

PEACE ON THE STREETS

HOW TO ORGANIZE AGAINST WAR



Toolkit for antimilitarist and pacifist
youth activism and education

This toolkit is the outcome of four projects:

- „Peace on the Streets“ training organized in Vienna, Austria on 1-7 June 2019
- „Methods Against War“ seminar organised in Mitrovica, Kosovo on 1-6 June 2022
- „Not Your Soldier“ youth exchange organized in Klosterneuburg, Austria on 10-18 August 2022
- „No War Anywhere“, 2023, including
 - „Utopias Against War“ youth seminar in Rome, Italy, on 16 - 22 April 2023
 - „Strategies Against War“ training, organized in Klosterneuburg, Austria, on 25 June - 2 July 2023

The first three were organised by Service Civil International Österreich (<http://www.sci.or.at>), with „Methods Against War“ organised in cooperation with GAIA Kosovo. No War Anywhere was coordinated by the international secretariat of Service Civil International.

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We thank the participants of all of these projects for their contributions to the toolkit!

Cover photo: Street action during the training „Peace on the Streets“ in June 2019 in Vienna.

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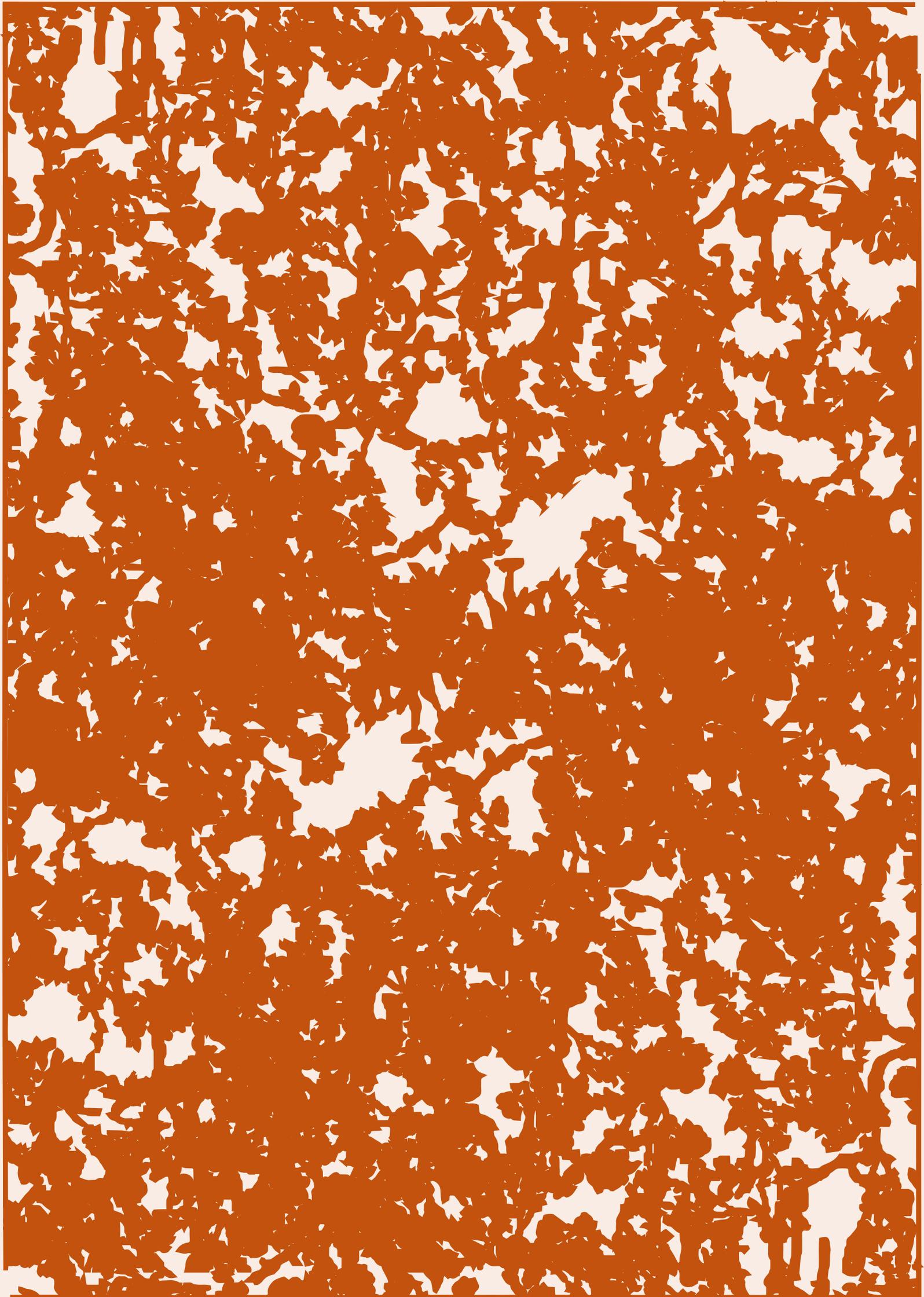
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HOW & WHY THIS TOOLKIT?



This is the outcome of a series of international peace and antimilitarist projects by Service Civil International (SCI).

As a branch of the international peace organization Service Civil international (SCI), we want to stand up for peaceful resolution to conflict, global disarmament and demilitarization. We want to connect our organization with other befriended networks already or (potentially) working on this, such as War Resisters International, IFOR, ICAN, ICYE, EBCO and CCIVS.

1. Our first project „Peace on the Streets“ trained European youth workers from 1-7 June 2019 in Vienna (Austria) how to do street activism around peace with young people.
2. In the seminar „Methods Against War“ in Mitrovica (Kosovo) from 1-6 June 2022, youth workers shared antimilitarist education materials and methods with each other.
3. And with the youth exchange „Not Your Soldier“ in Klosterneuburg (Austria) from 10-18 August 2022, we brought together young people from European countries with active military conscription to share their experiences and to relate them to the peace movement.
4. The last piece of the puzzle was in 2023, where we organized the project „No War Anywhere“, through which we brought:
 - 30 international youth activists in Rome (Italy) to collectively imagine a future without war and set it into action through the „Utopias Against War“, seminar.
 - 30 more international youth activists in Klosterneuburg (Austria) to train and kick-off an international network of youth antimilitarist actions around Europe and beyond.
 - participants of these two projects to found a new antimilitarist working group together, called „No More War“, in a 2-day follow-up online seminar which laid the foundation for sustainable youth antimilitarist action for years to come.

SCI has a lot of experience with peace activism, and it's time to use our skills to organise against war.

Since its beginnings in 1920 with the first volunteering camp ever organised, Service Civil International has its roots in pacifism and strongly opposes any form of militarization. Instead, we promote a culture of peace that brings people from different cultures and backgrounds together to overcome prejudices and hatred. Usually, we organize volunteering projects in order to reach this culture of peace, which might involve other forms of activism such as the ones described here. There is always an international aspect to our projects. We have noticed, also within our SCI



movement, a lack of commitment to fight against wars and to instead prioritize less controversial framings and topics of positive peace. This leaves the movement in a constant struggle around its fluffy values: What does peace even mean, when we don't organize against war?



For a lot of young people, military violence is unacceptable in times of crisis. It is seen as being in a position of power to have a gun or weapon, and this image is reinforced by military promotion. The military is seen as a masculine protector, an institution of global and national safety and perspective for marginalized youth. In the face of an unfolding climate catastrophe, we need a stable global security structure. There are many reasons why people join or support military structures, be it for job security, career opportunities or out of conviction.

There are many young people who want to engage against the dystopian plethora of wars that have come to us in recent years, but feel unable to do anything about it. From the Russian aggression on Ukraine to the seemingly endless spiral of violence unfolding in Palestine-Israel, and the militarization of Europe that comes with it, the 2020s have been marked by tremendous military escalation. Several countries in Europe uphold military conscription and force young people into military service, while closing off their borders to people fleeing wars and military occupation. Wars are profitable for a few people in the West: Arms sales skyrocket in times of escalating global tensions. And then there's the very apparent double standards at play: War crimes, if committed by the West (as during the Iraq War), are often not prosecuted. Wars are continued because of vetoes of UN security council members. Of course most young people feel powerless against this trend and they don't know what to do to effectively change the course of history.

We don't talk enough about peace and non-violence in Europe. Where are the loud young voices that call for diplomacy and negotiations for just peace? Where are the loud young voices that call out Europe's complicity and active involvement in upholding the logic and practice of global warfare? In democracies, we need to give young people the tools to voice their dissent and to stand up for the values of human rights and peace we hold so dear. We need activism and education to bring critical perspectives



on militarism into the public discourse and to give youth opportunities to become active in global disarmament, peaceful conflict resolution and peace activism. With this toolkit, we want to create a base for youth workers to come back to for ideas, input, and ways they can organize against war.

Education alone is not enough. In our experience, we found that three main points are crucial for the empowerment of young people on antimilitarism: Education, Activism, and Group Care. When youth are in an environment that is actively including these three points in their everyday work, we see them not only imagine a better future without war, but actively walk towards it together. Education alone is not enough to make people act, it needs to be education for active citizenship. So, we highly encourage anyone who wants to organize against war to utilize activities and ideas from all these three points, which you can find in the corresponding chapters of the toolkit.

Peace activism should be young. With frames for becoming active in civil society, e.g. through becoming peace educators themselves, volunteering for peace or organising activism, we want to motivate young people to become active citizens around issues of peace, non-violence and antimilitarism. We want to encourage youth to make our democracies more alive, in our minds, our bodies, our headlines, our classrooms, online and on the streets. This toolkit is made as a comprehensive guide by and to those who want to do something about militarism. It contains all of our learnings, our tested and trusted methods that we developed and use, and how you can use them in your own contexts. With this toolkit, we want to give some incentives on how to work with young people around these issues.

So, let's Organize Against War!

ANTIMILITARISM

101



Let's start with some basics. In this chapter, we will introduce some basic understandings and learnings around antimilitarism to you.

What is antimilitarism and negative peace? Antimilitarism emphasizes opposition to the use of military force and the dismantling of militaristic structures and institutions. It goes beyond the immediate prevention of war and focuses on addressing the root causes of conflicts, often challenging the militarization of societies and advocating for alternative, nonviolent means of conflict resolution. Antimilitarism focuses on what Norwegian peace scholar Johan Galtung calls “negative peace” - peace as the absence of war.

Is peacebuilding the same as antimilitarism?

While both antimilitarism and peacebuilding share the ultimate goal of fostering peace, peacebuilding involves constructive, long-term efforts to address the underlying issues that contribute to conflict. It includes activities such as promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and sustainable development. Unlike antimilitarism, peacebuilding may engage with existing institutions, including aspects of the state, to create conditions for lasting peace. This correlates with Johan Galtung’s definition of “positive peace”.

