

Unit Three: Power

Lesson 2: Sea of Change

Standards Addressed by Lesson:	This exercise pulls together learning from the previous lessons and does not address any specific state standard.
Objectives of Lesson:	To bring together what the class has discussed regarding nonviolence and to help students understand their own personal power.
Instructional Strategies:	Interactive activity
Preliminary Lesson Preparation:	Draw a diagram on the chalkboard representing a sea of change. Draw a lake on one side of the chalkboard flowing into a river that flows into an open-ended sea on the other side (use newsprint if a chalkboard isn't available). Write 'Sea of Change' at the top of the diagram, 'Lake of Violence' in the lake and 'Sea of Nonviolence' on the sea. The river in the middle represents change and ways in which we create a more peaceful world.
Vocabulary:	Empowerment, Thich Nhat Hanh
Resource Materials:	None
Suggested Time:	Between 50 and 60 minutes
Materials Needed:	Props: paper cut outs of waves (1 per student), boulders, and fish (2 or 3 per student for both), crayons, colored pencils, markers, tape (prepare ahead of time strips of tape for each paper cutout)
Attachments:	None

Lesson Outline

Introduction to Lesson:

Explain to the class that this lesson will help the group visualize obstacles to creating a nonviolent, peaceful society and their role, i.e. the power they have in overcoming these obstacles. Drawing on concepts and discussions from our previous lessons, this exercise will help the group to think about how these issues apply to us personally. They will also be encouraged to think about empowerment.

Icebreaker / Quick Activity to Assess Prior Learning:

Before starting the activity, ask the group how they would define empowerment. (To give power or authority to, to recognize our own power within and act on this personal power.)

Activities

Activity 1:

Sea of Change

Explain to the group that the diagram on the board represents a sea of change. The Lake of Violence is made up of all that characterizes a violent world. Remind them of the brainstorm that was done the first day when they came up with a list of what was violent and nonviolent. (Lake may have self-hatred, segregation, militarism, poverty, etc.) The river in the middle represents change, what is needed to create the Sea at the other end of the chalkboard. The Sea represents a nonviolent world (forgiveness, love, community, equality, understanding, etc.) To do this the class will build a river of change between the lake of violence on one end and a sea of nonviolence on the other end.

Break the class up into four groups.

Boulders (allow about 7 minutes for this part): Pass out boulders to each group and explain that they represent obstacles to a nonviolent world. Have the group write a word or draw a symbol to represent these obstacles on their boulders. Encourage them to think about the people studied together over the course of this class and what it was they were struggling to change. They should also consider the issues from the first few classes when the group discussed violence, or what they saw in their own community / personal lives. Give them a few minutes to discuss and complete their boulders.

(Some of the things they may come up with are: hate, greed, militarism, poverty, power, inequality, fear, disempowerment, insecurity, control.)

Ask each group to come to the board one at a time to put their boulders up. Once they have all been placed up there ask them to read (and if necessary explain) them. Repeat this with every group. When all the obstacles have been placed on the board, open it up to the larger group by asking: What do you notice about these obstacles? What stands out to you?

Fish (allow about 7 minutes for this part): Pass out fish to each group and explain that they represent ways in which we can create peace in a nonviolent world (i.e., ways of overcoming the obstacles) using capabilities we have on a personal and societal level.

Two Groups should think of **nonviolent strategies** in the context of peacemakers and how they led a movement that created change.

Two Groups should focus on **personal actions** people can take in their daily lives.

Repeat the steps used to place the boulders on the board. If the concept of power has been put up as both a boulder and a fish, it might be a good idea to point out (if no one else has done so) that

while power can be seen as an obstacle, there is also a positive connotation of power: personal power. (Some discussion might be needed to distinguish between positive and negative forms of personal power.)

Waves (allow about 7 minutes for this part): Pass out a wave to each person. Ask each student to draw a symbol of him/herself and think about which of the fish on the board apply to changes each of them can make in his/her personal life as a result of this class. Remind them that small commitments or changes are also very significant and realistic. Ask them to place their waves next to a fish that applies to their personal commitment.

Repeat steps used to place boulders and fish on the board. Again allow time for students to make comments about what they see on the board. Do any patterns stand out to them? Is there a relationship between personal strategies and the characteristics that make up a peaceful world?

Some things to point out to the class:

Notice that the personal strategies used to create a more peaceful world are also the characteristics of a peaceful world; we have to **BE** the world we want to create. All the personal actions such as kindness, compassion, love, etc. are both characteristics we would like to see our world made up of AND characteristics that should be reflected in everyday lives. In order to create the world we want we must be, embody, and live that which we want to create.

"Without being peace we can not do anything for peace... If we are not peaceful than we cannot contribute to a peaceful movement."- Thich Nhat Hanh. In other words, we have to be peace to create peace.

"Practicing nonviolence is first of all to become nonviolence. Then when a difficult situation presents itself, we will react in a way that will help the situation." - Thich Nhat Hanh

"My life is my message." - Gandhi

Some would say that nonviolent strategies such as noncooperation or boycotts aimed at social change are secondary to the individual spiritual path that nurtures within us the ability to become a better human being.

Helpful Hints / Comments from Previous Facilitators:

When the groups are taping their props up, let the class know you'd really like to make sure everyone has the opportunity to participate in the discussion. Suggest that the spokesperson be someone who hasn't participated much in the class.

DJPC 2004