

I will be happy if... I learn to build peace

"Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children
of God" (Mt 5:9)



Goal

To recognize the daily situations wherein we can build peace as individuals, thereby getting involved in doing something.



How did it go?

At the start, there is a moment of welcome, wherein it is important to allow space for dialogue and the sharing of what each one has lived, the experiences made, and the difficulties encountered. To welcome means to make each one feel accepted and be at ease: creativity will help us find the best ways. We may recall the aims set at the last meeting: "How did it go?"



Introductory activity

THE SEVEN WORDS OF PEACE

TIME: 10/20 minutes.

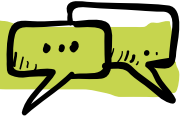
MATERIALS: Sheets of paper and pens for the participants, poster, sign pens

PROCEDURE: Within a few minutes, all the participants must write on a sheet of paper 7 words that they believe are the most important to build/maintain peace. Then they form pairs, each of which must agree within 2 minutes on the 7 words to choose. The participants should not immediately give up their ideas, but accept even those of others when these are really convincing. The next step is to form a quartet (2 pairs) who must agree on the choice of the 7 words. Continue until the participants will form 2 teams: at this point, they must arrive at a common agreement to have the 7 words of peace valid for the entire group.

NOTE: They must be words not phrases. At the end, the 7 words of peace chosen by the group can be written on a poster like a manifesto.

CONCLUSION: Facilitate a dialogue among the participants through some guide questions. Example:

- What attitude was needed to agree with others?
- Is there something we have learned from this exercise that can help us also in daily situations?
- In what personal situations can we daily become builders of peace in school, in the family, in the district, in the city?

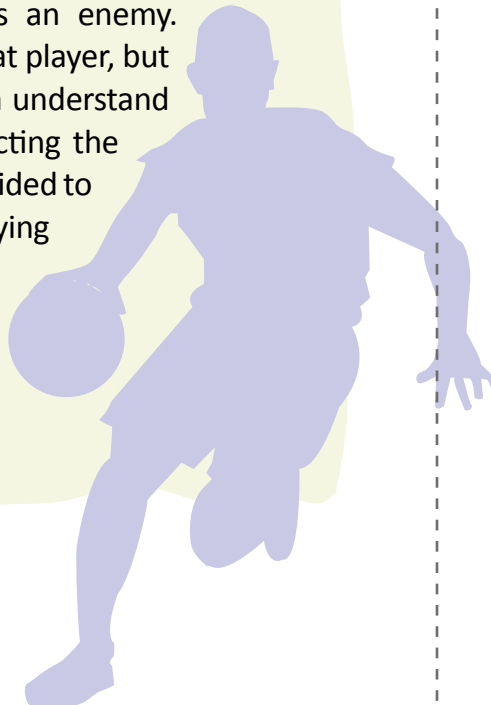


We live this way

I play in a basketball team. Often I notice that sports, due to the excessive competition, is transformed in a kind of war, where what counts is only to win, in whatever way and by all means. Sometime ago, during a game, the opponent I was marking was bigger than me and used a lot of physical contact. At a certain point, due to my fault, he fell down. It was not really serious, but I went near him and helped him to stand up.

Then something strange happened: my coach from the bench got angry because I helped an opponent. According to his philosophy, I shouldn't have done it, precisely because he was an enemy. I thought that I had to love that player, but also my coach, and make him understand that we can win while respecting the opponent. From then on, I decided to play my games as if I were playing with Jesus: me against Jesus and together with him.

(A. – Roma)



My father and I have strong characters and we often quarrel. When he was younger, he had a strong experience as a Gen, but he had a very hard life, and certain situations he went through in the past affected him. This had negative influence on our family and our relationships. We quarrel a lot, we don't agree, and sometimes we say things that should not be said.

My father is a nice person who loves us with all his heart, and would do anything to make us happy. But when he is drunk, he becomes another person, so that it is difficult even to look into his eyes. This is a great suffering.

