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In Humility: Developing Intercultural Competence Among Leaders of a Reconciliation Organization in Israel-palestine

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IN HUMILITY:
DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE
AMONG LEADERS OF A
CHRISTIAN RECONCILIATION ORGANIZATION
IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE

A THESIS PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS

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IN SERVANT LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore the need for intercultural competence development among leaders of a Christian reconciliation organization (Musalaha) in Israel-Palestine. Reconciliation work brings together people from numerous cultural and religious backgrounds. Success in reconciliation work depends on many factors of which intercultural competence is one. Simply living in a region of great diversity or even frequent interaction with cultural others is no guarantee of a high level of intercultural competence. The researcher sought to gather information on current levels of intercultural competence among Musalaha leaders as well as material on the best means for continued development.

A biblical reflection included an examination of Philippians 2:1-11 as a source of guidance for both appropriate attitudes and actions when the Body of Christ experiences disunity. The literature review included several studies regarding the relationship between intercultural competence and various spiritual and emotional factors that either help or hinder its development. The central role of humility was explored both in Philippians and in the literature review.

The researcher employed a case study approach that included both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was gathered through the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) both before and after providing Musalaha leaders with intercultural competence training. Qualitative data was gathered through observations during group and individual training and written answers to questions at the end of each

group training. Additionally, data was collected through Musalaha's curriculum, previously published interviews of Musalaha participants, and interviews with participants in Musalaha women's programs conducted by the researcher in the fall of 2016.

Results from the IDI indicated that as a group Musalaha's leaders are operating from a Minimization orientation, which is an improvement over the polarized mentality of the surrounding culture but falls short of the intercultural competence level necessary to reach their reconciliation goals. Post-IDI results indicated the greatest improvement among those who accepted the validity of their pre-IDI results and participated in focused and intentional activities to develop.

DEDICATION

To Maddie, Ellie, Leo, and Monkey.

Because during all these years of serious work,

you made sure I never forgot to laugh.

CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

Statement of the Problem

Reconciliation work in Israel-Palestine brings together people from numerous cultural and religious backgrounds. A lack of understanding of cultural differences and an inability to effectively bridge these differences can be a hindrance to reconciliation. The problem this project addressed was the need to develop greater intercultural competence among leaders from multiple cultures who work with a Christian reconciliation ministry (Musalaha) in the Israeli-Palestinian context. In response to this problem the researcher studied Philippians 2:1-11 as a model of active love in community, which can guide both actions and attitudes in developing intercultural competence in a conflict setting; explored literature relating to methods of developing and evaluating intercultural competence, particularly in a conflict situation; studied Musalaha's Reconciliation Curriculum to become familiar with current practices; used the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to assess leaders' intercultural abilities before and after additional training; provided intercultural competency development training for Musalaha leadership both as a group and individually over a four-month period; and developed a set of principles for intercultural competence training that is appropriate to this context.

Delimitation of the Problems

The research was limited to eight leaders who work for Musalaha, a "non-profit organization that promotes and facilitates reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, based on the life and teaching of Jesus."[1]

The research was limited to eight hours of group training, two hours of individual coaching, and individual development work by participants done independently on a voluntary basis and reported to the researcher over a four-month period.

The research was limited to examining the intercultural development of these leaders through IDI results (before and after training), observations during group time, recorded discussions during group time, individual interviews, and written reflections from participants.

Assumptions

Two central assumptions shaped this project. The first assumption was that the Bible provides sound guidance for all aspects of life, including appropriate attitudes and behaviors when interacting with others. The second assumption was that the IDI is a valid indicator of intercultural competence.[2]

Setting of the Project

The setting of the project was among eight leaders of Musalaha, "a non-profit organization that promotes and facilitates reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians

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[1] Musalaha, accessed September 26, 2017, http://www.musalaha.org/.

[2] Intercultural Development Inventory, accessed September 26, 2017, https://idiinventory.com/products/idi-validation/.

from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, based on the life and teachings of Jesus"[3] amid the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

For more than 20 years, Musalaha programs have brought together Christian Palestinians and Israeli Messianic Jews to seek reconciliation amid intense conflict according to biblical principles. Christian Palestinians and Israeli Messianic Jews share a common faith in Jesus, yet they are also part of two different and deeply conflicted histories and cultures. Despite their shared faith, Christian Palestinians and Israeli Messianic Jews struggle with hostility, bitterness, and fear towards each other.[4]

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an intractable conflict. Intractable conflicts include many factors. Intractable conflicts are protracted, meaning "they persist for a long time, at least a generation."[5] They involve physical violence in which "group members, combatants, and civilians are killed and wounded either in wars, small-scale military engagements, or terrorist attacks."[6] They are zero-sum, meaning parties involved in the conflict "do not see any possibility of compromise and perceive any loss suffered by the other side as their own gain, and conversely, any gains of the other side as their own loss."[7] People involved in intractable conflicts see them as irresolvable, meaning they "do not perceive a possibility of resolving the conflict peaceably."[8] Intractable conflicts are

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[3] Musalaha, accessed February 27, 2017, http://www.musalaha.org/who-we-are/.

[4] Musalaha, accessed February 27, 2017, http://www.musalaha.org.

[5] Daniel Bar-Tal and Eran Halperin, "The Psychology of Intractable Conflicts: Eruption, Escalation, and Peacemaking," in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, 2nd ed., ed. L. Huddy, D.O. Sears, and J.S. Levy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 924.

[6] Bar-Tal and Halperin, 924.

[7] Bar-Tal and Halperin, 924.

[8] Bar-Tal and Halperin, 924.

"central," meaning they "occupy a central place in the lives of the individual group members and the group as a whole."[9] Additionally, groups involved in intractable conflicts must "make vast material (i.e., military, technological, and economic) and psychological investments in order to cope successfully with the situation."[10] And finally, they are total, meaning they are "perceived as concerning essential and fundamental goals, needs, and/or values that are regarded as indispensable for the group's existence and/or survival."[11]

In working for peace in an intractable conflict, one must recognize the power of the collective narratives held by each side that speak to each group's "identity, aspirations, perceived role in the conflict, and, mainly, its past and current history."[12] Those who work in peace education in regions of intractable conflict must face

> the challenge of deeply rooted beliefs held by each side about itself (we are right, God is on our side, we are the victims) and about the adversary (they are wrong; they are the aggressors; they understand only the language of force; they force us to do ugly things). Such collective beliefs are perceived as unquestioned truths and are thus highly resistant to change.[13]

Along with the collective beliefs of the people comes an ethos of conflict that includes societal beliefs regarding the unquestionable justness of one's goals and the importance of security in terms of both personal safety and the survival of the nation as a

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[9] Bar-Tal and Halperin, 924.

[10] Bar-Tal and Halperin, 924.

[11] Bar-Tal and Halperin, 924.

[12] Haggai Kupermintz and Gavriel Salomon, "Lessons to Be Learned from Research on Peace Education in the Context of Intractable Conflict," *Theory into Practice* 44, no. 4 (Autumn 2005), 293-302.

[13] Kupermintz and Salomon, 294.

whole.[14] The ethos of conflict includes beliefs that require a positive collective self-image in an ethnocentric sense that attributes only positive traits, values, and behaviors to one's own group.[15] Additionally, the ethos of conflict includes belief in one's victimization, which leads members to see themselves as the sole victims of the conflict. Each side carries views that delegitimize the other and refuses to attribute full humanity to them.[16]

The ethos of conflict requires and supports a polarized mentality, and in fact it can be difficult if not dangerous for individuals within conflicted communities to demonstrate any understanding of or sympathy for the other, as a polarized mentality is understood to be essential for the survival of the in-group.

Challenging this culture of conflict can be difficult as

> societies involved in intractable conflict use various societal mechanisms to block the appearance and dissemination of information providing an alternative view of the conflict, the rival, the in-group, and/or the conflicts goals: alternative information that humanizes the rival and sheds a new light on the conflict; that suggests compromises can be made, that sees a partner on the other side with whom it is possible to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflict; that views peace as beneficial and conflict as costly; that views continuation of the conflict as detrimental to the society; and that may even provide evidence that the in-group also holds responsibility for the conflict's continuation and has been acting immorally. This tendency to block alternative information can be found in every society involved in intractable conflict in the phases of escalation.[17]

Introducing alternative information that challenges deeply held beliefs rarely brings about a change of view as

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[14] Daniel Bar-Tal, Eran Halperin, and Ruthie Pliskin, "Why Is It So Difficult to Resolve Intractable Conflicts Peacefully? A Sociopsychological Explanation," in *Handbook of International Negotiation: Interpersonal, Intercultural, and Diplomatic Perspectives,* ed. Mark Galluccio (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 74.

[15] Bar-Tal et al., 74.

[16] Bar-Tal et al., 74.

[17] Bar-Tal et al., 76-77.

> these beliefs satisfy important human needs such as needs for certainty, meaningful understanding, predictability, safety, mastery, positive self-esteem and identity, differentiation, justice, etc. … Because they fulfill such primary needs, any change in these beliefs may be psychologically costly to the individual.[18]

The circumstances of an intractable conflict lead to emotional, psychological and physical separation between opposing groups even though they live near or even among one another. Daniel Bar-Tal explains that the

> psychology underlying the zero-sum perception of conflict indicates that the rival sides close themselves into an ethnocentric closet. They focus on their own needs and goals, building a psychological fence that prevents them from looking at the rival as a fellow human being. The rival is viewed only through the prism of the rifle aimed at a vicious enemy that has to be destroyed. This limits the perspective of the group from seeing the needs and goals of the rival.[19]

The dynamics of the conflict mean that Israelis and Palestinians essentially live in separate, homogeneous communities, with little interaction and little knowledge of one another.[20]

> One of the powerful realities of growing up in culturally homogeneous settings is they foster a sense of superiority about one's own way of life and a tendency to judge cultural difference as indicative of inferiority. This result is often unintentional and unconscious, but it is also too often obvious in behaviors and private feelings. … This universal tendency to judge language, cultural, religious, and behavior differences as indicators of the other's intelligence, human values, and even dignity is all too common and creates serious problems in relationships with other cultures and societies. … Such cultural arrogance is obviously a barrier in a global community; it breeds distrust and defensiveness. It surely does not create the potential for peace.[21]

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[18] Bar-Tal et al., 81.

[19] Daniel Bar-Tal, *Intractable Conflicts: Socio-Psychological Foundations and Dynamics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 44.

[20] Musalaha Staff, *Musalaha: A Curriculum of Reconciliation,* rev. ed. (Jerusalem: Musalaha Ministry of Reconciliation, 2014), 19.

[21] Alan Guskin, "Cultural Humility," in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Janet M. Bennett (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2015), 162.

Working toward reconciliation in an intractable conflict is extraordinarily complex. While ethnocentrism is not the whole of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, it is a factor that has played a central role in causing and perpetuating the conflict, and it is a substantial barrier to reaching reconciliation. Leaders who are operating from an ethnocentric mindset are not equipped to be the cultural bridge-builders they must be to lead others through the reconciliation process. Those who earnestly seek reconciliation in an intractable conflict cannot ignore the crucial need for reconciliation leaders to have a high level of intercultural competence.

The Importance of the Project

The Importance of the Project to the Researcher

As an American who has spent several years living in the Middle East, the researcher has both extensively studied and lived amid the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The researcher has seen firsthand the deep psychological, emotional, physical, and spiritual damage that affects all who live in an intractable conflict.

Through the years the researcher has followed the work of various individuals and organizations who seek reconciliation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Musalaha's reconciliation work, which is formed according to the life and teachings of Christ and maintains a clear and faithful witness to Jesus, stands out among numerous reconciliation efforts in the area. The researcher has chosen to work with Musalaha both to learn from their years of experience in seeking to obey Christ's call to reconciliation in one of the most conflicted regions of the world, and to contribute to and enhance the good work they are already doing by assisting their staff to develop greater intercultural competence.

The Importance of the Project to the Immediate Ministry Context

While some Christians may assume that a genuine faith in Christ and a sincere love for brothers and sisters who come from culturally different backgrounds is all that is necessary to bridge cultural differences successfully, cross-cultural interactions are far more complex than many would imagine.[22]

In describing culture and its role in interactions between people, it is common to describe culture as an iceberg (Figure 1).

> The essence of the iceberg concept is that there is a visible dimension of culture that one can see and that people are aware of—the tip of the iceberg—and an invisible, largely unconscious dimension that one cannot see: the submerged part of the iceberg.[23]

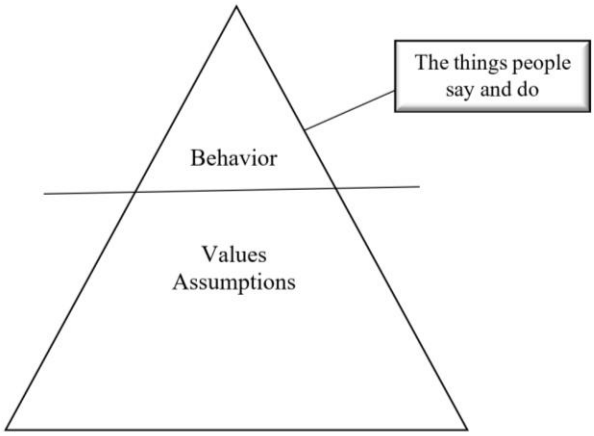

Figure 1. The Elements of Culture.
Source: Craig Storti, "Intercultural Competence in Human Resources," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 274.

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[22] Jaime S. Wurzel, *Toward Multiculturalism: A Reader in Multicultural Education* (Newton, MA: Intercultural Resources Corporation, 2004), 2.

[23] Craig Storti, "Intercultural Competence in Human Resources: Passing It on, Intercultural Competence in the Training Arena," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 274.

When interacting with another person, one encounters "their culture *in the form* of their behavior,"[24] and it is other people's behavior one must "understand, interpret correctly, and ideally be able to anticipate."[25]

> But people's behavior is not arbitrary or accidental; it is a result (at least in part) of the things below the line in the iceberg, hence invisible and unconscious. So to understand, interpret correctly, and be able to anticipate behavior, you need to have a general understanding of values and assumptions.[26]

People from different cultures are working with different values and assumptions that determine what behavior is "typical, normal, natural and logical"[27] to them. Behavior is rooted in values and assumptions. While the behavior of people from one culture might strike people from a different culture as odd or even offensive, it is perfectly logical to people who are from that particular culture and who have the same underlying values and beliefs.[28]

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[24] Storti, 275.

[25] Storti, 275.

[26] Storti, 275.

[27] Storti, 275.

[28] Storti, 275.

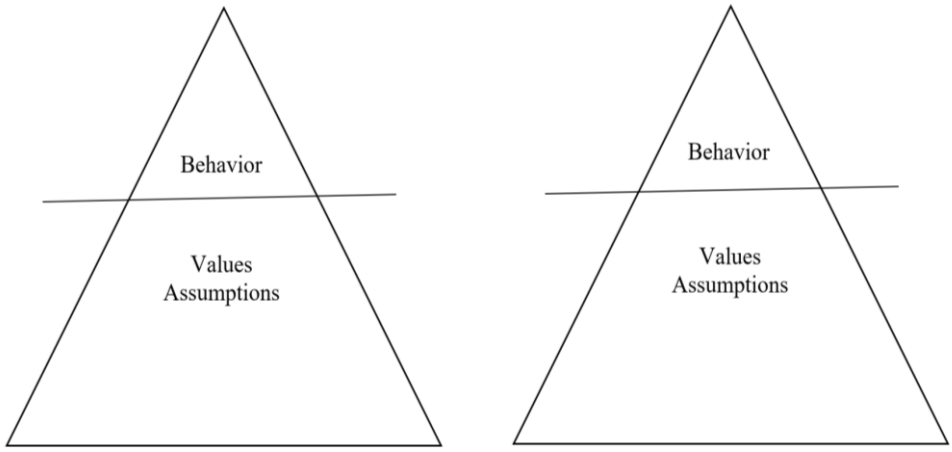

Figure 2. Making Cultural Comparisons.
Source: Craig Storti, "Intercultural Competence in Human Resources," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 275.

