrorist organizations etc. The major powers of the world have significant influence over these conflicts in some countries. The cases of Syria, Iraq, and Yemen are some of the well-known cases at present where several major powers of the world have had a role to play either in igniting and fueling the conflict or in trying to contain it. The emergence of AL- **al-Qaeda** and the so-called Islamic State (**Daesh**) in the middle-east and parts of Africa has introduced a dramatic difference to the nature of present day intra-state conflicts and to global security.

What has been responsible for causing contemporary armed conflicts? In the African region, intra-state conflicts based on rivalries between ethnic and/or religious groups have been a major source of conflicts. Africa is also home to many conflicts fought over the distribution or ownership of resources and also conflict between warlords. Latin America had conflicts between governments and drug cartels. The Asian region was marked by a number of internal conflicts, which often had to do with colonial heritages and impact of colonial administration in dividing ethnic groups. Conflicts between a government and ethnic or religious groups, conflicts fought over group identity, distribution of political power or resources have been prominent in Asia. Conflicts in Europe were fought on ethnic and/or religious lines, identity, and political independence from a central government. The conflicts in former Yugoslavia are a prime example. Even in relatively developed countries such as Spain, the region of Catalonia is fighting to gain independence while there are tensions between of Flanders (Dutch speaking) and Wallonia (French speaking) in Belgium.

Morton Deutsch (2006) have highlighted the social and psychological roots to conflicts and have distinguished between cooperative orientation and competitive orientation and how these may determine the outcome of a conflict situation. Any conflict situation has a mixture of these orientations. This theory has two basic ideas; the type of interdependence among the goals and type of actions. Goals can be positively linked (your goals attainment and my attainment is positively correlated) or negatively linked (your attainment leads to my loss or vice versa). However, in reality, it is rare to have purely positively or negatively structured goal attainment situations. Actions can be effective actions (making it possible to attain goals) or bungling actions (making it difficult to attain goals). Deutsch's theory of cooperation and conflict looks at conflict resolution as an effective cooperative problem-solving process whereby there is a mutual problem to be resolved cooperatively. But the opposite of this can be a destructive process, which involves a competitive process whereby parties compete or struggle to determine who wins and who loses leading to loss by both parties. Deutsch (2006) describes certain essential steps, which are required in constructive conflict resolution. Firstly, 'reframing' is a necessary action. A conflict can be

reframed as a mutual problem to be solved or resolved. This induces the parties to look for solutions that lead to win-win solutions and satisfy both parties at least minimally. If you look at the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, the government and the Tamil armed groups were competing and failed to see the cooperative dimension of the conflict. The parties failed to engage in a cooperative problem solving, which would have saved thousands of lives and assured a win win solution to the conflict.

According to some theorists, human needs or rather deprivation of them are at the bottom of most conflicts. Burton (1990) developed the 'human needs' theory and based it in the hierarchy of needs developed by Abraham Maslow and the notion of eight essential needs developed by Paul Sites (Rubenstein, 2001). Maslow identified five types of human needs. Burton stated that if conflicts are to be prevented or resolved, universally valid basic human needs must be satisfied.

1. **Physiological needs:** these are the very basic needs such as water and food without which the human body (or any living being) cannot exist. According to Maslow, deprivation of physiological needs will result in apathy, illness, disability, and death.
2. **Safety needs:** Human beings crave for sense of security without having to experience fear and anxiety. People need protection from any danger. Deprivation of safety needs lead to fear, anxiety, rage, and psychosis.
3. **Belongingness and love needs:** human beings always want to be part of a group, which could be family or any other group from which they find a sense of caring for oneself and others as well as intimacy. When these needs are not realized, people develop a sense of alienation, loneliness, and various forms of neurosis.
4. **Esteem needs:** Human beings aspire to have self-esteem. This can involve their attempt to build self-confidence, sense of worth or strength etc. People also want to have a social esteem, which can come in the form of respect, dignity, appreciation, etc. When the need for self-esteem is

not realized, people may develop feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, helplessness, incompetence, shame, guilt etc.

5. Self-actualization needs: The highest goals that human beings aspire are the self-actualization needs. These are considered the higher order needs that one aspires to reach some day. This involves realizing one's full potential. The self-actualization needs also involves meta-needs such as truth, curiosity, justice, beauty, aliveness, playfulness, etc.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, adopted from (Sandy, Boardman and Deutsch, 2006, P. 339-340)

Conservative personalist theories saw human beings as innately violent and posited that they are controlled by internal processes including instincts while the Liberal situationalist theories emphasized the importance of social determinants of human behavior and the possibility of controlling behavior by controlling social determinants. However, Burton advocated middle ground by rejecting both the inwardly-driven and outwardly-driven models. Burton argued that the needs for identity, recognition, security, and personal development were the most relevant to an understanding of destructive social conflicts although, over time, however, he also highlighted the failure of existing state systems to satisfy the need for identity. The state in many countries was entangled with modern ethno-nationalist struggles and as a source of identity, it could not provide a basis for constructing identity for some groups of people. Burton posited that the human needs theory would provide a relatively objective basis that would transcend local political and cultural differences in order to understand the sources of conflict and to develop conflict resolution processes (Rubenstein, 2001).

At the macro level, Conservative personalists and liberal situationalists advocated administration of deterrence and positive reinforcement respectively. However, after 1950s, the nature of conflicts changed radically from conventional wars to conflicts over religion, ethnicity, control of state within states, control over material and non-material resources etc and the realist model of applying

pain, that is, the use of coercion, not only failed but engendered more counter violence. This is where the human needs theory can provide a realistic response to violence, which, at first, seem as irrational (Rubenstein, 2001).

In trying to understand the nature and causes of conflicts, it is imperative that the reader is familiar with a specific type of conflicts, which emerged after 1950s. These new conflicts are referred to as 'protracted social conflicts' and the now we turn to a brief introduction of PSCs.

Protracted social conflict (PSC)

It was mentioned earlier that 1950s and 60s saw the emergence of an entirely new variety of intra-states conflicts. The concept of 'protracted social conflict (PSC), presented by Azar (1991) is vital to analysis of this new wave of conflicts. PSC represents a kind of conflict fought over basic needs such as security, social and cultural recognition, acceptance of status of whatever kind, access to political institutions and/or economic resources. These conflicts display mixed features in terms of internal and external involvement. In some cases, there can be external parties initiating and/or fueling internal conflicts like the case of the war in Sri Lanka in which India was initially training the rebels and giving them financial and military capability in addition to providing political support (Loganathan, 1996). PSCs can have multiple causal factors. For instance, the conflict in Sri Lanka was initially about the demand for political representation, equity in the distribution of resources and having a stake in state affairs. Later, the question of the official language of the country became a key issue. Youth unrest among the Tamil youth developed as a consequence and some youth took up arms state the state. The LTTE resorted to terrorist methods as a weapon of war. The Sri Lanka state applied counter violence and counter terrorism strategies, which opened up the space for revenge violence by the LTTE. Each year, new factors were added to the original set of causes and once the conflict had developed to a certain stage, it became extremely difficult to distinguish 'original' causes from secondary causes. In protracted social conflicts, the main goals, targets and even actors can change. In the case of Sri Lanka, initially, there were a dozen

insurgent groups fighting against the Sri Lankan state but the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam managed to decimate all other insurgent groups. PSCs fail to show definite starting and ending points. For instance, in the 26 years of history of the conflict in Sri Lanka, there were periods of intense violence while there were years of relative peace. Although the conflict seems to have ended now, some of the causes still remain.

The great majority of PSCs have taken place inside countries rather than between countries. According to Azar (1986) there are four aspects to the escalation of PSCs. Firstly, it usually springs up based on the relationship between an identity group such as ethnic, religious, racial, cultural etc and the state. The needs and interests, which form the core of the problem are of individual nature but they are expressed and articulated as the needs and interests of a group. Azar links many of the PSCs to the impact of *divide and rule* policies of the colonial rule, which created nation states putting together groups, which were not intrinsically connected beforehand. Often, one major ethnic group was able to capture power leading to discrimination of minorities and consequently creating a wedge between the state and those marginalized groups. The inability and unwillingness of these nation states to respond to the needs of the minorities often created protracted social conflicts.

Insights that Azar has generated on PSCs have direct relevance and applicability to the case of Sri Lanka. The question of whether Sri Lanka possessed features of a 'nation state' even before the advent of colonial powers can be debated. However, there is no doubt that by the time of the British conquest of Sri Lanka, there were several local kingdoms, which were not under a unified sovereign. The colonial administration lumped all these kingdoms into one and formed the new nation state in which, Sinhalas and Tamils competed for power. The post-independent state is accused of discrimination against minorities, predominantly, against the Tamils. It is this discrimination, along with nationalism and opportunism among the Sinhala and Tamil political elites, that caused the ethnic conflicts, which engulfed the entire country for 26 years.

Secondly, as stated by Azar, deprivation of human needs are at the core of a PSC and since the needs such as security, recognition, acceptance, etc are non-negotiable, the conflict is likely to be intense, vicious and cruel. At times, one may think the conflict is irrational but for those involved in the conflict, it is about basic human needs and thus extremely important. According to Azar, 'most states which experience protracted social conflicts tend to be characterized by incompetent, parochial, fragile and authoritarian governments that fail to satisfy basic human needs' (1990, P 10). The state, ideally, is expected to be an impartial arbiter of conflicts; when a conflict erupts among the members, the state is expected to govern but if the state is monopolized by a certain ethnic, religious or racial group, this role of the impartial arbiter is highly unlikely to occur and hence, the conflict is the most likely outcome because those who have power over the state are likely to use it for the benefit of the members of their group, while those belonging to the 'out groups' are likely to suffer and hence, oppose the state. Those excluded from the rewards of the state are most likely to challenge the state and the state loses its legitimacy in the eyes of a segment of the population it is supposed to govern.

Thirdly according to Azar, in many developing countries, many of which are also home to PSCs, the political development is also weak and the political capacity of the state is likely to be weak. Often, there is centralization of power at a center and rulers there would try to impose a rigid bureaucratic rule. People's participation and the possibility for participation are low and all this results in the inability of the state to respond to the needs of the deprived groups. Fourthly, the state is also influenced by regional and global political, economic and military forces and at times, can be dependent on these for its functioning, which can influence the PSCs.

The previous section introduced the nature and causes of conflicts and the specific type of conflicts called the PSCs. But then how do people and groups approach and respond to conflicts?

Approaches and responses to conflict

The most common response in the face of conflicts involves one of the two extremes of conflict avoidance or belligerence (Glasl 1999). Conflicts can occur at various levels including family, community, workplace, between groups or countries. Within the setting of an organization, if most individuals are of the avoidance type, then, that organization creates a culture in which conflicts are suppressed. This develops a work environment, which is boring and not conducive for creativity and where people are not happy. It is a constraining work environment in which people feel that they are weak. If on the other hand, people are belligerent, the work environment becomes as such people fight for even small issues and there is no basis for people to work together. The table below further outlines the contours of conflict avoidance and belligerence.

	Conflict avoidance	Belligerence
Personal attitude	Retreat, escape, defensiveness; anger and emotions are suppressed; differences are hidden from public eye.	Offensive approach, aggression; enjoyment of friction; personal emotions are lived out and clearly shown; differences are fought out in public
Organizational culture	Mostly formal structures; structures and methods encourage distance; power (attached to position, norms and methods) is the main emphasis	Mostly informal structures; structures and methods encourage confrontation; personal power (conviction, ability, strength, emotionality...) is played out openly.
Effect in the group	‘Cold conflicts’; all energy is paralyzed; static and cumbersome; death through paralysis.	‘Hot conflicts’; hectic and overly dynamic; unsteady and superficial; disintegration through anarchy.

Quoted from Glasl (1999, P. 5)

What is true for an organization is applicable to any conflict setting mentioned in previous sections. Glasl further notes that neither avoidance nor belligerence helps in the constructive resolution of conflict and that only extremely negative ends can be expected through these approaches. Someone, who likes to avoid conflict usually moves away from conflicts. She devalues herself and gives lower priority to her interests relative to the interests of the others. She is afraid to talk

and faces the conflicts and feels that facing the conflict will either hurt herself or others. Therefore, she suppresses her feelings and emotions. The belligerent person, on the other hand displays lot of aggression and gives no regard for the interests of the other. He usually insults and hurts others. Belligerent person is egocentric and is concerned only of his interests. He feels that he will be considered a coward if he accommodates the interests of others and he feels very insecure. Therefore, a belligerent person would either inflict pain on others or himself rather than leaving a conflict. Glasl recommends that we should be conscious of these fears associated with avoidance and belligerence so that these fears will not be able to control us.

Instead of conflict avoidance and belligerence, one should develop *Assertiveness* so that people can develop *individual conflict capability* and organization can develop *conflict resistance*.

Basic assumptions behind conflict avoidance, conflict capability and belligerence

Conflict Avoidance	Conflict Capability	Belligerence
Conflict drains energy, therefore keep away from it.	Aggressions are energy; I will channel them in a positive way	Conflicts allow me to experience my own being- it increases my vitality!
Open conflicts bring unnecessary destruction!	Conflicts help to get away from outdated patterns!	Only chaos will give rise to the new
Conflict only deepens opposites; Differences are basically insoluble.	Differences are vitally necessary; working out differences benefits everyone!	Consensus is often an illusion because: 'War is the father of all things!'

Quoted from Glasl (1999, P. 7)

Accordingly, the most common assumption among avoiders is that conflict takes so much energy and hence it is all the better to keep away from it while the belligerents believe that conflict is an opportunity to express themselves and that conflicts enable them to demonstrate their prowess. Yet, there is a third way to perceive and respond to conflicts; **assertiveness**. The assertive person

takes the conflict in a positive way and is interested in channeling the conflict energy for obtaining constructive and meaningful change. The avoiders feel that conflicts lead to destruction while the belligerents believe only by creating confusion and letting things get disarray, they succeed in creating the change but the assertive people feel that, conflicts, if handled and managed well, can lead to social change and allow people to get rid of situations, relationships, conditions which are no longer desired. Finally, the avoiders think that conflicts can only widen the gaps, which already exists and whatever differences that are there are not amenable for solutions while the belligerents feel that consensus is never possible and war is a necessary part of the world. However, the assertive people are convinced that differences are quite natural and necessary in human world and we all stand to gain by being able to work out the differences.

Writing more or less on the same aspects in conflict behavior, Miall et al (1999) show there are four conflict styles in which one can face a given conflict or conflicts in general (habitually).

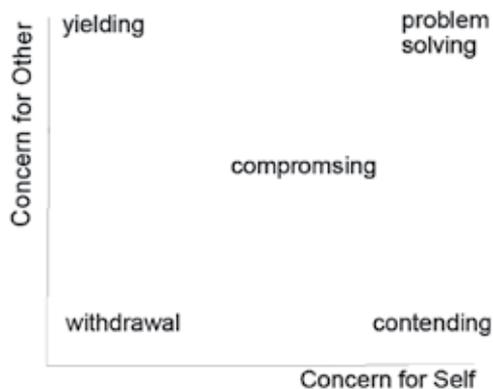


Figure 2 Source Miall et al (1999), P. 06

1. Contending- this refers to the furthest end of the concern for self where an individual or a group is exerting force for highly selfish interests.
2. Yielding- refers to a furthest end for the concern for other but conflict experts do not see this positively. This is a level where one fails to look after his/her individual or group interests.

3. Withdrawal- this refers to giving up, being subjugated and acceptance of defeat. Again conflict experts see this as a negative reaction.
4. Problem solving- this refers to a situation where parties face the problem and try to address the real issues. This is the goal of conflict resolution.

Conflict resolution does not see the compromise as a genuinely acceptable option as it means one gains 50% and loses 50%. There can of course be situations where compromise may be the only option but such situations are rare and in most situations problem solving is possible.

It is usual for parties to a conflict to think that a situation has a zero-sum outcome; one party's gain is the other parties' loss. Conflict resolution helps parties to realize that the situation could be non-zero-sum; both may gain or lose. It then helps parties to move in a positive-sum direction. In the figure below any point towards left is better for person A while any point towards top is better for person B. What is required is the movement towards the top-right.

Glasl (1999), makes an interesting comparison with the structures of personality; Id, Ego and Super Ego, proposed by Sigmund Freud and shows that each person has a higher-self and a shadow and one can oscillate between these ends depending on the circumstances. Higher-self represents a Light Personality or an Angelic being. Shadow represents sub-personalities or the 'Double'. Everyday Ego is a mixture of higher-self and shadow. According to Glasl (1999), individuals try to connect with the higher self or shadow in different ways; 1) compulsive self-chastisement, 2) escape from one's own ideal image, 3) resignation and capitulation, 4) illusion of perfection.

Compulsive self-chastisement involves a forced and almost a violent effort to connect with the higher-self. The individual tries to become the higher-self, be like it and tries all positive ways to imitate it in such a way that one fails recognize this is not possible. One does not realize that one is failing. There can be people in your organization, who think of themselves as perfect. In an academic institution, I have seen people, who think of themselves as the best teachers. They have such

a high self-image of themselves that they never think they make mistakes, or that they are not perfect. Sometimes, they show miserable performance but criticize others as incompetent, incapable and uninterested. Students as well as staff can find such teachers intolerable and inflexible and therefore, try to avoid them as far as possible.

Escape from one's own ideal image is a situation where the individual recognizes the higher-self and appreciates it but consider oneself incapable of being the higher-self and thus, avoids it. The individual feels that she is not worthy of being the higher-self. People of this nature knows what it means to be a quality person defined according to various standards and may attempt to live up to them in some situations but in many cases they avoid challenging situations, and keep away from certain gatherings. At your workplace You may have met individuals, who avoids bearing responsibilities or positions, even the ones that benefit them, because they lack confidence to meet the ideal image.

Resignation and capitulation is a situation where one recognizes the higher-self, appreciates it but thinks that one can never get close to the ideals and hence, give up them, resigns and retreats from those values. Individuals forgo their higher values in order to meet demands of certain life situations and under certain pressures but there can still be moments they feel sad about it.

Illusion of perfection resembles a situation in which the individual thinks he has already achieved his higher-self and living it and there is nothing else that he has to do in order to achieve the perfection. He thinks others must respect him or revere him for what he is. The person thinks that he is his higher-self and he demonstrates exemplary qualities, which must be recognized and appreciated by others. This kind of individuals can be seen in any work environment. For example, let's assume that there is a manager, who maintains the illusion that he is a perfect. He thinks he demonstrates excellence in work ethnics, commitment, and attitude and expect others to follow him. The result is that others around him may consider this person to be a nuisance, rude and unbearable and may even protest against him. Others may see the mistakes that this persons fails to see in him.

It is important to note that, these kinds of problematic connections can be found not only between the everyday Ego and Higher-self, but also with the shadow (See Glasl, 1999).

State as a factor in conflicts

Some theorists of international relations and global systems had predicted that the vanishing of state as an institution because the neoliberal economic agenda and the forces of globalization would engulf the nation state (Baylis and Smith, 2001). Burton spoke about a 'world society' in which the old state system becomes outmoded and non-territorial actors become more significant (Burton, 1972). These critiques have now been rendered almost irrelevant as the state remains strong as the most important actor having full trusteeship of sovereignty, the legitimate use of force, the key decision maker regarding the mode of production, provider of services and the distributor of resources. It is true that certain regional associations such as the European Union have reduced the scope and power of those states to a significant extent but even in the case of EU the ultimate negotiator on behalf of the people is the state. This is well illustrated by the position of Brexit where the British people decided in a referendum to breakaway from the European Union.

Contrary to predictions of the end of the state, for conflicts around the world, the state is at times the main source of grievance or capturing state power is the ultimately goal or at least, the state is looked upon either as a savior or part of the problem. As I pointed out earlier, many of the post-cold war conflicts are secessionist struggles fought over religious or ethnic lines to capture state power or to demand an important role in state power. In some cases, the conflicts about whether a group can maintain its cultural identity without being suppressed by a majority group. Often, a major ethnic and/or religious minority group holds state power but in a limited number of cases, as in post-genocide Rwanda, minorities have been able to capture power. In many occasions, the state becomes a brutal oppressor in crushing rebellion within the boundaries of the state. The anti-rebellion operations of the Sri Lankan state between 1989 and

1991 against the Marxists rebels of the People's Liberation Movement (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, JVP) saw thousands of youth being killed through extra judicial executions. In Sri Lanka, the LTTE, which became one of the most ruthless rebel movements in the world, waged a brutal war against the state and the state responded with the same level of brutality. The ultimate consequence was the death of thousands of soldiers, combatants as well as civilians at the hands of the state forces and the LTTE. Therefore, the post-cold war intra states conflicts becomes so special given the fact that, it is not through the forces of an enemy state that people of a country die but mostly through a conflict with the state or between ethnic or religious groups living in one state.

As explained by Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (2003), economic factors make a significant influence on the possibility and probability of having conflicts within a country. At times, inequitable distribution of resources can lead those who are excluded from the benefits to rebel against the state, perceivably, dominated by one or more ethnic alliances. In some conflict cases, real and genuine discrimination constitute the major grievance but in certain situations, people belonging to a particular ethnic or religious group can also rebel against the state for *perceived* discrimination as well. Drastic economic transformations also constitute a source of grievance and a sense of discrimination. At times, dramatic economic transformations generate winners and losers and the latter has been a cause of conflict. In some situations, material development is so fast that and uneven that it does not generate tangible benefits to some groups of the population and can cause conflict. When a country is divided along ethnic or religious lines, and when a group is able to capture the power of the state, it can result in another group or groups feeling that having the power over the state is the real decider of economic benefits. This can drive some groups to challenge the legitimacy of the state. Longman and Schmid, (1997) found a strong correlation between absolute level of development and conflict occurrence.

The role of elites and individuals in causing or escalating conflicts

The discussion presents an explanation of conflicts focusing on three different levels of context, social structure and relations. However, one critical question that would challenge this analysis is the role played by identifiable individuals. Almost all of us can pinpoint clearly identifiable persons in the case of some conflicts and hence, their role must become explicit in our conflict analysis. Stated differently, while the three levels mentioned about are highly significant explanatory factors, there are situations where the role of individuals must be highlighted. ‘A focus on international level (contextual), state level (structural), and conflict party level (relational) types of analysis may make the conflict appear to be natural or even inevitable process and fails to lay the blame squarely on the shoulders of the individuals and elites who are usually responsible...’ (Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (2003), P. 89). If this analysis is used to understand the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, one can clearly observe the role of certain individuals. Velupillai Pirabakaran, the leader of the LTTE, who was known for his penchant for violence, was pivotal to converting the LTTE from being a struggle against discrimination into a ruthless terrorist movement. The intransigence of the leadership of the LTTE, no doubt, made the possibility of finding a negotiated settlement less likely, especially, in the last peace attempt during the period 2001-2003. The same leadership ordered a boycott of the Presidential elections in 2005 and guaranteed the victory of the candidate who was not favorable to the peace process. In fact, the enforced boycott of election made sure that the individual who championed the peace process lost. It became an irony of history that the candidate, who won due to this enforced boycott of elections by Tamils of the North and East, succeeded in wiping out the LTTE leadership and the movement.

If one looks at the episodes of conflicts and violence, which have erupted between Buddhists Muslims time to time, certain organizations such as the Bodu Bala Sena (literally, Buddhist Power Force) and its leadership played key roles in inciting anti-Muslim sentiments and stoking hatred. Equally, leaders of radical Islamic movements such as the National Thowheed Jamaath, Sri Lanka Thowheed

Jamaath as well as Sri Lanka Thablighi Jamaath played key roles in effecting a purification drive among the Muslim community and consequent rapid cultural changes, which made them appear exclusivist (Herath and Rambulwella; Herath, 2015; McGilvray, 2016; Faslan and Nadine, 2015). This added fuel to an existing conflict and made the Buddhist-Muslim conflicts more likely. Therefore, one can clearly see the role played by individuals. It is very important to point out the role of political leaders in stoking racial/communal feelings. Politicians or aspirants to political office have resorted to resorting to 'ethnic outbidding' and creating an 'ethnocracy'. Even before political independence and especially, after 1948, invoking racism has been extremely successful in mobilizing people for electoral victory. Nationalism, especially, racism, has been a very powerful emotive force driving people to vote chosen parties or candidates, commit violence and tolerate poverty and corruption in the name of 'nation' and religion' (DeVotta 2004; Herath, 2019; Wickramasinghe, 2006). Even within the last decade, politicians have resorted to stoking Sinhala Buddhist nationalism to carve out a solid and permanent vote base.

Once mobilized, racism blinds people and it is very difficult to demobilise them again. Nationalism and racism, once given life, is like a falling rock. A rock standing on hilltop may easily be made to roll down. But once it gathers momentum, it is almost impossible to stop it halfway through. When S.W.R.D Bandaranaike mobilized Sinhala Buddhist nationalism in the 1950s, he was pushing a rock downwards. The falling rock assured his victory and made him the Prime Minister. But when Bandaranaike was late to deliver his election promises, it created tensions and a section disgruntled extreme nationalists (the very forces of nationalism he gave life to) engulfed his own life. The death of Bandaranaike did not end the forces of nationalism that he invigorated but continue to have influence people's choices in election cycles. Expedient politicians have resorted to reinvigorating forces of nationalism and discourses of fear to secure electoral advantage (DeVotta, 2004; Herath, 2016). Racism coupled with political expediency can transform an ordinary micro conflict into regional or even national pogrom. One fitting example is an incident, which occurred in the month of February in 2018 in Digana-Theldeniya in Kandy

between a Sinhalese lorry driver and a group of Muslim youth. Muslim youths attacked the lorry driver with iron rods. A few days later on the 6th March 2018, the Sinhala lorry driver died and it resulted in a riot against Muslim owned businesses. Some shops, houses and mosques were burnt in Digana-Teldeniya area. None of the Muslims, who suffered in the riots, were responsible for the attack on the lorry driver. One isolated incident of this nature cannot translate into a regional rioting without the involvement of politically motivated forces, which had very clear intentions. The spread of Islamic fundamentalism in Sri Lanka from about 1930s and Buddhist-Muslims tensions had already created a background for such religious conflicts in the country. In the North and East of Sri Lanka, Tamil politicians also have been stoking Tamil Nationalism and creating more or less the same effect among the Tamils.