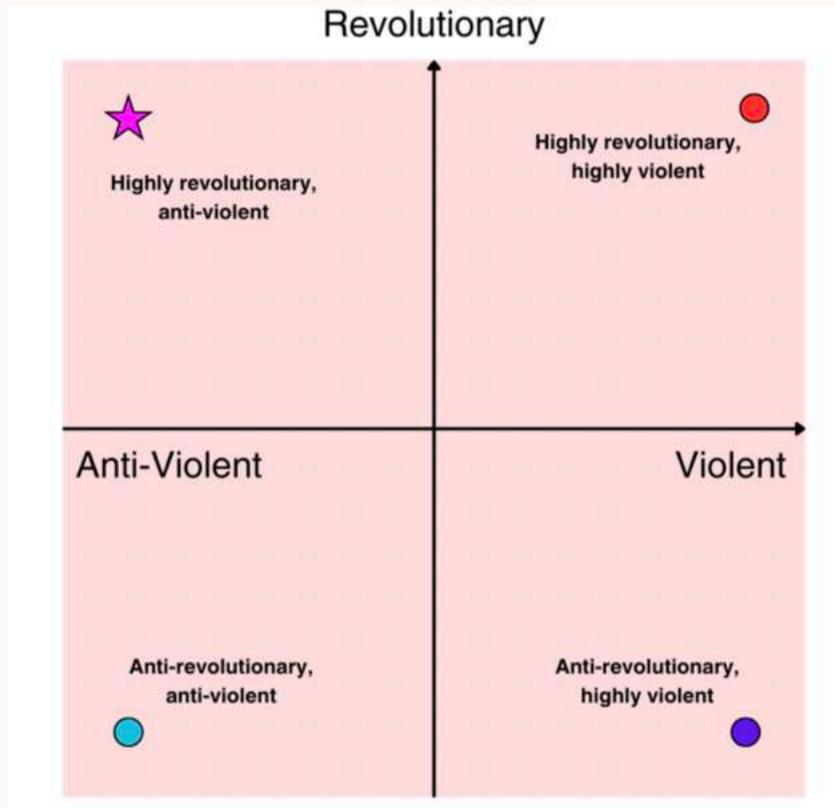
Antimilitarism focuses on structural violence and systemic injustices. Antimilitarists recognize that violence is not only physical but can also be structural. Structural violence refers to the systematic ways in which social, economic, and political structures harm individuals or groups by preventing them from meeting their basic needs. Antimilitarism often advocates for addressing these underlying structures to create a more just and equitable society. Understanding and addressing the root causes of conflicts involve recognizing and challenging systemic injustices. This includes issues such as economic inequality, racism, and exploitation. Antimilitarist activism often intersects with broader social justice movements, recognizing that peace is intimately connected to issues of justice and human rights.

There are different antimilitarisms: the Revolutionary-Violent Chart. During the context of our 2023 project, we found out that much of the discourse around war was revolving around the theoretical questions on violence and non-violence; Who has the right to use violence? If oppressed groups use military violence to defend themselves against military aggression, what happens? If we condemn these, because they are violent actions, how much are we unconsciously supporting oppressive systems that suppress these groups? We realized that we ended up talking about two different terms: the ‘revolution’, which we



analyze as the liberation of people from systems that oppress them (ex. genocide, military dictatorship, etc.) and the violence, through which they are either oppressed or freed through.

Thus, we ended up developing the Revolutionary-Violent Chart to support us reflect on our values and positionality around war:



The Revolutionary-Violent Chart, adapted by the work of Kai Chen Thom (2023).
Designed by Danai Tessa

The chart analyzes the 4 prominent positions against war we had observed in the current discourse about war:

1. **The Highly Violent Anti-Revolutionist**

This position opposes revolutionary changes, but is willing to use or endorse high levels of violence to maintain the current status quo or counter revolutionary efforts. They are often characterized as staunchly traditional or conservative, even aggressive, and might be seen as militaristic or authoritarian.

“We must use all necessary force to maintain order.”

“Violence is a necessary evil to prevent chaos in society.”

2. **The Anti-Revolutionary Anti-Violent:**

This position is against both revolutionary change and the use of violence. Valuing peace, and they end up advocating for preserving the current system, even if it's unjust. They are typically pacifistic, conservative but not aggressive, preferring dialogue and negotiation over conflict.

“We can't solve problems by creating more violence.”

“Why can’t people just co-exist?”

3. **The Violent Revolutionist:**

This stance is in favor of revolutionary change and believes that violence is a necessary, if not the only tool, to achieve it. They seek a significant overhaul of the current system or status quo. They can be radical, even aggressive, passionate about their cause, and believing in the necessity of upheaval for progress.

“Revolution is the only solution, by any means necessary.”

“We have to fight violence with violence”

“Sometimes, violence is the only language the oppressors understand.”

4. **The Anti-violent Revolutionist:**

This position advocates for revolutionary change but through non-violent means, due to their ideological stance against violence. They seek a fundamental change in the system through peaceful actions, but sometimes they are not even sure if this is possible. They can be idealistic, strongly principled about non-violence, and often inspired by figures like Martin Luther King Jr, Audre Lorde, Angela Davis, and others.

“True change comes from peaceful protest and resilience.”

“We can revolutionize our society without resorting to violence.”

“If we want something to change, we have to be the change first”



ANTIMILITARIST EDUCATION

In the following section we describe some methods that we employed as trainers, educators, facilitators and youth workers working within or with SCI, which we have implemented and tested in the projects mentioned before. Please keep in mind that these methods will be further tested and renewed in a future version of this toolkit.



Is it a Mouse or a Face?

Paving the ground for intercultural understanding

Topic: Conflict resolution

Aims:

Get participants to see that there are several perspectives to a topic and to see things from a different perspective
Make participants aware how difficult it can be to share a practice together with someone who has a different reality than oneself
Challenge participants to compromise and find resolutions to conflict

Time: 15-25 minutes

Preparation:

3 illustrations printed on A4 papers or bigger (see attachment)
1 sheet of A4 paper and 2 pens for each pair of 2 people
Please be aware that you need 2 facilitators for this method

Description:

First the participants are split in two groups and lined up in front of each other. Each of them turns their back to someone from the other group. They are told they cannot talk or react to the picture. One facilitator each stands in front of a group with a picture they have to look at attentively for one minute. The first group has a drawing of a mouse and the second group has a drawing of a face (a bold man's profile).

Then participants are asked to turn around and sit together with the person in front of them (from the other group) and that they are not allowed to talk. A facilitator distributes one sheet of paper per pair, but both participants receive a pen each. One of the facilitators holds up the third picture for 5 minutes and asks them to draw the picture they see together on the sheet of paper in silence.

This picture shows a combination of the two previous pictures and it clearly represents neither a mouse nor a man anymore. They might run into the understanding that they have been shown different pictures before and don't see the same thing in the mashed up picture.





They can find different ways to cooperate such as turning the paper so that both of them could draw the image by the side at the same time or wait for their turn to orient the paper in the right direction and alternate. The facilitators don't give any instructions except that they have to stay silent.

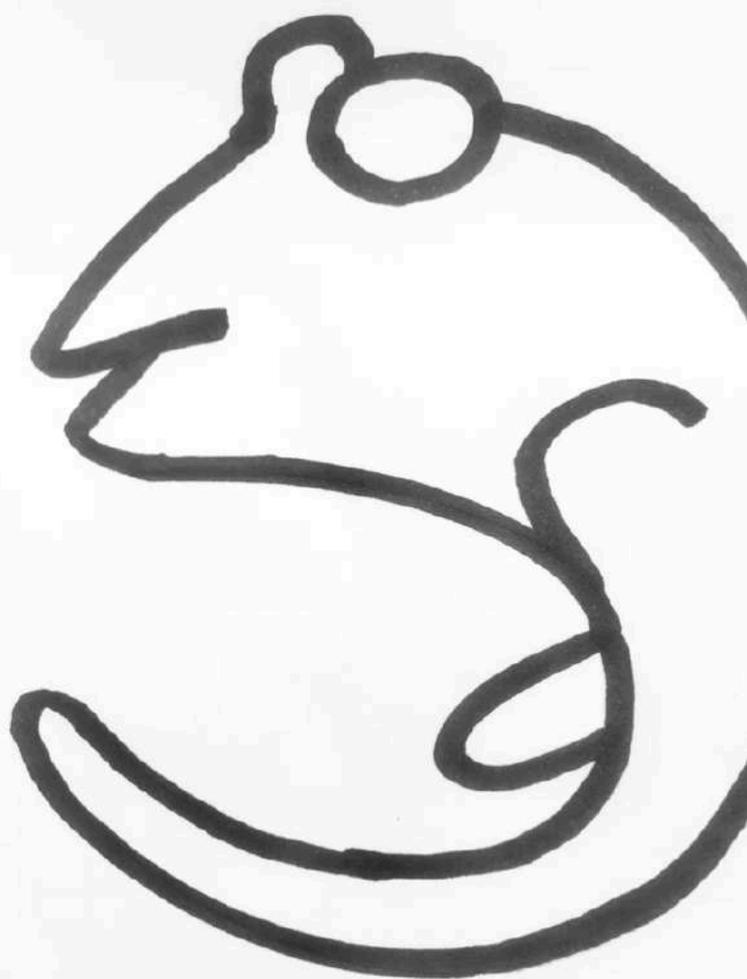
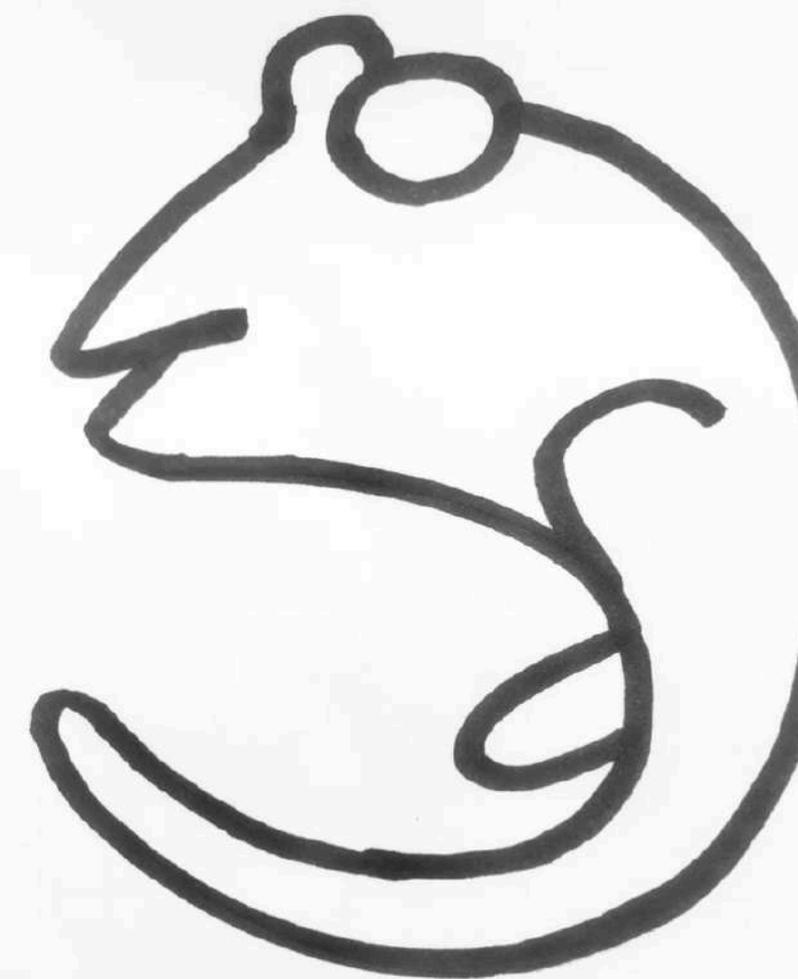
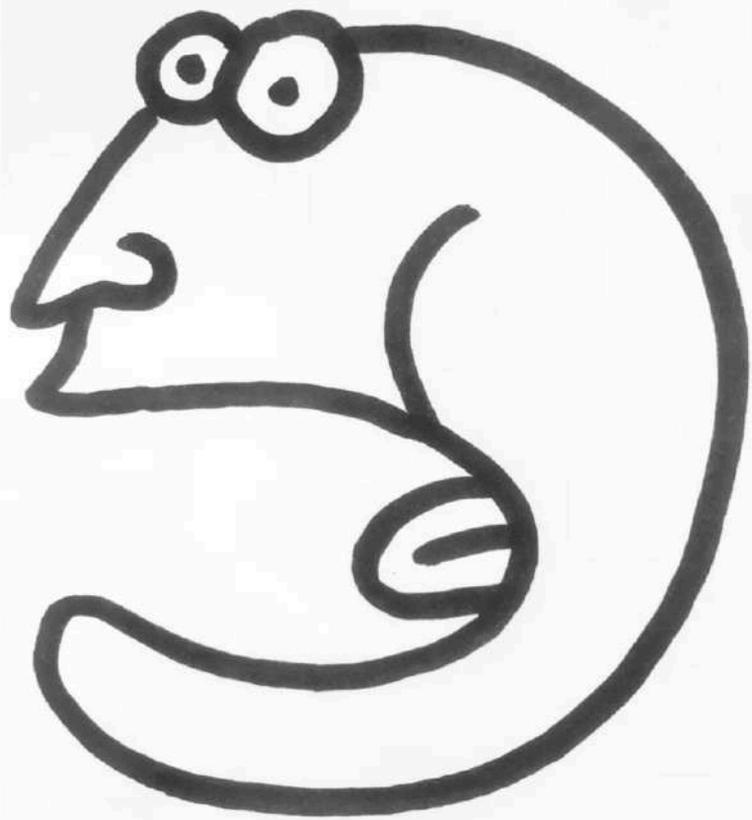
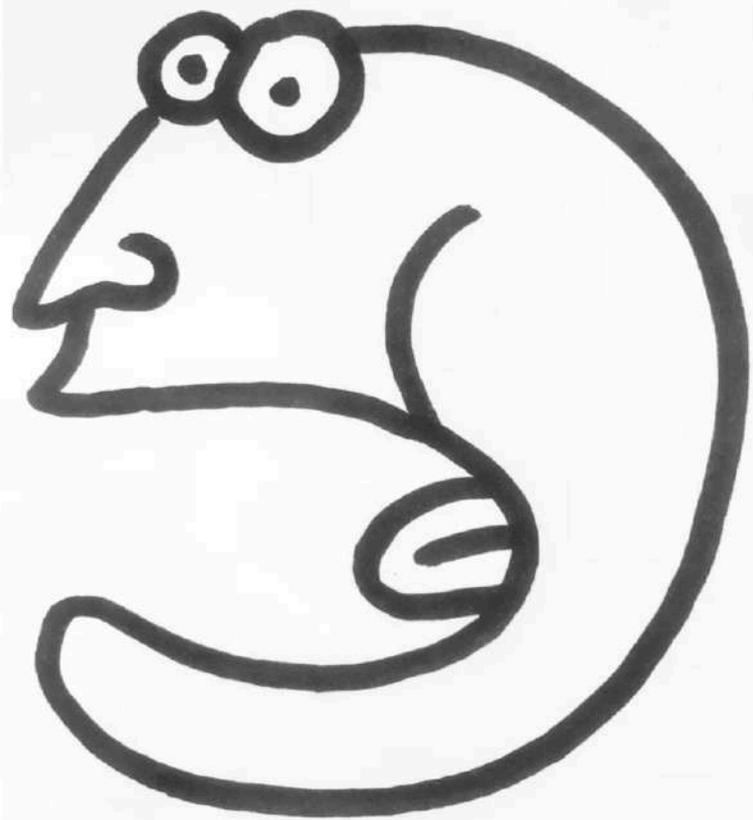
Debriefing: Finally, participants are asked to form a circle and they are allowed to speak again. Some reflection questions we propose:

What happened?

How did you feel during the activity?

How did you resolve the conflict you had?

What peaceful ways of resolving this conflict are there?



A Militarized River of Life

Topic: Militarization and War, Personal Experiences, Reflection.

Aims:

Participants reflect about their identities and become more aware of each other's different positions in society
Participants reflect about how their identities relate to peace and war

Time: 60 min

Materials Needed:

Notebooks
Coloring materials
Flipchart paper with the Steps 2-6 Questions
(check below)

Step 1: Reflect on War, Conflict, and Antimilitarism

Prepare participants by explaining to them that during the exercise they will be invited to take a moment to reflect on your life journey from the perspective of war, conflict, and antimilitarism.

Remember to mention that you will delve into personal aspects of their life which could potentially be sensitive, and encourage them to dive into and share only what they are comfortable with, as there's no expectations for anyone to go deep or not.

Invite them to reflect on these questions in their notebook:

- How have experiences of war or conflict influenced your life?
- Have there been specific moments or transitions related to these themes that stand out?
- How have your views on peace and antimilitarism been shaped by these experiences?

Then, reveal the flipchart paper with the following instructions and give them some time with soft music in the background to reflect through art:

Step 2: Create Your River of War and Peace

- Create your 'River of War and Peace' on your paper, marking the ebbs and flows, calm and turbulent periods. Use any extra coloring material you like.
- Label ages or dates along your river.
- Identify key events related to war, peace, or your stance on these issues.
- Divide your life journey into sections and name each part.

Step 3: Relationships and Intersections

- Reflect on key relationships and losses along your journey. How have they influenced your perspectives on war and peace?
- Consider how other societal issues have intersected with your experiences of war and peace.

Step 4: Contextualize with Global and Local Events

- Think about global, regional, or local events that have impacted your views on war and peace.
- Identify times of significant impact related to these themes.

Step 5: Evaluate Values and Commitments

- Note the values and principles that have guided you in your journey related to war, peace, and antimilitarism.
- Reflect on how these values have shaped your perspectives and actions.

Step 6: Look at the Bigger Picture

- Review your Militarized River. Does it accurately reflect how these themes have shaped your life?
- Make adjustments to better capture your journey.

Step 7: Debrief in Pairs

Step 8: Discuss in Plenary

Some questions you can discuss here are the following:

- What surprised you while creating your river?
- What did you uncover about your life relating to this topic?
- How did you feel when you shared with your partner?
- What common patterns do you notice in our life-stories?

War and Peace: a silent discussion to introduce antimilitarism

Topic: Militarism and Antimilitarism

Aims:

Participants discover different aspects and examples of the consequences of war and militarization and antimilitarist responses to them

Participants discuss these inputs and relate them to their own lives

Time: 60 min

Materials:

- flipchart papers with discussion questions
- papers that say „Comment on this video/article here“ for each article or video element
- printed articles and QR codes for videos (see Attachment 1)
- a functioning pen for every participant

Description:

Before the activity starts, set up the room with different elements (see Attachment 1):

- Set up flipchart papers with discussion questions.
- Hang up QR codes for videos to watch on the wall (or place one laptop with headphones for each video and distribute them in the room). Put papers that say „Comment on this video here:“ next to each video.
- Place articles in the room. Also here put posters for cam-mens next to each article.

Once the session starts, give participants the instructions for the Silent Exhibition:

- Tell them to take a pen and walk around the room. Explore the videos by scanning the QR codes with your phone, read the articles, answer the discussion questions.
- They can comment on each other's responses to the questions, videos and articles. They can also just make a + next to comments they agree with. Ask them to be nice to each other, even if they disagree on something.
- Tell them they don't need to write your name, it can be anonymous.
- Ask them to say their last words to each other and then to be silent for the next ca. 40 minutes (depending on

how long you want them to explore).

Participants then participate in the exhibition.

Debriefing: Ask participants to go in pairs and tell them to walk through the exhibition and show each other things they found interesting for ca. 10-15 minutes.

Then have a final debriefing in the big group:

- How do you feel after this exhibition?
- What did you learn? What was surprising for you?
- How do you feel about antimilitarism after this exhibition?

Attachment 1: Suggestions for Exhibition Elements

Videos:

- Everyday life of a Ukrainian refugee abroad: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CetTZybAvum/>
- George Bush mistakes the invasion of Ukraine with the invasion of Iraq: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CduKXS-fjasM/>
- Lego Violence: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-DThHosFS_0
- Glock Female Business Owner: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzMLiyFabeU>
- Why we should ban Lethal Automatic Weapons: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LVwD-IZosJE>
- Hiroshima survivor: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ohqe1Su6NY>
- Visit Hawaii: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfAiB-2ZoRhM>
- Profit from War in Ukraine: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mgirj9upfRk>
- WW1 Conscientious Objectors at Richmond Castle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1jdYzLnmnk>
- Timelapse Nuclear weapons: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLCF7vPanrY>

Discussion questions:

- Define War
- Define Peace
- Define Militarism
- Define Antimilitarism
- What are the connections of [the country you live in] with war?
- How do (people around) you contribute to militarism?
- Can there be gender equality in the military? Why yes? Why no?
- What personal experiences do you have with the military?
- What are the benefits of having a military? What are the benefits of being a soldier?
- What are the disadvantages of having a military? What are the disadvantages of being a soldier?



- How are wars today different from wars in the past?
- Who are past and present peace activists from your country/community that you admire? Why do you admire them?

Articles:

- <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/peace-activism-what-it-good>
- <https://www.businessinsider.com/top-countries-exporting-weapons-arms-sales-2018-3?IR=T>
- <https://daily.jstor.org/is-mandatory-military-service-good-for-a-country/>
- <https://www.wri-irg.org/en/story/2018/expanding-for-tress-new-report-exposes-firms-profiting-eu-border-militarisation>

Statistics, concepts:

- Peacebuilding vs. Antimilitarism (see chapter ANTIMILITARISM 101)
- Revolutionary-Violent Chart (see chapter ANTIMILITARISM 101)
- Where in Europe is there military conscription?
<http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/countries-with-mandatory-military-service/>
- Drones in Europe https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-71087-7_2
- Global Peace Index: <http://visionofhumanity.org/indexes/global-peace-index/>

A War on Screen: Some handpicked movie and animation recommendations to talk about war

Topic: Militarism, War and Antimilitarism through Cinema and Animation.

In this section, we will analyze how you can base your activity on an antimilitarist film and turn it into an educational experience about war. We will also discuss how we approached it during the project through the Japanese animation Barefoot Gen (1982), and give you some of our personal recommendations for movies and pieces of animation about war.



Aims:

Art, especially visual art like movies or animation, have been vital tools in our experience working with groups to provoke thoughts, unearth feelings, and spark deep discussions amongst participants regarding war. We chose Barefoot Gen in specific to:

- encourage critical thinking about the consequences of war, especially nuclear warfare
- explore the themes of resilience, hope, and the human spirit amidst war
- foster a deeper historical understanding of the Hiroshima bombing and its aftermath through the eyes of a real-life survivor of the bombing
- to organically lead to and facilitate meaningful dialogue on peace, reconciliation, and the human cost of conflict.

Time: depending on the length of your movie and the depth of the conversation happening afterwards - we recommend roughly 180 minutes including a small break.

Materials:

- A copy of “Barefoot Gen” (we recommend the subbed version).
- Projector and screen, or a large monitor for group viewing.
- Discussion guide with pre-prepared questions (provided below).
- Note-taking materials for participants (notebooks and pens).
- Soft lighting and minimal outside noise works the best here
- Comfortable seating arranged for easy viewing and group discussion.

Group size:

Suitable for small to medium-sized groups (10-30 participants), to allow for an intimate and engaging discussion right after.

Description:

“Barefoot Gen” is a Japanese manga series created by Keiji Nakazawa and then adapted into a movie, released in 1982. The story is set in Hiroshima during and after the atomic bombing of World War II. It is a semi-autobiographical account, as Nakazawa was a survivor of the Hiroshima bombing himself. The narrative follows the life of a young boy, Gen Nakaoka, and his family, as they struggle to survive the devastating effects of the atomic blast and its aftermath.

Before starting, as the film is quite graphic and contains distressing imagery, we discussed what this film is about, and gave some warnings to our audience regarding some elements that might be disturbing to viewers: graphic and gore imagery, pictures of loss, death, and nuclear catastrophe,

especially regarding kids. We made sure there was ‘an escape plan’ for those who might want to stop watching (ex. going out of the room without notifying, sitting with or taking time outside of the room with the trainers, and others), and fostered a safety net for the content we were about to see.