When one only sees the behavior of a cultural other without deeply understanding the values and assumptions that drive it, misunderstandings are likely (Figure 2). A person from a culture that believes a good person will communicate directly and sees direct communication as an indication of honesty and forthrightness will feel most comfortable communicating directly and will be most able to understand others who communicate directly. If that person directly communicates criticism in a culture whose underlying values and assumptions include a belief that a good person knows it is more important to behave in a way that preserves harmony in relationships and protects a person from public humiliation than to deal directly with a problem, the direct person's behavior will not appear to be honest or forthright but merely boorish, rude, and embarrassing. On the other hand, the indirect communication behavior of the person from a culture that values harmony in relationships and avoiding public embarrassment when dealing with a problem may seem dishonest, deceptive, and weak to the individual who is

used to direct communication. Even though both people are behaving in ways that would be considered "typical, normal, natural, and logical" among others with the same underlying values and assumptions, and even though both desire to communicate in a polite, appropriate, and respectful manner, their behavior is likely to be misunderstood by and offensive to the cultural other.

A sincere desire to demonstrate love, respect, and kindness is not enough to ensure that one will communicate any of these even in the most straightforward cross-cultural interactions. Gert Jan Hofstede explains: "intercultural competence requires the ability to participate in the social life of people who live according to different unwritten rules."[29] Following the unspoken rules of a community indicates that one is a "good member,"[30] meaning one who can be trusted to behave in moral ways (as defined by the community).[31] People who persistently break the rules are not trusted.

While some may misunderstand intercultural competence to mean leaving behind one's own cultural beliefs and practices and adopting those of the other, it is important to note that

> intercultural competence does not involve abandoning one's own cultural identifications or affiliations, nor does it require individuals to adopt the cultural practices, beliefs, discourses or values of other cultures. Intercultural competence instead involves being open to, curious about and interested in people who have other cultural affiliations, and the ability to understand and interpret their practices, beliefs, discourses and values. Intercultural competence enables people to interact and cooperate effectively and appropriately in situations where cultural "otherness" and "difference" are salient. It also enables people to act as

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[29] Gert Jan Hofstede, "The Moral Circle in Intercultural Competence: Trust across Cultures," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 85.

[30] Hofstede, 85.

[31] Hofstede, 85.

> "mediators" among people of different cultures, and to interpret and explain different perspectives.[32]

Intercultural competence involves much more than simply gaining information about cultural others, and herein lies one of the greatest challenges in developing it. While ethnocentrism can be viewed as "the inability to experience reality differently than we were originally taught," intercultural competence can be understood as "the ability to transcend our own limited experience and embody the world as another is experiencing it."[33] While gaining information about other cultures is relatively easy, developing intercultural competence is intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually challenging. It requires long-term, concentrated, intentional effort.

A person may have a deep faith in Christ and genuine desire to demonstrate love, respect, and kindness to a cultural other, but if that desire is not coupled with a substantial understanding of the values and assumptions of the cultural other, he or she may unconsciously and unintentionally communicate insensitivity, ignorance, or even arrogance. In work as culturally complex and acutely sensitive as facilitating reconciliation in an intractable conflict, it is crucial to have leaders who can genuinely empathize with the life experience of cultural others, comprehend the narrative of the other, view the world from the perspective of the other, and build bridges between different groups. In other words, it is essential to have leaders with a high level of intercultural competence.

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[32] Josef Huber and Christopher Reynolds, eds., *Developing Intercultural Competence through Education, Pestalozzi Series,* vol. 3 (Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2014), 24.

[33] Milton J. Bennett, "Paradigmatic Assumptions and a Developmental Approach to Intercultural Learning," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do About It,* ed. Michael Vande Berg, R. Michael Paige, and Kris Hemming Lou (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2012), 102.

The Importance of the Project to the Church at Large

In the multicultural world of today, situations of conflict with cultural others are inevitable, even among Christians. Often the actions and attitudes of Christians are influenced more by the history and life experiences of a specific group of people living at a particular time, in a particular place, and under particular circumstances than by reflection on Scripture and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. These circumstances shape how the group sees the world and experiences others. A lack of awareness of the values and assumptions underlying one's own and other cultures leaves Christians unable to discern the forces that move and shape them. Christians can benefit from developing a deeper awareness of how their cultural background influences their interactions with cultural others as well as with Scripture. Christians can also benefit from developing a deeper understanding of the values and assumptions of cultural others. Developing greater intercultural competence will allow Christians to make more consciously biblical choices in both actions and attitudes, particularly in situations of cross-cultural conflict.

CHAPTER TWO: BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

Introduction

The Body of Christ in Israel-Palestine faces numerous pressures, both within and without. Palestinian Christians struggle with disunity within their own communities due to differences in theology, tradition, and ethnicity. The Palestinian Christian community,

> like the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is caught between uniformity and diversity. The church is home to Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox religious orders, with chapels for the Syriac Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox and Ethiopian Orthodox churches. Although they are divided in their customs, traditions, languages and even theology, they inhabit the same building and worship separately under one roof. The Palestinian Christian community tends to unify as a group in the face of persecution. Nevertheless, their divisions are apparent, particularly because the denominations tend to correspond to ethnic divisions as well.[1]

Within the Israeli Messianic Jewish community,

> there is little theological reflection and, where there are critical issues, they are frequently laid aside in deference to the practical. There are no forums or discussion group meetings on an ongoing basis to reflect and discuss theological issues. The community is focused on activity and seems not to have the time for, or not to see, the importance of long-term, reasoned theological reflection. Differences are not openly discussed and worked through, and the tendency is to fellowship with those who are most like you, to avoid groups with whom you may differ, and to indulge in polemic name-calling from a safe distance.[2]

Along with the divisions within each community, deep divisions exist between the Palestinian Christian and Israeli Messianic Jewish communities. Salim Munayer and Lisa Loden explain,

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[1] Salim Munayer and Lisa Loden, *Through My Enemy's Eyes: Envisioning Reconciliation in Israel-Palestine* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2013), 71.

[2] Munayer and Loden, 96.

> the prevailing cultures within our believing communities impede even fledgling attempts at reconciliation. One of the biggest obstacles to the process of reconciliation between Israeli Messianic Jews and Palestinian Christians is theology, specifically the theological differences that separate them. It should be no surprise that exclusive theological positions have developed on both sides. These positions inform the way Israeli and Palestinian believers view each other and the political conflict in which they are enmeshed. While many leaders on both sides claim that reconciliation is a high spiritual priority, these same leaders too often fail to engage with those on the other side who present significant challenges to their theological positions. They do not truly engage their "theological enemy."[3]

Along with the pressures from within, both communities struggle under numerous pressures from without. Palestinian Christians are minorities within the Palestinian community, which is dominantly Muslim, as well as within the Israeli-Jewish communities. Messianic Jews are part of the dominant Jewish community but are a religious minority, one which is often despised by other Jews. Both Christian Palestinians and Messianic Jews struggle with pressures to conform to the dominant society, while at the same time seeking to maintain their uniqueness.

The Problem of Disunity in the Philippian Church

Philippians is a practical letter, concerned more with Christian experience than with correct doctrine.[4] Paul addresses several issues facing the Philippian church including suffering, disunity, and false teaching. Though Paul moves through many topics, his desire to see the Philippians demonstrate unity through humility and genuine concern for one another is woven throughout the epistle. The Philippian church was facing both internal and external pressures. This chapter will primarily consider how Paul addresses the internal disunity among the believers. By focusing on Philippians 2:1-11,

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[3] Munayer and Loden, 148.

[4] Gordon Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 1228, Kindle.

the researcher will explore Paul's message about maintaining unity in the Body of Christ amid conflict, and the critical role of humility.

Meaning of Verses

Philippians 2:1-4

After offering greetings at the beginning of the letter to the Philippians, Paul updated the Philippians on his situation in prison (Phil. 1:14) as well as the internal difficulties he faced with other believers who were trying to cause trouble for him while he was in prison (Phil. 1:15). Paul recognized that the Philippians were also suffering due to opposition in Philippi (Phil. 1:28). He encouraged the believers to stand firm and united "for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose" them (Phil. 1:27-28). Paul reminded them that along with faith in Christ comes suffering for him and the suffering they were experiencing Paul shared as well (Phil. 1:29-30).

"Therefore" at the beginning of Philippians 2:1 ties this passage to Paul's previous call to the Philippians to "live as 'citizens' worthy of the gospel by standing firm in one Spirit against the opposition."[5] In Philippians 2:1-4, Paul answers the practical question of how they are to remain united, both in terms of attitudes and actions, despite internal conflicts.

Philippians 1:1 contains four "if" clauses that in English seem to convey some sense of doubt, but these "clauses express little hesitancy."[6] Gordon Fee argues that they

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[5] Fee, 5371, Kindle.

[6] Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon: The New American Commentary,* vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 93.

are not intended "to express supposition, but presupposition" and might be better translated "since there is," which in turn strengthens the apodosis into an imperative.[7]

In the first clause Paul reminds the Philippians of the encouragement that is theirs in Christ. In the second Paul speaks of the comfort or consolation of love. Richard R. Melick agrees with the NIV translation, which clarifies this as Christ's love,[8] but Moises Silva finds the clause much less clear regarding whether "consolation" and "love" point to two separate topics or one as well as the question regarding the subject of the love.[9] Silva argues,

> These and other questions cannot be answered with any certainty. Nor should they. The clauses are deliberately compressed and vague, since the appeal is primarily emotional. That is, verse 1 is not intended to function as a set of four rational, theological arguments but rather as impassioned pleading.[10]

Paul goes on to speak of fellowship of the Spirit. Again, clarity is an issue, though "all agree that this refers to the Holy Spirit. The question is whether this is fellowship brought by the Spirit or fellowship in the Spirit."[11] There seems to be no reason that the phrase cannot convey both senses. Fee points to the three-way connection between the Philippians, Paul, and God:

> By the Spirit, therefore, they are united to Christ, and in Christ to one another—and thus to Paul. Indeed, the Spirit is the empowering agent of all that God is currently doing among them, "both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (2:13). Thus, just as the comfort from being "in Christ" and the solace of experiencing

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[7] Fee, 5389, Kindle.

[8] Melick, 93.

[9] Moises Silva, *Philippians: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2005), 2390, Kindle.

[10] Silva, 2390, Kindle.

[11] Melick, 93.

> God's love serves as the ground for his appeal to their unity in Christ, so too (especially) with their common "participation in the Spirit."[12]

Martin Hawthorne emphasizes that Paul "piles clause on top of clause … as if searching for a way to make his readers both think and feel deeply about the essential nature of harmony and its necessity within Christian community."[13] Melick agrees that "these statements make a strong emotional appeal."[14]

Having laid a powerful, emotional foundation by appealing confidently to the Philippians' common experience in Christ, Paul can now put forth his imperative. Hawthorne suggests that Paul is saying to the Philippians, if "you know anything of the mercy and compassion shown to you by God in Christ, as you most certainly do, then please respond by saying 'yes' to my request."[15] Fee explains it similarly: "If our common experience of comfort from God's love has anything going for it at all, then express that same love toward me, by completing my joy by having the same love toward one another."[16]

Paul calls the Philippians to unity. Again he piles on four clauses, all emphasizing different aspects of the unity that the church in Philippi must maintain. They are to have the "same mindset," "same love," unity "in spirit," and "one purpose." The word used here for "mind" (φρονεῖν) is used again in Philippians 2:5 when Paul asks them to have the same "attitude" or "mind" as Christ. The word

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[12] Fee, 5456, Kindle.

[13] Martin Hawthorne, *Philippians: Word Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Nelson, 2004), 81.

[14] Melick, 93.

[15] Hawthorne, 85.

[16] Fee, 5448, Kindle.

> means "to think," but not only, or even primarily, in the intellectual sense. It equally involves one's emotions, attitudes, and will. … Hence this expression cannot mean that Paul here pleads for uniformity of thought or that he insists on everyone holding in common a particular opinion—a demand that by its nature would contribute to dissension. … Rather, by his choice of the verb φρονεῖν, "to think," he is asking for a total inward attitude of mind or disposition of will that strives after that one thing … a unity of spirit and sentiment in which powerful tensions are held together by an overmastering loyalty to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.[17]

Paul previously called the Philippians to strive "together as one for the faith of the gospel" in the face of external opposition (Phil. 1:27). Now he calls them again to make the gospel their priority as they face internal conflict. Paul is calling them to seek the common goal of "witnessing to eschatological community."[18] Ronald Allen explains,

> A significant problem in the present age is that people no longer live together in supportive community in Edenic peace as God had intended. In the new creation, the fractured human community is being restored. A part of the vocation of the church is to embody restored eschatological community in the present.[19]

Silva notes that the "true obstacle to unity is not the presence of legitimate differences of opinion but self-centeredness."[20] Paul goes on in the next two verses to attack this problem of self-centeredness in the Philippian church that threatens to divide them.

Paul uses two words in Philippians 2:3 to communicate a picture of what they must avoid. The first word is ἐριθεία, variously translated "spirit of rivalry," "selfish ambition," or simply "selfishness." He used the same word earlier in Philippians 1:17

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[17] Hawthorne, 86.

[18] Ronald J. Allen, "Philippians 2:1-11," *Interpretation* 61, no. 1 (January 2007): 72.

[19] Allen, 72.

[20] Silva, 2381, Kindle.

where "it carries overtones of a party spirit generated by selfish ambition. … Rivalry is guaranteed to destroy unity."[21]

The second word is κενοδοξία, which "refers to a person who is conceited without reason, deluded."[22] Hawthorne explains that it is a person who is "ambitious for his own reputation, challenging others to rivalry, himself jealous of others. … Consequently, this is a person who will fight to prove one's idea is right."[23] Fee observes that "this word occurs throughout the Greco-Roman world to describe those who think too highly of themselves."[24]

Paul is calling the Philippians to live out their faith in practical ways. Selfish ambition, vain conceit, and the behavior that inevitably arises from such attitudes are not consistent with "the ethical character of the gospel."[25] This behavior is not trivial. It damages the Philippians' ability to witness to the gospel. As Fee explains, "at stake is the gospel in Philippi—Christ himself, if you will."[26]

In contrast to this negative presentation of what the Philippians were to avoid, Paul says they should "in humility value others" above themselves, and rather than look out for their own interests they should each look "to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).

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[21] Hawthorne, 87.

[22] Hawthorne, 87.

[23] Hawthorne, 87.

[24] Fee, 5538, Kindle.

[25] Fee, 4982, Kindle.

[26] Fee, 4878, Kindle.

In the Greco-Roman world humility was not considered a virtue; in fact, it carried particularly negative connotations.[27] The related adjective "was frequently employed and especially so to describe the mentality of a slave. It conveyed the ideas of being base, unfit, shabby, mean, of no account. Hence, humility could not have been regarded by the pagan as a virtue to be sought after."[28]

Humility, therefore, is a "uniquely Christian virtue."[29] It begins with a "realistic appraisal of oneself and others as being in the image of God."[30] Humility requires "a proper estimation of oneself, the stance of the creature before the Creator, utterly dependent and trusting."[31]

The humility that Paul speaks of is not, however, an attitude of self-disparagement but rather an attitude "inspired by the model of Christ and … therefore specifically Christian, an attitude of mutual love within the church, the antithesis of pride, empty conceit (κενοδοξία), and selfish ambition (ἐριθεία)."[32] It is a humility that is not self-focused[33] but instead looks out for the interests of others, not simply one's own. As Fee says, "if 'selfish ambition and vain glory' are sure bets to erode relationships within the church, then the surest safeguard to a healthy church is when 'considering each other as

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[27] Melick, 94.

[28] Hawthorne, 94.

[29] Fee, 5549, Kindle.

[30] Melick, 95.

[31] Fee, 5556, Kindle.

[32] Hawthorne, 88.

[33] Fee, 5558, Kindle.

more important than oneself' characterizes its people."[34] The emphasis here is on community, for

> it is only as a people of God together that God's people fulfill his divine purposes. But in contrast to ancient Israel, where entrance into the community came through birth within the covenant community, in the people of God newly constituted by Christ and the Spirit, people enter one at a time. Therefore, the emphasis in Pauline paraenesis (exhortation) is primarily on the community but obedience must begin with the individual ... Thus, "each one" among them must have this care for the "others" among them. This emphasis is probably to remind some within the community who seem to be out of step with some others.[35]

Paul began by reminding the Philippians of all they mutually have in Christ, and from this firm foundation he calls for unity, not necessarily in the sense of holding the same opinions but in their focus on the priority of the gospel and their humble commitment to one another. In Philippians 2:5 Paul transitions into the christic hymn, which he uses to reinforce the practical guidance he gave in Philippians 2:1-4 as well as to provide its theological foundation.