Conflict Prevention

One of the primary goals of conflict resolution and the practitioners in the field is to prevent conflict. However, the term prevention has to be understood clearly. The prevention in this case, does not mean to suppress the emergence of conflicts; it is to prevent the worsening of a conflict, which is termed as *light prevention*. This basically means attempt to stop direct violence being perpetrated and to create a situation where parties have the opportunity to negotiate. Whether conflict should be prevented is a difficult question and in some cases people can perceive violence as the only means of confronting social injustice. However they argue that ‘degeneration into violent protracted social conflict usually results in a lose-lose outcome for all main parties and for the population at large, and secondly that attempts to prevent violence should be accompanied by (and may be conditional on) strenuous efforts to ensure that human needs are satisfied, legitimate aspirations accommodated and manifest injustices remedied’ (Miall, Ramsbothem, and Woodhouse, 2003; P. 109). Light prevention involves taking measures to prevent a conflict turning into violent or armed conflict and could be performed through official diplomacy methods such as mediation, peace conferences, envoys, fact finding missions etc and through non-official diplomacy methods such as problem solving workshops, conflict

resolution training, peace commissions and creation of back channels etc (Ibid). This is a measure of containment. Practitioners, who practice light prevention, theoretically, do not attempt to address the roots of a conflict or the causes, which led to the development of the conflict. In other words, this is an attempt to address the symptoms of violence rather than its origins. For example, during the last phase of the conflict in Sri Lanka, there were many foreign envoys who acted as mediators or facilitators. Erik Soleheim, the Norwegian facilitator, was quite known in this period as one who ran back and forth between the government and the LTTE to effect a de-escalation of the war situation. There were also peace envoys from Japan, United Nations, and Western countries for the same purpose. Whether light prevention is successful varies case to case. In the last phase of the war in Sri Lanka, light prevention was not successful, as the war had already entered a decisive phase. Light prevention can be successful at the initial stages of conflict before it turns into a violent armed conflict. Often, powerful states and international organizations use their power and influence to stall potential escalation of conflicts. At times, this can be through positive incentives such as offer of aid, or facilitation of meetings or it could be mediation with muzzle such as threat to use force or impose economic sanctions etc. Resolutions passed at the UN human rights council as well as more powerful resolutions at the UN security councils can also be considered under this category.

Deep prevention of conflicts is a more solid and longer-term affair. In this case, the practitioners attempt to address the roots of a conflict and to bring about a change in the power structure and relationships. This can involve different actions in different settings. At the level of a couple who wants to have a divorce, it can mean a legal divorce obtained without destructive insults, emotional damage to children and equitable division of property or it can mean a decision to continue marriage but change the way spouse behaves, treat each other with respect, and make amends for past mistakes. In a work environment, deep prevention can involve changing the structure of relations from domination and subjugation to one where work colleagues respect each other, agree to disagree in some cases, and bring about a more transparent and participatory decision making situation. At the country level between a majority and a minority, deep

prevention can involve addressing the caucuses of the conflict by means such as the distribution of power, resources, protection of human rights, right to dissent and protest. If, for example, the conflict is about having self-autonomy to a region of a country where the majority of the population belongs to an ethnic minority, practitioners of conflict resolution may be able to incentivize the central government dominated by a majority group to create a federal government structure, which devolves not only administrative powers but also political powers to the regional councils. If the conflict is about state resources, the parties can agree to some sort of reasonable division of the state revenues, state jobs, and opportunities for rural development to benefit the rural poor people. At the state level, deep prevention can mean efforts to creating a more balanced structure of power whereby states can negotiate with other states to address conflicts and bring about their resolution.

Chapter Two: Key Concepts in Peace and Conflict Resolution

The central aim of this chapter is to introduce key concepts and theories in peace and conflict resolution as that becomes the foundation to understanding conflicts and facing them effectively and non-violently. The chapter pays attention to the key concept of non-violence and a typology of violence proposed by Johan Galtung. The chapter also introduces important methods in which conflicts can be understood and handled effectively. Further, the chapter discusses the dynamics of conflicts, third party intervention in managing conflicts and the importance of socialization in producing violence and non-violence.

Galtung (1996) explains peace studies through an analogy with health studies. He posits that 'peace studies' as a discipline is similar to health studies in that it can apply the triangular process of diagnosis, prognosis and therapy. Both health studies and peace studies involve a system of actors/cells. There are 'well-states' and 'ill-states'. Health studies may have health/disease while peace studies may talk about peace/violence. Equilibrium of key parameters of the human body is necessary for health and if one cell or a group of cells grows out of proportion, there can be ill-health. Similarly, a critical condition for peace is equitable relationships between people or groups of people and exploitation can create violence. Yet, Galtung also points out that there can be violence in non-exploitative relations as well.

Galtung (1996) further states that if the system falls out the 'well-state', the immediate question is whether the system is capable of self-restoration or whether some outside intervention is necessary. He says the intervention from outside should not be identified with therapy because such interventions can, in certain situations, make the system worse. It may be that the self is able to provide therapy. Our body has that function and we may simply be able to provide suitable conditions to support self-restorative function of the body. The third aspect of the triangle is therapy, which indicates a deliberate attempt by self or

others to move the system back into the 'well-state'. Here there is the distinction between negative and positive health/peace and curative and preventive therapy (Negative health, negative peace = 'ill-state' and positive health, positive peace = 'well states'). In the negative case there is no disease and the system is symptom free. Hence, the equilibrium can be so unstable that even a minor impact can turn the system back into an 'ill-state'. In the positive case, the equilibrium is stable and the system has more capacity for self-restoration even if the system may not be symptom free. Curative therapy aims at negative health/peace while preventive health aims at positive health/peace.

Direct, structural and cultural violence

Galtung makes the distinction between direct, structural and cultural violence. Direct violence involves an actor, who commits violence to someone or a group. Direct violence can be visible in the form of killing, maiming and injuring, rape, physical assaults, verbal assaults etc. It is easy to observe and pinpoint direct violence and to assign responsibility to a government, a rebel group, a war lord, a terrorist movement or an individual. Galtung says,

'Direct violence has the same structure as elementary sentences in (at least Indo- European) languages: subject-verb-object, with both subject and object being persons. Violence without this relation is structural, built into structure. Thus, when one husband beats his wife there is a clear case of personal violence, but when one million husbands keep one million wives in ignorance there is structural violence (Galtung, 1969, P. 171).

The object of personal violence perceives the violence, usually, and may complain - the object of structural violence may be persuaded not to perceive this at all...Structural violence is silent, it does not show - it is essentially static (ibid, P. 174)

Structural violence is more subtle and indirect stemming somewhere from the system itself and the actors are not very visible or at least it is difficult to pinpoint a source. Structural violence may manifest in terms of poverty, economic exploitation, gender exploitation, unequal distribution of resources, malnutrition and ill-health etc. These do violence to human beings although we may not always see them as violence. For instance, we tend to think that poverty is part of life. People are poor because of their own vices. People are either bon rich or poor and some may rise from rags to riches or vice versa. Similarly people may think that women have domestic roles to play according to tradition and that it is part of life. But in thinking this way, we may become parties to grave forms of violence. Such violence is in very the structure of the society and structure of relationships. As human beings, we may have indirect and inner violence, which is non-intended and coming out of the personality structure. If peace is the absence of violence, then, both direct and structural violence must be removed (Galtung, 1969; Galtung, 1996; Webel and Galtung, 2007).

A third kind of violence is cultural violence, which perhaps, underlies both direct and structural violence and in this sense, is harsher and more dangerous than the other two. Cultural violence is not visible to the naked eye as it is more symbolic than tangible. Cultural violence is shrouded in religion, ideology, arts, language, norms, values, procedure, precedents, education, law, media etc. In simple terms, cultural violence can be everywhere but we fail to recognize it. It is how we think and what we think. The function of cultural violence is to legitimize direct and structural violence and this legitimation and justification of violence that makes cultural violence the most serious kind of violence. The one who kills may do so in the name of religion, nation, ethnic group, clan, tribe, family etc. The issue here is that cultural violence blinds people to think it is acceptable or even heroic to kill. In ethnic or religious conflicts, killing becomes a duty performed with zeal. People may justify poverty, caste oppression, or oppression of women out of existing religious values or societal norms and values. Thus, when people commit direct or structural violence underpinned by cultural violence, people think they are doing the right thing and they have no remorse (Galtung, 1969; Galtung, 1996; Webel and Galtung, 2007).

Peace Studies: an Epistemological basis

Galtung offer two definitions of peace.

Peace is the absence/reduction of violence of all kinds

Peace is non-violent and creative conflict transformation (Galtung, 1996, P. 09).

The first definition, according to Galtung, is violence-oriented. You have to know violence in order to know peace. When we have managed to get rid of violence or minimize it, we deem there is peace. The second definition is oriented towards conflict. It is about the context in which you learn about how to transform conflicts nonviolently and creatively. In both cases, we envision human beings in social settings which makes peace studies also a social science with an applied orientation (Galtung, 1969; Galtung, 1996).

However, it is important to note that conflict becomes an opportunity for creative resolution only under certain conditions. For example, in a given situation when there are two views on how something should be done and if one group has to change their view to accept another, those who need to change would do it only if they see that the change required would not damage their self-esteem and social position. Thus, this calls for creation of conditions appropriate for that change (Coleman and Deutsch, 2006).

From dichotomies to *yin/yan*

Galtung advocates moving beyond strict peace/violence dichotomy to a more nuanced approach, which derives inspiration from the Daoist conception of *yin/yan*. Daoists believe that there is *Yin in Yan and Yan in Yin and Yin in the Yan in Yin* and son on. This means there is peace in violence and violence in peace... there can be peace in the violence which in peace and son on. Basically, this means there can be cyclical changes in peace and violence. This is different from seeing the Good and the Evil, that, one is good and the other is evil and there is a struggle between the two. Good is supposed to overcome the Evil. But according to Galtung, Yin and Yan have more life. They are each other's opposites but not

in the sense of overcoming or winning over the other but being just each other. They complement each other in a balancing act. But the relationship between Yin and Yan are not static. When Yin is leading and Yan is lagging, the Yan will try to catch up until it becomes leading and then Yin will try to catch up and the process goes on. According this is a cyclical process where there is no ultimate triumph of good over evil (Galtung, 1996).

It is a wrong question to ask whether there will be peace at a given future time. Galtung believes that the concrete dichotomy between good and evil is rooted in the Manichean dichotomy between peace and violence in which one will one-day overcome the other. But the reality will be different. One can hope that there will be more and better peace while less and less evil violence. It is like health; here will not be complete health at the given time. Old diseases may vanish but new ones will come but human condition, one hopes, can become better and better with less suffering due to poor health. This is applicable even to the dichotomy between the global North and South, which are, in reality, not as starkly different as they appear to be. The North has two classes as the dominant and the dominated and so has the South, which has the dominant and the dominated. Furthermore, the South is expected to be dominant in the world in the time to come while the North is predicted to be the dominated by the South as the world goes in a cyclical process. There again, one will find the dominant and the dominated (Galtung, 1969; Galtung, 1996; Webel and Galtung, 2007).

Non-violence

There is so much attention and so much emphasis on violence and war in the world that non-violence does not get the attention it deserves. One of the greatest thinkers and founders of non-violence, specially, non-violent resistance arose in the South Asia in the form of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of Indian independence movement. Gandhi was initially educated in Great Britain and became a barrister there. But his grueling and de-humanising experience in South Africa under the apartheid rule, and the discrimination he experienced there, transformed him into a freedom fighter championing freedom through

non-violent resistance. Gandhi considered non-violence not only as a means but an end itself. This was his experiment with truth (Sorensen 1992; Weber, 1999).

A cursory look at the history of war and violence may generate the impression that it is the violence that works in the resolution of conflicts. However, such a view is to do great injustice to the power of non-violence. Galtung (1996) for example lists major conflicts in the world, which were resolved through non-violence;

Gandhi's Swaraj campaign and the Indian independence

Martin Luther King Jr's civil rights movement in the United States

The anti-Vietnam war movement

The People's power movement in Philippines

The intifada movement in the occupied Palestine from 1987

The democracy movement in Beijing, spring 1989

(Adopted from Galtung, 1996: p 117-118).

Galtung (ibid) believes that many other resistance movements in the world, had they used non-violence, would have succeeded in gaining independence. There can be situations where non-violence does not work and there is no guarantee that non-violence always works. However, many do not see the obverse. The solutions gained through military victories are not always sustainable and such victories lead to great loss of lives, maiming of people, violence on women and children, as well as destruction of assets, properties and of course, nature. Therefore, given the successes of non-violence in history and the failures of violence, the world needs to explore the great potential that non-violence offers. If Gandhi had resorted to violence rather than non-violence, the conflict would have dragged longer and resulted in much greater casualties. But through a non-violent struggle, Gandhi was able to transform the Indian society from a colonial administration to independence.

According to Galtung, conflict transformation is a never-ending process. There are times when it seems as if a resolution has been found in terms of satisfying

all the parties and sustainability but conflict energies always input fresh life into a conflict and hence achieving a sustainable solution can, at times, be a temporary goal. What matters more is the conflict transformative capacity, which is the ability to handle transformations in an acceptable and sustainable way. The most important here is *how* we do it, the process. Galtung notes that the ordinary perception towards ending conflict sees two parties to a conflict; there is one party that is good and another that is evil and conflict ends by defeating the evil or bad side. According to him, the use of violence to end violence is an accepted means in the international system. There can be rare cases, where violence or use of force may be used with extreme care and limitation such to control dictators committing grave human rights abuses or genocides etc. But in most cases, non-violence is advocated as the most appropriate method of ending conflicts (Galtung 1996).

Major-minor' (M-m) model in conflict

Let us now move on to the field of micro level conflicts. How do we deal with differences in everyday life? It is highly usual for people to adopt what Patfoort (2001) calls the 'Major-minor' (M-m) model. This is the usual tendency among people to project their point of view or their behavior as being the better, the more legitimate and more accurate than the view of another. By doing so, we try to put ourselves in the major (M) position while putting the other in minor (m) position. The M-m positions can lead to violence in three ways.

1. Internalization; the person placed into the m position does violence to self
2. Escalation; we try to attack the person, who tries to place us in m position
3. Displaced aggression; the person subjected to m position may do violence to a third party

There is a popular belief that this M-m approach is the most humanly natural response to handling conflict but Patfoort argues that this is not natural and that

people resort to the M-m approach given an inherent quality of self-conservation among human beings. Thus, children are socialized from young age to follow this model. However, the drive to self-conservation does not have to lead to the M-m approach. She advocates the use of the 'equivalence' model (E model), which is based on equivalence and non-violence. The E model is as powerful as the M-m model but does not force people to an escalatory tract like the latter. E model is not offensive and does not provoke one another.

One can use three different kinds of arguments in a conflict situation (Patfoort, 2001).

1. Positive arguments; these are the arguments where one tries to highlight what is positive, good and more legitimate about one's own point of view. By doing so, one tries to place myself in the Major position.
2. Negative arguments; these are the arguments where one tries to highlight what is negative, bad or illegitimate about the argument of the other and by using negative arguments, one tries to place the other in the minor position.
3. Destructive arguments; these are the arguments where one tries to highlight the negative characteristics of the other person (opponent) and by doing so, one tries to place both the other person and his/her point of view into a weak or illegitimate position. In this situation, one makes comments on the person (moving from deed to culprit; see below).

While in the Major-minor model, one tries to show how that his/her position is correct, the equivalence model provides more opportunity to listen to the other, respect the other and find solutions through a process acceptable to both parties. I will elaborate on the use of M-m model later in this chapter and following chapters.

Mechanisms of conflict escalation

As Glasl (1999) notes, there are important dynamics in a conflict situation, which can determine the direction of a conflict. Conflicts impair the perception of the individual and then, differences can lead to aggression. He notes certain changes that may happen in an individual facing a conflict situation.

- The attention becomes selective...you observe certain things carefully and clearly while grossly overlooking some important other aspects. For example, you perceive threats clearly while missing opponent's conciliatory gestures, which might have had a cool down effect.
- Negative qualities of the opponent are noticed while overlooking good qualities.
- You develop cognitive short-sightedness - you tend to ignore about medium-term and long-term consequences of your actions.
- You remember the events in a twisted and distorted manner...you forget what happened first and second and so on. When you reflect on it, you would remember as if the opponent called me a pig first and that is why I called him fox.
- You tend to understand multifaceted and complex incidents, mechanism and processes in a very simple way. It is only because Kumar took my seat that I did not have a seat today.
- You tend to see what you want to see or what you think is right.
- You develop mistrust towards your opponent and become insensitive. You lose sympathy towards him/her

Adopted from Glasl, 1999, P 19-20.

Sometimes, a small conflict starts with just a difference of opinion. But when these differences drag on for a time, and when people cannot accept to respect

these differences or manage them, they can lead to conflicts and conflict escalation. People become annoyed at seeing differences or when differences interfere in their way of life, and they react accordingly. Your reactions provoke similar or dissimilar counter-reaction in your opponent, who, then again provoke aggressive responses in you. Each of you become unhappy about the way the other person responds. So, this becomes a vicious circle. Glasl, (1999) provides a detailed account of the mechanisms of conflict escalation, which helps us understand how these actions and reactions work.

- **Snowballing of contentious issues:** in a conflict situation, parties add more and more issues on top of the original issue (that is if one can talk about a definite original cause). For example, let us assume that a trade union in a textile factory has a conflict with the management over the salary paid to its members. When there is no solution, a few days later, they may complain that members face health hazards due to unsafe working conditions. Then, again, they will complain that the management had failed to solve the infrastructure issues such as water and sanitation for female staff. A few days later, the workers may argue that management is recruiting cheap labor as temporary staff to sideline the requests by permanent workers for more salary and welfare. Then, a few days later they will complain that there is corruption in the management and that is why the factory is running low. This snowballing of issues happens both consciously and unconsciously and is quite natural at individual and group levels. Conflict parties add issues consciously because these are actual problems, or they may do it in order to strengthen their case by bringing more and more grievances to the fore and hence more and more pressure on the other party. Sometimes, this happens unconsciously; for example, when workers keep fighting, if they feel that they are losing, then, they tend to switch on to other issues.
- **Widening of the area and personification:** in our example of the factory, initially, the union of the machine operators started the trade union campaign but when the management does not respond, they try to get

the support of laborers, clerks, security guards, drivers and so on in order to widen their support base and build up a strong force.

- Moving from deed to the culprit: in our first example of a textile factory, the operations manager and the trade union leaders are now at loggerheads over the salary issue and they have now been able to widen the issue to a larger section of people. The operations manager's focus now changes from workers' deed to the very people, who organize the trade union campaign. Let us say, one-day the operations manager complains that the machine operators maintain low standards. After a while the operations manager complains that machine operators ALWAYS had the easiest job to do and hence, they are lazy and disinterested. Further on, when the conflict has dragged on for too long, the operations manager comes out saying that machine operators are WORTHLESS FELLOWS. Here, it is clear that, initially, the work standards are commented and finally, the operations manager talks about the operators as individuals moving from *deed* to *culprit*.
- Pessimistic anticipation: this is a common occurrence in conflicts not just in trade union conflicts. Workers anticipate that managers would not take their demands seriously. So, they try to give him an unpleasant surprise. In our hypothetical example of a factory, the workers plan for a large and sudden destabilization. They plunge the entire factory into a sudden unannounced strike. The senior management of the company, not just the operations manager, is surprised and are shocked to hear the sudden work stoppage, which did not need to be that strong, after all. Then, management also reacts strongly and this goes on. What happens here is that each party, managers and workers, do not want others to think that they are weak. Workers want managers to take them seriously and they try to be as aggressive as possible. But aggression of workers generates aggression of managers, who would then react not to the interests or needs of the workers (that is their demands) but to their aggressive behavior. So, it is a paradox; workers try to be aggressive because they think otherwise they would not be taken seriously but the

senior managers decide not to heed to workers' demands simply because workers have been too aggressive. So, you reach a dead-end.

Levels of conflict escalation

There are nine stages, which a conflict is likely go through unless it is addressed at each stage. It is important to mention that the stages are mental constructs and hence one finds no hard and fast boundaries or landmarks to identify these stages, which, illustrate how a conflict is likely to progress. Yet, in actual situations, these stages may not be as clear-cut as they are envisioned. Sometimes, a conflict can pass some stages very quickly without us even noticing the worsening. Nevertheless, understanding these stages are helpful for us to intervene and stem the worsening of a conflict (Glasl, 1999). Let me apply this framework to a work context of an academic institution. I will also try to localize and contextualize these theoretical examples to fit a Sri Lankan work context.

1. **Hardening:** Let us assume that there is a new principal is appointed to an academic department in a university college. For some reason, the new principal thinks that he is perfect in terms of his values, morals and work ethics and other teachers have, more or less, failed to perform their academic duties. The behavior of this principal can be explicated with reference to our previous discussion about the relationship between *everyday Ego, higher self and shadow* and to the concept of 'illusion of perfection'. The new principal believes that he is his higher-self and there is nothing he has to do anymore to improve himself. He thinks others must respect him for what he is because he is an exemplary teacher and others must naturally follow him without any question. Because he is perfect, he does not have any tolerance for criticism against himself.

In this university college the norm is that teachers do not have strictly enforced work hours except the teaching hours but teachers do their teaching, supervision and other administrative duties at the correct time. Teachers have the freedom to stay in office or do their research

and development activities outside the office when they do not have assigned duties. However, the new principal asks teachers to be present from 8 am to 4 p.m. in office irrespective of whether they have teaching or other engagements. In this context, teachers feel uncomfortable and constrained and think that the academic profession is different from other jobs. They feel that intellectual freedom is essential for academics to engage in various readings, seminars, external engagements such as research and development etc. The teachers point out in the staff meeting that the new work ethics are not appropriate for an academic context and that they would cause a fall in the intellectual contribution of the academics. The principal firmly disagrees. He says he is bringing discipline to office and the teachers have failed to understand him. He firmly believes that the teachers would benefit from the new system because they would develop hard work ethics. Several meetings are held to discuss the issue but each side sticks their guns. Each side develops its 'positions' that theirs is better than the other. So, now it becomes a clash of positions. When the teachers refuse to budge, the principal assumes that he needs to be tougher than he is to enforce new work norms while the teachers think that they have a role in protecting the liberal culture of the college. Each side fails to note the logic of the other side's argument. Each side sees and hears what they want to see and hear, that is, they filter out. Perception becomes selective. They oscillate between cooperation and competitiveness.

2. Polemics and debates: in the first stage, there is some possibility for creative thinking and problem solving. Yet, when the conflict reaches the stage of polemics and debates, people have completely fallen onto opposing camps. In this university college some teachers refuse to abide by the directives of the principal and carry on their work as usual while the principal accuses teachers of sabotaging smooth functioning of the college. A minority of teachers also side with the new principal despite him being oppressive. The rebellious teachers argue that the efficiency and efficacy of teaching has fallen because the new system introduced by

the principal is oppressive and the teachers are under stress. Each side tries to win over neutral observers to their side. Taking people to their side becomes more important than convincing the opposing side.

3. **Actions, not words:** at this stage, each side comes to believe that there is no point in talking, which only annoys them and hence, they now resort to actions. They fall into a trap; 'if you don't listen to us, we shall not listen to you'... now the teachers avoid all informal duties except compulsory teaching duties and hence the college cannot manage some of its work, which requires effective non-teaching contributions of teachers. There are fewer and fewer discussions to solve the issue because sides believe talking would not help. The principal starts giving them direct orders without consulting teachers any longer. At times, the principal writes very hard and harsh letters to his staff even for very minor matters. Each side closes off from the other side. Nobody can stay neutral now as other members pressure teachers to take sides. People are asked to bury their differences in order to defeat the common enemy. So, this rids the group of whatever flexibility they earlier had. A particularly vocal and senior teacher becomes an informal leader for the teacher and starts having frequent arguments with the principal.
4. **Images and coalitions:** until now, each side did not tolerate a certain type of behavior of the other side and could still tolerate the persons as such. From now onwards, they project the negative qualities to the opponent. However, still, these judgments are about knowledge and abilities and not moral judgments about people. Each side may develop an image of the other side as tyrannical and inflexible. The rebel group brands those siding with the principal as cowards. The principal and the teachers siding with him charges that other teachers are not committed to their profession. The rebellious teachers in turn argue that the new principal has certain tyrannical qualities and is hungry for power. Teachers argue that the principal is unwilling to listen and is violating age-old customs of academic freedom. The teachers meet the chairperson of the College Board several times and make complaints against the principal. The

principal accuses that one of the rebelling teachers has an ulterior motive of becoming the future principal and therefore, he is sabotaging in the college. Glasl (1999) explains that this situation can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. Teachers' behavior creates the very thing that they try not to create: teachers do not want their principal to become authoritarian but teachers' behavior push the principal to become more and more authoritarian to face the issue at hand. While, the principal do not want to have a challenger for his post but his authoritarian and oppressive leadership style, in fact, creates conditions for the emergence of an alternative leader for the college. Thus, the behavior of both sides creates the very effect that each side wants to avoid.

5. Loss of face: this refers to loss belief in the moral integrity of a person, in this case the opponent(s). In the above example, each side now thinks that they see the real, cruel and vicious intentions of the opponent, which deliberately tries to destroy one's side. The principal is strongly convinced that the teachers want to undermine his position and create a negative image of him in the college despite him having done an excellent job of maintaining discipline. He really believes that one of the senior most rebelling teachers want to become the principal. So, the principal now keeps detailed record about each teacher, their attendance, lectures, dissertation supervision and student complaints. In the staff meeting he comes up with alleged complaint by students against the leading senior teacher of the rebelling group and accuses him of failing to conduct his lectures and supervision properly. The senior teacher becomes very upset and he fails to provide a convincing response because he is unprepared for this accusation. So, he feels personally attacked. In turn, he makes massive accusations against the principal too. He accuses the principal of a witch-hunt and of preparing bogus student complaints. Further, he accuses the principal of financial malpractices. Now, the principal charges the senior teacher of taking unofficial leave and report to the chairperson of the College Board with the request for an inquiry. Each side tends to look back in the past and think that so far all the actions by

the opposing side has been intended at harming one's side. This comes as a sudden realization. Each side develops a completely negative image of the opponent and simultaneously a completely positive image about their side. Each side now wants to get rid of the other side. Attacks and counterattacks follows.