After the screening ended, we held an open discussion led by the trainers, that focused on the following follow up questions:

- How do you feel now?
- How did “Barefoot Gen” change or reinforce your views on the impact of war, especially nuclear war?
- What scenes or moments in the film stayed with you? Why?
- How do you think Gen and his family embody the concept of resilience?
- In what ways does “Barefoot Gen” challenge the traditional narratives of war heroes and war stories?
- What do you take from this movie about dealing with trauma and loss during war?
- How does the film address the themes of hope and despair? How are these themes relevant in today’s world?
- Should we depict graphic war experiences in films, like “Barefoot Gen”? Why?
- What role do you think memory and storytelling play in understanding and healing from the atrocities of war?
- Would you recommend the movie to a friend? Why?

Things to keep in mind:

- Please make sure to watch the film yourself before showing it to the group. Make sure to build up trust and care structures within the group before showing a film about war.
- While seeing graphic images of war can be a wake-up call for people who haven’t experienced war, for those who have experienced war, seeing graphic images on screen can be re-traumatizing. Please think clearly through which films you show to which audience.

Other movie recommendations:

Here are some of our own personal favorite films and animated movies around war that we can wholeheartedly recommend for this activity:

“Persepolis” (2007) - Directed by Marjane Satrapi

An animated autobiographical film based on Marjane Satrapi’s graphic novel, depicting her experiences during and after the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

“Beasts of No Nation” (2015) - Directed by Cary Joji Fukunaga

A movie telling the story of a young boy who becomes a

child soldier as his country in West Africa goes through a horrific war.

“The Breadwinner” (2017) - Directed by Nora Twomey

An animated film about a young girl living under Taliban rule in Afghanistan who disguises herself as a boy to support her family.

“Under the Shadow” (2016) - Directed by Babak Anvari

A Persian-language horror film set in the post-revolution, war-torn 1980s Tehran, dealing with themes of war and societal oppression.

“Kajaki” (2014) - Directed by Paul Katis

A British war documentary-style film about a group of soldiers trapped in a minefield, offering a harrowing look at the realities of modern warfare.

“City of God” (2002) - Directed by Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund

A portrayal of violence and armed conflict in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, and how the topic of violence and arms comes into the urban landscape.

“Bamako” (2006) - Directed by Abderrahmane Sissako

The film examines the impact of global politics on African societies, specifically settled in Mali, addressing colonization and systemic oppression as the root causes of conflicts.

“Voces Inocentes / Innocent Voices” (2004) - Directed by Luis Mandoki

Based on a true story, this film depicts a young boy’s experience during the Salvadoran Civil War.

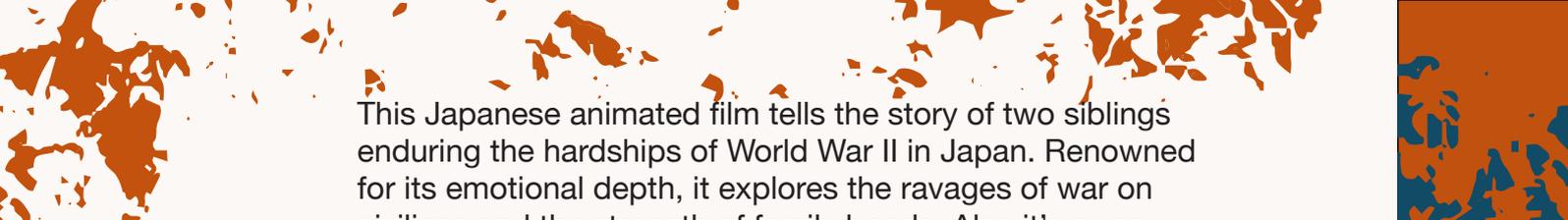
“When the Wind Blows” (1986) - Directed by Jimmy T. Murakami (British)

This beautiful British animated film depicts an elderly couple’s struggle to survive in the aftermath of a nuclear war. Known for its unique mix of hand-drawn animation and stop-motion, the film explores themes of war, preparedness, and the devastating human impact of nuclear catastrophe.

“La Vita è Bella” (Life is Beautiful) (1997) - Directed by Roberto Benigni

In this Italian tragicomedy set during World War II, we follow a Jewish bookshop owner employing imagination and humor to protect his son from the harshness of a Nazi camp - blending comedy and tragedy

“Grave of the Fireflies” (1988) - Directed by Isao Takahata



This Japanese animated film tells the story of two siblings enduring the hardships of World War II in Japan. Renowned for its emotional depth, it explores the ravages of war on civilians and the strength of family bonds. Also it's a very interesting pick if you are interested in exploring the consequences of World War II, but don't want to show 'Barefoot Gen' to the group due to graphic imagery - this film still contains distressing pictures of poverty and loss specifically of children.

“Иди и смотри / Come and See” (1985) - Directed by Elem Klimov

This Soviet film shows a young boy joining the Belarusian resistance against the Nazis and witnessing the atrocities the Wehrmacht commits against civilians in Belarusian villages. Again, distressing images.

“5 Broken Cameras” (2011) - Directed by Emad Burnat und Guy Davidi

A documentary that chronicles the peaceful resistance of a Palestinian farmer, Emad Burnat, against the Israeli separation barrier in his West Bank village. The film captures the personal and collective struggles of the community over a period of five years, providing a powerful and intimate perspective on the impact of conflict on ordinary lives.

Forum Theatre against War

Topics:

War, Military, Theater, Improv Theater, Conflict-Resolution

Aims:

Forum Theatre is one form of the Theatre of the Oppressed, which was invented by Augusto Boal for whom theatre is happening in daily life and should not be an elitist kind of art. It is a form of theatre that helps solving conflicts by picking up experiences and involving the audience. Through that, getting active is not only trained for and in the performances but also for daily life.

Materials:

Enough space; if wished a few props (they are helpful to get in and out of the role you play); one prop (often a hat is used) to mark the joker

Time:

60-120 mins



Group size:

min. two people who act the scene and four people as audience

Description:

A group of people prepare a short scene in which some kind of oppression happens. Then they show the scene to an audience once. Afterwards the scene is played again and people from the audience have the possibility to say stop at a time in which they would like the plot to be different. The actors will freeze and the person who stopped can choose one of them, but not the oppressor, and step into their role instead of the actor. The person tries now to improvise in a way to solve the oppressive conflict. When the scene is finished all people on stage are asked how they feel now and a debate can take place. This and the change of actor/audience is facilitated by the so-called joker. The scene is repeated a few times, so different ways of solving the situation can be tried. When the performance finishes it is important to make exercises to get rid of the roles and come back to be yourself again.

Things to keep in mind:

- War-related topics within Forum Theatre can be emotionally charged and sensitive. Begin by establishing ground rules that prioritize respect, active listening, and confidentiality within the group. One exercise that helps to host beforehand is How to host a Safe(r) Space from the ANTIMILITARIST GROUP DYNAMICS AND CARE chapter. Ensure that participants feel physically and emotionally safe to express their thoughts and emotions.
- Emphasize that Forum Theatre is a space for exploration and learning, not judgment. Encourage participants to take risks, try out different perspectives, and make mistakes without fear of criticism. This can foster a sense of openness and trust among the youth.
- Before engaging in the Forum Theatre exercise, provide context about the realities of war, its impact on individuals and communities, and the various perspectives surrounding it. This background knowledge will help participants approach the exercise with a more informed and empathetic mindset.
- Discuss the potential emotional responses that may arise during the exercise. Encourage participants to reflect on their feelings and provide resources or support mechanisms if needed. Being emotionally prepared can help ensure that the experience is constructive rather than overwhelming.

A world without army – Antimilitarist utopias

Topic:

Utopian thinking, Peace, Antimilitarism

Aims:

Participants understand the political importance of having the utopian vision of a peaceful future and that utopias are possible

Participants imagine their own peaceful future, share it with others, criticize it and this enables them to have a more constructive approach to how they can get there

Time:

2,5 hours (can be less, if parts are shortened)

Materials:

paper for everyone
pens for everyone
paper with critical reflection questions

Description:

Ask people to go into groups of 3-4 for 15 minutes and to find things that have changed positively around war and militarism in the past 30 years? In what way has the world become more peaceful in the past 30 years?

Then come back in the big group and collect all things that people have found on a flipchart paper. Add events or trends from the past 30 years that you find important, if participants haven't mentioned them yet.

Then given an introduction into utopian thinking. You could talk about things like these:

Meaning of word utopia: Thomas More 1516 εὖ (“good” or “well”) and τόπος (“place”)

utopias vs. dystopias

the ideology of utopias

challenges to utopian thinking, view of utopia as naive; utopian thinking is a skill we usually are not trained in

not just one utopia, the future is plural/endless

utopia doesn't mean there is no conflict; for whom is this a utopia? For whom is it desirable?; It's not possible to create a perfect future; there will always be conflicts

Dystopias became more popular in the 1950s after George Orwell's 1984 gained popularity; even more since

dissolution of Soviet Union 1991; often the view that with the fall of the Soviet Union we came to an „end of history“ (Francis Fukuyama)
Future Studies is an academic field that deals with utopian thinking

Then invite participants into a dream journey into the future for 20 minutes. Tell them that they will now imagine a positive future that is in 30 years from now. This can be emotional, it can be difficult to imagine a positive future. Ask them to sit or lie comfortably and to close their eyes (if they want to). You could do a breathing exercise with them for 2 minutes. You can set a cozy atmosphere playlist in the background (we have used this one: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4Ypcl2lkP7esfQiQopE4n0?si=XPaq7BzyRyOzW5D-jgpa5OA&utm_source=copy-link).

Then ask the participants these questions or a selection of those. Make sure to read them calmly, slowly, loudly and clearly – and make sure to make breaks between the questions, so participants have time to think about them and include them in their world-building of their utopia. The questions could be:

YOU WAKE UP IN 30 YEARS FROM NOW

How old would you be in 30 years?

What is your body like?

You live in a utopian society

There is no war

**There is no military anywhere in the world
What does this mean?**

What effects does this have on your life?

Where do you live? In which village or city?

What does the place where you live look like?

How does your community look like?

How is your relation to your neighbors?

How is your relation to your family?

What do you do when you wake up in the morning?

What are public spaces like?

How did politics change?

What happened to poverty?

- What happened to violence?**
- How are conflicts resolved?**
- What institutions are there for resolving conflict? Locally, globally?**
- What happened to Europe?**
- What happened to climate change?**
- How do we relate to nature?**
- What happened to capitalism, to greed, to people wanting to make money?**
- What are companies like?**
- What happened to technology? What happened to cell-phones?**
- What is family like? What is it like to raise children?**
- What do school buildings look like?**
- What is our health system like?**
- How do people see the past?**
- How do people talk about wars in the past?**
- What is the role of young people in society?**
- What are youth exchanges like?**

Come back

Then ask participants to open their eyes and to share their utopias in pairs. It is fine if what they share is blurry or also just a feeling. Give them 10 minutes for this.

Then ask them to criticize their utopias. This is to help them understand that no future is perfect and criticizing a utopia is an important part of utopian thinking. Give them some reflection questions on a flipchart paper. It is okay if they don't talk about all of them. Some suggestions for questions:

- Which social groups (age, gender, race/ethnicity, class) benefit from your vision? Which ones lose?**
- How do people coexist despite this conflict?**
- Where do resources for technology of your future society**

come from?

How could your vision reflect a world that is equal everywhere and not just in some privileged parts of the world, like your region?

Who controls whether people live in peace and follow the politics of your utopia?

Debriefing

Ask participants in the big group:

How was this? How do you feel?

What was your utopia like?

How come there was no war in your utopia?

How did you resolve conflict?

Afterwards you can ask participants to work creatively on their utopia. You could give them different options:

Draw a poster about your utopia

Draw a monument that would stand on a public place in your utopia

Write a letter to yourself from the perspective of yourself in 30 years from now

Write a newspaper article from the future, write about an event that happens in 30 years from now

Draw a short comic about the utopia

Do a short theater sketch about your utopia

...

After 30 minutes, ask participants to share their creative output with each other.