Philippians 2:5-11

Philippians 2:5 introduces the passage that follows while at the same time tying it to the previous four verses and so "forms a transition from *exhortation* to *illustration.*"[36] Paul tells the Philippians, "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus." Both this word "mindset" and the word used in Philippians 1:2 for "mind" come from the same verb, φρονέω. Paul first called the Philippians to be of one mind, and now he calls them to have the "same mindset as Jesus Christ." In the hymn that follows, Paul illustrates what he means by the mindset of Jesus Christ.

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[34] Fee, 5576, Kindle.

[35] Fee, 5586, Kindle.

[36] Daniel T. Knapp, "The Self Humiliation of Jesus Christ and the Christ-Like Living: A Study of Philippians 2:6-11," *Evangelical Journal* 15 (1997): 86.

Two words in Philippians 2:6 are frequently discussed and debated. The first is μορφή (variously translated "nature" or "form") and the second is ἁρπαγμὸν (translated "grasped" or "used to his own advantage").

With regard to μορφή, Hawthorne admits "that it is a word whose precise meaning is elusive but … at the same time"[37] he recognizes that

> from the earliest Greek texts μορφή, "form," was at least used to express the way in which a thing, being what it is in itself, appears to our senses. … Thus, when this word is applied to God, his μορφή, "form," must refer to his deepest being, to what he is in himself.[38]

Fee also emphasizes the power of this word when he explains,

> What the earliest followers of Christ had come to believe, of course, on the basis of his resurrection and ascension, was that the one whom they had known as truly human had himself known prior existence in the "form" of God—not meaning that he was "like God but really not," but that he was characterized by what was essential to being God. It is this understanding which (correctly) lies behind the NIV's "in very nature God." And it is this singular reality, lying in the emphatic first position as it does, which gives such extraordinary potency to what follows, and therefore to the whole.[39]

Despite being "in form" or "very nature" God, Paul explains that Jesus did not "consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage" (Phil. 2:6). The word ἁρπαγμὸν is also frequently translated "grasped." Fee explains that the word "is an abstract noun, emphasizing the concept of 'grasping' or 'seizing'. Thus, Christ did not consider 'equality with God' to consist of 'grasping' or being 'selfish'; instead he rejected this popular view of kingly power by 'pouring himself out' for the sake of others."[40]

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[37] Hawthorne, 114.

[38] Hawthorne, 114.

[39] Fee, 6012, Kindle.

[40] Fee, 6031, Kindle.

Rather than using equality with God "to his own advantage," Christ "made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Phil. 2:7). The phrase ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, translated in the NIV as "made himself nothing," has traditionally been translated as "emptied himself," but as Michael J. Gorman explains,

> The phrase "emptied himself" in 2:7 should not be read as a reference to the divestiture of something (whether divinity itself or some divine attribute), or even as self-limitation regarding the use of divine attributes, but "figuratively," as a robust metaphor for total self-abandonment and self-giving, further explained by the attendant participial phrases "taking on the form of a slave" and "being born (found) in human likeness."[41]

Fee affirms, "Christ did not empty himself of anything; he simply 'emptied himself,' poured himself out. This is metaphor, pure and simple."[42] This emptying

> was not a *getting*, not a *surrendering,* but a *giving*. It was not the acquisition of divine attributes, nor a setting aside of divine attributes or an exchange of divine characteristics and the taking up of human qualities in their place. *It was the giving of himself, the divine one, to humanity sacrificially as a servant*.[43]

In this, Jesus showed himself to be the opposite of the Philippians.

There is a play on words in κενοδοξία, "empty conceit" (Phil. 2:3), which characterizes those who demanded their rights and insisted on their own way, and κενοῦν, "to empty" (2:7), which describes the attitude and actions of Christ in terms of setting aside his rights and not insisting on his own way, as by an act of "seizing."[44]

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[41] Michael J. Gorman, *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology* (Cambridge: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 196, Kindle.

[42] Fee, 6083, Kindle.

[43] Knapp, 89.

[44] Hawthorne, 117.

In emptying himself, Jesus did not just take on the form of a human but the form of a servant. Paul wants to encourage the Philippians to turn away from their self-seeking behavior and humbly serve one another. In the Christ Hymn, Paul shows them that Christ "entered the stream of human life as a slave, that is, as a person without advantage, with no rights or privileges of his own, for the express purpose of placing himself completely at the service of all humankind."[45]

In Philippians 2:8 Paul says that Jesus "humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" In Philippians 2:3 Paul calls the Philippians to "in humility" value others above themselves, something which certainly would have felt like a difficult attitude to take towards those with whom they were in conflict. Here Paul shows them true humility. Jesus freely chose obedience and death for the sake of others. When Jesus "stooped to servanthood and death He did so with all the sovereign free will of One whose choices are limited only by His own holy and loving will. 'He emptied *himself*. He humbled *himself*'."[46] While the Philippians acted in selfish ambition and vain conceit, Jesus freely chose crucifixion, a method of torture that left one "so thoroughly stripped of any social status that the result is utter humiliation and death."[47]

In uplifting humility as a virtue, "the hymn is engaging in the scandalous. Humility was not merely overlooked as a virtue in Hellenistic society—it was widely

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[45] Hawthorne, 119.

[46] Alva J. McClain, "The Doctrine of Kenosis in Philippians 2:5-8," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 94.

[47] Peter-Ben Smit, "Crucifiction? The Reimagination of Crucifixion as Failed Imperial Ritual in Philippians 2:5-11," *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 46, no. 1 (2016): 17.

considered an obstacle to virtue."[48] But Paul goes much further than this. He not only turns notions of virtue on their head in this passage but likewise challenges ideas of what it means to be "God-like" in the Roman world.[49] Here we see the idea of divinity "being narratively defined as kenotic and cruciform in character."[50]

> The Cross represents the central event of history. It is the most stupendous thing God has ever done for humanity. It shows how giving God really is. It was not enough to give his full deity to humanity and become a servant; he gave his full humanity to suffer the most gruesome form of death known to the first-century world—death by crucifixion.[51]

And so here at the center of the hymn where Christ is "obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:8), we see most clearly who God is,

> For in "pouring himself out" and "humbling himself to death on the cross," Christ Jesus has revealed the character of God himself. Here is the epitome of God-likeness: the preexistent Christ was not a "grasping, selfish" being, but one whose love for others found its consummate expression in "pouring himself out," in taking on the role of a slave, in humbling himself to the point of death on behalf of those so loved.[52]

In pointing to the humility of Christ, Paul illustrates the mindset he is calling the Philippians to embrace, but Paul is seeking a change much deeper than mere imitation.

> The Philippians—and we ourselves—are not called upon simply to "imitate God" by what we do, but to have this very mind, the mind of Christ, developed in us, so that we too bear God's image in our attitudes and relationships within the Christian community—and beyond.[53]

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[48] Michael Wade Martin and Bryan A. Nash, "Philippians 2:6-11 as Subversive Hymnos: A Study in the Light of Ancient Rhetorical Theory," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 66, no. 1 (April 2015): 124.

[49] Gorman, 252, Kindle.

[50] Gorman, 252, Kindle.

[51] Knapp, 91.

[52] Fee, 5926, Kindle.

[53] Fee, 6777, Kindle.

Paul desires that the Philippians be a changed people. Rather than a people characterized by selfish ambition and vain conceit he wants them to be a "people characterized by communal kenosis for the good of the world," which is "both the means and the goal of God's saving activity here and now."[54]

The hymn concludes with the exaltation of Christ. His exaltation raises a question about

> the ongoing significance of the humiliation. The confession "Jesus is Lord" means, implicitly, that the crucified, servant Jesus, and no other Jesus, is Lord. There is continuity between his humiliated and his exalted status, just as there was continuity between his preexistent and his incarnate, humiliated status (revealed in the parallel phrases "emptied himself" and "humbled himself"). That is, Jesus' lordship, paradoxically, has the form of servanthood even in the present ... That is why a community that lives "in Christ" (Phil. 2:1-5) will be shaped like the story of Christ narrated in 2:6-8. Such a community does not simply remember and imitate a story; rather it experiences the present activity of Father, Son and Spirit mentioned in 2:1-13, which is formation into the eternal, unchanging image of the eternal Son of God.[55]

In his exaltation, Christ does not leave behind his humility, self-emptying, and self-sacrifice, which are the truest expressions of his nature. The exaltation at the end is not "to be understood either as a reward for Christ's previous action or as an assertion of his victory over the powers. Rather it asserts the divine vindication of Christ's emptying himself and humbling himself in obedience by dying on a cross."[56]

Here is the key to unity in the Philippian church. Having the humble mindset of Christ "would heal the wounds of the church at Philippi. They could endure suffering,

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[54] Gorman, 382, Kindle.

[55] Gorman, 318, Kindle.

[56] Fee, 6651, Kindle.

conquer opposition and overcome (worst of all) divisiveness by following Jesus' Christ-likeness in humility, obedience, love, and selflessness."[57]

Application

Unity is one of Paul's central concerns in the letter to the Philippians. The Philippian church faced both internal and external pressures. The internal pressures were conflicts that threatened the unity of the church. In an intractable conflict, each side clings to an attitude of superiority, grasps for power and control, maintains distance from the other, and seeks the interests of their own to the exclusion of the other. If followers of Christ are to witness to the gospel in Israel-Palestine, they must be unified and must demonstrate the mindset of Christ, the mindset of the humble servant who did not place himself above others, did not grasp for power or control, and sought first the well-being of others. Humility is essential to unity in the Body of Christ. Humility is also essential to intercultural competence.

The Foundation

The Philippians first needed to be reminded of the encouragement they had in being united with Christ, the comfort of his love, the common sharing in the Spirit, and the tenderness and compassion which they had found in Christ and as members of the Body of Christ. It is in remembering and experiencing these truths that the Philippians were able to find the resources to obey Paul's call to humility rather than being driven by fear, selfishness, arrogance, or a grasping orientation. Only on this bedrock foundation of spiritual well-being can unity be built in the church.

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[57] Knapp, 94.

Attitude of Superiority

Clinging to the victim role in a conflict is a means of maintaining one's innocence and moral superiority.[58] The assumption that victim and perpetrator are mutually exclusive roles[59] means that any acknowledgment of the suffering of the other would mean losing one's victim status, and with it the sense of moral self-esteem and superiority.

Followers of Christ must be conscious of attitudes of superiority that they hold toward other believers and must have the courage to acknowledge the fears that drive these attitudes. Besides clinging to victim status, in an intractable conflict both sides also refuse the role of perpetrator for themselves and place it entirely on the other. This polarized perspective which sees all goodness and innocence on one's own side and all badness and guilt on the other is not consistent with reality or humility. Instead, it leads to a divisive defensiveness that destroys unity. The fact is,

> more often than not, conflicts are messy. Indeed, they are very messy. It is simply not the case that one can construe narratives of the encounter between parties in conflict as stories of manifest evil on the one side and indisputable good on the other. … How will we disentangle those who are innocent from those who are blameworthy in the knotted histories of individuals, let alone the narratives of whole cultures and nations? The longer the conflict continues the more both parties find themselves sucked into the vortex of mutually reinforcing victimization, in which the one party appears more virtuous only because, being weaker, it has less opportunity to be cruel. If we organize our moral engagement around the categories of "oppression/liberation" we will need clear narratives of blame and innocence. Failing to find a blameless victim, however, we will be left with two equally unattractive choices: either to withdraw from engagement in moral disgust (and thereby giving tacit support to the stronger party), or to impose clear-cut moral narratives with moral partisanship (and therefore sharing in the ideological self-deception of the one party. … The *categories*

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[58] Nurit Shnabel, Samer Halabi, and Masi Noor, "Overcoming Competitive Victimhood and Facilitating Forgiveness through Re-categorization into a Common Victim or Perpetrator Identity," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 49 (2013): 871.

[59] Shnabel et al., 868.

> "oppression/liberation" seem ill-suited to bring about reconciliation and sustain peace between people and people groups. Though the categories themselves are indispensable, we must resist making "oppressed/oppressor" the overarching schema by which to align our social engagement.[60]

Both Palestinian Christians and Israeli Messianic Jews need the humility to recognize that both sides are victims of the conflict and both sides are also perpetrators.

Grasping for Power

Holding victim status also helps to gain and keep third-party support in a conflict.

> Thus, by maintaining the narrative that their own group is the victim of wrongful aggression in the conflict, people can increase the likelihood that third-party groups will see them as innocent victims and underdogs who are deserving of their support. In other words, people use competitive victimhood narratives as vehicles of identity and power politics to gain the moral high-ground and attract the attention and support of third-party groups. Ultimately, this support leads to more tangible resources and power, which all else being equal, increases their chances of winning the conflict.[61]

Groups "involved in prolonged, violent conflict compete over various tangible and psychological resources"[62] to gain power and security for their own group. Third-party support is one of these resources. Because of the zero-sum mindset that characterizes intractable conflicts, parties involved "do not see any possibility of compromise and perceive any loss suffered by the other side as their own gain, and conversely, any gains of the other side as their own loss."[63] The ensuing rivalry is intense and pervasive and influences even followers of Christ in both Palestinian and Israeli

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[60] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: The Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 104.

[61] Levi Adelman et al., "A Whole Other Story: Inclusive Victimhood Narratives Reduce Competitive Victimhood and Intergroup Hostility," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 42, no. 10 (2016): 1417.

[62] Shnabel et al., 867

[63] Bar-Tal and Halperin, 924.

communities. But "rivalry is guaranteed to destroy unity."[64] Both Palestinian Christians and Israeli Messianic Jews need to recognize the ways in which each community grasps for power and control in how they tell their stories and how they interact with others outside of the conflict. Competition for victim status and third-party support destroys unity in the Body of Christ in Israel-Palestine.

Using Religion and Theology to Gain Power

At times both Palestinian Christians and Israeli Messianic Jews employ theology and religion as a means of staking their claim to the land. Palestinians Christians point to their long history on the land and their sense of stewardship for the sacred sites.[65] They believe that there "can be no separation between Palestinian Christians and the Holy Land."[66] Messianic Jews argue for their status as the chosen people and their rights to the land they claim based on this status. Often the pressures of the conflict cause national identity to take precedence over "the principal spiritual identity of being members of the trans-national, trans-ethnic, trans-cultural body of Messiah of which there are also members from the 'enemy' community."[67]

Both Palestinian Christians and Israeli Messianic Jews need to recognize the ways in which they sometimes use religion and theology as a means of grasping for power and control and competing for tangible and psychological resources in the conflict. When the spirit of rivalry is intense, it is impossible to demonstrate humility and value others above self or to look out for the interests of others. The drive on both sides to seek their own

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[64] Hawthorne, 87.

[65] Munayer and Loden, 54.

[66] Munayer and Loden, 54.

[67] Munayer and Loden, 98.

interests by defending and legitimating their presence in the land through religion and theology makes it difficult to hear, much less understand, the perspective of the other. Theological differences are one of the most challenging areas of disagreement for Palestinian Christians and Israeli Messianic Jews to discuss. Each side's theology in some way delegitimizes the other and so feels threatening. An attitude of superiority and defensiveness is more common in theological discussions than an attitude of humility and a sincere concern for understanding and looking out for the interests of others. If reconciliation is to take place, theological discussions between Christian Palestinians and Israeli Messianic Jews must be characterized by "a commitment to intellectual charity and a posture of hermeneutical humility."[68]

As Paul recognized when addressing the Philippian church, this kind of mutual love and humility only comes from those who first have a strong sense of secure relationship with Christ. In the end, if reconciliation is going to happen between Christian Palestinians and Israeli Messianic Jews, each side must recognize that they must find their "ultimate identity in the Messiah. … There is no hope or future in our fleshly identity. As compared to our eternal identity in the Messiah, our fleshly identity is temporal."[69]

Living in Unity

Paul's call to unity does not mean agreement in every opinion but "a unity of spirit and sentiment in which powerful tensions are held together by an overmastering

[68] Munayer and Loden, 190.