6. Strategies of threat: now, the chairperson of the college issues a warning to the rebelling teachers and prepares to undertake an inquiry against the senior teacher for having taken unofficial leave and failing to conduct lectures and supervision properly. Many staff members now avoid coming to staff meetings. The chairperson appoints an inquiry board to inquire against the senior teacher and he is interdicted. The teacher consults legal action against the college. The senior teacher now passes on information about financial malpractices of the principal to the board of the collage and even to the press. In response, the chairperson appoints a new inquiry board to investigate the principal as well.
7. Limited destructive blow: the senior teacher is demoted in his position and is given a strong warning letter. The teachers union gets involved and accuses the authorities of persecution of teachers and destroying academic freedom. They hold a press conference and accuse the higher authorities of corruption. The trade union launches a sudden strike, which cripples the entire college. The principal believes that the demoted teacher is behind the corruption accusations and secretly fabricates other charges against the senior teacher. The university now dismisses the senior teacher. By this stage, parties are hell-bent on destroying the other side. The parties know that there is nothing to win now but damaging the other side as much as possible becomes the ultimate goal. The College Board finds evidence of financial malpractices by the principal and he is removed from his position and dismissed from the job.
8. Fragmentation of the enemy: Now, some of the best academic staff as well as bright students decide to leave the college and join other colleges in the country and abroad. The teaching quality of the college falls and

fresh student enrolment plummet. And finally, the chairperson is forced to recruit teachers from other colleges as a temporary measure to keep the college running and this causes shortages in finances.

9. Together into abyss: at this stage parties want to see the complete destruction of the opponent. They can even consider self-destruction as a means to destroy the opponent, if that causes great damage to the opponent. In the above case, the senior teacher files a case against the college but loses. Eventually, he is forced to leave the local town and struggles to find a job. His family gets into debts. The senior teacher sends anonymous letters to other colleges around the country and the former principal also does the same. The parties, thus, damage the prospects of finding alternative jobs as other colleges do not want to have trouble makers in their staff. The former principal too is unable to find an alternative employment due to his bad reputation and is forced to leave the town and find a less prestigious employment. A lot of the senior teachers from both groups have now left the college.

However, as explained by Glasl (1999), in conflict situations, it is indeed possible to achieve different outcomes and stop the worsening of a conflict. The situation would have been different had both parties reacted differently and if necessary, consulted collegial or professional assistance in resolving the conflict. Collegial assistance can help upto a certain level but after some worsening of the conflict, professional help becomes a must. This is where conflict resolution experts have a role to play. In most developed countries, when individuals or companies encounter issues like this, they hire professional conflict resolution experts as mediators to help them sort out the issues. As I said in the beginning, one can develop these skills and make their companies conflict resistant. One can do this at each stage and not allow the conflict to go down further than that. In fact, we may all have 'base' qualities within us but we also have higher-self. We should not allow our carnal side to take control of us. If one allows the shadow in her to drive herself, she can go to any depth in creating destruction. Then, she destroys herself also in the process. That will not solve a lot of problems. However, one may not be able to train the entire workforce in an organization

in conflict resolution. So, at times, it would be better to seek professional help of a conflict resolution expert to address conflicts that arises within families, communities, and workplace. It is like going to a doctor for medical treatment.

Third party intervention in conflict

In conflict resolution, be it at the family, workplace, community or country, it is usual to see some sort of a third party helping the conflictants to arrive at a resolution. The third party can be an arbitrator, mediator or facilitator. The arbitrator may use coercive or non-coercive means while mediation can only use non-coercive power. Sometimes, conflicts escalate when the conflictants react to each other's' actions leading to a spiral based on positive feedback. In such situations, often, the third parties can help by way of filtering message, helping parties to reflect and facilitating communication. In some situations, intervention aims at helping one side of the conflict to impose an end to violence or allow some space for protection until this side is strong enough to defend. In this kind of situations, the intervention is not necessarily oriented towards ending conflict by stopping violence and can be highly controversial. Such an intervention, if done carefully, can generate possibilities for creative conflict resolution and transformation. The third parties can be powerful or powerless depending on the situation. In protracted conflicts the conflictants can end up being weary of violence after a long period of violence but still their perceptions towards each other can remain negative with strong unpleasant memories, fear, mistrust, hatred and so on. These may prevent a dialogue and here intervention/mediation can help parties to cut through those negative feelings and see the possibility for mutually acceptable solutions (Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1999).

There can be several gradients to the power that a third party may bring to bear on conflict parties.

Hard power; Do what I want or else I will do what you don't want.

Exchange power: Do what I want and I will do what you want

Integrative power: together we can do something that is better for both of us

Different levels to intervene;

In conflict resolution, especially, with regard to third party intervention we speak about different levels of intervention based on the actors; who intervene and those subjected to the intervention. We identify three levels as the *track I*, *track II*, and *track III* diplomacy. Track I involves officials and/or governmental or intergovernmental representatives. Powerful actors have the possibility of using what is referred to as ‘carrots and sticks’ in relation to those who are weaker. ‘Carrots’ is a metaphor for positive incentives such as development grants, loans, offer of high positions, appreciation, pardon etc and ‘sticks’ is a metaphor for punitive actions such the use of threat or use of force, war, imprisonment, economic sanctions, embargoes, condemnation, etc. To cite an example from Sri Lanka, during the Eelam war IV the Norwegian government brokered a peace deal between the government of Sri Lanka and LTTE. This is an example for track I diplomacy. India has been a constant presence with regard to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. Indian political leaders and top government official have made number of track I diplomacy interventions all throughout the conflict period since 1983 upto its end in 2009. For example, the 13 amendment to the Sri Lankan constitution which devolved power to provincial councils is a result of track I diplomacy that came from India.

Track II represents unofficial mediators who do not have carrots and sticks. Track II may target government officials or those who have some connection with a government. When government officials act as mediators, they do so not in their official capacity but as unofficial mediators. Track II diplomacy may involve facilitation meetings or efforts to bring parties to think about a negotiation process. This kind of diplomacy typically involves situations where the use of ‘carrots and sticks’ may not be necessary or inappropriate. During the war period in Sri Lanka, representatives from international non-governmental organization trained Sri Lankan officials and interacted with members of the LTTE. Those representatives can be considered as track II diplomacy.

Track III involves attempts at the grassroots level to create awareness and build trust etc. These are typically the actors from civil society interacting with members of the public or local leaders in the hope of building a peace constituency. In the case of Sri Lanka, there were many organizations such as the Facilitating Local Initiatives for Conflict Transformation (FLICT), International Center for Ethnic Studies (ICES), Center for Policy Alternatives, and National Peace Council undertaking track III diplomacy. Peace-oriented civil society organizations organized conflict resolution workshops, peace seminars, exposure visits etc. Track III diplomacy strives to build up a peace constituency so that people at the grassroots become an important voice demanding peace.

Third party interventions have a very long history; in fact longer than the discipline of conflict resolution. Interventions have always existed in human relations and what conflict resolution has done is to make it more effective and systematic. Third party interventions have undergone radical changes over the years from the time of classical conflict resolution theories, which were a response to typical symmetric conflicts between nation states. What we see today mostly are asymmetric conflicts internal to countries. In such situations, the conflict resolution begins, ideally, before violence breaks out. In asymmetric conflicts one finds top-dogs and under-dogs. The latter sometimes may not even be aware that they are being oppressed and is in an unequal relationship. In an ideal type scenario, intervention will involve raising awareness and conscientisation. This will lead to mobilization of people and empowering them so that they are able to negotiate. Intervention does not end there; it tries to change attitudes and change the unequal relationships to create balanced power (Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1999).

Interventions at state level

Is it possible to intervene in a conflict between states or between a state and one or more non-state actors? Do norms and expectations surrounding the concept of nation allow intervention in the affairs of a state? It was earlier believed that what happens within the borders of a state constitute 'internal affaires' of

that state and other states or non-state actors should not intervene in intra-country conflicts. However, this belief has changed over the past decades. The formation of the United Nations also led to a situation where member states sign a variety of international treaties, some of which are binding. These treaties and conventions offer some space for the UN and the member states to intervene in the affairs of another state, when there is credible information that non-intervention would lead to loss of lives and destruction of assets, which could also have spillover effects on the neighboring member states. Even the very concept of nations state is now called into question through the consolidation of the idea that humanity, wherever and under whose protection they are, have certain inalienable rights which a state cannot violate. Formation of regional bodies such as the European Union has also drastically impacted the power of the state. Hence, there are situations when the UN and other member states intervene in the conflict of another country in order to protect human lives. While in some situations such intervention is driven by objective considerations and facts, in other situations, political and economic interests of powerful states can underlie such interventions.

We can illustrate the intervention of supra states institutions with some examples. From 1983 the conflict in Sudan involved the Sudanese government on one side and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and its armed wing, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) on the opposing side. The international community intervened in Sudan when they were convinced that the government of Sudan persecuted its own citizens, who lived in what is now called 'South Sudan'. The state of Sudan was divided into two states to create South Sudan. This African case illustrates the there are limits to the concept of sovereignty of a nation state and that some states, especially, those who are less powerful in the international system, are susceptible to intervention. Of course, this raises a moral question; is it only the small states (in terms of economic and military power) that have this risk? Unfortunately, although some powerful states have caused massive loss of lives and destruction of property though their military engagement in other states, the international system does not have the power to intervene in the affairs of powerful states as the cost of such intervention

massively outweigh the benefits. Therefore, while intervention may be justified in certain situations, there is certainly some bias in the way the international system operates.

Another important example is the separation of Kosovo from Serbia. The Serbian government leaders committed war crimes and crimes against humanity providing space for international intervention, which led to the terminal division of Serbia into several states. One cannot, possibly, ignore the geopolitics in this kind of a situation; the fact that former Yugoslavia belong to the former communist block and that it was politically close to the Russian federation offered incentives for the powerful Western block to intervene in the conflict. Yet, it was primarily the Serbian hawkish leaders who created conditions, which invited external intervention.

Is it possible to expect some international intervention in the affairs of Sri Lanka? There is already a history of foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. The most notable example is the intervention by the state of India. In 1988, the Sri Lankan government forces, led by late Major General Denzil Kobbekaduwa, surrounded the Tamil Tigers into a small geographical territory in Vadamarachchi. India gave the Tigers military and political support when the LTTE was on the brink of military defeat. Concerned that the wiping out of the Tigers was imminent, Indian air force dropped food parcels in the North. This was a symbolic threat that if the GoSL offensive forged ahead, the India was ready to make a military intervention. The Sri Lankan government was forced to call off the offensive. Two decades later, when the Sri Lankan government finally surrounded the Tigers in Mullaitivu again in 2009, India, ironically, provided political and military support to the government of Sri Lanka. Although, the conflict in Sri Lanka is militarily over, it is still alive in terms of some of the grievances such as effective devolution of power, social reconciliation and human rights abuses. Hence, if the situation in the north deteriorates and if there is an active conflict situation where the basic fundamental rights of the minorities are violated, then, one cannot rule out international intervention in Sri Lanka.

Socialization and conflict behavior

At various levels, the family, community, workplace, country and among countries, the use of muscle (power) is thought to be the most natural and effective approach to solving conflicts. On the opposite spectrum, there are others, who think that tolerating mental or physical pain, being calm, being passive and avoidance are examples of 'peaceful' behavior. By the same token, there is a popular belief in Sri Lankan society that those who confront the problems and try to change the way things are '*problem people*'. 'He creates a conflict wherever he goes'....is a usual reference you may hear about some people. This arises from a serious misconception. One cannot live with peace of mind by avoiding conflicts, being passive and inactive, and one does not necessarily create problems by confronting them non-violently. Most of us are reluctant to change or we believe that change is impossible and hence, we either ignore social injustice or suffer silently. We are so convinced that change is not possible that we do not even try. Yet, there are those, who believe in changing unacceptable circumstances and confront the *problems* rather than evading the problems or confronting *people*. Remember the emphasis is on confronting the problem not the people and the use of non-violence rather than coercion.

Nevertheless, confronting problems, at least initially, may be emotionally difficult. If you oppose social injustice, or try to change oppressive or unacceptable situations in family or in your office or your community, at times, people may dislike you. This may have impacts on your career in some ways or lead to emotional outbursts in the family. However, in most cases, if you persist with non-violence and principles, people will come to realize what you do and will respect you for what you have done. Nevertheless, scholars in the field of resistance accept that there are situations where non-violence or civil resistance does not work. These researchers never advocate violence but show that certain unjustified and exploitative situations cannot simply be changed (Chenoweth, 2018).

Socialization is vitally important in training children to confront problems or people either violently or non-violently. The first experience of conflict takes place within the family; parents insist that children must obey their commands while children want to do what they please. Often, parents use Major-minor model (Patfoort, 2001) in resolving these conflicts. Parents, often, place themselves in the major position while putting children in the minor position. 'What we think is correct, more justified, and make sense while what children do is incorrect, silly, arrogant and does not make sense'. We, as parents, often operate from this kind of fallacy although, of course, we may have the best of intentions regarding our children. In Sri Lanka, some parents believe that applying physical violence, at least, occasionally, is a must, lest, children will not behave. The fact that we do not spend time with children enough, that we do not seriously take their views, needs and aspirations, that we do not grant them due respect is usually forgotten or not even realized. Take the following example;

Parent

Child

I want you to do your maths now

I want to watch TV now

Here is an incompatibility of goals. Most parents care about their children's education. Some children do not need that much guidance and are smart enough to do well in their school with minimum effort. By listening to their teachers carefully and reading textbooks, some kids do well in school. But some kids need more attention and guidance from their parents and perhaps, more pressure being applied. This is, like in the case above, where the compatibility of goals arises. It is very important that you explain to the child why you want her to study even if you feel that the child is not old enough to deserve an explanation. You can try to explain why it is important to pay enough time and attention on her studies and that is for her own good. The language used, the facial expression and tone of the voice is very important here. Most likely the child will agree but perhaps, not at the speed you want. She will take time to follow your advice. Nonetheless, parents must remember that kids need time to play and enjoy, socialize with parents, siblings, grant parents and friends, and need sufficient

time to rest. If you explain well, most likely, children will accept your request and agree to watch TV after study. But at times, there can be children who get angry, feel betrayed and show aggression. In such situations, give them a little bit of time and space. May be they will leave the scene and spend a bit of time on bed trying to cool themselves down and let go of the anger. In a similar situation with my kids, I removed the TV from its place and told my kids that for the next two weeks, the TV would not be available until the examinations are over. At first, they would not agree but your resolve is important here. I explained them why I did it and told them that no sooner the examinations were over, the TV would become available again. But perhaps, it may be the case that you do not need to go that far and children are agreeable to spend time with education and then watch TV a little while later.

As Patfoort, (2001) point out one has to be careful in socialization as constant denial of children's requests can push them to become introverts. Parents, usually, highly approve of children who are docile, submissive, obedient, and do not react. But sometimes, it may be the case that this is a personality condition, which has come about through long years of using the major-minor model with kids. Parents, for example, may give the minor position to kids by dismissing what they do as silly, unnecessary and irrelevant while treating their own contribution as beneficial, useful, meaningful to the family, etc. For example, at home, father grabs the TV to watch a cricket match dismissing child's favourite cartoon programme as unimportant. The children are quick to notice this difference and will not take you seriously next time. While there may be situations when we have to prevail over children, the language, facial expression and the tone of voice are important and you may have to explain why you have to do it, if you really cannot avoid doing it. By doing it this way, you may be able to avoid putting your kid in the minor position. According to Patfoort (2001), if your child has been denied her wishes from family to school, then, it is possible that she may develop introvert personality qualities, which initially, appear to be similar to obedience but later turns out to be significant personality disorders. Let us get to the example of the TV. Following Patfoort, we can list down the 'foundations' of the parent and the child.

Parent	Child
I want you to read a book now	I want to watch TV now
Foundations	foundations
I am afraid you will not do well in exam	I enjoy watching cartoon
I feel bad you when you fail the exam	I am tired of studying
I am concerned about your future	I need a break
I want you to do a good job in future	I don't like you to force your wishes on me
I want to see you succeed in life	I have already spent enough time on studies

I have practiced this simple exercise recommended by Patfoort in many different instances. It is important that you understand the foundations/motivations behind your action and also the response of the child. This is extremely important in explaining the child why you want her to study now and watch TV later or in agreeing to the request of the child that she can watch TV now but spend time on studying after watching TV. The same exercise can be done to understand and address a conflict between spouses.

How could I behave differently?

In this example of the conflict over the TV, may be the situation could have been different had the parent not followed the major-minor approach.

Father; can you study till dinner time and then watch TV after dinner?

Daughter; No I can't work now; I will not work with anyone of you now

Father; Okay, I understand... you have worked for some time now. Perhaps, you are bit tired of preparing for exam? Aren't you?

Daughter; Yes I am tired and this is enough. I cannot work anymore now.

Father, Okay I see. I think your brother also wants to watch TV. He will finish his maths lessen by dinner time. How about the following... You take a rest now and work till dinner and I give you more time with TV?

Daughter; (after little bit of grudging) Okay then. I read till dinner time.
Father; Very good girl. You understand the situation very well.

In this example, the daughter agrees to the request of the father to work now and watch TV later but it is perfectly alright if the father agrees that the daughter watches TV now and spend time on studies after dinner, if that is feasible. Flexibility on our side, when such flexibility is appropriate, can help in resolving conflicts.

In this situation, the onus is more on the father to follow the equivalence approach as the more experienced and understanding person. It is important to remember that, if you had followed the major-minor model for your life time (it is also possible that your own parents also did use the M_m approach), you cannot turn the clock back in one day. Your kids are now used to being put into minor status and try to achieve major status against you whenever they can and hence even if you adopt the equivalence model today, the kids will take time to adjust to the equivalence model. Kids may persist with major-minor model and this requires you to have inner strength and courage to persist with the equivalence model. At times, this may turn out to be frustrating. You may be angry at yourself. You may feel that equivalence model is wrong, does not fit my culture and feels like giving it up. Yet, after a while, it will give you the results you expected. Then, you will realize that it requires much less effort and energy to guide your children than it required when you were following the major-minor model.

Let me take illustrate this further with the true story of a kid (Lalith) and his experience at a leading school. This kid is different from many others. Some parents believed that he had autism. Last year in the 3rd grade in school, Lalith had a kind-hearted teacher and she never used violence. Whenever he misbehaved such as hitting other kids, she did not respond with violence. Lalith managed his relationships with fellow students well, although he did not do well in studies. At the 4th grade, there is a new teacher, who uses the major-minor approach. She hits kids quit often in the classroom and at times, uses verbal violence. When kids fail to perform their tasks, she throws the students' books on the floor and

emotionally hurt them. She likes kids to bring proper lunch to school. But some kids have problems at home and cannot bring lunch and they bring short-eats, which is not very healthy for them. The teacher ridicules the kids when they bring such food. The teacher is well-meaning but her approach is terrible.

One day, Lalith pinches Saman sitting ahead of him lightly out of fun. Saman does not respond. Lalith does it again lightly. This time Saman gets really angry and launches a barrage of physical attacks on Lalith, who then cries. That moment, the teacher, who had gone outside for a while, returns to the class. Saman tells her that Lalith hit him. Teacher already had a pre-conception that Lalith is a misbehaving kid and is convinced that Lalith has hit Saman.

Teacher; Lalith come here you idiot. (she slaps him hard). Why did you hit Saman?

Lalith; I didn't. I just pinched him lightly.

Teacher; I know who you are. You do this everyday. No doubt you did it today too. (teacher hits him again and ask him to go back to his seat.

Other students, who do not like Lalith for his unusual behavior, keep silent although they know the truth. Perhaps, they were afraid that Saman would hit them later if they speak out the truth. Perhaps, they were afraid of the teacher. The teacher, on her part, believed that Lalith is really a spoiled child and is determined to put him back on track by any means. But she does not realize that she is failing miserably to achieve her objective. Lalith finds the school to be more and more unpleasant and grueling. This could easily have been different.

Teacher; Lalith, can you come here please? Why are you crying?

Lalith; Saman hit me.

Okay; that's not good. You must be feeling bad. Did you feel hurt?

Lalith; yes he hit me several times.

Teacher; Can you tell me what really happened?

Saman; he pinched me first. He did it twice.

Lalith; I am sorry. Yes, I pinched Saman. I did not want to hurt but was making a joke.

Teacher; Okay, I see, you wanted to have little fun but it seems Saman misunderstood you. Saman does not like being pinched and perhaps he felt disturbed when it happened twice. It is okay to have fun but when you hurt others, others may do the same. Saman, how did you feel?

Saman; Yes I was very angry. I hit him since he did pinch me twice.

Teacher; Lalith should not have pinched you for sure. Perhaps he was making a joke? May be a bit of patience on your side would have helped you to understand. Did you first tell him that you don't like being pinched? It is always good to talk before we hurt others.

In the latter case, the teacher is mindful of the fact that Lalith has certain emotional behavior at times and is determined to handle him carefully without letting him become worse. She understands that the use of violence may push Lalith further in the direction of bullying or getting hurt by others.

The child gone astray

Let me take another real life experience, which I experienced during my school age. Prassanna was a boy who did not have many friends at school. He was ridiculed, mocked at and bullied by his friends in the class. Sometimes, classmates harassed him for no reason. Prassanna was very sad for what he experienced. He did not do anything wrong. He just didn't know why some school mates were harassing him. His teachers had given him up. He was bad in every subject. English was his nightmare as he did not even know the alphabet and he was severely punished physically by the English teacher almost every day. He dreaded the class. Basically, Prassanna was a 'good for nothing' as his

teacher saw him. There is another teacher, Abdul, who was his mathematics and science teacher. He thought there was something in this boy; a potential that could be extracted. He started to target this boy in a positive way. He started to pay more attention on him. The teacher asks questions in the classroom. When Prassana failed to respond, Abdul did not abuse him but fellow students laughed at him. Prassana felt ashamed at his failure but he started to pay little bit more attention on his maths just to escape from the mocking laughter in classroom. He found one or two kind hearted students, who could be approached for help in learning maths. Prassana never studied at home. Now, to escape from Abdul's questioning, he starts to do some study at home.

One day, Abdul also started to ask him and fellow students in the class to write essays. Prassana wondered... 'this is a maths class and why should I write essays'. Besides I am terrible in writing essays'.

Abdul; okay here are your essays. Let me see. Okay Prassana you have got 60 out of 100. Not bad. Keep it up.

Prassana told himself 'Okay...hmmmm...can I write essays? Really, I never imagined I could. It seems I can...wonderful.

In fact, Abdul had given him more points than he deserved. He thought of giving Prassanna positive affirmation, which Prassana had never experienced. Prassanna really got only 30 points for his essay but Abdul gave 30 marks extra for the first essay. Abdul continued to write an essay topic each week. Prassana's second essay was much better than the first. Abdul gave it 70. Prassana could not believe himself. He met Abdul and told him privately.

Prassanna 'Sir can I have more topics to write essays? Will you grade them?'

Abdul; Of course my dear. Bring them in...

Prassana did gradually improve his writing skills. He started to read novels and later school texts books. He started paying more attention on his science. Abdul openly appreciated Prassana for his improvement. Abdul was no psychologist but he did somehow knew how to energize the boy to his potential. Prassanna made amassing progress at his exams and he never looked back. He became one of the best students of that school. Abdul, through his careful positive affirmation, was able to drag him out of the minor status to which he has been assigned by his teachers, friends and to some extent by his father too.

The use of violence at home and acculturation

As I have briefly explained before, there is an assumption among Sri Lankan parents that we must use violence, at least, occasionally in order to produce discipline in children. In many advanced countries, corporal punishment even by parents is illegal and can invite trouble in a legal sense. However, it continues to be used in Sri Lanka both at home and school. Principals and teachers who attempt discipline students using corporal punishment in school are thought to be the 'good' principals and teachers. In some cases, even if physical violence is not used, verbal and emotional violence is commonly applied. The following is a real life example based on a true story.

Sunil is an educated father and a highly skilled professional by his employment. He has two children and his wife is a school teacher. Sunil's parents were also was educated professionals. Sunil's father often used hard physical punishment to discipline his children. Irrespective of such hard violence, Sunil was the only one to enter university to obtain higher education. Sunil understood that, if violence works, then, his siblings would have gone to university. He was determined to follow non-violence in raring his children. He practiced non-violence for some time. But this was frustrating because, at times, his kids would not listen to him. His wife also told him that he was too soft on his kids, who had already been experiencing the major-minor approach through their teachers at school. He felt non-violence does not work! This prompted Sunil to use a bit of soft physical

violence. Initially, kids surrendered to this use of physical violence but soon, soft violence began to lose its efficacy. Sunil often had to step up the severity of violence to make punishment effective. In the process of using violence, Sunil persecuted himself emotionally for not been able to live up to his determination of raising his children with non-violence. He often chided himself. He felt his dark shadow took control of him and he could not control his sudden anger. Why does non-violence fail in some situations?

Sunil; 'then how do I control my sudden anger against people who are more powerful than me? If sudden anger could not be controlled, how I did I control it against my superiors when their conduct was unacceptable, and against those who were physically more powerful than myself? Well, I use violence against those who are weaker than myself such as my kids and my wife. Shame on me...

Sunil understood that sudden anger is a pretense or a false excuse. He loved his children dearly. He wanted them to study well and become respectable people like himself. He wanted to do everything possible. Even though he was a busy person, he made it a point to sit down with children and support their studies about one-hour each day. His wife did more with the education of children. He even spoke to his colleague Perera as to why his non-violence does not work. Perera was a more experienced academic at a university.

Sunil; Perera, I have always tried to use non-violence with my kids but it does not work at times. I have had to use bit of punishment to control kids.

Perera; well Sunil you have to understand the context you live in. It is good that you don't use violence at home. But you must know there is violence everywhere else in our society. There is violence in school both by teachers and peers, violence on the street, violence on television etc. all these influence the kids. So, our kids live in a world full of violence and you are trying to create an Island of peace. But rest assured, if you persist

with non-violence for a longer time, the kids will come to recognize it. Then, the 'detoxification' will occur.