A White Man's Job

Topic:

War, Systemic Oppression, Accessibility of Activism

Objective:

To explore and integrate feminist, queer, antiracist, anti-colonial, and inclusive perspectives into existing activities and discussions, ensuring that campaigns are accessible, horizontal, and beneficial to all.

Materials Needed:

- Large, open room with empty wall space
- Post-it notes
- Notebooks
- Pens or markers
- Flipchart or whiteboard
- Ground space for idea placement

Session Duration:

Approximately 1 hour

Description:

Welcome participants and introduce the session's purpose, and highlight the importance of inclusivity and diversity in our community and actions.

Invite participants to bring their ideas for actions that they are either working on or are thinking of starting, and write each idea on 1 piece of paper. Ideas then are placed on the ground in the center of the room.

Participants are invited to group related ideas in any way they see fit, into big clusters. Some examples of cluster types would be:

- Conflict in Middle East
- Russia-Ukraine conflict
- Nuclear Weapons
- Activism
- ...

Once done, have participants sit down. Present the clusters and invite people to think about their own place in society, regarding their class, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, educational level, level of ability, and other details of their background. This is their positionality.

Explain to them that this positionality is what decides how



and if we can be part of actions. Give them an example: If the campaign is all about boycotting a factory and you are physically disabled activists, how can the campaign include you as well? If you don't know how to read, how can a campaign include you as well? Then, invite them to reflect in their notebook of potential setbacks they can face when involved into a campaign, due to this positionality.

Invite participants to stand up, now fully embodying and centered into their positionality, and take a look at the clusters. Where do they think it would be hard for them to get integrated as a part of each campaign and why?

After some minutes, you can ask them to take some post-its and silently write down ideas on how to make sessions/topics more inclusive from their own point of view, considering:

- Feminist perspectives
- Queer perspectives
- Antiracism and anti-colonialism
- Horizontal non-oppressive structures
- Accessibility for people with different disabilities

Encourage participants to draw from personal experiences or use their privilege to amplify marginalized voices.

After some minutes, have participants individually read through all suggestions and sit back at the circle. Then, discuss what new insights were gained and how these can be incorporated into working on campaigns with people from all walks of life.

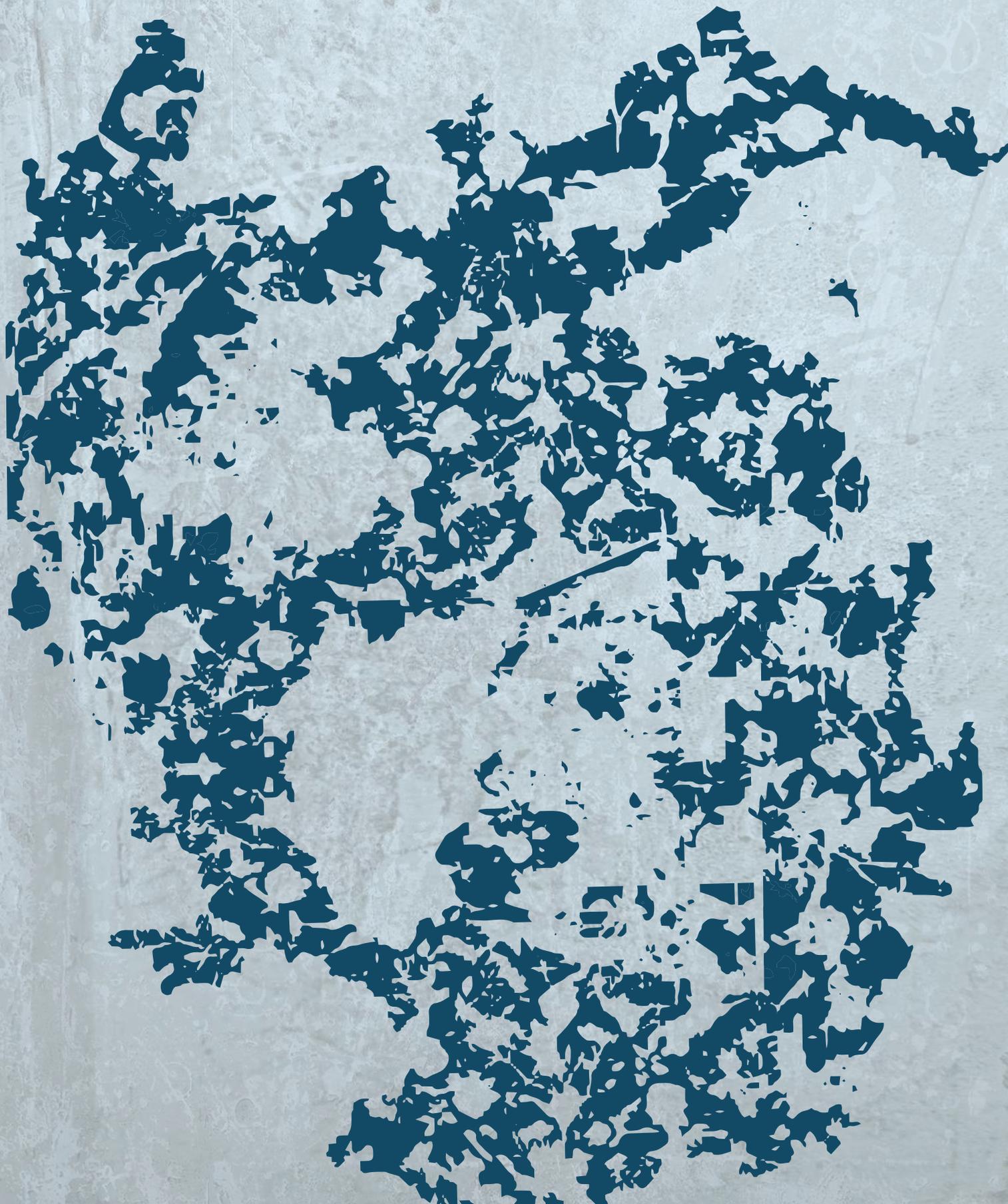
At the end, highlight that as activists it's important to make our campaigns as inclusive as possible, and utilize creativity and resourcefulness to not only include but also expand. We shouldn't see the need for accessibility as a setback, as something costly, or as an annoying detail that needs to be taken care of, but rather as the opportunity to expand beyond conventional or 'traditional' ways of doing something, and making our impact even bigger than before.

Notes for Facilitators:

If your group has more or less the same background or privileges, we recommend taking inspiration from The Wheel of Power and create different characters that you distribute between participants at the start of the activity. You can then invite them to act from their character's perspective throughout the exercise.



ANTIMILITARIST ACTIVISM



Starting a peace campaign or action

In this section, we will introduce some reflection and planning tools that help you to define how to begin planning an action. It might be helpful for you to apply several of these tools. They overlap each other, but you might get different results and different information out of them.

Essential questions.

When planning a campaign or action in order to make an issue related to peace, non-violence and antimilitarism more visible, we need to start from the basics by asking ourselves some questions:

What do I want to achieve by doing this?

Why do I want to do this? Why is it important?

When do I want to start doing this? When do I want to finish?

Where do I want to do this?

Who does this? Whom do I want to reach?

How do I want to do this?

Problem Analysis.

What is the actual problem you want to tackle? To understand your problem and the need and structures behind it is an important step in the beginning of your planning phase. It might require some additional research, if you don't have the solutions yourself. You could do a survey among people who know about the problem, you could read up on the backgrounds online, you could talk to people who know more about this than you.

One way to start formulating a problem is to follow these three steps:

1. State the issue, e.g. "Weapons exports"
2. Make it specific, e.g. "Weapons exports to Saudi Arabia"
3. Localize it: e.g. "Weapons exports to Saudi Arabia in Austria"

Some more questions to help you reach a deeper understanding of your problem:

Is the problem relevant? For whom is it relevant?

Who causes the problem?

Who identified the problem?

Is the problem new or does everyone know about it already?

Can you explain the problem?

Which images show the problem very well?

Are there solutions out there for the problem?



Does the solution cause other problems? For whom?
Can a campaign or action improve the situation around the
Does the solution cause other problems? For whom?
Can a campaign or action improve the situation around the
problem?
Are other groups and organisations already better equipped
and experienced at dealing with the problem?

NAOMIE as your start.

A common concept in project planning is NAOMIE. Each letter in the acronym stands for a different part of project planning, which is a great introduction to looking at a project.

Nneeds analysis: What are the needs you are trying to address? Who needs your campaign or action? In what aspect that you are trying to address does the world need to become a better place?

Aims: What is the overall vision you have for how the world and society should change about the issue you are addressing? Where do you want to end up eventually?

Objectives: What concrete goals do you have for your campaign in order to get closer to your aims?

Methods: How will your campaign or action look like? What will you do?

Implementation: How many people do you need? What and how much money, materials, tools or other resources? What is the timescale for our project?

Evaluation: What else do you need to do once the project is finished? What new needs have been created from your project?

Making your objectives SMART.

While it may be easier for you to find your overall aims, coming up with good objectives for a project is a real skill. A very common tool for finding objectives is to check whether they are SMART! Again an acronym, there are different ways to define the letters:

Specific: Come back to the Essential questions above – who, when, here, how, etc.

Measurable: How can you track progress within your project? How do you measure whether you succeeded? Give your objectives something that you can measure, e.g. number of people reached, number of mentions in the press, etc.

Attainable: Is the goal completely out of reach for you? Then tune it down a bit, so you can actually tackle this within your scope. (Alternatives for A are Achievable or Attractive)

Relevant: Is this objective actually something that you should tackle and not other people? Is the objective necessary for you to reach your aims? Is the goal consistent with other goals you have set? (Alternatives for R are Reachable or Reasonable)

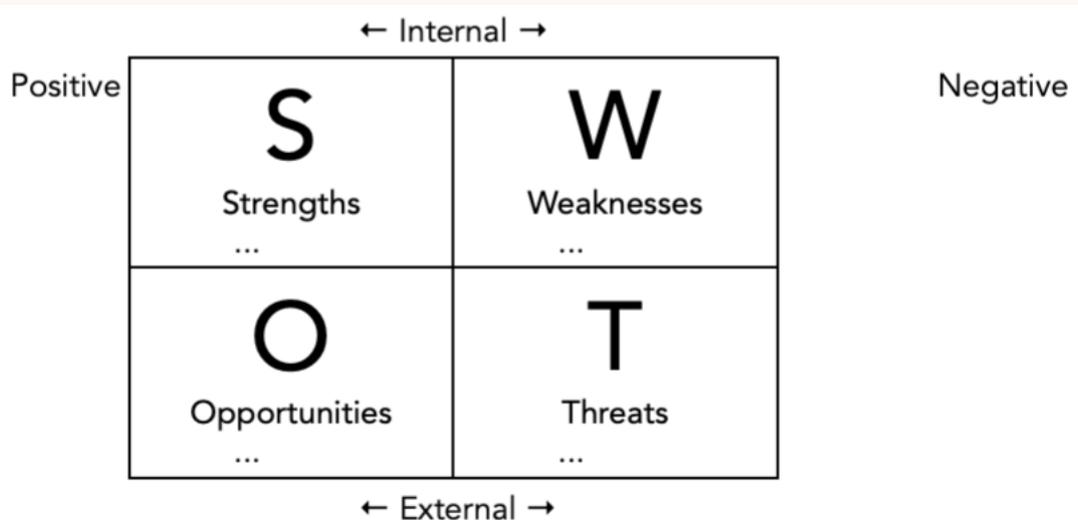
Time-bound: By what day of what year will you have completed this goal? In order for a project to be successful, it is really helpful to set yourself deadlines and to create a sense of urgency.