[69] Munayer and Loden, 209.

loyalty to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ."[70] The priority of love for Christ and for one another shifts the heart from the selfish ambitions of any individual or group within the Body to the freedom of looking out for the interests of others. The priority of love for Christ and for one another shifts the heart from arrogance and self-centeredness to a "realistic appraisal of oneself and others as being in the image of God"[71] and a knowledge of oneself as a "creature before the Creator, utterly dependent and trusting."[72] While selfish ambition and vain conceit are certain to destroy relationships in the Body, if "considering each other as more important than oneself" characterizes the community, it is one of the most certain safeguards to a healthy church.[73]

Paul called the divided Philippian church to unity so that they might fulfill their vocation to "embody restored eschatological community in the present."[74] Without unity in the Body, the Philippians could not provide a clear witness to the gospel in Philippi. Likewise, believers in Israel-Palestine are also unable to present a clear witness to Christ in their communities if the rivalry that characterizes the surrounding culture also marks their relationships with each another. Paul called the Philippians to humility in their relations with one another, demonstrated as an "attitude of mutual love within the church," which was the antithesis of arrogance and rivalry.[75] It was a call directed primarily to the community as a whole but which had to begin with the obedience of each

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[70] Hawthorne, 86.

[71] Melick, 76.

[72] Fee, 5556, Kindle.

[73] Fee, 5576, Kindle.

[74] Allen, 72.

[75] Hawthorne, 88.

individual in their care for one another.[76] Much more than merely imitating Christ, believers are to be shaped by Christ and to have the mindset of Christ in all of their attitudes and actions.[77] They are to be a changed people "characterized by communal kenosis for the good of the world."[78] Even in the midst of differences and perhaps especially in times of conflict, believers are to exhibit the same generosity of spirit toward one another that they have already experienced in Christ.

Strength, Courage, and Servanthood

The concern that immediately comes to mind when speaking of humility in the context of conflict and issues of social justice is the fear that it is a demonstration of weakness when a show of strength and power are needed most. In setting forth the example of Christ, Paul challenges the idea of humility as weakness. Instead of a king who grasps for power and control for his own advantage, Christ instead controlled only himself and freely chose to take the form of one who is powerless and without status for the sake of others. He did not focus on demanding his own way or protecting his own rights but instead freely and bravely sought the well-being of others. It is this same courageous servanthood that must characterize believers rather than arrogance, selfishness, or a seeking after one's own advantage. It is only from this stance of courageous humility grounded in a right knowledge of one's self in relation to God that one will have the power to take a strong stance on issues of social justice and face the

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[76] Fee, 5586, Kindle.

[77] Fee, 6777, Kindle.

[78] Gorman, 382, Kindle.

challenges of conflict without deteriorating into anger, hatred, self-centeredness, and self-righteousness.

Humility

Humility plays a central role in developing intercultural competence. In fact, some see humility as foundational to all positive intercultural relations.[79] In interactions with those who are culturally different, the temptation to arrogance and the desire to cling to one's own perspective in order to protect one's own interests is particularly strong. Interactions between those who are culturally different often become struggles for power and control, even among followers of Jesus.

In a society as culturally complex and as deeply conflicted as Israel-Palestine there is a desperate need for a people marked by genuine humility and sincere concern for the well-being of not only their own people but others as well. Such people have the spiritual and relational foundation necessary to develop the skills of intercultural competence that will enable them to shift cultural perspective, "change behavior in authentic and culturally appropriate ways,"[80] and be bridge-builders across cultural differences.[81] Such people will have the creativity, knowledge, practical experience, and spiritual depth to guide others through the challenges of reconciliation.

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[79] Joshua N. Hook and C. Edward Watkins, "Cultural Humility: The Cornerstone of Positive Contact with Culturally Different Individuals and Groups?" *American Psychologist* (October 2015): 661.

[80] Mitchell R. Hammer, *The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Resource Guide (RG)* (Olney, MD: IDI, LCC, 2016), 36.

[81] Hammer, *Resource Guide*, 42.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

Need for Intercultural Competency

As Milton J. Bennett states, "intercultural sensitivity is not natural."[1] Ethnocentrism is the normal human state; it is "a universal phenomenon, closely tied to the survival of the group and the preservation of the individual's social identity within it."[2] Developing intercultural competence is an attempt to change natural behavior,[3] which leads one to deny the existence of cultural difference, see it as a threat, or minimize its importance.

In a region as culturally complicated and severely conflicted as Israel-Palestine, intercultural competence is essential for leaders who are seeking to build bridges of trust and understanding between peoples of diverse backgrounds who have learned to see one another as the enemy. The reconciliation process can quickly be derailed by fundamental cultural misunderstandings and the frustrations that accompany them. The Israeli direct communication style can feel offensive and hurtful to Palestinians, while the Palestinian indirect communication style can seem dishonest and evasive to Israelis. A lack of knowledge on both sides of the differing narratives each group holds can mean that neither party is conscious of the profound pain, fear, and anger of the other, and so in

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[1] Milton J. Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism: A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity," in *Education for the Intercultural Experience,* ed. R.M. Paige (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1993), 21.

[2] Wurzel, 8.

[3] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 21.

ignorance both sides can unconsciously inflict severe emotional wounds on the other. Limited awareness of power differences and their impact on every interaction between Israelis and Palestinians can mean discussions and dialogues end up perpetuating the status quo rather than moving people toward mutual respect, equality, and reconciliation. In pressure-filled situations when nerves are raw, the likelihood of offending and alienating others despite the best of intentions is high. Leaders must have a deep understanding of their own culture as well as a deep understanding of the culture of the other if they are going to be able to help others navigate the intellectual intricacies and emotional minefields of reconciliation in the context of an intractable conflict.

Knowledge, however, is not enough: "Perhaps it is a special characteristic of ethnocentrism that people often cannot imagine that intercultural learning might demand competence, and so they think information will suffice."[4] Rather, intercultural competence requires the ability to shift cultural perspective and appropriately bridge behavior across cultural difference.[5]

While it is essential, developing intercultural competence is also extremely difficult, especially if one hopes to work with people from multiple cultural backgrounds and levels of intercultural competency.[6] Developing intercultural competence requires a high level of commitment of effort and time; in fact, it is a lifelong endeavor.[7] While the

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[4] Bennett, "Paradigmatic Assumptions," 96.

[5] Hammer, *Resource Guide, 31.*

[6] Joseph E. Trimble, Paul B. Pederen, and Eduardo S. Rodela, "The Real Cost of Intercultural Incompetence: An Epilogue," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 501.

[7] Trimble et al., 501.

challenges of developing intercultural competence are immense, the cost of incompetence is too high to ignore:

> The fallout and the untoward consequences of intercultural incompetence, especially in regard to human services, are unprecedented in the annals of the history of our planet; the emotional, psychological, physical, ecological, and economic costs are extraordinary and often beyond comprehension. Advocating and encouraging intercultural competency in every aspect of life will reduce the sociological, psychological, organizational, and financial costs of intercultural incompetence.[8]

When leaders are operating from an ethnocentric mindset or are only in the early stages of developing an intercultural mindset, cultural others frequently experience a sense of being ignored,[9] uncomfortable,[10] or not heard[11] when interacting with those leaders. In contrast, when leaders are operating at a high level of intercultural competence, cultural others will have a sense of feeling understood,[12] valued, and involved.[13] Trust is crucial in reaching the later stages of reconciliation, as is the ability to understand both self and other.[14] Frequent intercultural interactions that lead cultural others to feel ignored, uncomfortable, and not heard will make it difficult to build trust and are an indication of limited understanding of the cultures of both self and other. If the goal of Musalaha is to lead Israelis and Palestinians through the reconciliation process successfully, then their leaders must have a high level of intercultural competence, which

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[8] Trimble et al., 493.

[9] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 32.

[10] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 33.

[11] Intercultural Development Inventory, accessed October 12, 2017, https://idiinventory.com/products/the-intercultural-development-continuum-idc/.

[12] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 35.

[13] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 37.

[14] Musalaha Staff, 24.

will enable them to interact with cultural others in such a way that cultural others feel confident they are understood, valued, and involved. On this foundation and only on this foundation is it possible to build trust and reach true reconciliation.

The Intercultural Development Continuum

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) that was used in this project to assess the intercultural competence development of Musalaha leaders is based on the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC). The developmental orientations of the IDC include Denial, Polarization, Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation.

> The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) describes a set of orientations toward cultural difference and commonality that are arrayed along a continuum from the more mono-cultural mindsets of Denial and Polarization through the *transitional* orientation of Minimization to the *inter-cultural* or global mindsets of Acceptance and Adaptation. The capability of deeply shifting cultural perspective and bridging behavior across cultural differences is most fully achieved when one maintains an Adaptation perspective. The progression experiences cultural differences with greater complexity and, as a result, the intercultural mindsets have greater capacity to effectively shift perspective and behavior based on commonalities and differences. The IDC is *descriptive* in how individuals and groups experience cultural differences. The IDC is also *prescriptive* in identifying key developmental tasks for continued growth.[15]

Denial

Denial is the default position for individuals raised in a monocultural environment.[16] A person in denial experiences his or her own culture as the only real one, while "other cultures are either not discriminated at all, or are construed in rather vague ways."[17] A person in Denial is not stubbornly refusing to face the reality of cultural

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[15] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 31.

[16] Mitchell R. Hammer, Milton J. Bennett, and Richard Wiseman, "Measuring Intercultural Sensitivity: The Intercultural Development Inventory," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 27 (2003): 424.

[17] Hammer et al., 424.

differences but rather is unable to "make the perceptual distinctions that allow cultural events to be recognized as such."[18] Both isolation and separation contribute to Denial, whether it is "isolation of physical circumstance" or "separation created by intentional physical and social barriers."[19] Religious, economic, political, and other types of "groups or cults" can create physical or social barriers.[20] Intense nationalism is also a form of separation.[21] Religious, political, and nationalistic groups are a prominent part of both Israeli and Palestinian societies. As a result, one can expect that despite the cultural diversity found in the region and despite the fact that people seem to interact with cultural difference on a daily basis, many Israelis and Palestinians are in the Denial stage.

The Musalaha curriculum recognizes that a "policy of separation is very strong within both Israeli and Palestinian societies. For the most part, interaction between our two peoples is limited. … Little opportunity for relationship building is available to us."[22] West Bank Palestinians who are socially and physically isolated by the Separation Barrier[23] are particularly limited in their interactions with Israelis, apart from soldiers. But even among Israeli-Palestinians and Israeli-Jews who live and work in close contact in Israel, the policy of separation is difficult to overcome. Gideon Levy, an Israeli-Jewish journalist, explains the mindset that perpetuates this deep separation from an Israeli perspective. In an interview regarding his work, he says the

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[18] Bennett, "Paradigmatic Assumptions," 104.

[19] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 30.

[20] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 32.

[21] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 32.

[22] Musalaha Staff, 19.

[23] B'tselem, "Separation Barrier," accessed October 12, 2017, http://www.btselem.org/separation_barrier/map.

> biggest struggle … is to rehumanize the Palestinians. There's a whole machinery of brainwashing in Israel which really accompanies each of us from early childhood, and I'm a product of this machinery as much as anyone else. [We are taught] a few narratives that it's very hard to break. That we Israelis are the ultimate and only victims. That the Palestinians are born to kill, and their hatred is irrational. That the Palestinians are not human beings like us. … So you get a society without any moral doubts, without any question marks, with hardly public debate. To raise your voice against all this is very hard.[24]

A similar paragraph that reverses the two groups could be written to explain Palestinian attitudes towards Israelis. With such deeply entrenched narratives and overwhelming community pressure to maintain separation, it is not surprising that interactions between Israelis and Palestinians are severely limited despite their proximity. Even when individuals decide they want to meet the other and begin to build relationships with them, social and psychological barriers mean connecting with the other side is much more complicated than merely walking across the street or driving to the next town and beginning a conversation.

It is not common for members of an oppressed group to be in the Denial stage, as Bennett explains: "when it is *your* difference that is being denied, it's hard to deny that there's a difference!"[25] Because of their physical and social isolation, however, West Bank Palestinians have relatively little interaction with cultural difference (apart from Israeli soldiers) and live primarily in a context where their culture is the only one present. This isolation may lead many West Bank Palestinians to remain in a Denial stage despite their oppressed status.

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[24] Johann Hari, "Is Gideon Levy the Most Hated Man in Israel or Just the Most Heroic?" *Independent* (September 23, 2010), accessed October 12, 2017, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/is-gideon-levy-the-most-hated-man-in-israel-or-just-the-most-heroic-2087909.html.

[25] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 33.

Israelis Jews, on the other hand, are members of a dominant group. Denial may be present in this case more than one might expect in such a multicultural setting, as "denial can be thought of as a luxury of the dominant group. Generally, it is only members of that group who can afford both financially and psychologically to remain oblivious to cultural differences."[26] An American-Israeli Messianic Jew commented in her blog post that thousands of Israeli-Jews regularly drive up and down Route 90, a central Israeli highway. The question she asks is of those thousands of Israelis who

> travel this road every year on their way to holidays or work meetings, how many know they are driving through a refugee camp? How many realize that this is an encampment that Palestinians cannot leave without permission? How many give a thought to how these children get to school, or even if they should slow down while passing students or old people? How many even know they are in Area C?[27] I do now. But I didn't always. How many of us are driving with our eyes shut?[28]

Development forward from a Denial stage begins with exposure to basic cultural differences while at the same time drawing attention to that difference.[29] Introducing complicated cultural differences too early may be detrimental as it will either be ignored or "used as rationale for maintaining the comfort of denial."[30]

Polarization (Defense and Reversal)

Polarization is an evaluative orientation that divides people into "us" and "them."[31] Polarization takes two forms: defense and reversal. A defensive approach to

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[26] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 33.

[27] B'tselem, "What Is Area C?" accessed October 12, 2017, http://www.btselem.org/area_c/what_is_area_c.

[28] Another Voice, "Driving with Eyes Shut," accessed October 12, 2017, http://www.anothervoice.info/blog/2017/10/5/driving-with-eyes-shut.

[29] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 32.

[30] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 34.

[31] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 39

cultural difference takes an uncritical view of one's own culture and practices while taking an overly critical view of others.[32] Reversal maintains an overly critical perspective of one's own culture while maintaining an uncritical view of other cultures and practices.[33]

A person experiencing other cultures from a defense position views differences as threatening.[34] Because both the identity and the sense of reality of a person who operates from a defensive orientation is tied to one cultural reality, difference is felt as a threat to both.[35]

Dominant and non-dominant groups may experience the defensive stage in different ways. Dominant groups in the defensive stage may feel as if they are under siege from other cultures.[36] They "are likely to experience Defense as an attack on their values (often perceived by others as privileges). People of non-dominant cultures are more likely to experience Defense as discovering and solidifying a separate cultural identity in contrast to the dominant group."[37]

People in defense recognize and experience cultural difference more than people in the Denial position, but their "worldview structure is not sufficiently complex to

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[32] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 39.

[33] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 39.

[34] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 34-35.

[35] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 34-35.

[36] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 39.

[37] Hammer et al., 424.

generate an equally 'human' experience of the other."[38] Their perspectives of cultural difference tend to be simplistic or stereotyped.[39]

People operating from a defense orientation manage the threat of cultural differences by evaluating those differences negatively.[40] They denigrate those who are different[41] and exhibit a superior attitude.[42] Extreme negative reactions to cultural differences can be alarming and may cause some people to feel it would be better to return to the comfort of isolation and separation in denial.[43] In situations of long-term conflict, defensive polarization can deepen into intractable conflicts, with all of the entrenched and divisive characteristics described in chapter one. The need here is to reduce Polarization by equalizing criticism (less harsh of others and more critical of self) and finding commonality with those who are different, to be able to see the other as human, like one's self.[44] In the context of an intractable conflict, with the trauma caused by long-term violence, the obstacles to being able to recognize the humanity of the other and move beyond Polarization are considerably greater than in more peaceful settings.

In helping groups move past Polarization, Bennett recommends ropes courses or similar activities[45] that require cooperation for the safety and success of all involved.[46] He

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[38] Hammer et al., 424.

[39] Hammer et al., 424.

[40] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 35.

[41] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 35.

[42] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 39.

[43] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 36-37.

[44] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 39.

[45] The Middle Eastern version of the ropes course used by Musalaha involves trips in the desert.

[46] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 41.

explains, "[If] organized and facilitated properly, such activities allow people in defense to discover the vulnerability and value that all human beings share. In other words, the antidote to defense is the discovery that everyone is, after all, just human."[47] For groups and individuals who are engaged in an intractable conflict and are deeply entrenched in defensive Polarization, ropes courses and similar activities are not likely to be sufficient to bring about notable change. Musalaha programs, however, include desert trips that bring Israeli Messianic Jews and Christian Palestinians who are seeking reconciliation out for multi-day trips to the desert and guide participants through numerous relationship-building activities. The combination of the desert setting (which strips away power differences and many cultural and social markers), mutual faith in Jesus, and the guided interaction creates an environment where Israelis and Palestinians have been able to recognize their common humanity.