As his colleague advised, Sunil persisted with non-violence. There were days on which he failed but he never gave up his determination to leave violence. After a few months he felt, his children listened to him more. In fact, more than when he had been using physical violence. But occasionally Sunil failed and resorted to bit of violence. It was not easy for Sunil to push down his dark side within him. But he persisted with non-violence for several years. Sunil was amazed to find how effective non-violence could be. However, he knew transition from violence to non-violence is not effective until he gives up the major-minor model. He knew he had to keep fighting with the major minor model as well like he did with violence as a tool of disciplining children. Sunil persisted with an 'equivalence model' (Patfoort, 2001) with his kids and wife. This brought more effective children rearing and socialization and of course more happiness at home.

Loving the kids and showing your love

Often you here parents say that their kids are different in behavior and sometimes parents appreciate one kid better than others. Of course, kids are different. Each one of us are different in many respects. Let me take another real life example from a case I have observed.

Shehani is the elder daughter of a family and Ruwan is her brother. Shehani is at grade 8 while her brother is at grade five. For the last couple of years or so, Shehani has become a bit aggressive, arrogant and always fights with her parents, who found it frustrating and hard to believe that, despite their commitment on the welfare of kids, the kids do not understand and appreciate their contribution. They felt Shahani is ungrateful.

Mother; You are an ungrateful child. How much do I do for you? All my time at home is spent for your. But still you have no regard for me?

Shehani; Yes I know Ammi; your sweet boy is great for you. He is good and you always shower your love on him.

Mother? Don't be crazy child. So, I don't love you? Don't I? Who cooks for you, who washes your cloths, who takes you to school? Who takes you to tuition? It is always and still you say I love your brother more...

Shehani; Yes, but you do all that to Malli too? Don't you? But you still love him more.

And it goes on and on. It is important to remember that kids are kids and that they don't rationalize things the way you do. You may be doing thousand things but if they get the feeling that you love another kid more than himself/herself, then, it breeds jealousy and hatred. It is not that you love one of your children more than another but unwittingly, you might be *showing* more love to one of them, often, the youngest child. Without even noticing it, sometimes, you might be showing a difference in the way you talk, caress, kiss etc. Especially, when new kids are born, naturally, the new babies get more and better attention and this goes on even when they are grown up. Here, there is one thing you must do. Make a conscious effort to display your love and affection to older kids or any kid who accuse you of not giving enough love. Otherwise, those kids begin to hate the family, show arrogance and ultimately, disgruntled kids are less likely to listen to what you say. Countering this kind of behavior require inner strength on your part and understanding the foundations of you children. This is not catering to whims and fancies of naughty kids but a conscious effort to counter a feeling generated in your child that you love one kid better than another. It is not enough to tell your kids that you do not do this but you need to show it with your behavior.

At times, this can happen at the hand of your relatives including grant parents or friends who may show greater preference to one of your kids than another or others. At times, the physical appearance, skin color, or manners can make one child more appealing than others. Relatives or friends may appreciate, give

presents, and spend more time with the child who is more appealing. It may be difficult to tell outsiders not to do this. If you can manage to convey this message diplomatically, you should do but often you dare not do this fearing damage to relationships. In situations where relatives or friends appreciate one of your kids more than others, you have a great role in compensating the less appreciated child. Be very conscious and show greater affection, love and appreciation to the affected child in a manner that suits the occasion.

Chapter Three: Ethnicity

This textbook is about resolving conflicts at different levels including family. However, when someone hears *conflict resolution*, naturally, our thinking goes into the ethnic conflict, which haunted Sri Lanka for 26 years. Unfortunately, the Sri Lankan school textbooks do not contain a balanced and objective representation of the factors that caused an ethnic conflict. Therefore, this knowledge is not passed down to the future generation, which is vital to prevent a recurrence of conflicts. This lack of understanding is observed even among university students. Therefore, this chapter offers a thorough introduction to ethnicity and ethnic conflicts to fill this void in understanding. In addition to subjecting the concept of ethnicity into academic scrutiny, I take Sri Lanka and Rwanda as two conflict cases to illustrate the nature of ethnic conflicts, largely, due to my familiarity with these cases.

The concept of Ethnicity

Fredrik Barth (1969b) was one of the first in Anthropology to breakaway from a tradition, which saw ethnicity as a unique and stable feature in human society. It was assumed that ethnicity divided people to disparate groups, which were mutually exclusive. But Barth argued that people often switched between groups and cultures of different ethnic groups were often indistinguishable. This line of argument later came to be understood as ‘constructivism’, which represents the idea that ‘ethnicity is the product of a social process rather than a cultural given, made and remade rather than taken for granted, chosen depending on circumstances rather than ascribed through birth’ (Wimmer, 1969, P. 971)

Max Weber, one of the founding fathers of sociology, had downplayed the concept of ethnicity stating that primordial phenomena such as ethnicity and nationalism would vanish with modernization, industrialization and globalization. Weber was eventually proven wrong as ethnicity continues to be very important for human relationships within countries and between countries. One of the reasons why ethnicity has become more important in the present world is the emergence

of what is now called 'ethnic conflicts' especially after the Second World War. Before that conflicts were mostly between countries but after the Second World War, when the super power proxy wars had subsided, there emerged many internal conflicts within countries in which ethnicity became a corner stone for many of these conflicts.

Samuel Huntington (1996) wrote what became one of the most debated books in the 20th century called the 'clash of civilizations' in which he argued the future conflicts in the world would be between civilizations. He was mainly referring to the Christianity and Islam as two separate and contradictory civilizations and projected that the future conflicts would arise based on the incorrigible difference between these two occidental civilizations. This has however been challenged on empirical grounds by other scholars.

Globally, there has been a resurgence of ethnicity; Native Americans, Australian aboriginals, Samis in Norway, Catalonians in Spain, Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda, Tamils of Sri Lanka and many other ethnicities in other countries have asserted their ethnic identity. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics disintegrated into fifteen independent states largely on ethnic grounds while and the former Yugoslav republic encountered the same fate breaking into Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia etc.

The term 'ethnicity'

The term 'ethnicity' is relatively a new term in English language. The first dictionary appearance of the term came in the Oxford Dictionary in 1972. David Riesman in the US had used the term itself for the first time in 1953. Ethnicity was derived from 'ethnic', which is a much older term running back to the middle Ages. The English adjective 'ethnic' is derived from Greek 'ethnos' which is derived from the term 'ethnikos', which means non-Christian and non-Jewish pagan or heathen. In English language the term was used in this sense from about 14th century to mid-19th century. In Latin, the term 'natio' was used to refer to distant and 'barbarian' peoples as they called them (Eriksen,

1994; Hutchinson and Smith, 1996). In Sinhala the terms ‘Jathiya, Jati, Paraya, Paradeshhakkaraya’ were used in the past to differentiate people belonging to out-groups but none of them strictly signified ethnicity. Jati meant caste, while Paraya and Paradeshhakkaraya referred to foreigners. At present the term is translated into Sinhala as ‘Janawargikathwaya’ and into Tamil as ‘Inam’.

The term ethnicity denotes relationship between groups. Basically, the Greek usage implied, on the one hand, that there is a group of people, who share the same biological and cultural features and who lived together and act together. But on the other hand, it also implies that there is an OTHER. This means there is another group, which is different from my own group. The people of this other group are dissimilar to us. This process is called ‘othering’ or the construction of an ‘other’.

Schermerhorn defines ethnic group “as a collectivity within a large society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood.” (Schermerhorn, 1970: P. 12)

There is also the historical orientation; looking back at great ancestors, golden ages, periods of artistic, political or economic greatness. The current destiny of the group will be associated with the ethno-history. The term ethnicity, as (Eriksen, 1994) mentions, is a classification of people into groups and the relationship between or among the groups. Usually, ethnicity connotes subnational groups or minorities but majorities are no less ethnic than minorities.

Ethnicity is different from race. Racial discrimination is often stronger and more inflexible than ethnic discrimination because the former is based on immutable inborn characteristics while the latter is based on cultural differences. Modern social science or natural science does not believe in race as having a scientific foundation. It is more about biological characteristics and used to categorise people based on biological differences. Ethnicity is used to differentiate people based on cultural differences although these biological or cultural foundations

can blur, especially, because people assume ethnicity to have common descent, which speaks about a common origin and thus a common blood. In other words, just like in racial discourses, people often believe that their ethnic group has some inborn qualities, which are different from another's. People may further assume that inborn qualities explain cultural differences. However, ethnicity can exist without race. For example, different European migrants in United States consider themselves to be national or subnational groups but do not invoke genetical differences to construct their identity (Eriksen, 1994).

Ethnicity is different from nationalism or nationalist identity. A distinguishing feature of nationalism is the relationship to the state. A nationalist holds that the cultural boundaries are coterminous with political boundaries. However, ethnic groups, although they may ask for recognition and cultural rights, may not ask for the rights of a state. Yet, when an ethnic group makes a claim to the state and control of a territory, at that point, an ethnic movement can become a nationalist movement.

Ethnicity can also be compared with class. Social class is a system of ranking based on ownership of property and achieved status. Key social thinkers such as Karl Marx and Max Weber have theorized about class. Ethnicity is egalitarian if one considers the fact that it does not take into consideration the relationship to property; within an ethnic group every member is equal as far as the ethnic identity is concerned although they may be unequal in other aspects. Yet ethnicity is system of a horizontal ranking of groups based on imputed cultural differences or perceived inborn biological differences.

Demarcation of ethnicity and who belongs and does not belong to an ethnic group can be more complex than we think it is. If one looks at some of the common traits that anthropologists use such as language, religion, political organization etc, there can be significant overlaps. In Rwanda Hutus and Tutsis speak the same language, are Christian, have the same complexion, but everyone used to know who is a Tusti and who is a Hutu.

Ethnicity is often associated with conflict or made to appear that it is always a cause of conflict. But there is no necessary relationship between ethnicity and conflict given the fact that majority of the ethnic groups in the world live in peace with each other while in some parts of the world, ethnic groups do have conflicts between them. When conflicts occur between ethnic groups, there can be many reasons for it; usually, the members of the dominant group, who claim superiority, culturally rank ethnic groups and deprive others of cultural and religious freedom. In many ethnic conflicts, inequitable distribution of economic resources has been an important source of the conflict. In some others, identity issues such as not been able to practice one's culture or assert one's cultural identity has pushed people to fight with a dominant group. In yet others, the cause can be demand for share in political power or self-autonomy (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996).

Approaches' to Ethnicity

Hutchinson and Smith (1996) divide existing approaches into ethnicity into several groups as follows;

Primordial; Primordialism is an “objectivist theory” or “essentialist theory” which argues that “ultimately there is some real, tangible, foundation for ethnic identification. The primordialist approach is the oldest in sociological and anthropological literature. It argues that ethnicity is something given, ascribed at birth, deriving from the kin-and-clan-structure of human society, and hence something more or less fixed and permanent. Nevertheless, the primordial approach has attracted lot of criticism. Scholars have pointed out that ethnicity is malleable. Things like intermarriage, colonialism, and migrations have taken away what was considered discreet, immemorial and persisting nature of ethnicity. Also people can assume multiple identities at the same time and people may choose to do and change at different times. Whether one considers ethnic, religious, regional or national identify to be the most important can differ.

Instrumentalists consider ethnicity as a social, political and cultural resource for different interests and status groups. There is resource competition according to one view where some can manipulate symbols to garner mass support. So, this may be one way one can access wealth, power and status through the use of ethnicity. Instrumentalists consider ethnicity as malleable and individuals have some room to select his or her identity depending on many things. However, instrumentalists have also been criticized. They have highlighted only the material foundations of why ethnicity is used and ignored the affective dimensions. Clearly there are passions around ethnicity.

According to constructivist approach, ethnic identity is not something people “possess” but something that people construct in specific social and historical contexts to further their own interests. Ethnic identity is therefore fluid and subjective. This goes against the primordial approach of seeing ethnicity as tangible and fixed.

Ethnicity and ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka

It must be stated at the outset that ethnicity and religion is conflated in Sri Lanka in every pragmatic setting. For Sinhala, Buddhism is an essential part of their identity but there is a minority of Sinhala people, who are Christians. Tamils are predominantly Hindus while there is a significant minority who are Christians. Muslims technically belong to many ethnicities but in common parlance Muslims are wrongly treated as an ethnic group. The importance of religion can vary across many situations: for instance, in inter-group relations between ethnic groups, ethnicity may supersede religious identity while within the same ethnic group there are situations of conflict over matters connected with religion.

How old are the ‘ethnic groups’ in Sri Lanka? There is a taken for granted notion that Sinhalese were among the first settlers in the Island except for the *Vedda* people and a mythical prince called *Vijaya* populated Sri Lanka. This is what we have learnt from books of history in school as well. This view appears deceptively

simple and harmless but this has implications on how Sinhala people look at themselves and the minorities, how they vote, how they do business etc. Yet, the reality is that there were constant migrations to Sri Lanka from South India, Tamil Nadu and Kerala and possibly other part of India etc. Thus, people have migrated and settled in Sri Lanka for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. There have been hundreds of waves of migrations into Sri Lanka and settlement of people in different parts of the country and the population we have in the Island is highly mixed if one were to talk about genetics. Depending on the area where the migrants settled they gradually learned the language spoken in the location and were integrated into the society and culture. Accordingly, with time the migrants, possibly, espoused the religion of the locality and gradually melted into the ethnicity of the locality. At the same time, there were similar patterns of migrations within the country. There were constant migration from one locality to another and, in many cases, again people accepted the culture and language of the locality. The ethnic boundaries were very fluid and the ethnic identity did not have the modern connotations of ethnicity. In fact, ethnic identity was just one among many forms of multiple identities that people had to choose from (Gunawardana; 1990; Rambukwella, 2018; Wickramasinghe, 2006). Therefore, mixing of ethnic groups for hundreds of years make it impossible to speak about ‘pure’ ethnic groups from a biological sense. The ethnic divisions were so malleable that one could almost shift between the ethnic boundaries. (Gunawardana, 1990; DeVotta, 2004).

This is not to posit there were no conflicts between Sinhala and Tamil peoples in the history of Sri Lanka. South Indian invasions in different periods of history had a decisive effect the consciousness of Sinhala people. The Sinhalese have historically fought with the “spectra of South Indian invasions”, which contributed to the collective worldview of them being a “beleaguered majority with a minority complex” (Tambiah, 1986, p. 58). The epic *Dutta Gamini-Elara* war, fought by rival kingdoms, is a legend framing Sinhala consciousness. Nevertheless, one grapples with extremely difficult questions on the relevance of ethnicity in this war; did people have ethnic consciousness by that time in history? Was it ethnicity per se that drew the conflict? There were Sinhalese

soldiers for Elara's Army. Elara is not known to have destroyed the Buddhist Heritage in Anuradhapura. Further, what is, at present day, considered as the Eastern province, mostly occupied by Tamils, was not under Elara but under the Sinhala king Dutta Gamini. Arguably, this shows that *Dutta Gamini-Elara* war did not polarize people along ethnic lines but represented a conflict against rival kingdom ruled by an invader.

There is a rich intellectual debate on the formation of Sinhala ethno-identity. Dharmadasa (1992) argues that some form of loose but concrete identity as being 'Sinhala Jathiya' was established around the Fifth Century CE. Gunawardana (1976) contests this view and point out that the Sinhala ethno-identity goes only as far back as the 13th century (CE). It was during the Colonial period that ethnicity acquired its current meaning of being fixed and non-changeable. The act of census taking forced people to choose an ethnicity. Census taking made it necessary for people to choose one kind of ethnic and religious labeling. Even the simple formality of issuing an identity card or birth certificate contributed to the formation and solidification of ethnic consciousness and identity.

The British 'divide and rule' policy too prevented the formation of a common national identity in Sri Lanka. Ponnambalam Arunachalam along with his Sinhala elites formed the Ceylon National Congress (CNC) in 1919 and Arunachalam became its first President. CNC could possibly have been a platform on which the Sinhala and Tamil leaders could have united the masses. However, the Governor at that time, William Manning, managed to infiltrate CNC and incite the Kandy Sinhala leaders to break away from cosmopolitan Sinhala leaders, who advocated a common nation and a common identity. Ultimately, this led to the breakaway of the CNC (Frost, 2002).

Dharmapala, who rose to prominence in the 18th century as a lay Buddhist leader, thorough his public speeches and also his paper *Sinhala Bauddaya* attempted to revive Buddhism and a Buddhist consciousness but his campaign also gave rise to strong anti-Tamil and anti-Muslim sentiments (DeVotta, 2004; Frost, 2002; Roggers; 1987; Spencer, 1990; Wickramasinghe, 2006). Similarly, Tamil

nationalism, which started off as a Hindu revivalist movement spearheaded by Armugam Navalar, gradually metamorphosed into a fully-fledged ethno-nationalism. Some academic literature point out that Tamil nationalism emerged as a reactive and defensive form against Sinhala nationalism. The origins of Sinhala and Tamil nationalisms are independent of each other on one level and parallel at another level. Usually one form of nationalism is dialectically related to another and often it is irrational to speak about one concrete origin of it.

The formation of All Ceylon Tamil Congress (ACTC) in 1944 is an important landmark in Tamil Nationalism. The ACTC was founded in 1944 by G.G. Ponnambalam and demanded a 50:50 representation in the state council (50% for Sinhalese and 50% for *all* other ethnic groups) and the Federal party was formed in 1949. Both these are the strongest catalysers of Tamil nationalism. The demand for parity aggravated suspicion and antagonism between the two communities. Post-independent governments brought in various legislations that caused unrest among the Tamil community. The disenfranchisement of upcountry Tamils through the *Ceylon Citizenship Act of 1948* was the first major step in a series of discriminations. Ironically, a section of Tamil politicians from the North supported this legislation due to divisions along caste lines (Loganathan, 1996).

S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike came to power with the promise of making Sinhala the official language of the country and by doing, so gave life to a strong force of Sinhala nationalism and equally or stronger Tamil nationalist resistance. The introduction of the Sinhala-Only national language Act was perhaps the most serious and pernicious government action in engendering strong Tamil resistance. Granting official language status only to Sinhala language engendered the notion that Tamils had become second-class citizens. Many Tamil youth feared that they would lose access to education and state sector employment. Especially, the hardest hit by this policy was the Tamil middleclass stratum as this limited their chances of obtaining government employment. By this time, Tamils had a substantial representation in the civil service due to good education facilities in Jaffna. Tamils people further faced difficulties in

communicating with the government institutions. In the light of the language Act, Tamil parliamentarians protested and resigned from their parliamentary seats. There was a peaceful Satyagraha in the Gallface Green, Colombo. Hooligans, who stoned the protesters, interrupted this peaceful and non-violent protest. Violence applied on this Satyagraha hurt the Tamil politicians and provided the building blocks for the conflict in Sri Lanka. Even though the Sinhala Only act was amended and Tamil was included as a National language in 1969, the act had already provided the spark for the conflict (de Silva, 1997; Gunaratna, 1998, Orjuela, 2008; Venugopal; 2018).

Bandaranaike is mainly blamed for the 1956 'Sinhala Only' language policy but there were others, who cherished this idea. For instance, J.R. Jayewardene advocated Sinhala as the official language in the Legislative Council of 1944. Bandaranaike, who opposed Jayewardene's motion in 1944, introduced the language Act to make Sinhala the official language in 1956.² There were some attempts at rectifying the situation after the language act such as the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam Pact and Dudley-Chelvanayagam Pact but none of these could be executed due to the pressure from Sinhala nationalists (DeVotta, 2004; Manor, 1989; Tambiah, 1986).

The university standardization policy of 1970s impacted ethnic consciousness of Tamil youth. The main reason behind standardization was to benefit rural youth, who were not able to make it to the universities due to poor educational facilities in rural areas. Tamils, especially, from Jaffna enjoyed higher education opportunities and were able to secure university positions much exceeding their population proportion. The standardization was not intended to mistreat Tamils, but the quota system introduced by the standardization policy, nevertheless, did reduce the number of Tamils entering the universities. This created perceptions of discrimination and did lead to a reduction of opportunities for Tamil youth in higher education and therefore, fuelled the seeds of Tamil militancy (Loganathan, 1996).

² Bandaranaike initially intended to introduce legislation for 'reasonable use' of Tamil but this could not be done due to pressure from Sinhala Buddhist pressure groups. Relevant legislations were introduced in 1958 and implemented since 1960.

As tensions ran high between the government and Tamil militants, the GoSL deployed its military in the North and the East to counter attack against government targets such as police stations and government civilian officials. A pivotal incident in the history of the conflict occurred on July 13, 1983. In the Jaffna peninsula an army convoy was attacked and 13 soldiers were killed. The Sri Lankan army by this time was of ceremonial nature and was not equipped for a war and was severely under-staffed. The death of 13 soldiers was the biggest loss the military had ever suffered by that time. This incident sent shock waves across many parts of the country and the story was added flavor in its journey to the south, where ethnic consciousness was suddenly raged. Some corrupt sections of the ruling party mobilized the urban poor and lower classes for looting Tamil shops. Hundreds of Tamils were killed and their property destroyed. Many houses and shops were set on fire especially in Colombo. Parallel to this, some Sinhalese civilians were killed in the North and this further added fuel to the destructions in the South. Many Tamils now fled to the North. It was this incident, which is called the “Black July”, which provided the strongest base for Tamil militancy. Many moderate Tamils now turned into ardent supporters of Tamil Nationalism and a demand for a separate state. The international community too began to sympathize with the Tamil separatist movement after this incident. Thousands of Tamils left the country and sought asylum in many Western countries, and after settlement, they formed a Tamil diaspora, which began to fund the militants (de Silva, 1997; Gunaratna, 1998; Venugopal, 2018).

External Interventions in the Sri Lankan conflict

The first and foremost intervention on the Sri Lankan conflict was made by India, which provided military training to Tamil militant groups in Sri Lanka. Late Mrs. Indira Gandhi, late Prime Minister of India, was sympathetic towards the cause of Tamil militants and provided the militants with training, arms and ammunition, funds and moral support. Except for India, initially, PLO headed by Arafat and Hamas groups too have provided training to Tamil militants in Sri Lanka. It is said that these militants who received training had to serve in places like Palestine and Lebanon for some time in return for the training they received (Gunarathne, 1997; Loganathan, 1996).

GoSL launched a major offensive to quell the rebellion in the North in 1987. GoSL forces took control of the entire North and confined the militants to Vadamarachchi jungle. When the army was about to launch its final push, the Indian air force dropped food parcels from the air to the militants. This was not an act of humanitarian intervention as there was no food shortage in the North but only a symbolic gesture that India was to invade Sri Lanka if the offensive went ahead. President Jayewardene ordered his troops to cancel the offensive and the militants escaped from what would have been an early military end to the conflict (Gunaratna, 1998).

Clashes between the government security forces and the Tamil militants grew in intensity every day and there were many civilian died in conflict. After many series of discussions between the GoSL and the Government of India, the Indo-Lanka peace accord was signed. According to this agreement, all the militant groups had to surrender the arms to the state and an Indian peace keeping force were to monitor the peace process. As a political solution, a system of provincial councils was created. All the militant groups, which were around 13 in number, except LTTE, accepted this peace accord and surrendered their weapons. LTTE refused to surrender and continued to fight. The peace accord did not have the backing of the people in the South and it was signed under strictest curfew in the entire country.

LTTE did not accept the accord they started fighting against the IPKF. Meanwhile, fears were growing among the Sri Lankans that IPKF would prolong their stay in the country and President Premadasa, who opposed the peace accord from the beginning, called on the Indian government to withdraw their forces. When the Indian government showed no signs of withdrawal, Premadasa made a secret alliance and provided weapons to LTTE, who were already fighting against the IPKF. The LTTE used the same weapons to fight against the government forces later. Under Narasinghe Rao, the Prime minister of India, relations between India and Sri Lanka improved and the IPKF was withdrawn (Gunaratna, 1998).

After the withdrawal of IPKF, President Premadasa invited LTTE for peace talks, which brought LTTE representatives to Colombo without external intervention. However, the peace-talks were short-lived and LTTE unilaterally broke the ceasefire without even prior notice, and attacked several police stations and army bases in the North and the East. A particularly gruesome incident occurred in the East where the LTTE arrested 900 unarmed policemen, who were later assassinated. So, the parties fell back to war again.

As to the efficacy of the India's interventions in Sri Lanka are concerned, right from the beginning they were not welcomed in Sri Lanka and hence, the Indian intervention took the form of mediation through the 'muscle' or the so called 'sticks' method (Glasl, 1999; Patfoort, 2001). The hostility between the Rajiv Gandhi and LTTE did not change and an LTTE suicide bomber assassinated Gandhi in his run up to the elections. This was one of the turning points in Indian interventions in Sri Lanka. From this point onwards India's reaction to LTTE shifted from sympathy to hostility.

When Chandrika Kumaranatunga came to power as the third executive President, she launched a full-scale and a genuine peace process, which also included educating the general public on the need for devolution of powers. One of the main promises in her election manifesto was to bring peace through a negotiated settlement. Even at this time, there was no outside intervention. The talks went on for several months and there was much optimism that a negotiated settlement was possible. However, the LTTE broke the ceasefire accusing the government that it was not committed. The main accusation was that the president sent her close associates for peace talk but not those capable of taking important decisions.

Since the LTTE broke all the ceasefires that were signed so far unilaterally, there was much pessimism when the former Prime Minister, Ranil Wickramasinghe, resumed peace talks again in 2000s. There were many warnings given to him to be cautious when dealing with LTTE. The Sri Lankan media reported that LTTE was merely buying time to prepare for the next war. This time there was

strong international backing for peace talks with the Norwegian government as facilitators. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE with the assistance of Norwegian peace brokers and a peace monitoring mission was established with personnel from Scandinavian countries.

When the monitoring mission started their work, there were accusations that they were partial towards the LTTE. The popular argument was that there were many Tamils in Oslo and that they influenced the Norwegian government to favor the LTTE. However, it seems that these reports were exaggerated and there were many instances when the Monitoring mission reported violations by LTTE, which built new camps, killed around 30 men attached to the military intelligence and killed many civilians belonging to EPDP, a former Tamil militant group, which entered the democratic process after the Indo Lanka peace accord.