Reflecting on your context by doing a SWOT

Analysis. Another common tool for project planning, a SWOT Analysis helps you to look at possible challenges and possibilities that might await you before, during and after the project. Basically, you list Strengths (S), Weaknesses (W), Opportunities (O) and Threats (T) for your project. While strengths and weaknesses are things within yourself or/and your organisation, opportunities and threats are broader things in society and outside that might help or hinder you in achieving your objectives.

Think about your own capacities, the capacities of your organisation or organisations/groups/people around you, but also your opponent's capacities, society as a whole and practical issues.

The model can look like this:



Action forms

There are countless ways how you can gain attention for your issue. Some really common methods are:

- Having a campaign website
- Social media
- Campaign videos
- Press releases
- Petitions
- Testimonials by celebrities
- Communication behind the scenes (e.g. with opponents)

There are many different ways of doing **demonstrations and street protests**. The easiest way is to have a few people standing at a symbolic place with a message e.g. on signs or on T-shirts, either silently or shouting slogans. Think about whom you want to reach (journalists? random people on the street?) and how you can reach them. Some things that help your demonstration become more visible and more interesting in a media landscape that is saturated with news and actions:

A huge number of people – That is the goal of mass protests, to get as many people on the streets as possible, so that media can not not report about your action.

Funny or interesting costumes, e.g. animal costumes, colors, nudity, don't dress like a protester

Funny or interesting demo signs

Noise, music or silence

Unlikely alliances, i.e. getting groups that are not associated with an issue to be in solidarity with your campaign (e.g. „Grandmas against Killer Robots!“)

Doing it in a prestigious or symbolic location, e.g. at a high-level event of the opponent

Guerrilla communication gives an interesting twist to activism. Here you take on the symbols, language and identities of those you want to criticize and you mock and criticize them, basically using their own PR weapons against themselves. This can be for example fake ads (advertising/ subvertising) and fake press releases on behalf of the company or institution you want to criticize.

Another interesting and historically pretty successful action form is civil disobedience. That's the intentional breaking of a law in order to showcase one's protest against the law's legitimacy. Rosa Parks for example didn't get up from her seat in a bus in the segregated US in the 1950s, even though it was reserved for white people and she was black. Doing civil disobedience – e.g. blocking or occupying some

thing – needs, among other things, a good moral ground why to do it, it needs experience, good planning and a good legal team.

Strategic Storytelling

In order for a campaign or action to reach its goals, you need to be strategic. Here are some tips for you when planning one.

Who is your audience? Whom do you want to reach with your campaign or action? What do typical followers and supporters look like? What media platforms do they use? (Which social media do they use, which newspapers do they read, which shows do they watch?) What kind of language do you need to use to reach them?

There is a conflict. Every problem is basically a conflict between different interests. That your goal has not been achieved on its own probably has to do with some people in power not being willing to comply with what you want (e.g. a certain political party or the Ministry of Defense doesn't want to abolish military conscription). Media are much more likely to report about your action, if they can identify this conflict and they see the conflict as a relevant one. Make clear that there are different sides in this and on which side you stand on. Create actions that protest against your opposing side's positioning and put those into media.

Keep it simple, stupid! (K.I.S.S.) When people hear about your action or campaign, it should be very easy for them to understand what it is about. They should easily be able to tell other people about it and to repeat your core message. Having witty references to pop culture can be fun, but it might make it inaccessible to a lot of people who don't get them. Of course lots of issues are complex and multifaceted, but one of the difficulties of doing activism is to make complicated matters simple. Even the title of your campaign shouldn't be anything complicated ideally.

Emotions are key. While facts and rational arguments are great and can be part of your reasoning, what really reaches most audiences is emotions. Emotional images, emotional language, sad piano music in the background of a campaign video.

Don't keep doing the same thing! If you want to make media continuously report about your campaign and your goals – and thus also giving visibility to the problem you want to address – you should not just stage one street protest looking exactly the same after another. Bring variety into your campaign, use different action forms, have a surprise element.

Be a superlative. For media to report about you, it can be interesting for them, if your action is the first, the biggest, the only of its kind.

Keep a red thread. If you are doing several actions, make sure that there is a consistency between them in terms of language used, message, images etc. People should recognize that it all comes from the same place and has the same goals. When they hear about your campaign in different points of time, they should be led through your campaign like through a story, with continuous progression.

Best practices: Cool campaigns and actions

It is always good to look at what other people have done and are doing to see what works, what gets attention and what actually changes things. During our training, we shared a few cool and interesting campaigns and actions (around peace, non-violence and antimilitarism, but also other topics) that could be an inspiration for your own planning. Some examples here:

Women in Black: This women's organisation stages vigils in front of places where militaristic decisions are made. Women dress up in black funeral clothing, often with flowers or other symbols associated with grief and funerals, and protest against war. (More here)

Our Grief is not a Cry for War: After the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York on 11th September 2001, artists staged a performance in different places in the city to announce that they were grieving for the victims of the attacks, but still not asking for the US to use this as a justification for starting a war. The artists wore all black and signs depicting the name of the campaign. (More here)





End the Cage Age: It is still legal to keep animals in cages in huge factory farms. This EU-wide petition asked the European Union to ban cages from animal agriculture, e.g. cages for pigs, chickens or other farmed animals. Hundreds of animal rights organisations from around Europe were part of the petition and more than 1.6 million signatures were signed. This helped to make the issue of cage farming much more visible and it reached the goal of forcing a discussion on abolishing it in the European Parliament. ([More here](#))

eva.stories: What if a Jewish teenage girl in the Holocaust had Instagram? This art project on Instagram staged for several months Insta stories and posts on an Instagram account in order to gain visibility for the atrocities of the Shoah and to reflect on how this still relates to today's society and media landscape. ([More here](#))

Stop Killer Robots: Several countries (e.g. the US, China, Israel, Russia, South Korea and the UK) are developing fully autonomous weapons which by themselves would be able to kill, e.g. during armed conflict but also to suppress protest. The campaign informs about the situation through simple language („killer robots“). ([More here](#))

Save the Arctic: Greenpeace wants to prohibit industrial fishing and oil drilling in the Arctic in order to preserve Arctic ecosystems. On their website, they ask people to sign petitions about the issue. In several actions, e.g. through hanging banners on a Gazprom drilling site in Russia or by making a parody website of the Shell company, the campaign gained a lot of attention and became controversial. ([More here](#))

Clean Clothes Campaign: A network of NGOs and labour unions want to make the poor living and working conditions of workers in the global garment industry better by raising the issue, pointing out the malpractice of retailers and distributors, educating consumers and supporting workers on site. ([More here](#))

Food Not Bombs: First started by anti-war activists in the US in the 1980s, the concept is simple: Collecting “surplus” vegan or vegetarian food, cooking it and then distributing it in a public (or otherwise visible) space, along with educational materials like pamphlets. The idea behind it is to show how various forms of systemic injustice are interconnected - poverty, food waste, the military-industrial complex, as well as others like ecology and animal agriculture. Approaching people and engaging them in conversation is also an important part; holding it in a public space, having visible banners and lots of educational materials at the event itself, and/or publicizing it beforehand with posters or on social media helps to draw people's attention.. ([More here](#))



Money, Money, Money

How to get money for a workshop, an action or campaign?
There are different ways for you to move forward with this:

No budget. Do you need money actually? The easiest way to deal with an action is to see what resources you need and then to try and get around this with as little money as possible (low budget) or no money at all (no budget), as then you save a lot of time and effort on complying to your funder's guidelines and conditions, e.g. on what kind of actions you can or cannot do or on reporting.

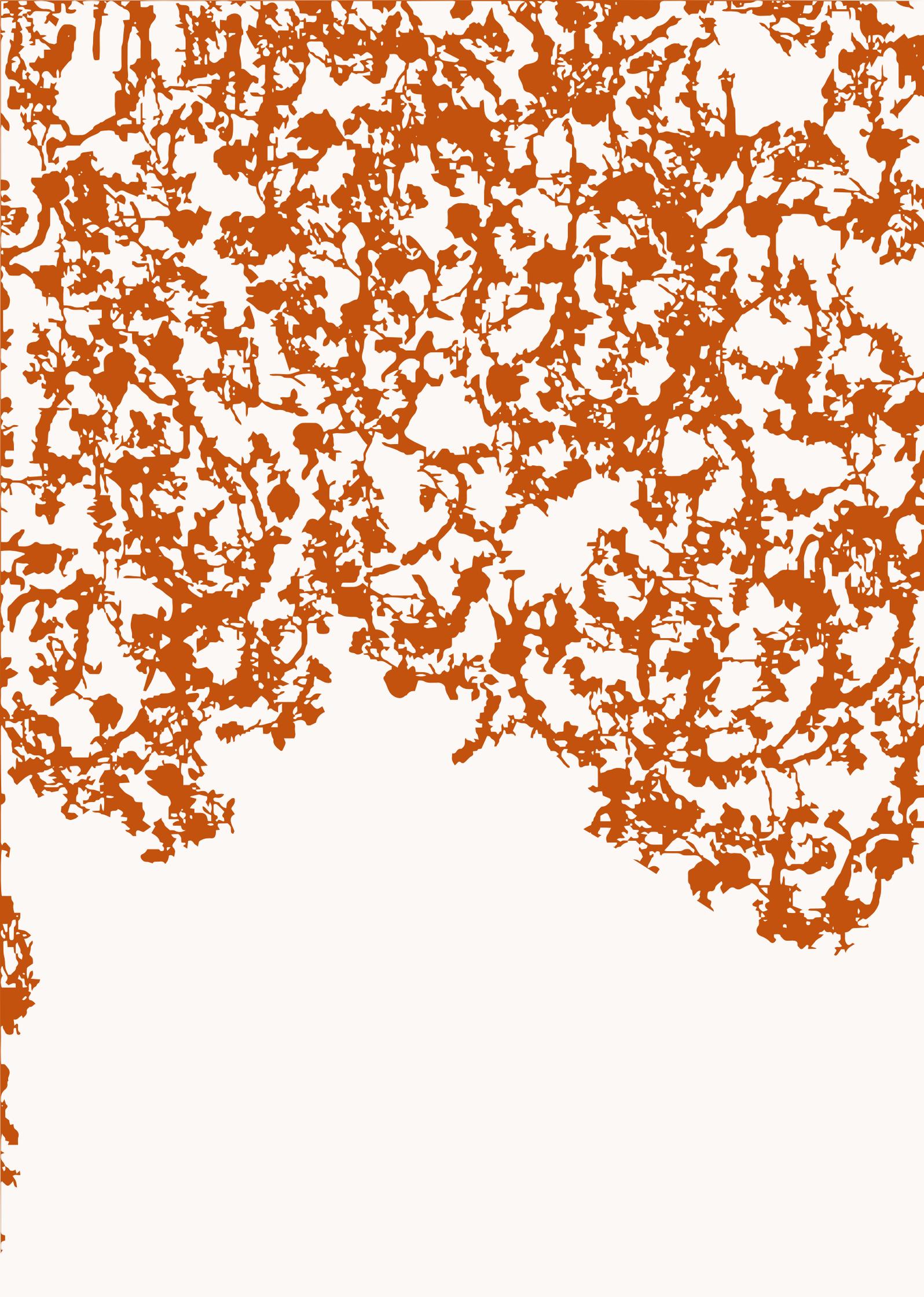
Public money. This is a really common source for funding:

- city governments
- embassies
- federal ministries (e.g. culture or youth)
- regional governments
- Council of Europe (e.g. the European Youth Foundation)
- European Commission (e.g. Erasmus+ like this toolkit here)

All of these institutions give money to youth and activist projects. Think about whether this could fit your project though – while some public institutions might actually be really supportive of also political actions and campaigns around peace and non-violence, others might see you as detrimental to their own work.

Foundations. Both public institutions and wealthy people or families might create funds to support non-profit projects with specific causes. Some foundations might especially focus on the topic that you're trying to address. Foundations are not a big source of project funding in every country, but e.g. in Switzerland, Germany, Norway and the US there are a lot of foundations that also give out money to projects outside of their own national scope.