Reversal is another form of Polarization. Not all people experience a reversal phase when moving through Polarization, but for some it is part of the process of resolving the issues of Polarization and moving on to Minimization. Reversal takes an overly critical view of one's own culture while holding an uncritical perspective of the other. Some people in reversal will take on the cause of an oppressed group, focusing only on the positive in that group and the negative in their own cultural group. Taking an extremely positive view of another culture does not necessarily indicate that a person has moved to a more intercultural or global mindset. If the overwhelmingly positive view of the other culture includes a dominantly negative view of one's own culture, then most likely one is still viewing cultural differences through simplistic stereotypes. As with

[47] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 41.

defense, the need in reversal is to reduce Polarization by equalizing criticism. In the case of reversal, however, it is necessary to be less harsh with one's own culture and more critical of the other.

Note must be made here regarding the challenge of moving beyond the defense version of polarization among people of oppressed groups. People who have lived in an environment where their cultural group is demeaned by the dominant group will likely need additional time and support to develop a positive ethnic identity. Facilitators should be aware that oppressed people may spend more time in the superiority phase of defense as they work to develop a confident sense of their own cultural identity. Facilitators should also be aware that "oppressed people may be more derogatory of other cultures (especially the dominant one) after they have solidified a beleaguered identity through superiority."[48] Whereas members of a dominant group may operate from a defense orientation to maintain the status quo, members of an oppressed group may see it more as "a vehicle for challenging rather than preserving the status quo and the cultural prejudice that manifests toward them."[49] In such circumstances, it may take members of oppressed groups more time to move to Minimization. In an intractable context like Israel-Palestine where both groups feel that they are the victim, this dynamic is complex. Israeli-Jews are in a dominant position in Israel-Palestine, but as a people the Jews have a long history of oppression and discrimination. Therefore characteristics of both the dominant and non-dominant defense behavior are present depending on whether they are interacting with Palestinians (over whom they have dominance) or with the outside world (which has so often oppressed them). Palestinians are in a non-dominant position in Israel-Palestine.

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[48] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 38.

[49] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 38.

Their defense behavior exhibits itself more straightforwardly by challenging the status quo. Palestinians who seek to interact positively with Israeli-Jews or who have any friendly relations with them are often criticized in their communities for engaging in normalization, an acceptance of oppressive circumstances that is viewed as a threat to the community. Individuals experience powerful community pressure to avoid this type of behavior.

The problem that must be addressed in the defense orientation is not the need for more or better information about the cultural other but rather the need to deal with ethnocentrism.[50] Those who attempt to

> correct the stereotypes of people in Defense are likely to fall prey to the polarized experience themselves, becoming yet another example of the evils of multiculturalism or globalization. The need here is to establish commonality, not to introduce more sophisticated understanding of difference. When this resolution is accomplished, the stage is set for a move to Minimization.[51]

In Musalaha women's groups, early interactions between Israeli Messianic Jews and Christian Palestinians focus on social activities that build relationship. The women spend time together worshipping, visiting and learning about biblical sites, swimming in the Dead Sea or the Mediterranean Sea, and sharing meals. As the women begin to share their personal stories they find commonality simply in being women, wives, mothers, and followers of Jesus. They begin to see that the other also loves God, her family, and her children and also dreams of a future with safety, health, and opportunities.

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[50] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 36.

[51] Bennett, "Paradigmatic Assumptions," 106.

Minimization

Mitchell Hammer describes Minimization as a "transitional mindset between the more monocultural orientations of Denial and Polarization and the more intercultural/global worldviews of Acceptance and Adaptation."[52] Bennett views Minimization as the "the last attempt to preserve the centrality of one's own worldview" by attempting to "bury difference under the weight of cultural similarities."[53]

In focusing primarily on similarities, people in the Minimization orientation avoid cultural differences by trivializing them and seeing them as less significant than cultural commonalities.[54] Commonalities include human Similarity, which focuses on basic needs such as eating and sleeping, and Universalism, which focuses on universal values and principles."[55]

Minimization can express itself differently depending on whether one is part of a dominant or non-dominant group. Among dominant group members the focus on commonalities is often a result of limited cultural self-understanding.[56] Among non-dominant group members the focus on commonalities can be "a strategy for navigating the values and practices largely determined by the dominant culture group. ... This latter strategy can have survival value for non-dominant culture members and often takes the form of 'go along to get along.'"[57]

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[52] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 34.

[53] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 41.

[54] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 41.

[55] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 34.

[56] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 34.

[57] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 34.

Israeli Jews, as the more dominant group, may lack awareness of their form of communication. Because an Israeli Jew is likely to speak directly and openly if there is disagreement, he or she may assume that others will as well and so may interpret a Palestinian's silence or avoidance as agreement. Palestinians, as the non-dominant group, may seek to avoid discrimination and the discomfort that comes when cultures differ by hiding aspects of their own culture when interacting with Israelis (such as their language or their political views) in an effort to "go along to get along."

People in Minimization assume that "all people share some basic characteristics, such as individual motivation for achievement."[58] The characteristics that persons in Minimization assume are universal are usually derived from the culture of the person making the assumptions, and the person making the assumptions is usually a member of the dominant culture.[59]

While Denial manages the threat of cultural difference by not recognizing it and Polarization by working from categories of "us and them" that overly criticize one culture and take an uncritical view of another, Minimization neutralizes differences by "subsuming the differences into familiar categories."[60] Because people in Minimization expect to see similarities, they may insist that others change their behavior to fit those expectations.[61] In the context of Israeli-Messianic Jews and Christian Palestinians this may exhibit itself in assumptions about theological similarities. When these expectations of similarity are not met, each side will pressure the other to conform to their own

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[58] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 42.

[59] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 42.

[60] Hammer et al., 424.

[61] Hammer et al., 425.

perspective. Dominant culture members in Minimization often demonstrate a lack of cultural self-understanding and awareness of the institutional privilege that their ethnicity provides them.[62] Israeli Jewish women who feel confident in speaking about religious and political views in public are often unaware that the conflict and the power differences that exist because of it mean Palestinian women have learned that speaking publicly on these topics poses a risk to themselves and their families. Both dominant and non-dominant groups in Minimization may avoid any focus on differences out of fear that a focus on differences is wrong and may lead to conflict.

For members of an oppressed minority group, learning about and interacting with the dominant culture will not hold the same excitement as it would in the case of a person choosing to move to a new country or a student studying abroad.[63] Members of non-dominant groups may need to overcome strong internal resistance to learn about and interact with the other. Though developing an interest and motivation to deeply understand the dominant culture will be challenging for an oppressed minority group, at the Minimization stage learning about the dominant culture may begin to be experienced as

> more developmental than debasing. People are likely to recognize the need to live together in a multicultural society, and they are willing to accord respect as well as demand it. Emphasis in intercultural relations may expand from an exclusive concern with countering the negative effects of racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice to include building positive channels for understanding cultural differences.[64]

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[62] Hammer et al., 425.

[63] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 47.

[64] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 48.

Athar Amleh, a West Bank Muslim Palestinian woman who began working in medical research at Hadassah, a Jewish hospital in Jerusalem, found that she resisted speaking Hebrew in her interactions with Jewish people, despite having taken Hebrew language classes. When her Israeli-Palestinian supervisor realized she was capable in Hebrew, he asked her to speak Hebrew with him. He also asked the other people in the lab to speak with her in Hebrew. Before working in Jerusalem, her only interactions with Israeli-Jews had been with soldiers at checkpoints. Her initial encounters with Israeli citizens in Jerusalem and at the hospital were full of both fear and curiosity. Speaking the language and interacting daily with Jewish people forced her to confront her negative feelings about Israelis and the Hebrew language, and also to recognize the fears her Jewish co-workers had towards her as a hijab wearing Muslim woman from the West Bank. As she spoke Hebrew with her co-workers, her fears began to disappear and she was able to accept them as human beings. She was able to overcome her negative feelings about the Hebrew language and see it more neutrally as their primary means of communication, as Arabic is hers.[65]

In an intractable conflict situation, it is not only the non-dominant group that faces resistance to learning about the other. Both sides feel threatened by the other and experience intense fear. If they are to develop from Polarization to Minimization, both sides need to confront the negative feelings that hinder learning and prevent them from developing greater intercultural competence.

[65] Athar Amleh, conversation with author, October 4, 2017 and email message to author, October 10, 2017.

Often those in the Minimization stage assume that success in cross-cultural communication depends on merely being one's genuine or authentic self.[66] At the base of this assumption is the idea that underneath the surface differences, everyone is the same and that positive or successful interaction simply requires avoiding artifice.[67] Bennett explains, "It is ethnocentric to think that one's natural self is automatically understandable, since it assumes that one's own culture is central to everyone's worldview."[68] The frustration and disappointment that comes when these expectations based on the assumption of underlying commonality are not met and fail to lead to positive interactions can often cause people to revert to defense attitudes of superiority and derogation, rather than to question the validity of their assumptions of commonality.[69]

Activities that help individuals develop greater cultural self-awareness as well as awareness of issues of power and privilege are essential in helping groups and individuals move from Minimization to Acceptance.[70] Culture-specific information can be helpful for those operating from a Minimization orientation, but it must go beyond information to activities that bring about more profound self-reflection as well and help groups and

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[66] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 44.

[67] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 44.

[68] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 44.

[69] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 44.

[70] Mitchell R. Hammer, "The Intercultural Development Inventory: A New Frontier in Assessment and Development of Intercultural Competence," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do About It,* ed. R. Michael Paige, Kris Hemming Lou, and Michael Vande Berg (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LCC, 2012), 123.

individuals to resolve the issues of the Minimization stage and move toward Acceptance.[71] Activities such as

> simulations, reports of personal experience, and other methods of illustrating substantial cultural differences in the interpretation of behavior are effective at this point. Awareness of these differences must be shown to have definite practical significance for intercultural communication to overcome the stasis of minimization.[72]

Simulations such as Ecotonos, which was part of the training used in this project, create a safe context for people to experience the emotions and misunderstandings that arise in situations of cultural difference and provide a guided opportunity to reflect on and learn from the experience.

The development between Minimization and Acceptance requires a paradigm shift from ethnocentrism to an intercultural or global mindset.[73] As such, it brings about an intellectual, emotional, and sometimes spiritual upheaval for persons or groups seeking to increase intercultural competency. The challenge of moving from Minimization to Acceptance and the value of support in this transition should not be underestimated. Even if activities are appropriate and effective, "learners are still likely to experience a degree of disorientation and confusion" as they shift from an ethnocentric perspective to an intercultural mindset.[74] The struggle and confusion should be acknowledged but not "prematurely eased by retreating to earlier ethnocentric states."[75]

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[71] Bennett, "Paradigmatic Assumptions," 108.

[72] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 45.

[73] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 45.

[74] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 45.

[75] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 45.

One of the greatest challenges of developing beyond Minimization is simply recognizing the need. In many situations, Minimization can bring a certain level of success in intercultural interactions.[76] Certainly relationships in Minimization seem more peaceful than they do when interacting from a Polarized orientation. As such, people may believe that they are more effective than they are in their contexts. Unless they can recognize the limitations of Minimization in cross-cultural work and interactions as well as the potential damage that can be done to relationships when operating from this orientation, they may not be motivated to do the work necessary to develop beyond it. Many Musalaha women enjoy the social activities and outings that Musalaha provides and that focus on building relationships, but resist pressing on to have the difficult conversations about theological and political differences that are necessary to move beyond Minimization.[77] While the relationships that are formed in the early stages of reconciliation are often warm and friendly, when circumstances (such as increased violence) force participants to see the differences that they have otherwise avoided, these relationships are not always able to withstand the pressure. The subsequent feelings of hurt and betrayal that come from broken friendships can be devastating to the reconciliation process.

Minimization is an improvement over Polarization but its focus on commonalities leads it to mask differences to such an extent that it can limit understanding of the other. Limited understanding can lead to limited trust and respect, both of which are essential to reconciliation. An example of both the positive aspects and limitations of Minimization

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[76] Hammer, "New Frontier," 122.

[77] Musalaha participant, conversation with author, November 24, 2016.

can be seen in a baby shower that was thrown by an Israeli woman born and raised in America for a Palestinian friend and attended by both Palestinians and Israelis. The American-Israeli woman wanted to express love and support to her expectant Palestinian friend, but she chose to do so in a way that fit her own American cultural background and not the cultural background of the Palestinian friend or the Palestinians or Israelis she invited. Neither Palestinian nor Israeli cultures throw baby showers or give baby gifts before the birth of the child. Individuals raised in America culture have a strong sense of control over their circumstances. Throwing baby showers before a birth demonstrates a confidence in their ability to manage circumstances and safely deliver a baby. Palestinians and Israelis have a stronger sense of the power of outside forces and feel that it is presumptuous to give gifts before the birth.

An American operating from Minimization might be tempted to dismiss the Palestinian and Israeli avoidance of gifts before the birth as superstition. Moving forward into Acceptance would require gaining a deeper understanding both of one's own worldview as well as the worldview of the other behind the different attitudes toward birth and gift giving. Is there something about humility and the limits of human control that Americans can learn from the different perspectives of Israelis and Palestinians surrounding birth? Is there something that Israelis and Palestinians can learn about their fears and how they manage them? Because of the long friendship between the woman who threw the baby shower and the expectant mother, most likely the mother experienced the shower as it was intended—as a demonstration of love and care for her—despite its cultural "inappropriateness." It was also an opportunity to bring Israelis and Palestinians together to interact in a social setting. On the one hand, it is an example of how

Minimization can bring some level of success in intercultural interactions. Israelis and Palestinians came together in celebration and friendship. On the other hand, one of the Israeli women who was invited could not bring herself to give a gift for the baby because it was not appropriate in her culture. She chose to attend the party but gave a gift for the mother instead of the baby, which could be an appropriate adaptation to the culture of the other, depending on how well she understood both her own culture and the culture of the others.

A party like this could be an opportunity to learn more about one's own culture as well as the culture of the other if the differences are discussed in a way that allows everyone to gain a greater understanding of both themselves and each other. However, if the differences are not recognized and discussed respectfully, it is possible that the women at the party could have been uncomfortable. They may have felt that their own worldviews were not recognized or respected, or they may have felt that they had not been heard (in the sense that their different perspective on gift giving was overlooked). In either case, the limited understanding of the other could limit the building of trust. When people break our cultural rules it is more difficult for us to trust them. While operating from a Minimization orientation has many advantages over Polarization, it is important to recognize its limitations and the benefits of moving forward into Acceptance.

Acceptance

A person in the Acceptance stage of intercultural competence recognizes both cultural similarities and differences.[78] In the Acceptance stage difference is no longer

[78] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 41.

experienced as threatening. Rather, difference can be "enjoyable and actually sought after."[79]

People operating from an Acceptance orientation are curious about and interested in cultural differences, are committed to cultural diversity, and acknowledge the importance of cultural context but still struggle with determining how to act appropriately in cross-cultural situations.[80] Deciding how to maintain one's "ethical commitments in the face of" differing cultural values is key to developing beyond Acceptance.[81] A person in the Acceptance stage may avoid, through inaction, cross-cultural situations where he or she realizes power differences are playing a part and may be unwilling to make decisions that would require applying ethical principles and values in other cultural contexts.[82] Developing to the Adaptation level requires learning how to act appropriately and with personal integrity in the complicated moral situations that arise in cross-cultural interactions.

It is important to remember that the Acceptance stage of intercultural competence does not necessarily mean agreement.[83] At times one will judge aspects of other cultures negatively. In the ethnocentric orientations, however, differences lead people to see others as inferior or even less human, whereas in Acceptance the judgment is "not ethnocentric in the sense of withholding equal humanity."[84]

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[79] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 46.

[80] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 41.

[81] Bennett, "Paradigmatic Assumptions," 108.

[82] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 41.

[83] Hammer et al., 425.

[84] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 46.