Meanwhile the President Kumaranatunga accused the Prime Minister of giving in too much to the rebels and of endangering national security. It appeared that Prime Minister Wickramasinghe was very optimistic about the possibilities of a peaceful settlement, it became obvious that his regime failed to curb the military buildup of the LTTE and inadvertently compromised national security. The President Kumaranatunga accused that while the PM had downsized the army, the LTTE was boosting its manpower and stock of arms. The peace-monitoring mission also confirmed that LTTE had abducted children to recruit them as child soldiers. The newspaper reports of new LTTE recruitment and stockpiling of arms led to widespread fear that they were preparing for the next war. In this backdrop, the President dissolved the parliament clearing the way for new elections.

The Norwegian intervention could be regarded as a combination of unofficial diplomacy and official diplomacy in their role as facilitators. They did succeed in breaking the ice between the government and the LTTE and their activities were generally impartial although in several instances mission was subject to serious suspicion. Had the Prime Minister been more cautious and not given away too

much for the rebels, there was considerable chance that peace process would have become a success. The MOU unintentionally facilitated a military buildup of the LTTE, which ultimately, reneged from the peace process and plunged the country back to war. A few weeks later, a LTTE sniper gunman assassinated Sri Lanka's distinguished Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar on the 13 August 2005 in the heart of Colombo. This was a crucial moment as it seriously deteriorated the people's trust towards the peace process while the LTTE lost much of the support it had from Western governments.

Ethnicity and ethnic conflict in Rwanda

Let me take another example to illustrate the nature of ethnicity and how ethnic conflicts are formed and lead to protracted social conflicts. While many examples can be chosen from any continent, I have chosen Rwanda for several reasons. Firstly, having done research in Rwanda I have firsthand experience to talk about it. Secondly, Rwanda is also a conflict between a majority and a minority. Thirdly, its conflict has colonial heritages and the conflict history goes much further than colonial as does the conflict in Sri Lanka. Fourthly, Rwanda went through an interesting process of post-conflict reconciliation and is comparable to Sri Lanka in this sense. Nonetheless, Rwanda is nowhere near Sri Lanka in terms of the human cost of the conflict as Rwanda was a case of genocide while Sri Lanka represents a case of ethnic conflict.

The ethnic conflict in Rwanda created one of the most brutal genocides in the world—the *Genocide perpetrated against Tutsi*, between April and July in 1994. It is estimated that more than one million people were killed within that three-month period, along with the profound devastation of the country's social, political and economic fabric.³ In addition to the extermination of Tutsi, several other Rwandans and some foreigners were also massacred for various reasons: some, for being politicians opposed to the genocidal regime and ideology; and others, for having refused to participate in the killing of, or for having hidden,

³ The latest estimation counts 1,101,000 victims (Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports & Ibuka Association, 2004; NURC 2007, 2009; Clark, 2010, p. 12).

the Tutsi (Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports & Ibuka Association (2004)). Just like the case of Sri Lanka presented above, the conflict in Rwanda provides great insights into how ethnic conflicts occur and prolong. The Rwanda's conflict has a long and disputed history. Before the colonial administration (by Germany, 1894-1916, and by Belgium, 1916-1962) and the arrival of Christian missionaries (since 1900), history records emphasize that Rwanda was a society composed of three groups of people—the *Hutus*-farmers (around 85%), the *Tutsis*-herders (around 14%), and the *Twas*-hunters and potters (around 1%) under the Tutsi Kingship. History records also emphasize that Rwanda's history has been marked by a conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi groups. Conflicting narratives regarding this conflict are about whether the three categories were 'ethnic' groups prior to colonization and whether the conflict between the Hutu and the Tutsi existed before colonization. Conflicting narratives also arise when it comes to how colonial administration affected the relations between the Hutu and the Tutsi, the nature of their relations after colonization, and particular how the conflict between them informs the 1990-1994 civil war and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda (Eltringham 2004). The official dominant narrative states that the different sections of Hutus, Tutsis, and Twas, are and were, until the colonial adventure, *Banyarwanda* (Rwandan people). Differences only referred to the socio-economic life in relation to cattle raising (cows) and the land use, whereby cows, culturally, in a comparative sense, represented wealth. In many regions, whoever could own many cows was part of the political elite and was called 'Tutsi; the rest, especially those who had less cows and who lived essentially on agriculture were called Hutu, while those who mainly fed on hunting, fruit picking, and pots-making was qualified as Twa (Shyaka, 2007; MINEDUC, 2006). This narrative also emphasizes that the governance structures and processes in pre-colonial Rwanda, despite inherent weaknesses and inequalities typical of such a pre-industrial society, offered a minimum of stability and constant progress.

During colonization's indirect rule, power and government in Rwanda were generally still in the hands of the Tutsis. As Rwanda was close to acquiring its independence in 1962, a violent conflict between the Hut-majority and the Tutsi-minority (1959) erupted leading to some Tutsi (notably those from the

ruling elite) finding their way to exile, which has also produced competing narratives on whether the violence was within the ‘Hutu revolution’ against the ‘Tutsi (Loyle, 2016). Rwanda independence from Belgium in 1962 created a republican constitution and the demographic power of the Hutus helped them capture the state power and assert Hutu dominance. After independence, in 1962, the Hutus took over and ruled the country until 1994, with two successive republics: 1962-1973 under President Grégoire Kayibanda and 1973-1994 under President Juvénal Habyarimana. Post-independent Rwandan state had adopted discriminatory policies towards Tutsis. However, on October 1, 1990, a primarily Tutsi military group, many of combatants being children of Tutsi refugees from earlier violence (1959) had formed the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) and an armed wing—the Rwandese Patriotic Army (RPA), launched a war from Uganda, against Habyarimana government. Divergent discourses on this war are about the war motive and nature—whether it was a ‘civil war’, a ‘liberation war’, or an ‘invasion’.

Marking a potential step forward, the government and Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) signed the Arusha Accords (Arusha Peace Agreement) in 1992 to end violence and to negotiate a peaceful settlement. By this time around one million people had been displaced to bordering countries due to the conflict and the Arusha accords was to facilitate the return and reintegration of the refugees. According to the agreement, the parties agreed to form a transitional government, draft a new constitution, to hold elections, and to create a unified national army (Melvern, 2006; Prunier, 2008).

Following the agreement, the United Nations set up the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in 1993 and agreed to deploy a peace keeping force. However, critics point out the considerable delays in the process and the failure by the UN to provide adequate human and material resources to the UNAMIR, limited its capacity to fulfill its mission. The tensions between the Hutu dominated government and the RPF continued to rise and there were credible information that the Hutu government was planning attacks on Tutsi civilians and its political opponents. Already some of these attacks

were taking place. Despite the UN imposed cease-fire that led to the signing of Peace Accords in Arusha, in Tanzania, on August 3, 1993 between RPF and the Habyarimana government, towards the establishment of a shared government, the plane that carried President Habyarimana and the President of Burundi Cyprien Ntaryamira, from Peace talks in Arusha, was shot down in Kigali air-space on April 6, 1994 and both died in the crash. The Hutu government accused RPF of carrying out the attack while the RPF charged that sections of the Hutu government, who were wanting a trigger for the escalation of the conflict, had carried the attack. Yet another important event was the assassination of the Prime Minister along with her Belgian bodyguards in most brutal manner by the Hutu forces. The commander of the UNAMIR, Brigadier General Dallaire was in constant touch with the UN with a series of warnings and requests of permission to intervene. He informed the UN Security Council that, even before the plane crash, arms were being distributed to Hutu militias and requested permission to seize the weapons but permission was denied. He requested the UN to bolster the strength of the UNAMIR from about 2500 to 5000 soldiers, so that, most of the violence could be prevented but contrary to expectations and common sense, the force was further dwindled. This resulted in removing whatever pressure and control the UN could have exerted over the Hutu government. The combat between RPF/RPA and the government army resumed and at the same time, the genocide that targeted mainly the Tutsi civilians resident in the country raged until July 4, 1994. Hutu militias unleashed a brutal genocide on the Tutsi people, Hutu moderate politicians, and Hutu civilians, who opposed the genocide. However, serious accusations are levelled against the RPF as well. Some studies even accuse RPF also of carrying out genocide against Hutu civilians. RPF managed to capture power on July 4th 1994 by overpowering the Hutu forces and established a government, which up until today has a horrible human rights record (Melvern, 2006; Prunier, 2008; Rever, 2018).

The Rwandan conflict is interesting not only for its great magnitude of human costs but also as a case of post-conflict reconciliation. Unlike in the case of Sri Lanka, which went for a grand scale physical reconstruction of the war-torn provinces, Rwanda went in for social and political reconstruction. The result is

that Rwanda has strived to achieve social reconciliation through many means. Rwanda is famous for its Gacaca courts, which were initiated as a local method to try the perpetrators of genocide. Instead of relying on courts, Gacaca courts is a community-based traditional truth seeking mechanism, which demands the perpetrators to come forward and acknowledge the crimes they committed and tender a public apology. Those responsible for grave human rights violations are then persecuted through higher courts while others are released (Clark and Kaufman, 2009, Gahima, 2013).

Post-genocide Rwanda implemented a conscious strategy of transitional justice and various programmes in order to achieve social reconciliation (Clark and Kaufman, 2009, Gahima, 2013). Among others, the key projects included the formation of 'interethnic' grassroots cooperatives (where people of a village work together for community development), the Ndi umunyarwanda programme (I am Rwandan campaign in which people are expected to delve into history, repent on past crimes committed on the other ethnic group and heal), Umuganda (a day dedicated for collective community work such as cleaning infrastructure, repairing roads etc., once a month), Umugoroba w ababyeyi ('parents' evening' where parents of the same village talk about various issues from politics to development to family issues), and Ijisho ry'umuturanyi (eye of the neighbour) (Herath, 2018a; Sentama, 2009).

These measures have seen different levels of success and failure. The Rwandan government has violently attempted to create a common identity and 'one nation' in order to prevent a recurrence of violence by banning the use of ethnic labels. Today one can get into trouble by publicly using the terms Hutu, Tutsi or Twa and the government wants everyone to call themselves Rwandan. This has been criticised by academics and civil society as a failed approach to achieve reconciliation. It has been pointed out that ethnicity cannot be suppressed by banning and a government should instead work towards cooperative relations between ethnic groups and treat different ethnicities equitably in state polices (Herath, 2018a; Sentama, 2009).

Rwanda and Sri Lanka present two interesting cases to understand ethnicity, ethnic conflict, the nature of protracted social conflict and possibilities for post-conflict reconciliation. As mentioned below, the intensity of violence in Rwanda was possibly ten times stronger than in Sri Lanka in terms of human cost but the two cases from Africa and Asia offer great possibilities for insight into ethnic conflict, how they can evolve for hundreds of years and how external parties can either aggravate the divide or bring parties into negotiating table. Having compared the two cases, it must be stated that each ethnic conflict is unique and there are many facets, which make them very different from each other.

Chapter Four: The Concept of Reconciliation

The key purpose of this chapter is to shed light on the concept of post-conflict social reconciliation and to place the case of Sri Lanka in high relief to provide a reasonable understanding on the dynamics of a process of reconciliation. The chapter introduces the term, the key roots of the concept and goes on to discuss globally accepted macro and micro methods of fostering social reconciliation. I end the chapter by offering a comparison of reconciliation as practiced in Sri Lanka and Rwanda. The choice of cases was motivated both by their relevance and uniqueness as well as my familiarity with the cases.

The term ‘reconciliation’ has Latin roots and is derived from the Latin expression *conciliatus*, which denotes a process of ‘coming together’. Therefore, reconciliation represent a restoration of broken relationships between two or more actors. Reconciliation becomes ‘social’ when it is about the process of rebuilding relationships between social/cultural/ethnic groups rather than individuals. In our most general understanding, social reconciliation refers to a process of re-establishing the broken relationships between social groups. However, this pre-supposes the presence of harmonious relationships between the parties before the conflict erupted but it may not necessarily be the case. For example, prior to the manifest conflict, there could have been social injustice, inequitable distribution and animosities between groups, although these had not come out in the form of aggression. Thus, restoring relationships to a pre-conflict phase may, sometimes, mean returning to a situation of injustice, inequality and animosity. Hence, social reconciliation is much more than restoration of pre-conflict relationships (Kumar, 1999).

A process of reconciliation must work towards resolving deep-seated anger, prejudice, misunderstanding, exploitation, injustice etc and attempts to address these problems in order to build tolerance and mutual trust between former adversaries. Moreover, conflicts can involve serious violations of human rights, killings, injuries, destruction of property and livelihoods etc and leave victims with bitter memories. Therefore, any attempt to build harmonious relationships

in the immediate aftermath of a conflict can be unrealistic and unhelpful. There are three objectives of a process of social reconciliation; preventing violent conflict, addressing negative emotions (anger, prejudices, misunderstandings), and establishing or re-establishing positive relationships among the conflicting parties. Cohen (2005) offers a good starting point to distinguish some of the key terms that are used along with reconciliation. Accordingly, he notes that...

Imagine a continuum that displays interpersonal and intercommunal relationships according to the degree to which the parties to a conflict acknowledge and act upon their interdependence... Coexistence...refers to a threshold point on this continuum where individuals or groups shift from reciprocal hatred and injury to rudimentary, even grudging respect....Reconciliation ... refers to a set of deep processes designed to transform relationships of hatred and mistrust into relationships of trust and trustworthiness. These processes involve former enemies acknowledging each other's humanity, empathizing with each other's suffering, addressing and redressing past injustice, and sometimes expressing remorse, granting forgiveness, and offering reparations. Reconciliation reflects a shift in attention from blaming the other to taking responsibility for the attitudes and actions of one's self and one's own community (Cohen, 2005; P 9-10)

The concept of reconciliation has religious origins but scholars dealing with inter-states and intra states conflicts have used it in a more secular sense. Reconciliation is a process encompassing political, juridical and psychological dimensions. An essential part of reconciliation is to focus on curing the emotional injuries and trauma experienced by the victims of conflicts in order to bring closure between the victims and the perpetrators. It is important to note that the 'victim' and 'perpetrator' are not always clear and there is some level of subjectivity in the categorization. Reconciliation is a reciprocal and gradual process, which, ideally, ends in a situation where the enemies can live in peace (Bockers, Stammel, and Knaevelsrud, 2001).

Existing theoretical contributions on reconciliation suggests innovative ways of looking at prospects of social reconciliation in the context of Sri Lanka. Sinhalese and Tamils have coexisted in peace and harmony for much of the history although there have been periodic internals of wars between local kingdoms. However, scholars have pointed out that South Indian invasions into Sri Lanka have been formidable in forming Sinhala nationalism (Gunawardana, 1976; DeVotta, 2004). The period before independence was marked by emerging Sinhala and Tamil nationalisms, which brought forth some sense of antagonism and suspicion, although there was no overt conflict. Hence, reconciliation in Sri Lanka cannot aim to restore the inter-ethnic relationships to a pre-independent situation as that would constitute latent conflict. Instead, it should be situation in which Sinhalese, Tamils, and Muslims agree to coexist and build strong social and economic relationships.

There are three stages of the reconciliation process; simple co-existence, democratic reciprocity and reconstruction of bonds among former victims and perpetrators (Croker, 2000). Bar-Tal points out that reconciliation is a central component in intergroup conflicts that have lasted for a long time with widespread violence. Due to the longevity of the conflict the parties involved may develop entrenched animosity and maintain strong prejudices and beliefs partial to their respective groups. These beliefs and prejudices that were part of the conflict can become part of the societal beliefs and are incorporated into the romanticism of at least one generation, which would not have the ability to discern the reality of the situation. In conflicts where parties have committed grave violence in the forms of killing, wounding and other types of abuse, many people will have deep emotional scars that focus on vengeance (Bar-Tal, 2000).

In the case of intra-state intergroup conflicts, the conflicts can end in either dividing the country into separate states, or creating a political power-sharing system within the same country. When parties settle to live in one state, this will require establishment of peaceful, cooperative, and trustful relations between the formerly antagonistic groups. When new states are created, the newly created

political systems will have to establish bilateral relations between the societies living in two different states (Bar-Tal, 2000).

Methods of Social Reconciliation

Social reconciliation can possibly be achieved in many ways. Methods of reconciliation can be broadly categorized as macro and micro efforts. Macro efforts are usually large-scale endeavors by governments with strong focus on resolving the political issues between former enemies (which can include the states or a state and a non-state actor). Macro efforts also include development projects undertaken after the end of the conflict. The micro efforts are usually undertaken by civil society organizations, religious organizations, NGOs, and in some cases individuals. Micro efforts may focus on individuals and communities in a smaller scale and will attempt to improve community interaction. The distinction between macro and micro methods is not always clear and there is certainly some overlap. A state can design, undertake or fund micro efforts at the grassroots in some instances but some state institutions may also participate in the implementation of such micro methods. For instance, the government, which came to power in 2015, established the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) in Sri Lanka and, as elaborated later in this chapter, it had a range of reconciliation initiatives from macro to micro.

Justice is an integral part of social reconciliation in the aftermath of violent conflicts. Justice can be broadly categorized as retributive justice and restorative justice. Retributive justice is based on punishing perpetrators, who are held responsible for various offenses ranging from killing, rape, injuring, destruction of property etc. Retributive justice may serve as a reconciliation method; victims or potential victims may develop a sense of security as the perpetrators would no longer be able to commit crimes due to imprisonment. Victims or other people indirectly affected by the conflict will develop a sense of justice by holding the perpetrators accountable for the crimes they committed. This can contribute to bringing in closure, which is very important psychologically to heal emotional wounds.

Restorative justice is a more soft and non-punitive approach, which pays more emphasis on the emotional, social and security wellbeing of the victims and less on punishing the perpetrators. Restorative justice may be achieved through various methods including but not limited to truth and reconciliation commissions, peace committees, compensation, counseling etc. I have described below some of the most known methods of macro and micro social reconciliation.

Macro methods of reconciliation

Truth commissions/truth and reconciliation commissions- Truth commissions have been adopted in many countries affected by violent conflicts as a method of reconciliation. TRCs are basically set up for uncovering the violent activities of the past in order to bring closure, heal the emotional wounds and to bring perpetrators to justice. Fundamental to TRC is the belief that it is hard for enemies to accept each other before they have established the truth as to what happened in the conflict. This is a process, which brings to light the crimes committed, who committed them, on whom these were committed and how were these committed under what circumstances. According to Avruch and Vejarano (2000) TRCs are a formal mechanism to articulate the violence experienced, crimes committed and rights desecrated. Perhaps, the most famous TRC ever was enacted in South Africa, which allowed the people to give voice to their sufferings. TRC provided affected parties the space to reveal their untold suffering and to build a future founded on the recognition of human rights (TRC South Africa Report, 1998). A TRC is expected to compensate for the climate of impunity that may have prevailed during the conflict.

Reparations – this involves providing victims or affected parties with monetary or in-kind compensation. This can include payment of money, provision of land and houses, household items, machineries for livelihoods, etc. It is expected that reparations, while restoring or improving material conditions of life, will also contribute to healing the emotional and psychological wounds to some extent.

Remembrance – governments, and international organizations can facilitate remembrance by building memorial sites, museums, statues etc in order to acknowledge the sacrifices, deaths and injuries suffered by people during the time of conflict. Holocaust museum in Germany and the genocide memorial in Kigali in Rwanda are just two well-known examples. Remembrance can also involve symbolic measures such declaration of a Mourning Day or Remembrance Day. This may be a particular day every year on which cultural, political or religious activities may take place to remember the dead and the atrocities committed. For example, the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Rwanda Genocide is an important state sponsored event where mourners and high state officials gather to remember the horrendous mass genocide. The government of Rwanda expects that this day will pass a message to the future generations about genocide and its impact (Herath, 2018a). However, there is disagreement over the impact of remembrance as it can refresh wounds and further aggravate the emotional and psychological trauma. It is important to mention that remembrance can also be practiced as a micro method. Sri Lankan villages, for example, have large numbers of statues or monuments (such as bus stops built by relatives of dead soldiers). Even a photograph of a dead relative can be a remembrance method.

Cambodia developed another well-known remembrance day to support the reconciliation efforts in the country with the establishment of the Day of Hatred on May 20th of every year. This day remembers the crimes committed under the Khmer Rouge Regime in various ceremonies all over the country with wreath laying, songs, prayers and religious activities for the dead. This day is also taken as a therapeutic remedy for victims, as they reenact the sufferings that they have suffered, enabling them to evoke traumatic memories in a protected environment with results similar to cognitive behavioral therapy. Cambodia also established the Toul Sleng Museum to remember the past incidents involving the Khmer Rouge regime in order to honor the victims and to help the younger generation to know and remember the violence that the older generation had undergone. These activities were done to generate a dialog and understanding between the younger and the older generations of Cambodia (Brockers, 2011)

Educational measures – education of the young generation is an important method of reconciliation. The educational institutions such as primary and secondary schools and universities can play a role in educating the young generations about the past conflicts so that peaceful resolution of conflicts become more attractive and feasible. The government can build its educational system either to resolve the conflicts or to aggravate the existing divisions within a country. School texts books of history, for example, can engender discourses of fear, which can often be manipulated for political advantage by shrewd politicians in the name of patriotism.

Micro methods of reconciliation

Psychosocial assistance - Many of the victims as well as perpetrators can suffer emotional disturbances and in some cases, psychological trauma due to the experience of various forms of violence. These affected people need emotional support in the form of be-frienders, social workers, religious/cultural healers or professional counselors. Emotional disturbance is a status where affected persons suffer emotional weakness, stress, fear, or even depression and less severe compared to trauma as those suffering from trauma may need psychiatric treatment. Facilitating community support and provision of psychosocial help is an important method of reconciliation for people to have closure and come to terms with past violence and current hurdles).

Traditional methods: traditional societies had developed indigenous mechanisms for investigating, acknowledging, and punishing anti-social behavior. At present, many countries affected by conflict have attempted to revive indigenous mechanisms for social reconciliation. A well-known example is the *Gacaca* (pronounced as *gachacha*) process. Sentama, (2009) points out that after the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, the state of Rwanda had a dilemma; if it were to rely on the court system to try thousands of perpetrators, it would have taken the lifetime of several generations. Instead, the government of Rwanda decisively went back to the traditional indigenous system of Gacaca courts, which empowered the village elders, assisted by some state officials, to hear complaints

about past violence. Perpetrators and victims are asked to come to a public place and perpetrators are asked to make public confession of guilt. Those who reveal of minor offences are forgiven while those who had committed grave crimes are then separated for judicial actions.

In the North of Sri Lanka ritualistic ceremony has been used in Amman Kovil in Mulativu to heal people. Interesting, a consultant Psychiatrist based in Vavuniya has been using performing this healing ceremony for years to help the victims of violence. Resorting to religion is an accepted method of healing among Hindus, Buddhists and Christians to a large extent.

Dialogues, workshops, and conferences– these hope to create discussions and understanding among former enemies. Often participants in these events come from middle classes and some who are employed in state organizations. These events involve training participants in conflict resolution, reconciliation, non-violent problem solving, power devolution etc. These activities are expected to promote willingness to listen to opposing viewpoints and help in acknowledging mutual needs, rights, and obligations.

The use of ‘peace media’ – ordinary and special media can be used for social reconciliation. Peace media can be used to propagate attitudes favorable for peace in conflict-affected societies. Generally, if journalists can be trained to counter rumours, anger and hatred, it can help a process of reconciliation. On a more positive line, media can also cultivate values of sharing, common heritage, the need to face common problems, non-violent communication etc. Societies affected by conflict have made use of peace media to broadcast or telecast documentaries and films promoting mutual understanding.

Grass-roots structures for peace – this involves a broad array of localized and simple methods, which may include but not be limited to peace committees, community protection committees, inter-religious federations, women’s societies, cooperatives etc. These grassroots structures can mobilize local leaders and community members to prevent eruption of violence and to foster tolerance.

These groups can counter rumors, create opportunities for social and economic interactions between potentially conflicting groups, intervene to mediate in solving small scale conflicts, control the youth who may otherwise resort to violence in venting out anger. These grassroots structures are largely voluntary in nature although state and non-state institutions may offer them financial help, material aid or training in some instances. By nature, they become more active when there is some tension. When peace returns they can become inactive after a while but for sustaining peace, these structures should maintain at least at a low profile activism.

Collaborative activities –These can involve exposure visits taking people to visit and interact with people from other ethnic or religious communities, youth camps with youth from different communities, labor donation activities, grassroots development projects, running of cooperatives, etc.

A further note on Truth and Reconciliation Commissions

A government taking a community through a transition from a state of violence to peace may have three options as regards addressing past violations of human rights; 1) undertaking trials to prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence; 2) appointing truth commissions; 3) do nothing. The trials occur when the government concerned is strong relative to the perpetrators and there is a high public demand for justice. Truth commissions, which may look back into past atrocities but may or may not lead to severe punishment, may result when there is a power balance between the government and the perpetrators. A government may do nothing when the perpetrators are stronger than the government (Skaar, 1999). Nevertheless, the world reality may not always fit this model that Skaar describes. For example, the Sri Lankan government, which is more powerful than the LTTE, has more or less done all three steps. It has taken steps to prosecute some former members of the LTTE while there are also court proceedings against some members of the armed forces of the GoSL, who are accused of committing violent crimes. The government appointed a Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission while in many cases, has done nothing about many other alleged cases of human rights violations.

One of the first TRCs was initiated in Argentina, which was ruled by the military for six years during which there was political terror committing heinous crimes causing destruction and abuse of many lives. After violence ended in 1982, the establishment of a truth commission was an important step for reconciliation. The commission was named, *Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas* (CONADEP), which strived to provide a detailed account of the disappearances during the military regime. The commission was expected to serve indictments against officials, who were accused of cruel repression while the lower level officials and soldiers were to be excluded if they were strictly obeying orders from higher officials. Therefore, between December 1983 and September 1984 the commission conducted extensive research and presented the final report - *Nunca Más/Never Again*- with information on 8,960 disappearances. However, the government after many years pardoned all the responsible individuals, who were either awaiting trial or already convicted, in the name of national reconciliation in 1990 (Grandin, 2005).