Since I am the eldest daughter, I lived more years with him, and it took me a long time to understand how to love him, and how to go beyond everything. Once, after a very difficult family quarrel, **I learned that we must never judge the other**, because we never

know what the other has gone through and why he acts that way. Perhaps if you were in his place, you would have acted worse. I often think of this so it becomes easier for me to understand the things people do. **To pray and to love with all one's heart, this is the most difficult but also the most beautiful that one can do for someone!** Maybe my father will not change, but I will always love him; all of us will love him always! You try, and you will also discover that it's worth it. We only need to love.

(A. – Southeast Europe)





In depth

TO PUT CHARITY INTO ACTION



*Chiara Lubich, Gen 3 Congress,
The Beatitudes, June 20, 1975*

When Jesus was born, the angels sang "peace on earth to all people of good will." When Jesus sent his disciples out to preach all over the world, he commanded them to proclaim peace. Certainly, because Jesus came precisely in order to restore peace between God and humanity, that peace that had been destroyed by original sin, and to build peace among people, because he taught us to love one another as he loved us. Therefore, Jesus calls "happy" those who find peace with God by passing from the old man to the new man, and who then line themselves up with God to spread for-

givenness and love wherever there is discord.

The Gen knows that Jesus wants peace among all people. In fact, that he even wants us to be united as one. And so who could be better than a Gen in being a peacemaker in any situation at all!

When two friends are quarrelling, when two families have stopped speaking to one another, a Gen finds some excuse to put charity into action.

Now you can understand, Gen, that if boys and girls act in this way, like other little Jesus', the heavenly Father, with great love, will call them "Children of God." 💡

Note: The video is also available at the website <http://assistentigen3.focolare.org>



KEEP THE FAMILY TOGETHER

When there are family crises, when there are problems between our parents, what can we do to bring unity back to our family? ?

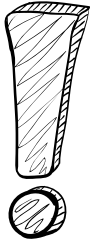
Santiago – Uruguay

Use this strength that you have, this Ideal, and make every attempt to keep your family together.

Do you see how he gives in to what you want? So try to love one another again, because we need you." You must say this to your parents. Don't ever lose hope; continue to start over again until they see that you love and need them very much. Naturally, a winning move would be to bring them to our Movement where, as you know, there are also adults, families, couples, etc., etc. That would be the winning move. You know that many couples get together again after coming into contact with our spirituality. 💡

What must you do, then? At the right moment, take your Dad aside and begin to highlight all his qualities, his good qualities, and there will be many of them. Then highlight the qualities of your Mom also and say: "Mom is like this, too. Do you see how good she is? Do you see how patient she is? Do you see how many good things she prepares for you? Do you see? Then, in another moment, go to your Mom and say: "Look, Mom, you are so good, so patient; you must do all you can. But Dad too, do you see what good qualities he has?

*Chiara Lubich,
Marino Ice Arena, May 10, 1997
Gen 3 Supercongress*



I will try

Peace is not simply the absence of war or being calm or not having enemies; it is something deeper. Let us take on certain situations in which we can become builders and ambassadors of peace in the next epoch, and act accordingly. Here are some examples:

- I will reconcile with someone with whom I had some differences.
- Let us involve friends and schoolmates in taking photographs of every gesture of peace that they see around them. Using social media, we can show to those who think that peace is just a dream that instead it is already alive among us; we only need to be its collaborators.



At what point are we?

To reach a goal, we must practice daily and keep note of the positive changes and the difficulties encountered.

This will help us until the next meeting when we shall allot time for sharing our experiences.

In which situations did I try to build peace?

What conflict did I notice?

What gestures, attitudes, and concrete actions of mine helped solve it?

What change did I notice?

Grid area for notes.

For the gen assistant



Evaluation after the meeting

- Did the proposed activities increase the youth's interest for this beatitude?
- Has a particular area emerged from the Gen 3 in which they feel it is difficult to live justice?
- What commitment have they taken to live it? Aim at accompanying and supporting them in their commitment until the next meeting.
- Do I consider the topic finished or is there still something to discuss at the next meeting?
- Did difficulties arise? What must we keep in mind to improve next time?