People in the Acceptance stage have developed the ability to experience their own culture as "one of a number of equally complex worldviews."[85] Much more than simply being experts in one or more cultures, "they are adept at identifying how cultural differences in general operate in a wide range of human interactions."[86] In Musalaha, sharing the different narratives of the Israeli and Palestinian people is a vital aspect of the reconciliation process. In the Polarization stage it is difficult for each side to hear (much less accept) the narrative of the other. In Minimization, the discomfort of difference is avoided by focusing on commonalities. Participants can hear the narrative of the other without the strong negative reactions of Polarization, but there is still a sense of gritting one's teeth and getting through it while still clinging to one's own views as central to all. In Acceptance, participants are finally able to begin to recognize the legitimacy of other viewpoints and see situations from the perspective of the other. Because they no longer experience difference itself as threatening, participants in Acceptance can de-center from their own view and begin to understand more deeply how the other experiences the world.

Empathy begins to play a role in developing intercultural competence at the Acceptance level though it is still in its beginning stages and takes time to develop fully.

> The ability to make the temporary shift in perspective represented by empathy indicates a relatively high level of intercultural development. Upon this base, most people can engage in reasonably satisfactory intercultural communication. Development within this stage may go on for some time (perhaps years), taking the form of increased knowledge of other cultures, facility in foreign languages, understanding communication styles and nonverbal patterns, and heightened sensitivity to how situations "feel different" when alternative cultural values are

[85] Hammer et al., 425.

[86] Hammer et al., 425.

> applied. Such development can be encouraged by constantly coupling knowledge of other cultures with the practice of ethnorelative empathy.[87]

Developing from Acceptance to Adaptation requires one to increase in both cultural self-understanding as well as understanding of cultural differences.[88] Development also requires engaging in culturally adaptive behavior.[89]

Adaptation

A person in the Adaptation orientation can shift cultural perspectives in his or her interactions with different cultures and is also able to adapt behavior appropriately to differing cultural contexts.[90] Adaptation does not necessarily mean trying to act like people in a different culture, but it does involve "respecting local customs and investing in learning appropriate behavior."[91]

Developing alternative communication skills is important in the Adaptation stage.[92] While people from the same culture can easily understand the behavior and language of others from their own culture, unless they take a Minimization perspective they cannot assume that they will be able to do so when interacting with people from a different culture.[93] Bennett explains, "central to any intercultural communication skill is the ability to experience some aspects of reality differently from what is given by one's

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[87] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 54.

[88] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 41.

[89] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 41.

[90] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 42.

[91] Hofstede, 97.

[92] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 52.

[93] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 52.

own culture."[94] Again, empathy is essential in developing a mindset that can understand the other's perspective.[95] Empathy "demands a shift in frame of reference; it is based on an assumption of difference, and implies respect for that difference and a readiness to give up temporarily one's own worldview in order to imaginatively participate in the other's."[96] Such a shift is not simply cognitive but rather is

> a change in the organization of lived experience, which necessarily includes affect and behavior. Thus, people at Adaptation are able to express their alternative cultural experience in culturally appropriate feelings and behavior. If the process of frame shifting is deepened and habitualized, it becomes the basis for biculturality or multiculturality.[97]

Musalaha leaders in Adaptation will be acutely conscious both of how their own cultural backgrounds influence how they see the world as well as how the cultural backgrounds of others influence the perspectives of others. Leaders in Adaptation are growing in their ability to make cognitive shifts between different cultural views as well as appropriately adapt their behavior in ways that build trust by demonstrating their understanding of and respect for cultural differences. Musalaha leaders in Adaptation would recognize the fears that shape the narrative of their own people as well as the fears that shape the narrative of the other, and would be able to speak sympathetically and perceptively to each. This knowledge and these abilities will allow Musalaha leaders in Adaptation to bridge between Musalaha participants from various cultural backgrounds and levels of intercultural competence.

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[94] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 53.

[95] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 53.

[96] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 53.

[97] Hammer et al., 425.

Assessment and Development of Intercultural Competence

Assessment

Due to its complexity, assessing intercultural competence is challenging and no one tool can provide a comprehensive measurement of an individual's competence.[98] Some form of assessment is often necessary, however, as "self-reports are notoriously unreliable in the sense that an individual may not have enough knowledge about the topic being discussed to draw valid conclusions about it."[99] Additionally, self-reports often exhibit social desirability, meaning people report what they believe is expected or desired by the one questioning them.[100] While the learner may have some awareness of how effective he or she is in interacting with other cultures, it is only the person from the other culture who can "determine the appropriateness of behavior and communication in the interaction."[101] Some combination of assessment, observation by a trained instructor, and feedback from the cultural other may provide a fuller picture of one's intercultural competency.

While some research regarding the effectiveness of using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) in multicultural education has produced mixed results

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[98] Darla K. Deardorff, "Implementing Intercultural Competence Assessment," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc., 2009), 486.

[99] Michael Vande Berg, R. Michael Paige, and Kris Hemming Lou, "Student Learning Abroad: Paradigms and Assumptions," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do about It,* ed. R. Michael Paige, Kris Hemming Lou, and Michael Vande Berg (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2012), 22.

[100] Vande Berg et al., 23.

[101] Darla K. Deardorff, "Assessing Intercultural Competence," *New Directions for Institutional Research* 2011, no.149 (Spring 2011): 73-74.

regarding pre- and post-change,[102] other research demonstrates substantial improvements when the IDI has been used as part of a program to develop learners' ability to "adapt to diverse cultural values and practices."[103] Differing results may be due to differences in participants[104] as well as differences in how educators and trainers use the information they gain from the IDI results and the type of training, education, and experiences they provide between pre- and post-IDI. Studies indicate that students who receive the most individual and group mentoring during study abroad experiences make the greatest gains in post-IDI testing.[105] Research also suggests that student development is greater when educators "actively facilitate their learning, helping them reflect on" their cross-cultural experiences.[106] The most substantial gains in post-IDI testing occur in situations where there is intentionality, mentoring and reflection.[107]

Development of Intercultural Competence

Developing intercultural competence is a complicated process. Intercultural experiences by themselves are not sufficient to develop competence.[108] A cognitive classroom approach is also insufficient.[109]

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[102] Steven J. Sandage et al., "Spiritual Predictors of Change in Intercultural Competence in a Multicultural Counseling Course," *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 34 no. 2 (2015): 169.

[103] Hammer, "New Frontier," 129.

[104] Sandage et al., 169.

[105] R. Michael Paige and Michael Vande Berg, "Why Students Are and Are Not Learning Abroad: A Review of Recent Research," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not and What We Can Do About It,* ed. Michael Vande Berg, R. Michael Paige, and Kris Hemming Lou (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2012), 37.

[106] Paige and Vande Berg, 37.

[107] Paige and Vande Berg, 37.

[108] Darla K. Deardorff, ed., *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), xiii.

> Culture learning develops only with attention to experience and the affective domain that is then linked to cognition. It is through impactful experiences, where people are challenged to make sense of their new environment and accommodate to the difference, where they ultimately gain more sophisticated knowledge about other people and a feeling of being at home in a new context.[110]

Developing intercultural competence requires intentional effort that includes "adequate preparation, substantive intercultural interactions, and relationship building."[111]

In the past, learning intercultural skills was left to those few individuals who studied, worked, or lived abroad. However, today the "call to develop the skills and abilities to live and work with culturally different others is no longer specific to a few particular disciplines and professions but rather a call to cultural consciousness in a much wider context."[112] In considering how to develop intercultural competence in one's self and others, a comprehensive and long-term approach is necessary. A one-time

> workshop or course, while a possible start in framing some of the issues, is not sufficient in this development process; rather, the integration of aspects of intercultural competence must be addressed throughout one's education and professional development. For schools, this may mean revisiting the overall curriculum in an effort to determine how to incorporate aspects of intercultural competence—such as other worldviews—into the whole of the curriculum. This also necessitates instructors being adequately prepared to guide learners in this development process, meaning that instructors themselves need to understand more fully the concept of intercultural competence.[113]

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[109] Kenneth Cushner and Jennifer Mahon, "Intercultural Competence in Teacher Education: Developing the Intercultural Competence of Educators and Their Students," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 316.

[110] Cushner and Mahon, 316.

[111] Deardorff, *Handbook,* xiii.

[112] Janet M. Bennett, "Cultivating Intercultural Competence: A Process Perspective," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 122.

[113] Deardorff, *Handbook,* xiii.

In their article "Developing Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills," J. Camille Hall and Matthew T. Theriot discuss their research that explores whether or not training makes a difference in developing intercultural competence among social workers. The results of their research "showed that the proportion of multi-cultural-infused courses, multicultural supervision, and racial/ethnic minority caseloads were significant predictors of multicultural competency scores."[114] Training does make a difference if it is broadly applied and long-term in design.

Darla K. Deardorff likewise asks the question, "How can intercultural competence be developed in students?"[115] Deardorff explains that culture-specific information is not sufficient. Developing intercultural skills and competencies is a long-term process that requires increasing critical thinking skills as well as attitudes such as respect, openness, and curiosity and a growing ability to see things from other perspectives.[116] Bennett notes that "curiosity, suspension of judgment, cognitive flexibility, cultural humility, and tolerance of ambiguity are critical components of the affective dimension of intercultural competence."[117] In developing intercultural competence, gaining the skills necessary to think interculturally becomes more important than culture-specific knowledge.[118] Training in intercultural competence must go beyond simply introducing the concepts in a lecture or occasional readings or taking one course on the topic.[119] In the context of

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[114] J. Camille Hall and Matthew T. Theriot, "Developing Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills: Diversity Training Makes a Difference?" *Multicultural Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (2016): 36.

[115] Deardorff, "Assessing Intercultural Competence," 69.

[116] Deardorff, "Assessing Intercultural Competence," 68.

[117] Bennett, "Process Perspective," 128.

[118] Deardorff, "Assessing Intercultural Competence," 68.

[119] Deardorff, "Assessing Intercultural Competence," 69.

Musalaha programs, it will require infusing relationship building activities and curriculum with frequent opportunities for participants to reflect on cultural differences, gain greater understanding and knowledge of both their own culture and others, and to develop intercultural skills like those mentioned above that will allow them to interact more effectively with difference.

Developing cultural self-awareness is an essential part of developing intercultural competence. Data from research regarding increasing intercultural competence among study abroad students shows that "students learn and develop considerably more when educators prepare them to become more self-reflective, culturally self-aware, and aware of 'how they know what they know.'"[120] People operating from a Minimization orientation may be "relatively tolerant," but they are not able to deeply understand other cultures because they do not see their own culture clearly.[121] Only when one can see "that much of one's experience is a function of the particular context in which one was socialized can one fully imagine alternatives to it."[122]

The mental and emotional strength of the influence of one's culture cannot be overestimated, though it is largely unconscious. Wurzel explains:

> We might think of culture as "the habits of the heart and mind." This expression can reveal the extent to which the familiarity of everyday life, our habits and the depth of our feelings for them, influence the way we perceive and interpret experience. These habits are learned, and they consciously and unconsciously affect our mental and emotional lives. If they were less powerful, they would be easier to change.[123]

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[120] Vande Berg et al., 21.

[121] Bennett, "Paradigmatic Assumptions," 107.

[122] Bennett, "Paradigmatic Assumptions," 107.

[123] Wurzel, 3.

Developing intercultural competence cannot only be an academic or intellectual activity. It involves troubling emotions and requires personal application.

> Understanding one's own cultural reality is both an emotional and intellectual experience. The experience of self-discovery and cultural expansion involves both that which is comfortable and that which is not. Relating learning to oneself entails the questioning of basic premises about oneself. Self-discovery almost always involves some personal and emotional turmoil and some personal sense of loss.[124]

Particularly in an intractable conflict situation as in Israel-Palestine, developing cultural self-awareness can be challenging because the questioning of basic premises about oneself can feel not only uncomfortable but dangerous and may even be actively discouraged in the surrounding culture. It is probable that extra knowledge, care, and patience will be necessary for facilitating growth in cultural self-awareness in conflict situations.

Self-reflection is another key to developing intercultural competence. As noted before, cross-cultural experiences alone do not lead to higher competency. "People don't learn from experience, they learn from reflecting on experience."[125] IDI research with study abroad students

> indicates that students who participate in programs that take steps to deeply immerse them in the host culture as well as provide expert cultural mentoring that is developmental—that is, mentoring that asks the students to reflect on their experiences, and to reflect on how they characteristically make meaning of their experience—do succeed in helping their students develop intercultural competence.[126]

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[124] Wurzel, 13.

[125] Lilli Engle and John Engle, "Beyond Immersion: The American University Center of Provence Experiment in Holistic Intervention," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do About It,* ed. Michael Vande Berg, R. Michael Paige, and Kris Hemming Lou (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LCC, 2012), 301.

[126] Hammer (2012), 133.

Musalaha participants are not likely to have an immersion experience in the sense that they will live exclusively in the culture of the other for an extended time, but they do have the opportunity for interaction with those from different cultural backgrounds at Musalaha events and can choose to increase those interactions and reflect on them. Even Christian Palestinians who live in the West Bank and are not allowed to enter Israel without special permission can develop relationships with Muslims, providing intercultural experiences that can lead to valuable reflection and development of intercultural competence. Israeli Messianic Jews who live in communities where there is little opportunity for frequent interaction with Palestinians or who are not yet prepared to interact directly with Palestinians can choose to purposely interact with Jews with different beliefs and cultural backgrounds or with foreigners living in their area, and they can reflect on these experiences.

Interaction with cultural others is essential for growth in intercultural competence, but it is not sufficient on its own to lead to the development of intercultural competence. Interaction must be combined with self-reflection. Musalaha leaders must first develop the "habit of reflection" among themselves if they are going to be able to communicate the value of reflection in developing intercultural competence to their group participants and if they are going to be able to teach and model methods of reflection to them.[127] Training in reflection should have two primary goals:

> to provide frameworks that facilitate empathetic interpretations of communication behavior in intercultural interactions, and to assist students in generating culturally appropriate behavior. They typically include topics such as

[127] James E. Zull, "The Brain, Learning and Study Abroad," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do About It,* ed. Michael Vande Berg, R. Michael Paige, and Kris Hemming Lou (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LCC, 2012), 182.

communication and conflict styles; contrasting value sets; and the "D.I.E." model of description, interpretation, and evaluation of behaviors.[128]

Quick writing exercises can give participants the opportunity to practice reflective intercultural skills including critical thinking, application, analysis, and evaluation.[129] Even simple questions such as "What is one surprising thing you observed this week?" can create a wealth of opportunity for reflection.[130] Information from written exercises can provide facilitators with useful information on how participants are developing.[131]

Deep reflection on cross-cultural experiences can be both rewarding and challenging. On the one hand, learners develop an expanded worldview[132] that can enable them to empathize with others and see situations from different perspectives. On the other hand, this can be "difficult, sometimes frightening work for [learners], because it challenges them to look at their personal identities in a new way."[133]

It is important to provide participants with support so that their "cognitive learning is not blocked by too much emotional challenge."[134] Even though Musalaha participants are not living in an immersion situation, their extended and deep interactions

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[128] Bruce La Brack and Laura Bathurst, "Anthropology, Intercultural Communication, and Study Abroad," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do About It,* ed. Michael Vande Berg, R. Michael Paige, and Kris Hemming Lou (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LCC, 2012), 206.

[129] Jennifer Meta Robinson, "Learning Abroad and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do About It,* ed. Michael Vande Berg, R. Michael Paige, and Kris Hemming Lou (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LCC, 2012), 247.

[130] Robinson, 247.

[131] Robinson, 247.

[132] Victor Savicki, "The Psychology of Student Learning Abroad," in *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not, and What We Can Do About It,* ed. Michael Vande Berg, R. Michael Paige, and Kris Hemming Lou (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2012), 231.

[133] Savicki, 231.

[134] La Brack and Bathurst, 207.

with the other and the additional pressures of living in a conflict context can lead to many of the same uncomfortable feelings of culture shock that people living in a different culture might experience. Discussions explaining some of the challenges and negative feelings that may arise in intercultural interactions can help prepare participants to cope with these emotions.[135]

In time and with ongoing mentoring and support, the hope would be that Musalaha participants would learn to "examine both external events and their own interpretation or emotional response to those events and gradually learn to write their cultural observations with close attention to the use of neutrally descriptive (versus judgmental or evaluative) language." Skills such as these are an essential foundation that leaders and participants need as they move through the reconciliation process and face increasingly controversial and emotionally charged topics.