Gautamala witnessed a bloody conflict between the military and a left insurgency of the country resulting in serious human rights violations and abuses. Gautamala created a truth commission by the name of *Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico* (CEH). The commission recorded about 8,000 testimonies from victims and determined that the military is responsible for about 93 per cent of the human rights violations, which included 626 massacres and about 200,000 political murders. The guerrillas were held accountable for about 3 per cent of the violations and 32 massacres (Grandin, 2005).

The TRC created in South Africa started functioning in 1995 and became one of the most well-known TRCs in the world. TRC was formed to record information on human rights violations including the killings, abductions, torture and severe ill-treatment conducted by the government security forces or the liberation movement between the years of March 1960 to May 1994. TRC consisted of three sub committees as the Human Rights Violation Committee, the Amnesty Committee and the Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee (Theisse, 1999). The Amnesty committee set up a timeline (September 30, 1997) for

perpetrators to come forward and make an application with full disclosure about their respective crimes. Perpetrators or suspects, who fail to meet this deadline and those who were refused amnesty, were expected to face prosecutions. About 1,400 cases were heard in public. The Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee recommended a reparation policy to the President and Parliament. The public opinion about the efficacy of the TRC varied along 'racial' divides in which many African respondents felt that the commission was successful in addressing and exposing the past offenses (Research Surveys 1998). However, the African whites largely disagreed that the truth was uncovered. There was similar disagreement with regard to the impact of the TRC on reconciliation. Some felt that the TRC, by allowing people to confess their crimes and plead forgiveness, benefited both parties (blacks and whites), while, still others believed the process brought more anger and resentment (Gibson and Gouws, 1998). The African respondents mostly expressed satisfaction and admitted that the TRC was effective in promoting peace and reconciliation, while the White respondents were more likely to reject the work of the commission (Research Surveys 1996).

Cambodia is another case, which was marred by mass killings, forced labor, forced marriages, rape, deportations, separation from family members, torture, and starvation. The regime further effected closure of schools, public offices, and media institutions. It is noted that a quarter of the Cambodian population was wiped out due to malnutrition, overwork and executions during the period of the regime. Cambodia created the *Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia* (ECCC) in 2006. The ECCC incorporated both international and Cambodian laws and victims could participate not only as witnesses, but also as complainants or civil parties. ECCC took considerable time and had extensive delays while only 5 people were held accountable for the genocide (Bockers, Stammel, and Knaevelsrud, 2011).

How can reconciliation be achieved in Sri Lanka?

The conflict between the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE took its toll on the country for about 30 years. It is estimated that more than 70,000⁴ lives were lost in the conflict, which caused massive destruction of individual and industrial property, machinery, housing units, infrastructure, and farmland. Some estimates suggest that the total economic cost of the war in Sri Lanka is as high as 1,135 billion rupees (in 1996 prices) or in other words, 168.5 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as of the year 1996 (Arunatilake et.al., 2001). The economic cost is likely have increased exponentially by the year 2009. The social, emotional and psychological cost of the war remains relatively under-estimated. Recent studies have shown significant levels of psychosocial distress as well as fear and anxiety in the North and East while the mental health sector is largely inadequate to cope with the situation. Some psychosocial issues in some cases find their expression in increased alcohol addiction and suicide, although people in the North and East have displayed high resilience in the face of problems (Usoof-Thowfeek, 2018).

It is in a context of a military victory by the GOSL over the LTTE, that the discussion on post-war reconstruction and reconciliation was initiated. Most intra-state conflicts have generally tended to cease with a military victory to one of the protagonists (Wallensteen and Axcell, 1995; Wallensteen and Sollenberg, 1997). Although this may not offer an encouraging message to those engaged in peace studies and activism, peace researchers still have a role in post-war environments, especially, where reconstruction projects are underway. Military victories are not sustainable in the long term because as long as genuine grievances remain unaddressed, seeds of fresh conflict remain. Conflict resolution literature gives ample evidence to demonstrate that there are many cases in which conflicts restart after brief periods of relative peace as parties to conflict feel that their real needs have not been addressed (Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse 1999). However, it may be possible that, even in the context of

⁴ There are different estimates about the death toll of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka from 1983 to 2009.

a military victory, a well-designed and context sensitive post-war reconstruction project may have the capacity to address genuine grievances of the affected parties in Sri Lanka. Peace researchers and generally social scientists can facilitate such a process by generating academically and policy relevant knowledge and meaningful interpretation of the post-war environment.

After the end of the war in 2009, certain actions by the government worsened the possibility of social reconciliation. For example, after the end of the war in 2009 up until 2015, GOSL held grand war victory celebrations in Colombo. These victory celebrations involved the display of imported military hardware, aircraft, military parades and inflammatory speeches precisely with the purpose of creating heroes out of the political and military leaders who led the war. The use of fighter jets and military pomp contributed to refresh the emotional wounds of those, who had lost loved ones or experienced injuries in the war. While the GOSL permitted the erection of war monuments to remember the fallen soldiers of the security forces, it destroyed the LTTE cemeteries by bulldozing them and constructing buildings on them. This possibly caused deep emotional scars on those, whose loved one were laid to rest in those cemeteries. The purported rationale for erasing the graveyards was to erase the memory of terrorism. However, this action violated some fundamental human values of respect for the dead and violated the freedom to mourn the dead, irrespective of whether the dead were terrorists or heroes.

Nevertheless, GOSL gradually realized the need for reconciliation for meaningful peace and adopted and implemented some macro and micro methods of reconciliation. Essentially, at the macro level, a grand post-war development programme was initiated aiming to resuscitating the economy of the war-affected regions and it was expected to foster social reconciliation as well. The post-war reconstruction programme rebuilt the infrastructure including major roads, harbors, schools, hospitals, and government institutions while line ministries assisted people in revitalizing agriculture and fishers, which were centrally important for the northeast economy. The motive of the government was to rekindle development, reduce poverty, eradicate unemployment and thereby win

the hearts and minds of the Tamil community, which had been backing the LTTE for nearly three decades to win them a separate homeland. Hence, it is highly significant to examine the extent to which the government could actually win the hearts and minds of the Tamil minority, which distrusted the government for decades. Research in the north and east with community leaders, civil servants, local Tamil and Muslim politicians, and civil society representatives reveal that the government has had only limited success in addressing the emotions of the people. Many feel that plans for reconstruction have been made by the central government without proper consultation of the stakeholders in the north and east; hence, there is no sense of ownership of the reconstruction project among the Tamils and Muslims (Herath, 2012). While material reconstruction was indeed necessary and contributed to improving social relations between people of different ethnicity, insufficient attention on social reconstruction hampered prospects for social reconciliation among the divided ethnic communities. People in the north and east developed some resistance to the material reconstruction because the large-scale development failed to secure local participation. People from the North and East were mere receivers of development rather than decision makers or implementers. Effective social reconciliation requires concerted and conscious attempts by the government as well as civil society to address aspirations for political power, healing emotional wounds of war and developing a platform for venting out suppressed agony of loss of lives (Herath, 2018b; Usoof-Thowfeek, 2018).

Although, many scholars and practitioners advocate the setting up of TRCs or such formal mechanisms to foster reconciliation in post-conflict environments, there are studies, which challenge the effectiveness of those commissions (Gready, 2005; Karekezi, 2007; Selimovic, 2008). Thus, it is necessary to critically examine the utility of a TRC to the context of Sri Lanka; after all, who should be put on trial? The war eliminated the LTTE leadership almost entirely and those still living were either co-opted into the ranks of the government or were rehabilitated in detention centres. Some others are in detention awaiting judicial trial in formal courts of law. The government is the military winner while the LTTE is the loser. In the current political conditions in which nationalism is a

strong factor in electoral victories, it is highly unlikely that a government would prosecute military commanders accused of violations of human rights. Further, TRCs have a Western origin and are largely unfamiliar to the general public in Sri Lanka resulting in a lack of public demand for a TRC. The proposal to set up a TRC has come from the political leadership as a top-down effort. Therefore, TRC remains a distant possibility and even if implemented, has minimal chances of achieving its intentions. In 2010, GOSL appointed the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), which provided opportunities to affected people to record the disappearances and the death of loved ones and other grievances. LLRC could have performed the role of a TRC but it did not lead to uncovering 'truth' other than recording statements. LLRC could not bring perpetrators and victims to a forum where uncovering of truth could take place. LLRC consisted mostly of legal professionals and civil servants while it was devoid of social scientists and experts in peace and conflict resolution.

TRCs need the support of other subsidiary mechanisms to succeed. For instance, in South Africa, peace committees at local, regional and national levels contributed to social reconciliation through activities such as facilitating communication between antagonistic groups, negotiating disputes and working with the government and police to make them conflict sensitive. In other countries such as Nicaragua, peace committees got involved in disarmament efforts, monitoring elections, release of prisoners, demobilisation, refugee issues, and human rights monitoring (Kumar, 1999). But in the North and East of Sri Lanka ethnic topography is different. People live in kind of mono-ethnic communities to a significant extent. The ethnic discord is a generalized consciousness expressed not in term of localized flashpoints but in terms of expression of political ambitions and grand meta narratives.

Sri Lanka already has some formative experience about the utility of local peace committees at the local level although this was before the end of the war. Orjuela (2003) elucidates the role played by peace committees (PCs), made up of religious leaders and representatives from different ethnic communities in combating rumours, controlling possible unrest and preventing violence at local level. Peace

committees can contribute to maintain the peace by minimizing the chances of escalation of conflicts at local level. Many of PCs, if not all, are now defunct but, it may still be possible to revive them and especially, to benefit from that social networks to create a constituency, which advocates social reconciliation. Local peace committees have also played a role in resolving minor flashpoints between Tamils and Muslims in the east.

As previously pointed out granting amnesty to the parties of the conflict has been adopted as a measure of social reconciliation especially, when trials or truth commissions were not conducive to maintain (negative) peace, that is, to put a stop to fighting. Yet, the efficacy of general amnesty is dependent on whether amnesty would be able to attract belligerents to lay down arms and the severity of crimes committed. It is important to note that amnesty has been used in combination with other measures rather than as a stand-alone method. In some conflict cases, amenities have failed to achieve social reconciliation or reduce violence at all (Arnould, 1997). After the end of the war in 2006, GOSL detained thousands of the former LTTE carders, who were rehabilitated and released. This can be considered a general amnesty, although even as of 2019, some members of the LTTE, who are accused of serious crimes, are awaiting trial.

Setting up of ONUR in 2015 was an important step in the direction of post-conflict social reconciliation. The reconciliation action plan 2017 of ONUR lists activities from the Office on the Missing Persons (OMP), national reconciliation week, policy development, memorialization, Integration friendly schools and universities, youth corps, peace media, grassroots activities, interfaith projects, livelihoods support projects and many others etc. As a macro initiative, OMP sought to establish truth about people, who disappeared in periods of violence including those who disappeared in 1988-89 period in the South and those who disappeared in the North during the ethnic conflict. ONUR could have been an important inspiration and driver of reconciliation in Sri Lanka, although political conditions, which prevailed after 2015 seriously affected the potential contribution that ONUR could have made. The rise of a strong wave of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism in the South and Tamil nationalism the North of the

country as well as the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in many parts of the country including the East, weakened the incumbent government, which then, failed to provide necessary leadership for actions proposed in ONUR action plan. OMP attracted significant nationalist flak, which possibly, limited its role in establishing truth. Stated differently, a strong government is also *sine qua non* for implementing sound social reconciliation initiatives. The elections in late 2019 has brought in a strong government and it remains to be seen how the new government would handle social reconciliation.

Thus, it is very clear that Sri Lanka has a long way to go in terms of achieving social reconciliation. At present, there is no violence and Tamils and Sinhala people have restored social, economic and cultural connections. Yet, Tamil Nationalist parties, which strive to mobilise ordinary people for nationalist goals, frequently refresh demands for devolution of powers. Regional powers such as India also play a role in highlighting the demands for sharing power. Therefore, social reconciliation demands concerted action and commitment from GoSL as well as Tamil political leadership.

Chapter Five: Negotiation and Mediation

This chapter introduces the fields of negotiation and mediation. The chapter, in addition to bring out importance concepts and theories, makes the reader familiar with central methods and approaches of negotiation and mediation, and techniques of communication. The chapter introduces several exercises, which are often used by practitioners and localizes these exercises to fit with a Sri Lankan audience. I have used my own experience in illustrating the applicability of the selected exercises and in making them relevant to the context. The chapter offers a pragmatic training in the use of communication techniques and method in resolving conflicts.

Negotiation and mediation are natural and essential habits of our everyday lives. Every day, at your family, workplace, market, community etc there is some form of negotiation. If you want to get your child to eat the breakfast, ask your husband to drop the son in school, ask your wife to pick up the daughter from school, ask a workmate to share an important work in office etc, there is always some form of negotiation, even though sometimes we may not realize that we were in a negotiation. Naturally, you want to participate in the decisions that affect your life and hence negotiation is an essential component in asserting your rights and performing your obligations. Often, in addition to negotiating our way through ordinary life, we may be called upon to intervene in conflict situations on behalf of others. Therefore, mediation in conflicts is also a part of life. We may mediate in conflicts between our children, other members of the family, friends and their spouses, workmates, people in the community and so on.

In many countries, mediation (being a mediator) is a professional service. Just like the family counselor, mediation specialists are called upon to resolve conflicts at the family, workplace, community, between leaders representing two ethnic communities or between and among countries. Hence, this is a well-established profession, which requires solid training in principles and methods of negotiation in addition to having a profound understanding of the theories of conflict resolution.

In everyday life we meet two kinds of negotiators; soft and hard. The soft negotiator, usually, tries to not worsen a situation and attempt to find a solution acceptable to the other party by giving concessions but at the end of the day, may feel that he/she has lost a great deal. On the other hand, the hard negotiator tries to win over a situation, avoids giving any concession, and often forces a solution into the other party. Given that hard negotiator keeps pressing a solution that benefits himself/herself or a party related, often, this approach could evoke an equally hard response from the other party leaving both parties exhausted and tired. Ultimately, a solution may be found but only after damaging the relationship between the parties. However, scholars from the Harvard Negotiation Project developed a third approach; the *Principled Negotiation*, which focuses on the issues at their merit rather than demands or threats issued by conflict parties. The principled negotiation approach attempts to arrive at mutual gains where that is possible and where it is not possible, stresses on the use of fair and acceptable standards not dictated by the *will* of the parties. The principled negotiation is hard on the issue but soft on people and we try to gain what we want through an approach that is fair and in a way that denies the other party the opportunity to take advantage of our softness. The principled negotiation approach can be used in any situation against any conflict party, powerful as well as powerless and from family to international conflicts (Fisher and Ury, 1991)

Fisher and Ury (1991) further stipulate three criteria which can judge any negotiation method; a negotiation should produce a wise agreement, it should be efficient and it should either improve the relationship between the parties or at least make sure that the relationship is not damaged. They further point out that a wise agreement is something that meets the legitimate interests of both parties to the extent possible, and it is durable and fair. But if two negotiators adopt soft and hard positions, the hard negotiator is likely to dominate the soft, will obtain concessions while denying concessions to the soft, and will produce an agreement unfavorable to the soft negotiator.

Soft	Hard
Participants are friends	Participants are adversaries
The goal is agreement	The goal is victory
Make concessions to cultivate the relationship	Demand concessions as a condition of the relationship
Be soft on the people and the problem	Be hard on the problem and the people
Trust others	Distrust others
Change the position easily	Dig in to the position
Make offers	Make threats
Disclose the bottom line	Misleads about the bottom line
Accept one-sided loss to reach agreement	Demand one-sided gains as the price of agreement
Search for the single answer; the one that the other will accept	Search for the single answer; the one she/he will accept
Insist on agreement	Insist on position
Try to avoid a contest of will	Try to win a contest of will
Yield to pressure	Apply pressure

Source, Fisher and Ury, (1991, P. 9.)

Positions and Interests

One of the very important lessons from conflict resolution is the separation of interests/needs from positions. Position represents our view, opinion or perspective regarding something that we want to do, want to have or want to change etc while interest or need is what underpins the position. Some theorists go a step further to differentiate between interests and needs but for now I will treat them as similar. The interests are not irreconcilable but positions may be. There can be several positions supporting the same interest and among them mutually compatible positions. However, if the interest is on values or relationships, conflicts become harder to solve. Identifying the interests considerably facilitate the process of arriving at an outcome satisfactory to both parties (Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, 1999). If we glue to our positions, we become committed to defending our positions even though the positions may not always represent our interests but when positions are expressed blatantly,

the other side also prepares to defend its positions and then conflict becomes harder to solve as the positions become more important than interests. When we are hard pressed to focus on the positions, ultimately, the solution may involve an artificial compromise between our positions and may not address the interests of any of the parties leaving both parties unhappy. This kind of solution may not last long as the interests remain unaddressed.

Fisher and Ury (1991) note that when we bargain over positions, our opening position tends to be extreme and we usually tone down depending on the situation and try to make sure that the final outcome is highly favorable to us. Each side to a conflict does the same and makes it very difficult to arrive at a solution. Parties would have to work under intense pressure and there is a set of techniques used to apply pressure such as the use of threats, deliberately slowing down and evasive actions etc which involve significant costs to the parties. Each side, instead of sitting down to identify the real issues and devising some solutions, tries to force the other side and demands that the other side change their position. In some situations such as those involving personal relations, the positional bargaining will have lasting effects and can destroy relationships.

Son; I want to go to Pizza shop

Daughter; I want to go to Burger Hut

Son; we went to Burger Hut last month too. And this is my turn

Daughter; Idiot, father bought you a toy last week and I had none, so it's my turn

Son; if we go out today, that will be Pizza shop or none at all

Daughter; Okay, not going out today then. Dad, if we go out for dinner, it will be Burger Hut and nothing else.

Son; Burgers are useless junk

Daughter; Pizza are the real junk food. In any case, who told you I love burgers?

Son; did I tell you I love pizza?

Daughter; No, but you love the food I hate...

And it goes on. Dad intervenes here and asks son what he wants to eat today. Son says he likes the chicken *Biryani* at Pizza shop while it turns out that daughter is interested in fish rice at Burger Hut. Both places, in addition to serving the main products of pizza and burgers, also sell various kinds of rice dishes but neither party sat down to find out what their interests were. Each stuck to their guns and were ready to have no food instead of discussing what the real issue was.

Dad; okay son what do you want to eat?

Son; I want to eat Biryani at Pizza shop.

And you my daughter...what's your pick?

Daughter; I want to have fish rice at Burger Hut.

Dad; I see, do you know both places have several rice dishes of the kind you want? So, let's go to the closest place and see if we can find a dish that you both like. Shall we?

Essential elements in a principled negotiation

Fisher and Ury (2001) list down the four essential elements in a principled negotiation

- People: Separate the people from the problem
- Interests: Focus on interests not positions
- Options: generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do
- Criteria: Insist that the result must be based on some objective standard

Separate the people from the problem

The first proposition takes consideration of the fact that parties in a conflict are human beings, who have different styles of communication, different levels of

emotions, and different understanding about a particular problem. Therefore, it becomes essential to separate people from the problem so that qualities of people involved do not overshadow the problem that we are trying to address. Hence, we should attack the problem not the people.

According to Fisher and Ury, in many kinds of negotiation, we should be concerned not only about the final outcome but also about the relationship we have with the other party. We have an interest in maintaining the relationship; yet in many situations we see the problem only in **our** perspective. We tend to forget that for the same issue, there can be other perspectives, which are equally valid. When we stick to a position strongly and negotiate on the basis of that position, the other party may react the same way by negotiating on the basis of his or her position and then, the substantive issue is left out. Thus, all energy goes into assuring the victory of the position. This can hurt not only the relationship between the parties but also the final outcome we expect, that is, addressing the substantive issue.

How can we deal with the people and the problem? It is vital to understand perceptions of ourselves and those of the other party just as much as we try to understand the object of negotiation. It is recommended that we should develop the ability to see a problem in the perspective of the other party. If we can see the problem from their angle, then, it is easy to address the issue. This does not mean agreeing with the other side or giving in; it just means we know how the other side views the problem, rightly or wrongly.

A usual thing to do when we have a conflict with someone is to direct the blame on that party. Blaming, even if applied in justifiable situations, usually make people defensive and closed off. Once this happens, the other party no longer listens. A very important factor in dealing with others is the impact of emotions of both yourself and that of the others. Often we respond to emotions rather than to substantive issues. It is advisable to talk to the opposing party about emotions of yourself and of the other party, if there is an environment supporting that kind of open conversation. At times, allowing the other party to express his/

her emotions can be an effective strategy. When people have bitter and strong emotions, and when they have been offered space to express these grievances, and if you have the emotional strength to listen, then, they may begin to open up. Once I was involved in the designing of a new course of study in the university. One academic, who was not initially a part of this process, had felt grieved that she had not been consulted. In several occasions outside the formal meetings, she told others that she, not me, was the expert on the subject and she would propose a new course instead. I heard of this grievance before I went to the meeting where she said she would develop a new course in place of the one I had done. She spoke about her training in the field, how she had been involved in the designing of courses before, and her good grasp of the field. She spoke angrily that I had sidelined her and not given her due respect in this. I did not object to her speech and carefully listened while nodding to confirm some of her points about her expertise and experience. Once she had let off the steam, I began to talk and opined that we stand to benefit by getting her expertise and contribution. I mentioned that some of the modules she mentioned were already integrated into the course and what is missing can be included if she wanted to amend the course I had designed. Nonetheless, I also said that I was willing to consider if she wanted to design a completely new course. She gradually opened up and nodded when I spoke. At the end she, said,

Okay Dhammika I see your point. Yes in a way it would take a long time to design a new course. Why don't you send me the electronic version of the course you designed and I will include what's missing there.

That was the end of the problem and we succeeded in developing the course with actually only minor changes in what I did. Her disagreement was not really about the content but a feeling that I had failed to give her due recognition. She is not an expert on the subject although she thought she was but when people grow older, such assertions becomes necessary for their self-concept.

Focus on interests not positions

The second proposition encourages the parties to focus on the underlying interests rather than positions. This is similar to what Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, (1999) also expressed in relation to positions and interests. Making a compromise over positions can be done after hard negotiation but it may still not satisfy the needs created the basis of the positions.

One of the frequently used examples in books on conflict resolution to illustrate positions and interests is the story of two kids fighting for an orange. Mother comes into the scene and asks what the problem is.

Son; I want the orange (Position)

Daughter; I want the orange (Position)

In my conflict resolution lectures at the university, I have asked students what they would do, given the conditions there is only one orange, both kids wants the orange and nothing else, and there is no possibility of shopping at the moment for more orange. I always get the response from the students that the best solution is to divide the orange in half (Compromise). Some would say orange should be kept aside without giving it to any of the kids (lose -lose outcome). However, in our example, the mother is smart and asks each child why he/she needs the orange.

Son; I want to eat it (Interest)

Daughter; I want the orange peel to make a cake (interest).

Here the mother goes a step further to find out about the interest of each of the kid and finds a win-win solution. But if she had focused only on the positions, it would be very hard to arrive at a win-win solution. Often, in conflict situations this is what happens. It is not difficult to meet interests but meeting the positions is difficult.

Let me take another real-life example from a professional college. There, in one of the social science units, there were 10 instructors. The basic level courses were taught by one particular senior instructor, Sunil Bandara. His colleagues saw him as an arrogant and unresponsive character although they respected him as a dedicated teacher. However, his colleagues observed that his grading of examinations was haphazard and that it would seriously impact the quality of the program. It is based on the grading of the basic level that the students are categorized into special courses in the secondary level and when grading is not genuine, students get selected for the special courses on the basis of chance rather than merit; best students may fail to secure most sought after courses while weak students may creep in just by chance. Hence, in a staff meeting, the principal suggested that grading of examinations at the basic level should be done not only by the instructor in charge but by all 10 instructors. However, Bandara vehemently opposed the suggestion.

Principal; we would like the basic level papers to be graded by all 10 instructors instead of Bandara doing it all by himself. (position)

Bandara; No. I am the only expert on the basic level. I have always done this myself. I must do this alone. (Position)

Principal: Bandara, look...This is the basic level. So, all instructors are qualified and capable of grading them easily. Isn't it?

Bandara: No; I have always done this alone for the last 10 years. Either I will do it or other nine people will have to do it without me. I am tired to this place. I lost some of my important books that were there in my room. I think you are conspiring against me.

Karu: Well if he has lost books, this is not the forum to talk about it. We are talking about exam grading. Loss of books is not relevant here. It is not even in the agenda.

Principal: Badara, as per the exam regulations, it is your duty to participate. I am afraid it is an offense to withdraw from it unless it is for medical reasons. So, you

are required to participate. But can you tell us why you oppose the participation of others?

Bandara; I want to maintain good quality in grading. When so, many people grade the basic level, marks will vary quite a lot.

Principal: Okay I see. You are concerned that there will be unacceptable variation from instructor to instructor. I think your point is very valid and I appreciate your concern. What if we do this? You prepare a marking scheme and all instructors agree to use it as the basis to grade the papers while you supervise the grading process? You randomly check grading by others and if there is significant variation, you advise them how to minimize it. At the end, we will standardize all the marks so that variations do not impact on grades. Would you agree?

Karu: Bandara...listen up. We hope by doing this we can undertake a genuine grading. It is difficult for you to grade all basic level papers all by yourself because there are 500 students. You will have to do it very fast without paying close attention. That will be unfair by students.

Badara; Okay let's go with that option then. I can see your point.

Finally, they all sit together and finish the grading of the basic level examinations in three days. If Bandara were to do it alone (genuinely) it would have taken a whole month or more. However, while grading his colleagues observed that, Bandara was extremely fast and graded papers almost without reading them. His colleagues were very worried. But they were happy that they could at least discover the reason why so many clever students did not make it to the more demanding and sought-after courses at the secondary level.