Donations, sponsorships, etc. You might also think about crowdfunding, which is collecting money online by lots of people giving small donations and you offering them something in return (e.g. a product or an experience). You could organise a solidarity party, where people come to dance and the entrance fee goes as a donation to your project. Some companies might also be keen on providing you with materials and capacities for free, if they support the cause of your campaign or action.



ANTIMILITARIST GROUP DYNAMICS AND CARE



An important and short introduction

As facilitators delving into the important and often challenging topics of militarism, war, and peace through action, it is crucial to recognize the emotional weight these subjects carry. The discussions and activities we lead are not just intellectually demanding, but can also take an emotional toll on both participants and yourself as a facilitator.

In the context of our most recent project, we hosted learning environments about war while there were active war zones in different corners of Europe and neighboring regions, and they were already everywhere in the news. Some participants had been through war themselves, had to serve as soldiers due to military conscription or actively refused to do military service. We found that the best reaction to this situation was to separate our daily programmes into input sessions, where participants could learn about war and antimilitarism, and group care sessions, where participants and facilitators could hold space and emotionally take care of each other.

Thus, we want to remind you of some things before moving forward:

- People come from all walks of life, with many different and complicated experiences related to war, most of the time not 100% digested or healed.
- Some people are already in a vulnerable spot regarding it due to past experiences (ex. Ukrainians, Palestinian refugees)
- Some others have not lived through a war situation themselves, but come from a family or community who has and this affected them
- Some others are sensitive to topics that are involved in the context of war (ex. sexual abuse, murder, etc)
- Some others have half-formed opinions about issues due to lack of education or awareness, which can be hard for some to hear and experience
- Some are facing conditions that don't always allow them to express themselves in the way they would like (ex. neurodivergent people)
- Facilitators can be facing multiple or all of the aforementioned cases
-

All of these boil down to one important reminder: people are different and very emotional creatures, especially around sensitive topics. Which means that we need to invest time and energy in our educational spaces when we work on the



topic of war in order to make sure that people have adequate emotional care to navigate through this journey. And that includes also the facilitators, especially if they are the ones responsible for the group's emotional wellbeing.

Below, we will provide you with some tips and tricks on how to navigate this, and some detailed sessions that you can host to support you and your group.

Understanding the Emotional Landscape

As we mentioned, the topics of war, militarism, and activism are inherently intertwined with intense emotions. Participants may bring personal experiences, directly or indirectly, of conflict, difficult experiences, and even fully formed trauma.

These experiences can evoke a range of emotions from anger and grief, to hope and resilience. As a facilitator, being cognizant of this emotional diversity is the first step in creating a supportive environment.

As you might imagine, even just understanding emotions is a very lengthy topic with lots and lots of information, which we couldn't go through extensively here. However, we want to provide you with some tried and tested resources that we ourselves use to navigate it as facilitators:

- **Don't Worry, Be You** This fellow EU-funded project exclusively works on the topic of personal and community wellbeing in the context of global crisis. On their platform, you will find a very thorough booklet for educators with everything regarding the emotional landscape, as well as embodiment videos.
- **A Guide to Psychological First Aid for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** This guide is a deep-dive into the world of psychological first aid, especially in non-western environments, which can come in handy and many different scenarios in learning environments - especially the format 'Look-Listen-Link'.
- **Working Constructively With Emotions.** A good read about emotions and how they come into the space of



facilitation, and other articles included within it. We especially recommend the ones about Conflict.

How to host a safe(r) space

Aim:

To establish a safe and respectful learning space by introducing and embodying common values through interactive exercises.

Time:

60 minutes

Materials:

Pre-prepared poster describing each of the four agreements:

Consent, Engagement, Tenderness, Confidentiality.

Space for movement and pair activities

Background music

Description:

Present the concept of “The Four Agreements” and their importance in creating a safer training environment, because there’s no truly safe space - but we can make spaces as safe as possible.

Display the prepared poster, briefly describe each agreement, and how can it look like within a group:

- **Consent:** The act of allowing something to happen. Ask. Verbally or nonverbally. Give space for feedback. Respect the answer.
- **Engagement:** The act of being there, observing and reacting. Being on time. Be there. In the body. If you cannot engage fully, observe.
- **Tenderness:** The act of approaching something with kindness and care. Gentleness. To yourself and the other. Like seaweed in the sea. Grounded with feet, other parts of the body move.
- **Confidentiality:** The act of keeping something a secret, not shared. Respecting that people are sharing their stories, are vulnerable. Without confirmation, don’t share outside. Talk about your own experience.

Next, ask participants to stand up and start walking in different speeds, directions, and heights, loosening up their body and preparing for the next part.

Consent

Participants explore comfort with different distances by looking only at their feet and feet of others. They experiment with standing closer or farther apart, identifying the distance where they feel most comfortable.

Engagement

Participants pair up and non-verbally start engaging with each other in a 'silent conversation'. They experiment with how they can keep being engaged in a conversation without speaking.

Tenderness

In the same pairs, one participant acts as 'seaweed' moving parts of their body, while the other represents 'ocean waves' gently touching to guide the movement. Then, they exchange roles.

Confidentiality

In the same pairs and still nonverbally, participants close their communication they just had by a symbolic way they choose without speaking, which will maintain the confidentiality in what they shared (ex. shaking hands, a gesture, a hug).

Debrief

Invite participants to come back to the circle and discuss what they learned about this experience with their pair. Then, host a discussion about collective takeaways from the exercise on how we can support each other to keep our learning space as safe as possible.

Group Pitfalls

Topic: Exploring sensitive areas and trigger points, setting boundaries, group agreements

Aims:

To identify and address potential group pitfalls in a respectful and inclusive manner, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all participants.

Time: 60-90 minutes



Materials:

- Cards labeled with various potential group pitfalls, points or topics that can bring down a group (ex. “Alcohol,” “Late Arrivals,” “War”, “Alone time”, etc.)
- Soft background music
- Post-it notes
- Pens
- Flipchart or board
- Timer

Description:

Briefly explain the purpose of the activity, and lay out the cards with group pitfalls on the floor. Start playing soft music in the background.

Invite participants to explore. Instruct participants to walk around and observe the cards, and encourage them to reflect on their reactions to each pitfall:

Where do they feel more relaxed or more tense?

What thoughts or feelings arise?

Invite participants to suggest. After exploring enough, distribute post-it notes and pens to participants. Ask them to think about their personal needs and write anonymous yet personal suggestions on how to avoid falling into each pitfall. After that, have participants sit down.

Harvest and present. The facilitator collects all post-it notes and displays them on a flipchart or board. Facilitate a discussion to reach common agreements on how to work together, addressing each pitfall and the suggestions you got via post-its.

Formulate and agree upon group norms. Some examples could be:

Respect for everyone’s background, identity, and pronouns.
Acceptance of mistakes, with a commitment to recognition and corrective action.

A non-judgmental attitude as a principle

The right to opt-out of activities with open communication for improvement.

Consent for any physical contact.

Respect for everyone’s time, both participants’ and facilitators’

Open communication about personal limits.

Acknowledge that it’s okay not to have immediate solutions for all pitfalls.

Discuss the plan for breaks, including the upcoming coffee

break and lunch schedule.

Remind participants that unresolved issues can be revisited and addressed progressively.

Notes for Facilitators:

Ensure a safe and respectful environment throughout the activity.

Encourage honest and open communication.

Be attentive to the needs and comfort levels of all participants.

Be prepared to mediate and guide the discussion constructively.



Introducing Non-Violent Communication

Topic:

Conflict resolution, non-violence

Aims:

Make participants aware of their emotions and needs and how to communicate them in a non-violent way



Time:

60 minutes

Materials:

2 flipcharts

One with the Giraffe Framework

1. See / Observe without judgment: 'What do I observe (see/hear) that does not make me feel okay?'

2. Feel / our internal feeling: 'How do I feel in relation to what I observe?'

3. Needs: 'What do I need or value that causes my feelings?'

4. Action / Request: 'The concrete actions I'd like to be taken'

And one with the How to Express cheat sheet:

- When [objective fact]...

I felt/thought...

My request is...

Introduction / background:

Non-violent Communication (NVC) is a method of communication developed by Marshall Rosenberg. This method aims to facilitate dialogue and explores how to manage conflict and express empathy / self-empathy. Through it, you can learn how to connect with

yourself and others, take responsibility for how you feel, and form requests in a way that respects all parties involved

With non-violent communication, anger or disappointment is not bad. It is an emotion that you can express, and comes when a need that you have is not fulfilled. However, through the NVC framework, you can express your needs and feelings in a way that is constructive rather than destructive, and build the foundation for interpersonal change.

Humans have an inherent set of needs that they need fulfilled, and it is subjective what need is more important for them in a specific scenario. This method urges us to look at our position, acknowledge what created this situation, and treat each other with empathy and care rather than judgment.

Description:

The Wind Blows for the Ones Who... This exercise is inspired by the activity "The wind blows for the ones who....". Start by making a circle of chairs, with each person sitting on one chair. The facilitator doesn't have a chair and stands in the middle. The facilitator explains that whoever is in the center expresses a need for themselves. For example: „I need collaboration“. If someone has the same need, they

stand up from their chair and look for a new place in the circle, until there is a new person in the middle.

Debriefing:

- We suggest to first talk about these reflection questions:
- How did you feel during the activity?
- Were some needs universal, while others were not? Can you give examples?

Provide input. After a discussion, we propose to explain the core of Non-violent Communication as a method through the analogy of Giraffes; they are big animals with a tall neck for observing and a big heart, ears outwards to hear everything and approaching with curiosity rather than attacking.

Then, Introduce the Giraffe Framework:

1. See / Observe

What do I observe (see/hear) that does not make me feel okay?

2. Feel / our internal feeling

How do I feel about what I observe?

3. Needs

What do I need now, and these feelings have surfaced?

4. Action

What do I need to happen to feel okay again?

And provide the How to Express Cheat Sheet:

When [objective fact] ...

I felt/thought...

My request is...

Give examples. Give an example from the participant's standpoint:

When you touched me in the middle of the exercise, I felt uncomfortable and unsafe. My request would be to please ask me before touching.

Or, a bit more complicated scenario:

When you laughed in the middle of my campaign presentation, I felt confused and embarrassed. I started thinking 'Did I do something wrong in my presentation?'. So, my request would be for you to please don't laugh when I am presenting, and get in touch with me after the presentation if you observed something is out of place.

You can also present an example from the facilitator's standpoint:

I noticed that when I was addressing the group, you were looking at your phone several times. I feel uneasy and I need

to feel my attention is being valued, like I value yours. My request is for you to actively participate in the session. Would you like it if we'd talk to reach an agreement about phones during sessions?

This framework works well also for situations where we want to highlight something positive that we observed:

When we were in the middle of a heated argument about the campaign in the group, and you asked me if I was okay, I felt appreciated and taken care of. Please, keep doing this when we are working together. :)

Little Hassles

Topic:

Conflict resolution, personal responsibility, issue resolution, non-violence

Aims:

To explore alternative reactions to little hassles that happen in activism but can bring the whole group down.

Time: 1-3 hours

Materials:

- Hassle Envelopes. Write a common hassle on the front side of an envelope (ex. people not being on time for the demonstration, the printer not working last minute) - prepare as many different envelopes as there are teams.
- Response empty cards/papers, four for each team.
- Pens
- Timer
- Whistle/Bell

Description:

Organize participants. Divide participants into 4 to 6 teams, with 3 to 7 members each. Teams should be approximately the same size for balance.

Brief participants. Explain that in this exercise we will try out the concept of taking personal responsibility. Although we cannot control what is happening in the real world, we can change our reactions to the event. For example, when we are stuck in a traffic jam with cars crawling at a very slow speed because of a highway accident, we can use the slowed-down pace to make telephone calls to our

friends. The secret is to stop feeling like a victim of the circumstances and how the universe has abandoned us, and change the way we see the situation that confronts us, to find the meaningful opportunities hidden there..