Research also indicates that cultural mentoring has an important impact on the development of intercultural competence; in fact, it may be one of the most important aspects of any program attempting to develop intercultural competence among its participants. The Georgetown Consortium Project was a research project that included a pre and post test IDI comparison among study abroad students.[136] Of the seven different variables included in the study,[137] cultural mentoring (which the researchers defined as guided reflection on the students' cultural experience) proved to be "the most predictive

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[135] La Brack and Bathurst, 207.

[136] Paige and Vande Berg, 35.

[137] Among them: length of stay, language issues, academic work, housing with other students or immersion with a host family, guided cultural interactions, and experiential learning.

of intercultural development."[138] Group mentoring was found to be particularly effective.[139]

The common assumption that placing people in cross-cultural situations will automatically result in the development of intercultural competence has been shown in numerous studies to be false. Interdisciplinary and research evidence demonstrates that

> most students abroad are at this point not learning to negotiate cultural differences, whether inside or outside the classroom, unless educators intervene in their learning in ways that help them develop the types of knowledge and skills that will allow them to shift perspective and adapt behavior to new and often challenging cultural contexts.[140]

In the Israeli-Palestinian context, just because Israelis and Palestinians spend time together in work, social, or educational settings does not necessarily mean that they are developing intercultural competence. As intervention is necessary for most study abroad students to develop intercultural competency, intervention is probably necessary for most Israelis and Palestinians to develop intercultural competence. In the case of Musalaha program participants, cultural mentoring by group facilitators is potentially one of the most effective means of development. If they are to be effective in helping others develop intercultural competence, Musalaha group facilitators need to be at a high level of intercultural competence themselves and also trained in how to be cultural mentors. As study abroad students "learn and develop effectively and appropriately when educators intervene more intentionally through well-designed training programs that continue throughout the study abroad experience,"[141] Musalaha program participants are most

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[138] Paige and Vande Berg, 37.

[139] Paige and Vande Berg, 36.

[140] Vande Berg et al., 123, Kindle.

[141] Paige and Vande Berg, 21.

likely to develop intercultural competence if they are mentored by interculturally competent leaders who are trained to be cultural mentors.

The IDI in an Intercultural Competence Development Program

In her article "Introduction of the Intercultural Development Inventory to a Long-term Study of Student Journals in an Undergraduate Intercultural Communication Course," Sherry Jett Barnes discusses her research comparing Intercultural Communication courses that used the IDI and those that did not.[142] Students in all classes were required to meet frequently with a partner from a different culture for conversation, which is a common requirement in intercultural communication courses.[143] The addition of using the IDI in the course created a unique situation in that the IDI provided "a strong framework that includes appropriate vocabulary and an objective stance to discuss the development of intercultural sensitivity" in their intercultural experiences with their conversation partners.[144]

In comparing journal writing from students in classes that used the IDI and those that did not, Barnes found several areas of learning that were unique to the IDI class students. Students in classes that used the IDI "came to understand the developmental nature of intercultural sensitivity as measured by the IDI versus the idea that 'people either have intercultural sensitivity or not.'"[145] This awareness of the developmental nature of intercultural competency seemed to increase students' tolerance when they

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[142] Sherry Jett Barnes, "Introduction of the Intercultural Development Inventory to a Long-term Study of Student Journals in an Undergraduate Intercultural Communication Course," *Intercultural Communication Studies* XIX, no. 2 (2010): 184.

[143] Barnes, 184.

[144] Barnes, 184.

[145] Barnes, 194.

"identified Denial, Defense [Polarization] and Minimization behaviors in class case studies and current events."[146] Students in the IDI classes also recognized the need for intercultural competence outside the classroom context.[147] Barnes observed as well that using the IDI vocabulary helped students clarify behavior and identify where those behaviors fit in the stages of intercultural sensitivity.[148] She found evidence in the student journals that students had learned what was necessary to move up through the stages of intercultural sensitivity as demonstrated in the IDC and "appeared to be making an effort to take those actions steps."[149]

Finally, Barnes observed that while students in the classes that did not use the IDI expressed enjoyment in their learning and confidence in their new knowledge of intercultural communication, students who were in classes that used the IDI

> instead wrote specifically of future personal growth, and seemed to understand more clearly the need for specific goals. They still wrote about their culture of origin and the values they had been taught, and still were optimistic about interacting with other cultures, but it was a subdued optimism. Humility often replaced the excitement of having already learned what was needed. Determination to press forward replaced the subtle message that 'this class has taught me what I need.' Journal entries in [the IDI class] often were deeper and more personal and this change seemed to be tied to the realization that they needed to continue to develop and that it would be a challenge to do so.[150]

Based on her study, Barnes concluded that the "addition of the IDI is of sufficient value to make the necessary commitment of time and resources for future Intercultural

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[146] Barnes, 194.

[147] Barnes, 194.

[148] Barnes, 192.

[149] Barnes, 195.

[150] Barnes, 196.

Communication classes."[151] Additionally, Barnes believes that the combination of the IDI, interviews with cross-cultural partners, and reflective writing may be appropriate in non-academic settings where groups seek to develop intercultural sensitivity among their members.[152] While no assessment can provide a complete picture of a group or individual's intercultural competency on its own, the IDI has frequently been shown to be a valuable tool in programs or classes focused on developing intercultural competence. Using the IDI among Musalaha leaders and participants could create a greater awareness of the need to develop intercultural competence and increase the motivation to do so. The IDI can also provide the guidance and framework to take practical steps toward greater intercultural competence.

Importance of Relationship in Developing Intercultural Competence

Finally, the importance of relationships in the development of intercultural competence cannot be overemphasized.

> Building authentic relationships … is key in this cultural learning process—through observing, listening, and asking those who are from different backgrounds to teach, to share, to enter into dialogue together about relevant needs and issues. Respect and trust become essential building blocks in developing these authentic relationships from which to learn from each other.[153]

One method that recognizes the role of relationship in developing intercultural competence is the PEER model, described and evaluated in Prue Holmes and Gillian

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[151] Barnes, 197.

[152] Barnes, 198.

[153] Deardorff, "Implementing Assessment," xiii.

O'Neill's article "Developing and Evaluating Intercultural Competence: Ethnographies of Intercultural Encounters."[154] In earlier studies,[155] Holmes and O'Neill

> found that intercultural contact that occurs at a functional level—through group work in, or brief meetings beyond, the classroom—does not of itself foster intercultural friendships or develop intercultural competence. It may even reinforce cultural stereotypes.[156]

The PEER model focused instead on a study "undertaken by a class of university students who were each required to engage in a paired relationship with a student from another culture (A Cultural Other previously unknown to that student) through a series of encounters."[157] The purpose of the study was

> to engage the class in a process that would ultimately enable them to self-reflect critically on, and evaluate, their own intercultural competence. Each class member wrote a report that focused on those incidents from which they had gained the greatest insight, and concluded with a personal self-reflection on his or her intercultural competence.[158]

The PEER model begins with PREPARE (P). Students identified and recorded "assumptions, prejudices, and stereotypes they held about their Cultural Other."[159] The students then ENGAGED (E) with their Cultural Other over a period of time and in a variety of social and cultural activities.[160] The researchers gave the students a list of guiding topics to help them in their interactions but also encouraged them to find their

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[154] Prue Holmes and Gillian O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating Intercultural Competence: Ethnographies of Intercultural Encounters," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 36 (2012): 707-718.

[155] Prue Holmes, "Ethnic Chinese Students' Communication with Cultural Others in a New Zealand University," *Communications Education* 54, no. 4 (2005): 289-331.

[156] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating," 707.

[157] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating," 708.

[158] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"708.

[159] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"710.

[160] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"711.

own ways of engaging with their Cultural Other (CO).[161] The EVALUATION (E) phase required students to record data regarding their experiences in engaging with their CO, drawing on concepts introduced to them in the classroom regarding communication, culture, and intercultural competence as well as their knowledge of ethnographic data collection, note-taking, and observations.[162] Finally, in the REFLECTION (R) stage, students were required to

> reflect critically on their encounters by drawing on their experiences and notes. They were asked to note any challenges to their preconceptions about communicating with their Cultural Other which prompted a (re) construction and/or (re) negotiation of taken-for-granted ways of thinking, behaving and communicating. Applying reflection and sense-making to their conversations and actions, each student created a picture of his or her intercultural experience and competence.[163]

Through the series of interactions with their CO, students' stereotypical views of the other developed into more complex understandings of both self and other[164] and feelings "of superiority gave way to the need to show respect."[165] Students recognized the need to monitor their feelings during intercultural interactions[166] and as they worked through the confusion that came about through their interactions they "began to question who they were, how they were seen through the eyes of the Cultural Other, and whether the two identities matched."[167] Students found that "monitoring and managing emotions, and reflecting on the feelings of Self and Other in the intercultural encounter require

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[161] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating," 711.

[162] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"711.

[163] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"711.

[164] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"712.

[165] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"714.

[166] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"712.

[167] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"713.

sensitivity (to the feelings of others), empathy and facework; these were all important processes in developing an awareness of intercultural competence."[168]

The research using the PEER model

> begins to address some developmental interdependencies in that we are able to theorize that developing intercultural competence encompasses processes of acknowledging reluctance and fear, foregrounding and questioning stereotypes, monitoring feelings and emotions, working through confusion, and grappling with complexity of intercultural competence.[169]

Furthermore, the approach adopted in this study

> required student researchers to move from theoretical understanding of intercultural competence to an experience-based evaluation of their own intercultural competence. The findings demonstrate how continued relationship building (by way of the PEER model) with a Cultural Other can heighten awareness of the nature and complexity of intercultural competence. The study also highlights the importance of intercultural encounters as places where individuals can shift their focus away from external evaluation of the Other to an inward contemplation of their own competence.[170]

In the Middle Eastern setting where Musalaha works and where relationships are primary, it is imperative to explore relational approaches to developing intercultural competence like the PEER method, which fit well with the goals and processes of reconciliation work.

Role of Religion and Spirituality in Intercultural Competency Development

Religious beliefs play an important role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Even though Christian Palestinians and Israeli Messianic Jews have a common faith in Jesus, their theological beliefs differ in their views of the Land and their definition of the "chosen people." Because of their central role in the conflict, it is necessary to ask in

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[168] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"714.

[169] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating,"716.

[170] Holmes and O'Neill, "Developing and Evaluating," 716.

what ways do religious beliefs and spirituality help or hinder the development of intercultural competence?

Spiritual Grandiosity

> A long history of empirical research on religiousness and prejudice … offers evidence that some religious orientations predict prejudicial attitudes toward certain forms of difference ... Prejudice is, in part, the result of an inability to tolerate differences and an anxiety-driven desire to validate the superiority of personal values and affirm self-identity.[171]

Spiritual Grandiosity occurs when a person becomes "spiritually inflated in ways that lead him or her to feel relationally superior to others."[172] While developing intercultural competence requires an openness to others, Spiritual Grandiosity is maintained by limiting attachment with others.[173] Steven Sandage notes:

> Spiritual grandiosity appears to reflect a style of relational spirituality oriented towards using the sacred to supports one's own perspective and to secure one's own desires. … Those high in spirituality grandiosity likely feel an internal pressure for "specialness" or spiritually privileged status which inhibits their capacity to value the perspectives of others or relate as equals.[174]

Sandage and Mark G. Harden found that Spiritual Grandiosity was negatively associated with intercultural competence as indicated by IDI scores.[175] Individuals who are high in Spiritual Grandiosity may "experience significant dissonance or narcissistic

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[171] Sandage et al., 169.

[172] F. Le Ron Shults and Steven J. Sandage, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2006), 4551, Kindle.

[173] Steven J. Sandage and Mark G. Harden, "Relational Spirituality, Differentiation of Self, and Virtue as Predictors of Intercultural Development," *Mental Health, Religion and Culture* 14, no. 8 (October 2011): 834.

[174] Sandage and Harden, 832, quoted in Shults and Sandage, 4551, Kindle.

[175] Sandage and Harden, 831.

disequilibrium when diversity training leads to the simultaneous deconstruction of their spiritual and cultural frameworks."[176]

Many of the characteristics of Spiritual Grandiosity parallel characteristics of defense Polarization: attitudes of superiority, a focus on defending one's own perspective and denigrating others and a lack of openness to, or relationship with, those who are different. Greater awareness of the characteristics of defense Polarization and how to support people in moving from Polarization to Minimization will likely help facilitators identify and address issues of Spiritual Grandiosity as well.

Quest Spirituality

In contrast to Spiritual Grandiosity, Quest Spirituality is characterized as "a complex religious orientation that involves valuing the role of doubt and maintaining a tentative, changeable stance towards religious conviction."[177] Sandage and Harden suggest that a "willingness to question one's religious tradition and explore new meanings may be an important aspect of spiritual or religious development and mature alterity."[178] Without this ability to question one's religious traditions, "strong religious commitments might reinforce homogeneity and potentially hinder openness to diversity."[179] Spiritual questing or the capacity to question one's religious tradition is a form of cognitive frame-shifting, which is one of the essential skills exercised in Adaptation.[180]

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[176] Sandage and Harden, 832.

[177] Sandage and Harden, 827.

[178] Sandage and Harden, 832.

[179] Sandage and Harden, 832.

[180] Sandage and Harden, 832.

In seeking to facilitate the development of spiritual questing in others, leaders must help

> trainees learn to value questions and tolerate ambiguity. For religious trainees, this can involve critical thinking capacities for questioning one's religious tradition and cultural factors that have shaped that tradition. The results of this study suggest there is a positive association between spiritual questing and the cultural frame-shifting of intercultural competence, so these skills might be mutually reinforcing if practiced together.[181]

Spiritual questing does not mean that one does not have strong religious convictions or deep faith, but rather it indicates humility and recognition of human limitations in fully understanding the sacred.

Differentiation of Self

Differentiation of Self (DoS) is "the ability to separate feelings and thoughts."[182] It includes "the ability to lessen one's emotional reactivity, and therefore relate prosocially and intentionally to others" as well as the "ability to maintain a distinct sense of self while connecting with others across differences, initiate and receive intimacy voluntarily, and establish clear boundaries for oneself within relationships."[183]

Research demonstrates that DoS is positively associated with intercultural competence.[184] Individuals with high DoS "seem to have a greater capacity to differentiate their own cultural framework from that of others without reducing the value of either."[185] They can appreciate both their own and other cultural and religious

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[181] Sandage and Harden, 834.

[182] Bowenian Family Therapy, "Differentiation of Self," accessed July 11, 2017, http://www.psychpage.com/learning/library/counseling/bowen.html#Z3.

[183] Sandage and Harden, 823-824.

[184] Sandage and Harden, 832.

[185] Sandage and Harden, 832.

traditions in positive but non-idealizing ways.[186] Additionally, self-differentiated individuals have a mature capacity to self-regulate anxiety and other negative emotions that "may facilitate intercultural development by helping regulate intercultural anxiety."[187]

Spiritual Well-Being versus Spiritual Instability

Spiritual well-being is a way of relating to the sacred characterized by a "secure closeness in relating with God" and a "high existential well-being generated by a sense of meaning and purpose in life."[188] Spiritual well-being has been positively associated in research with intercultural competence through DoS.[189] Highly differentiated individuals who also demonstrate spiritual well-being are more able to self-regulate negative emotions, and so have a greater capacity to manage the stresses of intercultural interactions that are necessary to develop intercultural competence.

Spiritual instability, on the other hand, is characterized by

> an emotionally and relationally dysregulated style of polarized relating with the sacred consistent with traits of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). Those high in spiritual instability tend to engage in polarized splitting of good and bad objects and manifest high levels of insecurity, mistrust, and fear of abandonment in their attachment with the sacred. In particular, they frequently feel negative about themselves and attacked or punished by the sacred and these hostile introjects and projections can also generate interpersonal defensiveness and conflict.[190]

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[186] Sandage and Harden, 833.

[187] Sandage and Harden, 832.

[188] Steven J. Sandage and Peter J. Jankowski, "Spirituality, Social Justice, and Intercultural Competence: Mediator Effects of Differentiation of Self," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37 (2013): 367.

[189] Sandage and Jankowski, 371.

[190] Sandage and Jankwoski, 368.