Thus, it is clear that by focusing on interests and through principled negotiation, one can overcome many conflicts. But it does not mean that we always need to satisfy the whims and fancies of people. In this case, Bandara had multiple interests; he wanted to avoid variation in marks (met), he wanted to be in control

(met), he wanted to feel superior by grading the important basic level all by himself (unmet) and he wanted to claim a large payment that was there for the grading (unmet). Still, this was not a compromise. The principal used principled negotiation. Remember that the principal too had multiple interests. She wanted to maintain quality, to assure that papers are genuinely graded, students are fairly treated and importantly, to have a working relationship with Bandara. If Bandara goes out of the way to make complaints even against the principal, the college would earn a bad reputation. Outsiders would hear that there are conflicts in the college. She wanted to avoid such damaging effects as well.

The principal too made a mistake. When Badara spoke about his loss of books, Karu dismissed Bandara's issue as irrelevant. This was a great mistake. Yes it was irrelevant to that particular meeting but for Bandara it was important. If principal had taken the issue seriously and had given him attention, showed her concern and empathy, Bandara would have been tempted to cooperate. This was an opportunity missed for the principal to show that she is concerned about Bandara's welfare too.

Fisher and Ury (2001) points out that some of the basic human needs constitute the most powerful interests. These include security, economic wellbeing, a sense of belonging, recognition, and control over one's life etc. These basic human needs can be present in many other interests and positions. It is important to communicate these interests to the other party in clear and specific terms so that the other party is able to recognize them. Being assertive in communicating one's interests is different from being adamant and aggressive. One should never shy away from expressing his/her interests. However, it is equally important to listen and register the interests of the other party, who must feel that you are listening to them and taking their interests seriously.

Create many options before arriving at a solution

The third proposition advises the parties to create many options before arriving at a solution because under the tensed conditions of negotiation with an opponent, one may not have the required psychological space to be creative and to think

holistically. Hence, it is always best to develop many options, that is, expand the available solutions to choose from in such a way that not only yourself but also the other party have the opportunity for gain. This requires changing our usual mode of thinking in conflict situations. We may need to move away from the belief that we are always correct and our view is the only rational option.

At times, lack of confidence can be a barrier against developing many options. We may fear that the other side may take us as weak or even stupid for developing certain options. Zero-sum thinking often derails our efforts in arriving at possible solutions. Of course, there can be such situations but in most situations, one's gain is not the loss for another or vice versa. However, in our attempt to develop many options, it would not succeed if we only consider gains only for ourselves. Genuine concern for the other is equally important.

Let us assume that we are negotiating with a separatist movement on a possible political settlement. Remember when the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) was negotiating with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the latter demanded a separate state of Tamil Eelam while the GoSL refused to move an inch away an unitary state. Often, the parties thought of in zero-sum terms. The parties did not bother to develop many options. In the effort to develop options, it is not absolutely necessary that we accept the options we propose. As Fisher and Ury (2001) points out, we do not need to bother whether the proposals are practical and rational. It is important to remember that we are not bound accept the proposals we develop. It is an exercise of free thinking where even the wildest ideas are not criticized. Parties agree before a brainstorming session that people are free to generate ideas and no one can criticize them. The whole purpose is to think out of the box hoping that when we are free from pragmatic constraints, fears and controls, we may have the chance of generating realistic options from which we can choose later.

In the year 2002, the GoSL and the LTTE were negotiating a peace deal under the Norwegian brokered peace process. Often the negotiation process faltered and finally the war broke out because the parties failed to generate many options

and were sticking to their positions. The parties failed to look at the underlying interests and to develop alternatives to meet those interests. Negotiators were often afraid that they would have to vouch for the proposals they make. The negotiators, which included key GoSL Ministers and leaders of the LTTE, were centrally controlled and advised by the decision makers at home. Thus, when the parties went to the negotiating table with their counterparts they always went with pre-set goals, which they tried to push on to the other. The negotiators from both sides did not bother to see whether their proposal lead to gains by the other side. Often, the parties used threats that each would resort to war if the talks failed. In fact, the LTTE was killing government intelligence agents in the North and East as the talks were unfolding in Oslo in the hope that they would increase its bargaining power.

Insist on objective standard criteria

The fourth proposition, *insist on objective standard criteria* means we will stress on using some fair standard to determine an outcome rather than giving in to the power or will of the other side. However, the objective criteria do not indicate one's own but something that both parties can consider fair.

Let us assume you are the project director of an urban housing project and that your project is funded by a development bank. The project involves involuntary resettlement of people from their current location to a new location. Your organization and the bank agree to follow internationally accepted social safeguard standards in implementing the project. Some steps down the line, the bank employs an external monitor, who reports to the bank that the standards agreed upon prior the project are not being met and the bank demands your organization that the project be halted until the standards are met. In this negotiation, it is not your urgency or the power of the bank that should determine the next course of action. The action must be based on fair standards. You ask the bank to explain the standards on which they take the decision to halt the project. The bank in turns may say,

Bank: your project has negatively affected the living standards of the project-affected persons. You have asked the people, who resettled into new houses to pay for their electricity connection. You agreed to provide them with free electricity connections. People may get into debts to pay for electricity and your administrative delay cannot translate into people falling into debt traps.

In this negotiation the bank asks the project implementing organization stop the project temporary citing social safeguard standards as the objective criteria. The same can be true in the case of selling car, buying a house, requesting higher salary, discussing the number of hours of work, requesting leave from your boss, agreeing on the place for dinner tonight and so on. Negotiation on the basis of some objective criteria is much easier than positional bargaining in which each side tries to defend the position. When the standards are clear and objective, it greatly enhances the likelihood that parties will abide by any agreement made as they do not feel that the other party has cheated them or forced them to agree on something.

What we mean by 'objective criteria' is difficult to define but these should not be based on the power of one party and must be fair to both sides. One should be able to use fair standards in a negotiation. If such fair standards cannot be found or agreed upon, then, there must be fair procedure to choose the standards. One way is to have a bottom line. As Fisher and Ury (2001) point out, a party can establish a bottom line before moving into negotiate with the other party, so that, it helps in advance to determine and agree a minimum, the least that we will settle for. This way you know that you will not go below or above a certain agreed limit. However, a bottom line can also have loopholes. In any negotiation, new information may emerge and such information would have changed the bottom line if that was available but now since the bottom line is already fixed, it is not possible to change it during the negotiation. Hence, a bottom line, while helpful in some situations, may limit the room for change in other situations.

Negotiation and Mediation in family

When a conflict reaches a certain level, it is difficult for parties to solve it by themselves. Let us look at a hypothetical case, which is not unfamiliar to us. There is a husband and wife who have divergent views over what kind of role they play at home. It is not a conflict but it can be the basis for a conflict to emerge. Let us believe that both are professionals and that the husband comes from a very traditional family in which he was trained to believe that it is the duty of the husband as the male in the family to be the breadwinner while the wife should look after the house and manage household chores. But let us also assume that wife was raised by educated parents and was educated in a modern school; she has learnt about changes in gender and so she does not believe in the tradition division of labor in the family. Wife demands her husband to play a role in sharing household chores and taking care of the children. The husband refuses to cooperate and thinks that he is already doing enough by being the main income earner of the family. But at the same time, the wife, who is also educated and employed, thinks that if she has more time with her job, her income would rise and she too can be the main income earner, if called upon to do that. Therefore, she argues that the husband must cooperate with household work. The conflict drags on and the couple's quarrels keep increasing in intensity, frequency and also the level of violence used.

Husband

'I earn enough for the family and spend for family needs, why should I work at home?' My colleagues would laugh at me if I do household work'.

Wife

'I have good education. I don't want to confine myself to the kitchen, washing cloths and looking after the kids. Is that all I am born for? Can I not contribute to my family's economy, to my country, and be a worthy citizen?

This develops into a conflict as it becomes a **pursuit of incompatible goals**. This is how we defined a conflict in the first chapter. The mismatch of ideas

continues and small verbal attacks occur between the husband and wife. The husband continues to refuse to participate in household work and wife is persistently stressed between her household work and her commitments in office. After experiencing conflicts at the family, the husband also has difficulties in concentrating into his work. Both husband and wife tell about their conflict to their close friends too and realize that the conflict is going to cause serious damages to the family. The husband thinks about a divorce but asks his wife about what she thinks. She too starts to think about a divorce.

Husband?

What shall we do now?

Wife?

Let's talk to a mediator. I know someone who can help us

Both husband and wife agree to seek help from a known mediator. The mediator talks to husband and wife separately initially and then brings them together to talk. After a lengthy discussion, the mediator brings the parties together and asks each person to tell why they think the way they think. Husband describes his family upbringing and his image of an ideal husband and an ideal wife. He describes how he learnt this from his own family. Hearing this, wife begins to understand why her husband was strongly opposed to her request of help in household work. She now softens her stance and begins to develop some empathy towards her husband. Now the mediator turns to the wife and asks her to explain why she thinks the way she thinks. She explains that in her own family too, work was not shared between mother and father and as a result, her mother suffered. In the university, she took several courses in gender studies, which opened her eyes into injustice that the existing norms of household work cause on women. She studied in the university that these norms severely limit the potential of women and confine women into boring household work although women possess the capacity to move beyond these confinements. She tells that she was determined to change the status quo when she has a family of her own. Hearing this, husband too softens his stance.

The mediator helps them realize that a divorce is an acceptable option if the parties fail to address their interests and solve the conflict but a divorce may have a debilitating impact on children in terms of emotions and education and that both the husband and wife are likely to be worse off with a single salary. They would not be able to afford the hefty rent they are paying for the currently large house. They also have obtained loans to pay for the recent land purchases and the purchase of the new car that they are using. A divorce may mean that they would have to sell the land and car and divide the money between them. Husband and wife also know that they like each other, have very satisfying sexual life with each other and share some interests. The mediator helps them understand that they have interest in nature photography and once in a while they go on a long excursion into a nature forest. They begin to wonder whether the life would be the same with a new partner.

With this new information, husband begins to understand why his wife thought in a particular way. He understands that this was not because wife was adamant or lacked respect towards him. The mediator helps them see beyond what they had been seeing and brings into relief the prejudices they had long cherished. The mediator helps them think about possible solutions but do not offer solutions. Finally, as a temporary solution, husband and wife agree to hire a housemaid to help them in managing household work until both spouses find space and time to adapt to the circumstance. Husband offers to pay the salary of the maid. This releases the wife from some of the household work. Husband also begins to enjoy spending time with his son more and more and he now performs some of the child rearing duties. Both have more time to enjoy their other interests too. Of course, now part of their income goes to a third party as the salary of the maid but a more disastrous outcome could have resulted if both parties remained glued to their positions. What happened was that with the help of the mediator, husband and wife were able to differentiate their positions and interest and no one had to sacrifice their self-esteem.

Nevertheless, as I mentioned, hiring a housemaid was a temporary measure. Within about a period of six months, husband gradually increases the time he

allocates for household work. Wife has more time for her career now but she has less stress and consciously gives more time to her family. Thus, change of behavior comes out of conscious change of attitude by both parties. Yet, it is important to remember that each conflict situation is different and there is no standard solution. What if the spouses were not able to find a housemaid at the first instance and what if the husband refused to budge? Mediators have to develop innovative solutions in order to address conflicts in the complex world that we live in. If everything fails, they also need to keep the option of legal redress but in such a way that parties resort to such action without malice.

Importance of communication in mediation

Krauss and Morsella (2006) emphasize the importance of communication in resolving conflicts and present four basis paradigms about communication. The first is the 'encoding' and 'decoding' paradigm. When we communicate, we express something, which is an act of encoding. This encoded message is then transmitted either directly or through a third party to a receiver, who has to decode the encoded message to comprehend it. This is a natural process even in basic day-to-day communication. However, the possibility of error increases if there is 'noise', or if we do not share the meaning of certain words or symbols and this may hinder the process of decoding. In such case, the receiver may decode a message to generate a meaning not intended by the sender. For example, the husband tells his wife referring to another woman 'that woman has nice hair'. The husband makes the comment to appreciate a particular person. However, in decoding the message, the wife takes it differently. 'So you are saying my hair is not nice?' This was not the meaning intended by the sender.

Krauss and Morsella point out that according to the 'Intentionalist' paradigm, in human communication, the same message can be interpreted differently in different situations. The meaning of an encoded message is not cut in stone and the receiver has to imagine message intended by the sender. Therefore, the sender needs to be conscious of how the receiver would interpret. At times, the speech is figurative and to derive the meaning we need to immerse in a particular culture.

We may use phrases to generate a culturally embedded meaning. Someone, who is not familiar with the speaker's culture, may take a meaning literally instead of understanding the non-literal meaning intended by the speaker. Understanding the intended meaning, although we usually assume that we do, is difficult and complex and requires shared knowledge or what is referred to as a common ground. Mere knowledge of a particular language becomes insufficient if the communicating parties do not share a common ground.

The perspective-taking paradigm

Krauss and Morsella (2006) elucidate that individuals perceive the world through different perspectives and this determines how people decode and understand messages and hence, the sender has to take into account the receiver's worldview. We are supposed to design the message in accordance with the addressee's ability to comprehend, although this is a very difficult task. Often, when people communicate they make certain assumptions as to what the receiver knows, believes or values but this assumption can go wrong and lead to misunderstanding on the part of the sender. In conflict situations, the perceived distinctions between the actors become salient and this can worsen the conflict situation. Further, in conflict situations, a question can arise as to how to address multiple audiences. Different people belonging to a group can understand a given message differently and this makes communication difficult.

Dialogic paradigm

The dialogic paradigm focuses on the collaborative nature of the communication activity. Krauss and Morsella (2006) underline that communication is a joint accomplishment between the participants, who collaborate to bring about a particular communicative goal. The meaning of an utterance is context dependent and can only be understood with reference to that context. This paradigm considers the senders and receivers of information as participants whose role is not passive but play an active role to make sure that they have the same understanding of what has been said. Listeners participates in a communication

through facial expressions, nodding, making brief sounds etc. This paradigm plays important emphasis on being active listeners for effective communication.

According to Krauss and Morsella the substance as well as the form of communication matters in communication. The same message can be communicated as a direct command, an indirect request or suggestion and accordingly, it can determine how the receiver takes it and reacts. However, communication alone does not solve a conflict. The substance is the most important thing in communication. If the goals are irreconcilable, then, communication makes little difference. However, if the goals are reconcilable, communication can greatly facilitate the process and makes it practically possible to come to a mutually acceptable solution.

Problem solving approach to conflict resolution

Weitzman and Weitzman (2006) note that the problem solving approach takes a conflict as a puzzle or an individual dilemma to be solved or worked out. The problem solving approach involves two key parts; diagnosing (identifying) the problem and developing alternatives. A problem can be seen as a puzzle or riddle or question and thus a challenge or an opportunity for growth. There are a variety of ways to achieve a mutually acceptable solution

1. Expanding the pie - this involve parties attempting to create more resources to be divided
2. Nonspecific compensation – this means developing new ways to compensate a party who has to undergo some losses due to the solution agreed upon
3. Cost cutting – this is a situation where parties work together to reduce the actual ‘cost’ for the party, which has to yield to some solution.
4. Logrolling – in this case each party agrees to concede on issues, which they consider less important so that it creates a favorable environment for parties to agree on something more serious.

5. Bridging – here the parties work together to create new options which may address the underlying interests or the initial demands.

Pruitt, and Kim (2004) cited in Weitzman and Weitzman (2006), P 201).

In a given conflict situation, it may be possible to follow some of these if not all of these steps. In summary, as Noted by Weitzman and Weitzman (2006, P 214), the problem solving approach to conflict resolution has four main steps.

(1) Diagnosing the conflict

Diagnosing involves the determining of the kind of conflict that one finds himself/herself in. Although most of the conflicts are amenable for cooperative problem solving, there are some conflicts, which cannot be solved this way and might require the interventions of powerful actors. It is important to determine early on whether the conflict is amenable in this sense. In order to identify the conflict one needs to know what the conflict is really about, i.e., whether it is substantive interests, values etc. Then, it is necessary to understand what aspects of the conflict make it solvable.

(2) Identifying alternative solutions

Once the parties have been able to identify the problem, they can begin to search for solution acceptable to both parties. Initially, the parties can brainstorm as many alternatives as possible and the parties would not be allowed to comment on the alternatives proposed. This is to allow creativity and encourage development of many alternatives to choose from.

(3) Evaluating and choosing a mutually acceptable solution,

Once many alternatives have been identified, the next step is to evaluate those alternatives and choose some of the better ones. At this stage, the parties would have to decide on a mutually acceptable and viable alternative as the solution.

(4) Committing to the decision and implementing it.

The next step is to agree on a particular alternative and committing oneself to uphold the agreement.

Decision-making

Weitzman and Weitzman (2006) note that negotiation is a process of decision making which can be individual or joint. In the decision-making 'anchors', 'frames' and 'reference points' are important. "The reference point in a negotiation is the point above which the party considers an outcome to be a gain and below which any outcome is considered a loss" (p. 209). Framing involves seeing a conflict positively or negatively. In a negotiation, there can be several reference points; my starting point, other parties starting point and the point in which both parties agree to settle. According to the reference point, each party may determine the outcome as a loss or gain. People tend to be loss averse and hence avoiding a loss is thought more important than achieving a gain. "Anchors are salient values that influence our thinking about possible outcomes, much like reference points. The difference is that whereas reference points define the neutral point between gains and losses, anchors may be anywhere along the scale and are often at the extremes (P.209).

Judgmental biases

Thompson, Nadler, and Lount (2006) delineate about judgmental biases, which occur in conflict management. They refer to core biases in negotiation which impact on conflict management/negotiation processes. One such core bias is the 'need for simplification, which means that in conflict situations, participants have a strong tendency to oversimplify. People may develop judgments and conclusions about others without allocating significant deliberation or evidence. People focus their attention on a few key aspects of what the other party says and proceed to act based on such limited information. Thus, parties may form responses without adequate information. When parties try to simplify a conflict, they can even miss out information, which is not consistent with their initial beliefs regarding their opponents or they may use ambiguous information to

confirm their beliefs, although such information may contradict existing beliefs. The need to simplify the conflict also leads to erroneous or spurious cause and effect relationships.

According to Thompson, Nadler, and Lount (2006) we tend to assume that the differences between us and our opponents are very large although it may not be the case. Here, the win-lose dichotomy comes into play and we often believe that our win comes at the loss of the other and vice-versa. There is also the view of a 'fixed pie' meaning that the resources for which we fight are naturally limited, although there may be other ways to find or expand the available resources. Another bias is the false dichotomy between cooperation and competition. There is no need for pure cooperation or pure competition. Although cooperation is needed to reach agreement, pure cooperation can only be possible only in the unlikely event of both parties being highly concerned about the other's interests. Therefore, it is necessary to use of strategic creativity, which is to use both cooperation and competition. Finally, egocentric judgment is yet another key bias; people have a tendency to protect their own egos and interests but may not be aware that their judgments may serve self-interest.

Importance of self-regulation in conflict resolution

Mischel, DeSmet and Kross (2006) highlight the significance of self-regulation in conflict resolution. "the facet of willpower that is of particular concern here is the ability to inhibit impulsive, automatic, "hot" emotional responses that conflict with and threaten to undo the more valued but distant future goals one is trying to pursue" (P. 295). High stress in a conflict situation makes it difficult to respond in a conflict sensitive manner. Generally, high level of stress can trigger hot emotional responses, which then can elicit similar hot responses from the other party. High stress decreases one's ability to solve complex problems because one loses the self-control. Therefore, managing stress is an important part in effective conflict resolution because it allows the person to generate more alternatives. Some of the conflicts require abundant mental resources but stress, anxiety, physical exhaustion take away such resources impairing the ability to

resolve complex problems. Mischel, DeSmet and Kross (2006) describes certain 'cooling strategies and techniques' which they say are helpful in reducing stress.

Time out: people who have stressful jobs can take brief time out after their work. When people return home after a stressful day, it can influence how they interact with family and confront various issues. Therefore, people should take some time out to allow themselves to calm down so that they can have a pleasant interaction with the family. Some of the small techniques are quite well-known; for example, counting up to ten in a heated meeting or going out for a few minutes. But time out should not be used to nurse angry feelings or plan counter attacks.

Reflection: this involves improving our self-awareness of a situation by comparing our behavior in relation to key goals and also trying to look at the issue from another persons' perspective. Reflection can help a person stay on course, respect ground rules and act consistently. Yet, reflection is not going to the extent to deep thought, which generates confusion about goals and methods etc.

Distanced-why: the adoption of what is called a 'distanced why' perspective is advocated to enable to be an observer of oneself and one's experiences. Here the person asks why he or she experiences particular negative emotions. This perspective makes it possible for the person to assess the feelings and emotions without being overwhelmed and in a relatively calm situation.

Some research in psychology stress the early childhood experiences as being pivotal in the development of socio-emotional skills, which impact on the ability to resolve conflicts in adult life. Although forms of violence among children may occur more frequently in adolescence and youth, early childhood is a predictor of such behavior Sandy, Boardman and Deutsch, (2006).

In her description of the Equivalence model in conflict resolution, Patfoort (2001) explains that we should understand who we are, our motivations, our points of view and why we hold a certain point of view. She recommends that we build a positive self-image of ourselves so that it helps in developing self-knowledge and assessing the power we have. This leads to inner strength and enables us to show humility and control our emotions and look at a situation from a wider perspective with attention to social relationships. The inner strength is necessary to accept the other and to avoid putting the other down. The equivalence model stresses on putting oneself and the other in an equivalent position and giving space to the other. The second step is to identify the foundations of yourself and the other without assuming either Major or minor positions. The communication including facial expressions, location, gestures and so on are very important. Once the foundations of yourself and other have been identified, the third step is to find the solutions acceptable to both parties.

Principles of communication

1. The use of “I” messages: conflict resolution experts advocate the use of “I” messages when you communicate with your opponent rather than using ‘YOU’ messages. “I” messages convey what you feel and perceive while, in contrast, “you” messages convey an accusation, which provokes a similar or offensive reaction. The “you” messages encourage the opponent to come up with a justification whereas I messages persuades him/her to understand you. It helps your opponent to develop empathy toward you. For example, you can say... “I feel insecure about the new work shift system”...rather than saying, “your new maintenance system makes me insecure”. A wife may tell her husband “I feel secure when I am in control of my finances” rather than “You don’t let me control my finances”. The “I” message compels the question WHY while the “YOU” message evokes a defensive reaction.
2. Articulating what you don’t want to happen: This means you clearly express that you do not want negative/harmful things to happen. You

state in “I” messages that you are really concerned not just about yourself but even the opponent. For example, the union leaders of factory is negotiating with the manager and may say “I don’t want to see any drop in production due to our differences of opinion. That can damage our company and I don’t like to see that happen”. The manager could also say, “I am myself worried that the situation has gone very far. I do not want the top management to feel that differences of opinion go as far as stopping work”.

Articulating what you don’t want to happen is important in several ways; this helps you to show the other party that you want to limit the damaging consequences. The other party may have assumptions about your damaging intentions and hence, this is an opportunity to address such fears. You can also show that you feel responsible for your actions and invite the other party to open himself or herself.

3. Empathy with others’ viewpoint: You must express your point of view as one that is relative to that of others, that is, you say that this is how you feel but you are also interested in other’s view of it. You want to know them and you consider those viewpoints just as valid as yours. When you express your viewpoint, you can also try to anticipate the counter argument and express that before the opponent say it. For example, leaders of a workers union can say, “you may think that I am actively protesting the new work shift because I failed to become the line manager myself....and then you raise your objection to that viewpoint...by saying...”but I am genuinely concerned about the safety of my colleagues and I want to explore what possible solutions exist on this issue”.
4. Annual reviews: most companies have annual reviews of stocks and profits and loss. But it is good to have an annual review of working atmosphere, job satisfaction and tensions. This way you can prevent destructive conflicts rather than cure them once they have erupted.

Communication Exercises

There are some simple things, which we can do to handle conflicts non-violently. However, in order to practice these techniques, you must already have the conviction that conflicts must be solved non-violently and must be ready to make a commitment. Unless you believe in non-violence, these techniques will have no appeal. The following exercises have been adopted from Glasl (1999) and I have localized and contextualized, so that, a Sri Lankan student will be able to apply them to his/her context. I have used hypothetical examples to illustrate the use of these exercises and used some of my own experiences in developing the body of the examples.

Duet Speaking

Communication is a part of life and crucial for social interaction not just for conflict resolution. However, when we are in conflict, we fail to listen to the opponent. In a heated conversation, even before the other party has finished his/her point we start framing the counter response in our mind and as a result, we hear only a fraction of what the other party has said. It is important not only to listen to the other side but to **show** that you are listening with interest irrespective of whether you agree/disagree. It is gratifying for the other side to know that they are being properly heard and this helps the opponent to speak meaningfully. If the opponent sees that you do not listen, then, she/he will keep trying to make you understand. This means unless you give your opponent the time and space, she/he will not understand your point of view.

Duet speaking exercise involves two parties. Each party has a strong particular viewpoint about a matter on which they disagree. In the exercise, each party is asked to speak simultaneously face to face. Each one tries to drive home a point and is advised not to be dissuaded from her/his viewpoint. Let us assume Piyal and Mala are husband and wife. They have received a bonus from employment. Piyal wants to buy a flat screen TV but Mala wants to buy a washing machine. In the exercise each argues about what he/she wants without giving a chance to the

other party. There is someone else watching and observing and perhaps taking notes. After three minutes, the exercise is interrupted. Both Piyal and Mala now should describe what the other party has said and the facial expressions of the other party. The neutral party then tells them what they missed. Duet speaking exercise help the parties to understand how much they listen, register (or how much they do not) and therefore, it trains people to pay attention to opposing viewpoints. This exercise can be practiced with anyone.

Actively listening: this exercise promotes and trains people in active listening. Two people have a conversation about a controversial topic. One person speaks while the other listens. The listener continually feeds back and confirms on what points he/she heard and also mentions of what they perceived of the mind of the other.

What you say is that you have not been able do something that you like for a long time... You mentioned that you feel financially insecure...am I right?

I think you want to feel financially independent, ...am I right?

May be you think you didn't get enough time to express your opinion?

It seems you believe you are the only expert on this subject...

If the perception is not correct, speaker tells the listener what he/she really meant. By continuously offering feedback or asking meaningful questions (in a manner that is not threatening or disturbing).