Create some examples. Ask participants to brainstorm alternative reactions to getting stuck in traffic. Follow up by asking participants to give other examples of everyday hassles. Take one of them and challenge participants to generate positive reactions to these negative events. Distribute the supplies. Give one hassle envelope and four index cards to each team.

Conduct the first round. Ask team members to discuss the hassle on the envelope they received and to identify how they could respond to it in several different positive ways. Tell team members to write short sentences describing these reactions on an index card. Announce a time limit of 3 minutes and encourage the teams to work rapidly. Explain that the teams' reaction cards will eventually be evaluated in terms of both the number and the quality of the positive alternatives.

Conclude the first round. After 3 minutes, blow the whistle and announce the end of the first round. Ask each team to place its reaction card (the index card with its positive alternatives) inside the envelope and pass the envelope, unsealed, to the next team. Warn the teams not to open the envelope they receive, but not to look at the alternatives listed on the reaction card inside. Tell the teams to list positive alternatives related to the hassle on a new reaction card. After 3 minutes, blow the whistle and ask teams to place the response card inside the envelope and pass it to the next team.

Conduct more rounds. Conduct two more rounds of the game using the same procedure. Conduct the evaluation round. Start the fifth round just as you did the previous rounds. However, tell teams that they do not have to write any more positive alternatives to the hassle specified on the front of the card. Instead, teams must evaluate and synthesize the four reaction cards inside the envelope. They do this by reviewing the different cards, selecting the top five positive alternatives, and writing them on a flip chart paper.

Debrief the participants. Assemble participants back in their seats. Invite them to briefly comment on the patterns among the positive alternatives. Also ask them to discuss the similarities that can be found among positive alternatives related to different hassles. Ask the participants to identify the hassle for which it was the most difficult to come up with suitable alternatives.

Carry out follow-up activities. Collect all the envelopes and cards for use as examples during future sessions.

Adjustments

Not enough time? Announce tight time limits. For example, allow only two minutes for each round. Play only two rounds of the game before conducting the evaluation round. Eliminate the evaluation round. After evaluation, proceed directly to debriefing.

Too few players? Conduct the game among individual players. All you need is a group of three participants. If necessary, play the game twice, using two different sets of hassle envelopes.

Too many players? Divide the large group of participants into three or more subgroups. Have each subgroup divide itself into teams and play the game in a parallel fashion.

Power Structure Play

Topic:

Power structures within activism and organizations, non-violence, impro

Aims:

To enhance awareness of participants' on the topic of power structures and communication, especially in peace activism and organizations.

Time: 30-60 minutes

Materials:

Handout for all participants of a neutral dialogue

Description:

Round 0: Tryout.

Distribute the handout with the script for a peace activism scene.

Recruit two volunteers to act out the scene, just as it's written.

Allow the pair to play the scene once without any outside direction.

Discuss the perceived status of each character in the context of peace activism.

Rounds 1- as many as you want: Roles

Assign status roles to each of the two players and have them play the scene again. The status assignments may include any of the following:

Activist A has high status in the organization; Activist B has low status.

Activist A has low status; Activist B has high status.

Both activists have high status.

Both activists have low status.

Activist A has high status and Activist B tries to gain high status

Both activists have low status and try to gain high status

The high or low status of someone is decided based upon years involved in the organization, years involved on the topic, age, gender, race, being part of a mi

Replace the two players with a new pair and continue with different status combinations.

Debrief at the end of each round.

Conduct a final debriefing discussion.

- How did the status dynamics affect the discussion about peace activism?
- What were the most effective ways to raise your status in the context of peace activism?
- What lowered your status in this setting?
- How would you apply these status dynamics in real-life peace activism scenarios?
- What is the value of being aware of status during conversations in activism?

Tips

- Encourage each team to try a couple of different status interactions before moving on to the next team.
- Feel free to pause the action of the scene to highlight a clear status moment
- Note that attempts to claim status can backfire: High-status activists can fall in the eyes of others. Low-status activists can gain status by being focused on the cause.

Variations You Can Try

- Use one pair for the initial demonstration. Then divide participants into triads (two actors and one observer) for subsequent enactments.
- Have the group write their own neutral scene related to peace activism. Ensure that the script remains neutral.
- Set up status battles with the observers voting to decide who is the lowest or the highest in the context of activism.
- Incorporate 30 seconds of silence somewhere in the scene to reflect on the impact of non-verbal communication.

Activist Self-Care and the Six Thinking Hats Methodology

Topic:

Self-care in the context of peace activism and education, creative thinking, lateral thinking

Aims:

To help participants and develop personalized self-care strategies, fostering resilience and wellbeing in their challenging environment

Time: 45 minutes - 1 hour

Materials:

- Flipcharts
- Markers

Introduction:

The Six Thinking Hat Methodology is a decision-making methodology developed by Edward de Bono. De Bono identified six distinct directions in which the brain can be challenged when examining a subject, and in each of these directions the brain will identify and bring into conscious thought certain aspects of issues (ex. gut feeling or instinct, pessimistic judgment, neutral facts, etc).

When we first touched the topic of Activists' Self Care with our participants, we encountered various points of resistance; Some felt guilty for taking the time to take care of themselves while war was happening in another side of the world, while others were not convinced that this was a type of care that they needed. We found that the Six Hats framework is allowing them to inhabit 'a role' and freely discuss various aspects of the topic, feeling safe to play and experiment, and this is why we chose it for this specific aim topic.

Description:

Explain the importance of wellbeing in activism. You cannot pour in from an empty cup. It's important that we devote time as activists to our wellbeing. This is a fact that we all accept, and it's a fact of life.

Present the Six Thinking Hats framework. Prepare the participants that you will have a conversation to reach our own strategies for activist self-care, wearing different hats at a time. Announce that you will be keeping notes on your whiteboard/flipchart from the conversation.

Blue Hat Conversation (10 minutes) - Managing the Thinking Process

Announce participants that they will now wear the blue hat. The blue hat is the control hat. It is used for thinking about thinking. The blue hat sets the agenda, focus and sequence of hats, ensures the guidelines are observed and asks for summaries, conclusions, decisions and plans action. Do an “Agenda Setting” with your blue hats on - set the agenda for your self-care discussion. You decide what aspects of self-care they will focus on. If the conversation gets stuck, make sure you can guide the group towards the types of self-care.

Green Hat Session (15 minutes) - Generating Self-Care Ideas

The green hat is for creative thinking and generating new ideas, alternatives, possibilities and new concepts. Under the green hat, participants brainstorm creative self-care strategies. Encourage them to think outside the box, considering new and innovative ways to care for themselves.

Red Hat Session (10 minutes) - Intuition and Feelings

The red hat is about feelings, intuitions and instincts. The red hat invites feelings without justification. Wearing the red hat, participants share their feelings about self-care without justification or analysis. This could include their emotional responses to the topic of self-care, barriers they feel, how it connects or ‘collides’ with their identities as activists.

Yellow Hat Session (15 minutes) - Benefits and Values

The yellow hat is for a positive view of things. It looks for the benefits and values. With the yellow hat on, participants discuss the positive impacts of self-care not only on themselves, but also their communities around them and their activism. How, in the end, when we take care of ourselves we take care of everything around us.

Black Hat Session (15 minutes) - Caution and Critical Thinking

The black hat identifies risk. It is used for critical judgment and must give the logical reasons for concerns. It is one of the most powerful hats. Donning the black hat, participants critically assess potential challenges and obstacles in implementing self-care routines. They discuss logical reasons why certain self-care strategies might not work, and how they can balance personal with community care through activism.

White Hat Session (15 minutes) - Information and Facts

The white hat is all about information. What information you have, what information you need, and where you can get it. While wearing the white hat, participants discuss what

information they need about self-care, where they can obtain it, and how to apply the information effectively in their lives.

Conclusion and Action Plan (20 minutes)

Participants now remove their hats, and reflect on the insights gained from each perspective. Then, invite them to create a personal self-care action plan, based on the holistic understanding developed through the process.

Closing (5 minutes)

Invite participants to do a “Commitment Circle” - a quick round where each participant shares one key self-care commitment they are making

Important points for the Facilitator

- The black hat is powerful and essential. It is a necessary part of thinking, but often overused - so make sure to monitor the conversation.
- Make sure you guide the conversation only when you feel it's stuck somewhere.
- While we tried to keep the original colors of de Bono's model here, we understand that colors have different cultural contexts - for example, in China wearing a green hat signifies an unfaithful spouse. Feel free to change the colors of the hats to better fit the needs of your group, and make sure everyone can feel safe and focus on the exercise.

FURTHER READING

campaignstrategy.org . This is a great website by the British Greenpeace campaign strategist Chris Rose, featuring some basic tips for campaigning and lots of interesting further resources.

350.org Trainings. This climate justice organization gives lots of lessons on how to create grassroots actions and campaigns. They have very hands-on and useful tips on how to communicate with journalists, creating the right video, which images to use, but also on for example reaching decision-makers through people power.

Beautiful Rising. This beautiful activist web platform has lots of interesting tactics and tips when planning a creative action or campaign. It connects it to inspiring best practices and stories from all over the world.

War Resisters League. With a century of resistance history, the War Resisters League works to dismantle war and militarism at its roots. They provide antimilitarist education, resources, and organize with frontline communities and diaspora communities impacted by war and violence. Their website includes a lot of useful knowledge on topics such as police militarization, tear gas, and non-violent campaign organization.

The Change Agency. This resource platform focuses on activist education conducted by and with activists, utilizing education methods that affect justice-oriented social change. Their pedagogy includes experiential and empowered learning, mentorship, and exercises linked to real and contemporary change work. They draw inspiration from Paulo Freire's popular education work, and the spiral model of learning.

INCITE! Anti-Militarism Resources. INCITE! has developed a range of anti-war materials, focusing on the impact of war on women of color, third-world women, and their communities. Resources include statements, flyers, and articles that intensify the discussion on violence against these groups in the context of war.

Thriving Activist Toolkit. This online toolkit includes resources to help activists manage stress and overcome activist burnout; It provides a range of materials, such as studies, articles, videos, and books, focusing on self-care and sustainable activism.

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The official platform for the campaign with one goal: to abolish nuclear weapons forever. They are also our favorite place to look for resources regarding nuclear weapons, arguments and counterarguments, as well as to organize with fellow organizations on the topic.



INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION



As we wrap up this toolkit, we want to share a heartfelt hope with you: that it becomes more than just a collection of pages in your hands. We dream of it sparking new ideas in your mind, igniting a fire in your heart, and guiding your steps as you navigate the challenging path of antimilitarism and peace.

The reality is, the world of war and militarism is vast and deeply rooted. It's a tough, resilient adversary, and it won't crumble easily. But here's what keeps us going: the belief that, through persistent education and advocacy, we can slowly but surely turn this tide. Each conversation you start, each action you take, chips away at this colossal structure. It's a journey of a thousand miles, but every step counts.

As SCI, we are in this for the long run. We will be constantly evolving and improving our methods. The world changes, and so must our strategies to ensure our message remains powerful and relevant.

Our commitment to actively stand against war. This isn't a passive dream for us. It's a living, breathing mission that demands our constant attention, creativity, and passion. We urge you to stay active, keep the conversations alive, and always hold onto the vision of a world where peace isn't just a nice-sounding vanilla dream, but a tangible reality that can indeed happen.

In closing, we hope this toolkit does more than inform; we hope it inspires. We're excited to see the waves you'll make and the changes you'll drive. The future we're striving for - a future where war and militarism are just chapters in history books of a dystopian past - is within our reach. Let's keep pushing, keep dreaming, and keep working towards it.

Let's Organize Against War, so we can Live for Peace.