I have conducted this exercise in my conflict resolution course with my students in the University of Peradeniya and students found it very interesting. I asked the students to make a circle and got the two students to come to the middle facing each other to make a role-play as conflict parties. Other students act as the neutral party and offer feedback. During the exercise, one has to open all his/her senses in order to listen to the other party and hence this involves perceptive action. By doing the exercise, each party learns several important points.

1. In an argument we fail to listen to the other party
2. We are interested only in communicating what we want and what we like and miss out a lot of what the other party is saying.
3. We often fail to notice the facial expressions, which are key to interpreting the intentions, the mood, and tone of the other party.
4. With the help of the third party, who is neutral and who gives feedback, parties get to realize that, the conflict is not as difficult to solve as they think and realize that they have shared interests.
5. The parties also get the opportunity to develop their listening skills by playing the role of a conflict party.
6. Parties will have further motivation to move away from the extremes of avoidance and belligerence and to move towards assertiveness.

Critical review at the end of the day

This is usually done just before you go to sleep. This is a deceptively simple but very effective technique. In this case, you imagine that you have climbed up a hill and you are looking down. You start in the reverse order...first the last thing that you completed just before coming to bed, the one before that and the one before that...until you reach the first thing you did after waking up. See where you got things right or wrong, see whether you had conflict within yourself between your higher self and shadow...whether you tried to get close to your higher self in gradual and simple efforts or gave in to your shadow, whether your behavior led to unintentional consequences. It is important to note this is not an intellectual review of the things done during the day, we just allow the images of the things done to pass through our memory.

I feel very tired. What did I do just before? I had a wash before coming to bed. Yes I had dinner with the family and we talked casually about many things. I watched News for a little while. I was too tired to work.

I managed to help my wife a little bit with household work but I should have done more. I came home late and so I was too tired to contribute to household work or to spend time with kids. Need to come home a little earlier tomorrow...kids and family deserve more time from me. On my way home I went to see parents. I felt good about it. But I was there for only about 20 minutes with parents. It was late in the day but I should spend a little bit more time with parents at least once a week, preferably more than that. If wait for time to be available, it will never happen. So, I should be conscious of how I spend time. Spoke to my brother briefly on my way to see parents. I was driving from work. Left the office at about 4.30 but had other engagements on the way. During the office, I had work till 4.00 p.m. today. During the time in office, I had tea with colleagues from 3.30 to 4.00 and we talked about negative qualities of another colleague. Negative remarks about third parties create stress in me even though I did not realize it earlier. I felt it would have been nice to talk about positive and nice things. It would make me happy and keep me fresh in my thinking. I had lectures for two hours from 13.00 to 15.00. I managed to do the lectures well. But I feel I hadn't prepared myself enough for the afternoon lecture. I should have given it more time than I managed to do before the lecture. Why couldn't I have more time for lecture preparation? Two visitors from Australia came to meet me and we had lunch together 12.00-13.00. Yes it was a rush lunch as I was squeezed for time due to work. But it was nice to talk to friends. In the morning I had lectures from 9.00 to 12.00 and felt very tired. I went to office by 7.15 and it was nice that I could read and prepare for my lectures for about 2 hours in the morning. I felt confident of what I was teaching at the morning lecture. I left home at 6.00 am to work. I had breakfast before going to office. I helped my wife a little bit and also the kids. I always have to rush in the morning. May be I should help kids and wife a little bit in the morning as well. Wife and kids need to go to work and school. I got up at 5.00 am.

Inventory of your morals, values, ideals and strengths:

This can be once a year. The exercise will take about 30-60 minutes. Think about your moral, ideals, values, and strengths in relation to your private and work life. You can do this alone or with a close friend. Think about the last 12 months and try to address the following questions. Provided below each question is an illustrative example but the actual responses will differ person to person.

1. What strengths did I show during the last 12 months?

I was a highly motivated academic. I had a lot of courage and determination to try to attempt certain precious goals of my life. I was not afraid of power or powerful people. I was not afraid to speak out even in situations in which speaking out can bring disadvantage and disapproval as long as I was speaking against injustice in general without intending personal benefit. I was really committed to everything I did ranging from family to work obligations. Commitment to what I do has always been a quality of myself. I was working very hard for the entire last year. I was not willing to sacrifice my values for being popular or for personal benefit. I stood with my principles even when I was ridiculed, laughed at and mocked at.

2. What are my abilities

I feel that I have many abilities. I am very good in analytical thinking and thinking ahead. I have good language skills and relatively speaking can read, write and communicate rather well. I have developed my skills to speak to the point. As an academic I have managed to undertake many research assignments during the last year and published in reputed journals. I also have very good personal relations skills.

3. When I look back at me, what I am most proud of

When I look back at me during the past 12 months, I am most proud at my ability to bring change in an extremely conventional environment. I was able to mobilize my colleagues to change the oppressive working

environment at my work place. Many of my colleagues were afraid to talk to power. Many feared reprisals. Colleagues were experiencing harassment but stayed silent. Most colleagues, even the very senior people, thought that it would be foolhardy challenge the powerful people and thought no change was possible. But I spoke to young colleagues, who were fearless and together we set in motion a movement, which ultimately radically changed the work environment to one of equal, cordial, pleasant and productive relationships. I was also able to help my colleagues address their conflicts using my conflict resolution skills.

4. Which of my qualities do my friends and colleagues appreciate? (and also not appreciate)-for this ask a few of your friends/colleagues to comment on you.

My friends and colleagues have told me that I am a kind-hearted person. My colleagues appreciated my being kind, and gentle. My colleagues also appreciate my commitment to work. Many people have appreciated my academic skills. Further, my colleagues have praised me for not being intimidated by power. But my friends and colleagues have also seen my negative qualities. They have pointed out that at I am sometimes not very practical, too much target oriented so much so that I fail to see consequences, and that I expect change too quickly and become unrealistic.

“You are helpful and I feel that you are not selfish because you invest time and resources in others. You have empathy. You are talented in your field of study and a multi-tasker. You use humor as tool to convey both positive and negative feedback. You encourage young scholars.”

“You have a friendly approach and very trustworthy. We can talk and bargain with you. You don’t go into extremes. You are a good listener. You have a professional and friendly approach. You are helpful to friends at any time. You are very target oriented and work hard”.

“You are too much target oriented and hence only focus on input and outputs. Sometimes, you fail to see the deep meaning of education. You are too ambitious and so when you face obstacles, you get shocked and become impatient. You want change too quickly and sometimes it becomes unrealistic”.

“You are not very flexible. You try to maximize your own ideas-show that your view is correct. At times you plan too much in advance”.

5. Which of the moral qualities are most important to me even if I have not been able to realize them fully?

I admire non-violence and Ahimsa and I need to do much more to realize these goals in full sense. I dislike showing my power to those weaker than myself but, I have been sometimes hard in disciplining my children and I need to be softer. I must apply what I teach to pragmatic life more than I have done.

I always wanted to share what I have with others. I have tried in small ways to help poor people and poor students but I have not been able to make a significant financial commitment on this aspect yet and I hope to improve this quality more.

I wanted to be a person who takes good care of parents. Given my busy career I feel I have not done enough for my parents. I appreciate the norm of gender equality but I have not been able to put this into practice as yet. I wanted to respect everyone and share the workload in the family but I have not done enough.

I want happiness in life but due to heavy workload I am not happy and sometimes, I am not happy because I think about what I do not have. I want think more of what I already have and must enjoy the life at the present moment. I want to be content with life without necessarily losing hope to improve in future.

6. Which ideals do I want to realize in the next year?

I would like to be a more moderate person and to improve myself in this direction. I like to have a sense of humour but I need to maintain a good balance in this respect not to violate people's level of privacy and respect. Further, I want to respect gender equality more and follow a more soft approach with regard to children and my wife.

I am a strong believer of democracy and anti-corruption. I would love to work on these goals in pragmatic ways although this can be very hard to realize. I want to be an active citizen to work for democracy and against corruption. I need to involve myself in social activism to achieve these goals.

7. What small steps I can take tomorrow in that direction? (number 06 above).

I must get away from some of the work and should pay more attention to social engagement outside the work environment so that I will be able to make an important voice in general society. Although I may achieve career goals by working hard, I need to go out into society more so that I will be able to realize my ideals with regard to democracy and anti-corruption. With regard to my family obligations, I must spend more time with my kids, wife and parents so that I can share household work more and give valuable time to my kids. I must work hard to be aware of my emotions so that I will be able to bear criticisms against me in family and workplace more than I can do now. Being able to listen to opposing viewpoints and respect them is a quality, which I need to practice during the next twelve months. It is of greatest importance that I learn to be happy with what I have and learn to manage stress better.

As you may realize, what I have provided above is just an example. What matters more is not whether you are really accurate but that you make an honest effort to undertake the above exercise.

Find if your opponent or enemy has any similarities with you

The exercise below is done with a hypothetical enemy but a real example can resemble this.

- A. Which qualities and patterns of behavior of the opponent/enemy do I dislike most?

My enemy is living in the same community as I live. He is very jealous. In the past he was good with me but after a while he started quarrel with me saying that my fence has eaten into the road. While the enemy himself has annexed government reservations into his compound, he has thought it fit to find *my* mistakes and where I have erred. He is disingenuous and ungrateful for he has forgotten how I helped him. He pokes into what I do which is not his business. We could live in peace if not for his stupid interventions. My enemy is not decent. He has spoken foul words in the past.

- B. Which qualities and patterns of behavior of myself do I dislike most?

Well, in the past I thought I had power. I thought with my position I could override my enemy. I did not make use of opportunities for a decent settlement of the land dispute I had with the enemy. Instead, I was arrogant which prompted my enemy to find other ways of solving problems, even going to court. May be due to lack of experience and relatively young age, I did not seriously think. I should have negotiated the land dispute rather than being arrogant.

- C. Do I share any negative qualities and patterns of behavior with my opponent/enemy

Well...I do not use foul words nor cherish any feeling of jealousy. Of course there is nothing to be jealous about my enemy. May be I get angry very quickly and that's why I could not seize opportunities given by the enemy to negotiate and find a mutually acceptable solution. I did not respect my enemy because he was not an educated person.

D. How have I handled my negative qualities so far?

Whenever I have been angry and reacted with aggressive behavior to anyone, I have reflected of my behavior at a later time. I have tried to understand my quick temper and reflected on its consequences. I have always chided my shadow in this. I have hated my shadow and always thought I should get closer to the higher self. I advised myself to be calm and not to use physical or verbal or emotional violence. I cannot be patient. I need to find quick solutions. It burns me inside to wait but I have seen other colleagues being very patient even when they had very serious problems. I wanted to improve myself on being more patient.

E. Have I been able to improve those qualities?

Yes I think I do not get angry as much as I used to do. But still I do not have enough patience to give time. Sometimes, I know time is a healer but still do not have patience to wait. I always reflect on why aggression is bad and why hurtful words are harmful for social relations including in the family. Now I try to be more patient. I try to control my anger. I always tell myself that there is nothing like quick temper. We get angry and react violent mostly against those weaker than us. So, I told myself that I should control my emotions. I told myself that getting angry and scolding those weaker than myself is not heroic... it is stupid.

F. Do I know if my opponent/enemy tries to deal with his/her negative qualities?

May be. I have seen times when my enemy wanted to talk to me. May be my enemy also realizes that his behavior was wrong and wanted to make amends? I am not sure but it is possible. I haven't had any verbal aggression with my enemy for several years although I do not talk to him often. Perhaps, my enemy realized that it is not great to use foul words and show aggression.

You will discover a lot of parallels because we all have weaknesses. Then again answer the following set of questions.

- a. How do I respond to the negative qualities of my O/E

I stopped talking to him. Only after several years, I restarted having very brief conversations and even that rather reluctantly. I reacted angrily when he started to question the boundaries of my land and told me that there is a problem in my fence. I rejected his allegation totally. I looked down on him with disdain, anger and ridicule.

- b. Have I made it clear to o/e that I do not like those qualities? How did I do it? Once I told him not to use foul words and not to be aggressive. I told him that people could talk to each other decently. I told him that it is not good to find fault with my fence when he has already encroached on government lands.

- c. Did the o/e understand this? Am I sure?

Well he did not understand my idea at the time I expressed it. I am sure. Possibly he understands it now. My enemy has aged and so he probably understand himself better than he did in the past. But I am not sure...

- d. Was it possible to tell these in such a way that o/e became open rather than defensive? How did I do it?

No. I was angry when I said it to him. He was defensive and rude as ever. I stood moral high ground and told him. It had no effect at that time. He was much older than myself and so he couldn't care less. He was angry and did not listen to me.

- e. Has my o/e ever told me about my negative qualities and shortcomings? How did he do it?

Yes he did. He told me that I did not respect him and that I had such self-concept about myself that I was inflexible. He told me that he tried to solve the problem but I was not amenable to talking and that it pushed him to resort court action.

- f. How did I feel them? Was I ready to accept them? How did I respond?

At the time he told me about my weaknesses, I felt even angrier. I did not accept any of his comments. I rejected him totally. I was ready to face court action. I responded with disdain and anger.

- g. Can I respond to my opponent in a different way next time? What would be most suitable?

Yes, I now can see the long-term consequences of being arrogant and inflexible. I was angry with my opponent for being jealous and making undue interventions in my land. I was angry that despite my various helps towards him, and his own faults, he was trying to find fault in me when I had not harmed him in anyway. But now, even though, I still cannot respect my enemy for his cruel qualities, I would now be more amenable to negotiation. I would never want to be a friend with my enemy but I will not respond with anger. I will be ready to listen while being assertive.

Checking interlocking with the opponent

Sometimes people say, I did not start this trouble...I only responded to what my o/e said. Then, you have to think what behavior in your o/e provoked strong reactions in you. If you can understand how you allow yourself to be provoked by others, then, you can control yourself. By doing this, you can break a vicious cycle of provoking each other. I will again use the conflict with my neighbor over the land dispute to illustrate the use of this exercise.

- h. Which behavior of the o/e provoked me to lose control of myself

Honestly, I never lost control of myself. But I was inflexible and not amenable to negotiation. It was the sheer ungratefulness of my enemy that pushed me to stand my ground firmly. I had not committed any offence but my enemy was saying I had illegally expanded boundary of my land. Further, my enemy had expanded his boundary by a great margin and had built part of his house on government reservations. While being so greedy to capture what belonged to the people, he was trying to find fault in me.

- i. What did I feel?

I was livid with my enemy. I felt he was cruel and inhuman. I felt he was ungrateful and indecent in poking his finger into other peoples' affairs.

- j. How did I allow myself to lose control and not to see the consequences of what I did?

I had overestimated my economic and social power and underestimated the tenacity of my enemy. I was relatively inexperienced and I was not ready to listen to my elders and colleagues who advised me to find an amicable solution.

- k. How did my own behavior provoked o/e so, she lost control of herself?

Well I do not know. Perhaps, when I was so resistant to negotiation (because I never committed anything wrong) and when my own reactions were not so polite and rude (though not foul), my enemy was angry.

Foundations or parallel list exercise

A somewhat similar exercise, called 'foundations or parallel list' exercise is proposed by Patfoort (2001). This exercise can be done for a conflict involving two individuals. The first step is to define the situation.

Person A;

Person B;

I want you to send a letter to the Governor

I don't want to send a letter to the Governor

The second step involves identifying what Patfoort calls the 'foundations' (Motivations,

Interests, needs etc). The recommendation of the author is to use a black sheet of paper, fold it into two columns and begin to write our foundations on the left side column. Only one side is completed at one time, that is, only *my* foundations. Once my foundations have been put down, I put myself in the shoes of the other (opponent) and imagine the foundations of the other/opponent (why she/he wants what she/he wants etc.). In the example below, two deputy principals of a primary school have a conflict over whether the school should have a relationship with the provincial governor and whether the school should seek governor's help in finding upper school admissions for students. This exercise helps the party to effectively understand the actions, motivation, and aspirations of the opponent. This is helpful in effective conflict resolution.

Person A	Person B
I want to get an upper school quota of student admissions	I want my school to be independent of political connections
I want to have a connection with an important politician	I want my school to provide good education, so that, kids become competitive
I want to make my school popular by guaranteeing students a quota in upper school	I feel our school reputation is at stake when we connect with the governor
I find it difficult to manage parents' complaints about not having a suitable upper school for kids	I feel we lose our independence by requesting governor's help
I feel it good when the school gets proper recognition	I want to find other alternatives to seeking governors' help.
I feel it good personally to be recognized by the governor	I feel we lose our respect when we seek the help of a politician

I have also used a modified form of this exercise in addressing conflicts between married couples also. To illustrate one instance, I first asked the wife to tell me her foundations and imagine the foundations of her husband. I then met the husband separately and asked him to tell me his foundations and imagine the foundations of his wife. I wrote all the foundations and found that in terms of the underlying needs, they are largely the same although the positions are different. Then, I brought the couple together to a neutral location outside home and let them understand how similar their foundations were in terms of the needs. Later, I had a lengthy discussion about other issues, which have caused problems in family and at the end I was able to address many of the issues through this exercise. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that a conflict does not end by the use of one exercise but requires concerted efforts by the parties and at times, third parties trying to help.

One of the questions you may have is whether one can practice non-violence unilaterally, when the other party is either not supportive or even against. Patfoort (2001) asserts that it is indeed possible to practice the 'equivalence' model even with a violence character (this does not mean preaching non-violence to someone who is trying to hit you with club!). When we avoid putting ourselves into the Major position and the other into the minor position, it is likely that the other soon will realize this and cooperate. Interestingly one's attempt to put oneself in the M position naturally pushes the other also to assume M position and hence, the stress is placed on getting both into the equivalence mode. Patfoort offers the following guidelines.

1. Avoid trying to transform your foundations into positive arguments, which pushes the other into a minor position.
2. At the same time, avoid converting the foundations of the other into negative arguments
3. Buildup of self-confidence, inner strength and a positive self-image, so that, you can defend yourself better against attacks or criticisms from the other. Do not allow the other to place you in the minor position
4. Do not force destructive arguments against the other as a person.

Ideals and reality in group work

Glasl, (1999) shows that in work places, there are often conflicts among work colleagues over their contribution to the work place. At times, you may think “I have devoted my life to this company...I live up to its goals but others make themselves an easy life”. Without talking about this with anyone, you keep it suppressed but at one point suppressed feelings may come out with aggression or violence. An analysis of ideals and reality in a group work can be helpful here. You can get your employees to do this at the end of the year. But you may have to take into consideration the educational levels of your employees to do this.

1. Review of contributions made: you ask people to form small groups of less than five people and ask to discuss the following.
 - a. During the last year what did we want to do over and above others
 - b. During the last year what did we want to do less
 - c. During the last year what did we want to stop doing
 - d. Do some people have to work more than others? Is that a problem?
 - e. What do we want to do during the next year? What do we want to achieve?
 - f. What would be the most difficult thing to achieve? Why?

Procedures for conflict resistance in organizations

There are many procedures to improve the conflict resistance at the workplace. These procedures are useful to identify conflicts early in advance but may vary from one work setting to other. Very much like individuals, organizations, which includes all kinds of places of work or where people congregate, can develop mechanisms to identify and resolve conflicts. Organizations can develop platforms and procedures (conflict regulators), which, can detect conflict early

on and deal with them before they become solidify. Glasl, (1999) lists certain flagging technics;

- Employee consultation: the manger of a workplace can consult his/her employees about working atmosphere, interpersonal relations, management-worker relations and goals of the organization. Usually, people do this in writing as it provides anonymity. But what methods would suit your organization?
- Complaint boxes: this guarantees anonymity and is very simple. You can open the complaint box at your monthly staff meeting or can set up a separate committee to handle the complaints. But this should not embarrass anyone in the management or workers and must be handled with good purpose.
- Upward appraisal: here the staff assesses managers. This is done with strict anonymity. This is very important for smooth, creative and stress free work environment.
- Ombudsman: this is a person that workers go and talk to when they have a problem. This has to be a person whom people can talk freely without being too conscious of their status. There has be to a guarantee that there won't re any repercussions against those who make complaints to ombudsman.

Talking to the employees and having proper and appropriate consultation is a very important strategy in addressing conflicts and in fact, resolving issues before they turn in to bitter grievances. Sometimes, the only thing that employees want is respect and a feeling that their opinion also matters. Even the routine monthly meetings for staff can be a technique where potential areas of problems or grievances are identified, discussed, debated and decisions are taken. An organization can devise various means for obtaining feedback from employees in a manner workers do not feel threatened or forced. At times, even direct confrontation between those holding different views can be useful as long these are moderated and decisions are mutual at the end. Usual routine meetings

among staff can be a forum to discuss working conditions, future changes in the organization and other important decisions. If important decisions are not discussed in advance, the failure can lead to develop tensions between managers and the workers. While these mechanisms and structures are pivotal, an organization must have individuals, who have the *conflict capability*, who can make use of these structures and mechanisms to address problems and create a conducive work atmosphere. Therefore, an organization needs both conflict resistance and conflict capable individuals (Glasl, 1999).

This is not to suggest that the leadership must not take independent decisions; there are situations where unpopular but principled decisions have to be taken based on regulations/laws or traditions. Yet, being despotic does not address problems; people react strongly against despotic leaders in whatever ways they can. Therefore, this chapter has attempted to describe and elucidate on certain simple but useful methods and techniques, which can be used to address conflicts at different settings including family and workplace. It is important to highlight that the use of these techniques requires practice and training and persistence with a non-violence model.

Conclusion

This introductory textbook on conflict resolution has attempted to provide a basic understanding about the sources of conflict and how behavioral change and communication methods can be used to address some of the conflicts familiar to our ordinary life. The book is also intended to provide a stepping-stone into further studies in peace and conflict studies. I have benefitted from existing literature on conflict resolution and tried to make existing knowledge relevant to the Sri Lankan context. As I have delineated throughout the book, conflict is a necessary part of life and should not be avoided. There is a misconception that we must avoid at all costs as any attempt to address them may spoil relationships. I have seen married couples living miserably because they feel afraid to talk about their grievances openly and believe that time will heal everything. Most people practice conflict avoidance as the most common method of conflict resolution thinking that being silent or ignoring the problems is the best method of keeping a family together. It is important to understand that time does not heal everything and exploitative and oppressive relationships may have a lifelong existence. Conflict resolution experts do not recommend avoidance or belligerence because one does not address the problem by being silent or being aggressive or oppressive. In fact, problems can get worse the more one ignores and avoids. This is true of any conflict, be it at family, workplace, community or between countries. Therefore, it is very important that people develop a good understanding of how and why conflict occurs and what we can do about such conflict and when to call for external help.

It is extremely important to highlight that belligerence is as problematic as avoidance. We all have seen bullies at school when we were kids. We were afraid to take them on. This goes on at family, workplace, and other settings. Of course, there are situations where you have to avoid in order to 'fight another day'; if someone is trying to hit you with a club or shoot you, it is obvious that we need to take shelter and if the face of a seven feet drunken bully, it is foolhardy to try to use assertive communication. But in these situations are rare and in most situations, through non-violent assertive communication one has a much greater

possibility for addressing conflicts. Yet, non-violence and assertiveness demand more courage, inner strength, and discipline than what belligerence demands. Non-violence and an equivalence model require patience, postponement of gratification of your senses and thinking ahead. Agents of socialization such as extended family, school, folklore, stories, media, and so on have programmed us to think that violence is bravery. Often, we think that non-violence does not work. Initially, when I started to practice non-violence and the equivalence model at home, it was frustrating because my kids were not listening to me as they were already used to violence at school. Kids observed violence everywhere in society. In school the teachers used canes and harsh words to discipline them. They observed violence on the street or in their favourite cartoon or movie. Often I gave up but always convinced me back to the equivalence model. It takes time and great effort for us to practice non-violence and equivalence model but I can guarantee that this works in the end and that this is thousand times more effective than Major-minor model and violence. I feel happy and much more satisfied about life when non-violence and equivalence guides me.

I have helped people facing conflicts to address them and have succeeded in most instances. When I faced conflicts myself I never avoided them but confronted them non-violently. For example, once a university non-academic official insulted me. I pointed out to him about his verbal abuse of me at the moment, went on to make an official complaint and even got my union to intervene. I demanded an apology from him and I received it at the end. The said official accepted publicly that he was wrong. I was very firm that one cannot insult me and requested help from my colleagues. Some helped but some took the side of the said official for petty gains. Many people became unhappy with me including some academics. They thought I was creating conflicts because they were used to avoiding conflicts and maintaining status quo, which, in fact, only prolonged unhealthy and unjustifiable behavior or relationships. Therefore, one must not be dissuaded from the path of assertiveness due to slanders, insults or intimidation.

This book provides only a basic training and I encourage readers to continue to use literature and online resources which are currently abundantly available.

There are also many international organizations, which provide opportunities for further training. There is a false opinion in Sri Lanka society that we now do not need to talk about conflicts as for most people, conflict means ethnic conflict. When I was looking for publishers, two of the major publishers were of the opinion that the book would not have a local market. Nothing can be further from the truth. The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is far from over while this book is not just about ethnic conflict. I do not need to reiterate that we need training to address conflicts in our life be it at home or at work place or may be the village or town.

I also hope that this book will encourage readers, especially, university students, to be interested in the academic field of peace and conflict studies. Sri Lankan universities have started to offer degrees and diplomas in peace and conflict and conflict resolution. This is a relatively new addition to the Sri Lankan university system. It is my expectation that this book will provide an adequate background for students to pursue post-graduate studies. Being a conflict resolution expert is an important profession and with rapid changes in Sri Lankan society, I anticipate conflict resolution experts to be in demand. The general readers of this book will certainly find the methods elaborated in this book useful for their everyday life.

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Conflict Resolution

An Introductory Textbook

Dharmika Herath

This introductory textbook is intended to provide a quick overview of the field of conflict resolution as an academic discipline and to provide the reader with essential skills in handling conflicts at various levels including family, workplace, community, and other macro settings. The book will thus be of value to students starting to learn the field while the general readership may find important and useful knowledge and gain pragmatic practice in dealing with conflicts in various settings non-violently. The chapters of the book illustrate various examples of conflict and culturally appropriate exercises to sharpen conflict resolution skills.

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