Spiritual instability is negatively associated with intercultural competence,[191] and is

> another dysfunctional form of spirituality, distinct from grandiosity, which is characterized by emotional self-dysregulation in one's attachment to God. It would appear that both an inability to perspective-take beyond the self because of a perceived privileged status in relating to God and the experience of insecure attachment relating to God prevents persons from tolerating the anxiety generated by relating to a different other, and therefore potentially lessens effective interpersonal exchange.[192]

These studies demonstrate that Spiritual Well-Being, Quest Spirituality, DoS, and intercultural competence are intimately related. Awareness of these interconnections can be foundational in preparing Musalaha participants for the spiritually and emotionally challenging work of reconciliation.

Humility

Humility "consists of the ability to view the self accurately, an orientation toward others, and the capacity for emotional self-regulation."[193] In a study that explored the relationship between humility, DoS, and intercultural competence, David R. Paine and colleagues found that

> the positive associations between humility and the intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects of DoS offer support for the conceptualization of humility as a relational virtue. Interpersonally, the humble individual can maintain a sense of self as autonomous while connecting with others, even when anxiety escalates. The capacity for interpersonal DoS seems to stem from the ability to effectively regulate arrogance, defensiveness, and self-importance tied to one's own beliefs, values, and experience that may arise when encountering interpersonal difference. This allows the humble individual to interact effectively with individuals of unfamiliar cultures. The ability to regulate self-orientated emotions is also

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[191] Sandage et al., 175.

[192] Sandage et al., 175.

[193] David R. Paine, Peter J. Jankowski, and Steven J. Sandage, "Humility as a Predictor of Intercultural Competence: Mediator Effects for Differentiation-of-Self," *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families* 24, no. 1 (2016): 19.

> compatible with receptivity to others. All of these aspects of humility seem conducive to openness to ongoing learning about other cultures and a willingness to engage new intercultural situations.[194]

In its orientation toward others, humility avoids excessive self-interest, which "appears to be the root of both narcissism and shame."[195] Intercultural competence likewise is incompatible with both narcissism and shame in relation to one's culture

> as both extremes tend to distort perception of one's own and another's culture and respect for cultural complexities. … Individuals with ethnocentric orientations tend to have trouble critically examining polarizing views of cultures, including their own. Idealizing one's own culture is incongruent with accurate self-perception. The ability to acknowledge one's limitations without prejudice signifies humility and intercultural competence.[196]

Paine and colleagues found that "humility can foster effective interpersonal negotiation of cultural difference and support a definition of intercultural competence as receptivity to another's perspective, willingness to see self accurately, openness to cultural differences, and emotional regulation."[197]

Humility also plays a role in Quest Spirituality as "something about embracing existential questions without reducing their complexity, viewing religious doubts positively, and remaining open to religious change [that] seems to be associated with more humility."[198]

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[194] Paine et al., 19.

[195] Richard A. Bollinger and Peter C. Hill, "Humility," in *Religion, Spirituality, and Positive Psychology: Understanding the Psychological Fruits of Faith,* ed. Thomas G. Paine (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LCC, 2012), 827, Kindle.

[196] Paine et al., 16.

[197] Paine et al., 20.

[198] Wade C. Rowatt et al., "On Being Holier-Than-Thou or Humbler-Than-Thee: A Social Psychological Perspective on Righteousness and Humility," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41, no. 2 (2002): 235.

In seeking to help others move beyond the ethnocentric orientations on the IDC, facilitators would do well to emphasize the spiritual virtue of humility, which appears to be essential in developing a global or intercultural mindset.

Meditative Prayer

Meditative prayer has a long history in the Eastern Church.[199] Christian meditative prayer, according to Gailyn Van Rheenen,

> opens the mind to the purposes of God by reflection upon Scripture, simply resting in his presence, and dwelling with him in the goodness of his creation. We grow as loving, holy, faithful beings by dwelling in the presence of God. Christian meditation, thus, attempts to fill the mind with the Person, attributes, and purposes of God.[200]

Sandage and his colleagues explain: "Meditative prayer represents a form of intimate connection with God and secure attachment relating which can provide a basis for exploring new ideas and social relationships without debilitating anxiety."[201]

In a study that explored the value of meditative prayer in the development of intercultural competence, Jankowski and Sandage found that "meditative prayer corresponded with increased DoS, and increased DoS corresponded with increased intercultural competence."[202] The study also found that meditative prayer "may foster positive emotions and self-regulation capacity, which then may facilitate increased ability to effectively navigate cultural differences."[203] Overall, the results of the study suggested

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[199] Peter J. Jankowski and Steven J. Sandage, "Meditative Prayer and Intercultural Competence: Empirical Test of Differentiation-Based Model," *Mindfulness* 5 (2014): 361.

[200] Gailyn Van Rheenen, "Christian Prayer and Eastern Meditation," Global Christian Center, accessed July 11, 2017, http://globalchristiancenter.com/missions-inspiration/24941-missiologyorg.

[201] Sandage et al., 170.

[202] Jankowski and Sandage, 367.

[203] Jankowski and Sandage, 370.

that "contemplative practices and meditative prayer, specifically, hold potential to foster intercultural competence."[204]

Research among counseling students also indicates that the relational posture of help-seeking in petitionary prayer aids in the development of intercultural competence. Sandage and colleagues explain that help-seeking "seems to represent openness to and desire for receiving from others because of perceived self-need, and it may be that this positioning fostered change in intercultural competence."[205] They suggest that future research may explore "whether help-seeking prayer might mitigate the stress of intercultural growth among highly religious trainees."[206] In attending to the spiritual and emotional growth of those one seeks to assist in the development of intercultural competence, facilitators would do well to encourage growth in prayer, particularly meditative but also petitionary.

It is vital for Musalaha leaders to recognize the role of spiritual and emotional health in intercultural competence development and the interconnections between them. The assessments used in the studies discussed in this section (Spiritual Grandiosity, Quest Spirituality, DoS, Spiritual Well-Being, Spiritual Instability, and Humility) are in English and have not been tested for cross-cultural validity. As such, they could not be used in evaluating Musalaha leaders or participants at this time. Even so, an awareness of these concepts and a recognition that Spiritual Well-Being, DoS, Quest Spirituality, humility, meditative prayer and intercultural competence are intimately linked can be valuable knowledge as Musalaha explores ways to support the development of its leaders and

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[204] Jankowski and Sandage, 369.

[205] Sandage et al., 176.

[206] Sandage et al., 175.

considers how to incorporate intercultural competence development into its curriculum. Particularly in communities that are resistant to involvement in reconciliation activities, a focus on developing Spiritual Well-Being, Quest Spirituality, DoS, humility, the practice of meditative prayer, and intercultural competence could be a means of addressing some of the traumas of living in an intractable conflict that prevents people from engaging in reconciliation, as well as a door to helping people develop to the point that they are both willing and able to begin the work of reconciliation.

Challenges of Developing Intercultural Competence in a Conflict Context

Value of Learning in an Emotionally Neutral Context

Developing intercultural competence is challenging under any circumstances, but there are aspects of living in a conflict situation that make it particularly complicated. A study by Haggai Kupermintz and Gavriel Salomon explored ways to help Jewish high school students living Israel-Palestine to develop an awareness of the psychological biases that develop in an intractable conflict while avoiding the highly charged and emotional atmosphere that causes people to resist recognizing different perspectives. For several weeks, 68 twelfth-grade Israeli Jewish students studied the conflict in Northern Ireland.[207] During this time, the instructors did not mention the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, though it is likely that students noted some of the parallels themselves.[208] The purpose of the study was to see if the students were able to transfer the knowledge they gained about a distant intractable conflict and apply it to their own context.[209]

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[207] Kupermintz and Salomon, 296.

[208] Kupermintz and Salomon, 296.

[209] Kupermintz and Salomon, 296.

To test the effectiveness of studying a distant conflict, researchers asked students who had participated in the studies on the Northern Irish conflict as well as students who had not participated to write essays explaining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, first from a Jewish perspective and then from a Palestinian perspective. Both groups of students were able to write essays explaining the Jewish perspective, which was well known to them. However, when "asked to write about the conflict from the Palestinian point of view, most of the program participants wrote well-balanced and impartial essays, but only a handful of the nonparticipants wrote anything at all."[210]

By learning about intractable conflict in a setting removed from the emotionally charged context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the study "afforded the opportunity to engage in a process of rising to a bird's eye view of the two-sided conflict" and allowed students to apply "the constructed abstraction to the local conflict."[211]

The study found support for the theory that something "learned in an emotionally neutral context" would "spontaneously [transfer] to another, emotionally loaded context."[212] It is a study and a theory that may prove useful in attempting to develop intercultural competence among Israelis and Palestinians. It may be necessary to take an indirect approach by first introducing ideas of intercultural competence through information and interactions with cultural others who are not part of the conflict, or who at least who are not perceived as the enemy. In this way, facilitators may be able to avoid the emotionally loaded atmosphere that would likely lead to resistance and so introduce essential intercultural knowledge, skills, and experiences that could spontaneously

[210] Kupermintz and Salomon, 296.

[211] Kupermintz and Salomon, 296.

[212] Kupermintz and Salomon, 296.

transfer into the reconciliation process between Israeli Messianic Jews and Christian Palestinians.

Pluralism

While members of oppressed minority groups may learn to operate with reasonable success in the dominant culture, it does not necessarily mean they have developed intercultural competence. They may demonstrate an ability to interact in and understand the dominant culture, but if "adaptation to the dominant group is unconscious or based only on survival, then the skills involved may not indicate general intercultural sensitivity."[213] Individuals in such circumstances would be considered pluralistic but not necessarily interculturally competent, meaning they will not be able to "deeply shift cultural perspective" or demonstrate the ability to bridge behavior across cultural differences.[214]

> In the case of oppressed minority group members and others, pluralism may be accidental if it was achieved without systematic movement through earlier stages of development. This is most likely to occur when living experience in another culture is undertaken without preparation or previous experience with ethnorelative stages, such as might be the case with young children raised abroad, with untrained personnel posted to long overseas assignments, or with members of minority groups who are forced to live in the dominant culture. In these situations, people may understand and even respect the differences with which they are familiar but they may be unable to recognize or use this sensitivity as part of a generalized skill in adapting to cultural difference.[215]

The difference between pluralism and intercultural competency is an important one to note in the case of Israeli-Palestinians. While many Israeli-Palestinians have learned to live in the dominant Jewish culture, it does not necessarily mean they have

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[213] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 56.

[214] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 31.

[215] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 56.

resolved the issues of the ethnocentric stages of development and moved on to Acceptance or Adaptation. For many, their adjustment to the dominant culture is not a conscious and confident choice made from a position of respect for both their own culture and the other but instead is one made from shame, fear, and the need to survive.

Betrayal

Another challenge members of oppressed groups might face in their efforts to develop intercultural competence is the dilemma of betrayal. [216] In some cases, if people are developing intercultural competence and making efforts to adapt to the dominant culture they may be accused by fellow members of the oppressed minority group of "betraying their own cultural roots."[217] On the other hand, if they limit their behavior to what is acceptable to other members of their group, then they "betray their own intercultural abilities."[218]

> Various terms—such as Oreo cookie, coconut, apple—that indicate white on the inside and some other color on the outside are applied by less developed observers to denigrate those who dare act biculturally. People dealing with identity issues in defense are likely to see every act as political, and their evaluation of people in adaptation can be devastating.[219]

As members of oppressed groups gain intercultural competence they can develop the ability to use "contextual evaluation," which is the "ability to analyze and evaluate situations from one or more chosen cultural perspectives."[220]

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[216] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 56.

[217] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 56.

[218] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 56.

[219] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 56.

[220] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 61.

> The more sophisticated type of contextual evaluation is one in which one consciously chooses to subject a phenomenon to two or more cultural frames for the purpose of evaluation. … Contextual evaluation is a particularly powerful form for people who have experienced cultural oppression. They are able to evaluate those aspects of the dominant culture that lead to oppression without rejecting the entire culture. They are able to see the strengths and limits of their own cultures without embracing them entirely. For the first time in ethnorelative development, members of oppressed minority groups may feel released from the dilemma of betrayal. By defining the context in which evaluation of their actions occurs, people under political pressure can separate the reactive forces of defense identity maintenance from integration commitments to constructive action. The politics are still difficult, but the issue of identity is much clearer.[221]

Nationalism versus Global Citizens

Another challenge for developing intercultural competence in a conflict situation is nationalism. Whereas patriotism is defined as love and devotion to one's country, nationalism, in contrast,

> is described as loyalty and devotion to a nation; especially *a sense of national consciousness exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups.* … Exaltation of one nation over another automatically assumes a degree of cultural superiority, a lack of openness and objectivity.[222]

Those born in a country that holds a strong nationalism will face substantial barriers in developing intercultural competence, as nationalism's "defining features include a lack of intercultural sensitivity and a marked sense of cultural superiority" that can "lead to barriers such as an inability to take an objective and impartial view of one's own culture and its shortcomings. … Nationalism creates significant systemic obstacles toward the development of globally competent citizens."[223]

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[221] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 62.

[222] Mark A. Ashwill and Du'o'ng Thi Hoang Oanh, "Developing Globally Competent Citizens: The Contrasting Cases of the United States and Vietnam," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 145.

[223] Ashwell and Oanh, 153.

In contrast, global citizens are those who see their loyalty and responsibility as reaching beyond their national borders to include all of humanity.[224] As such, national interests are

> not paramount but rather subjugated to and measured against the interests of fellow human beings in other countries. The logically consistent global citizen supports or rejects national interests on the basis of the extent to which they complement or are damaging to those other people.[225]

In a study regarding leadership emergence in multicultural teams, Alon Lisak and Miriam Erez found that individuals who scored high in cultural intelligence, global identity, and openness to cultural diversity were "significantly more likely to emerge as leaders than were other team members."[226] They believe that "team members with high levels of global characteristics display behaviors that contribute to creating a safe team communication climate and strengthen team identity."[227] Individuals who are operating from an Acceptance and, even more, from an Adaptation orientation carry these same characteristics. The IDI can provide a means of evaluating the global characteristics of Musalaha leaders or potential leaders.

Both Israeli and Palestinian cultures are nationalistic. Developing intercultural competence will require recognizing the negative impact of nationalism and the value of moving instead toward a global citizen perspective. In choosing leaders for Musalaha programs, it will be essential to look for individuals who are developing the global characteristics of Acceptance and Adaptation. Leaders operating from a global mindset

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[224] Ashwell and Oanh, 142.

[225] Ashwell and Oanh, 142.

[226] Alon Lisak and Miriam Erez, "Leadership Emergence in Multicultural Teams: The Power of Global Characteristics," *Journal of World Business* 50 (2015): 3.

[227] Lisak and Erez, 12.

will be able to navigate the sensitive and potentially explosive nationalistic waters of Israel-Palestine with wisdom and integrity.

Conclusion

A lack of intercultural competence is not the whole of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, but it has played a substantial role in contributing to and perpetuating it. Without a high level of intercultural competence, Musalaha leaders are limited in their abilities to guide others through the reconciliation process. A commitment to increase intercultural competence among its leaders has the potential to profoundly enhance Musalaha's reconciliation work.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Design and Research Method

Case Study Research

In exploring the role of intercultural competence in reconciliation work and in considering how to develop intercultural competence specifically among leaders in the reconciliation organization, Musalaha, the researcher determined that a case study would be the most suitable method of research.

Case study research focuses on the desire to "understand complex social phenomena."[1] The case study is an empirical inquiry that "allows investigators to focus on a 'case' and retain a holistic and real-world perspective"[2] in situations where "the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident."[3] One of the unique strengths of the case study "is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence—documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations."[4] Because case studies rely on multiple sources of evidence, "the researcher must look for convergence (*triangulation)* of the data: many separate pieces of information must all point to the same conclusions."[5]

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[1] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2014), 691, Kindle.

[2] Yin, 692, Kindle.

[3] Yin, 958, Kindle.

[4] Yin, 866, Kindle.

[5] Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design,* 10th ed. (Harlow Essex, England: Pearson Education Unlimited, 2014), 142.

While Paul Leedy argues that the major weakness of a case study, particularly one that looks only at a single case, is that "we cannot be sure that the findings are generalizable to other situations,"[6] Robert Yin counters that

> case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a "sample," and in doing case study research, your goal will be to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalizations) and not to extrapolate probabilities (statistical generalizations).[7]

This case study seeks to develop a set of principles for increasing intercultural competence that is appropriate in this context.

Participants

The case study involved ten Musalaha leaders who were invited to take part in two four-hour sessions of group training in intercultural competence and three hours of individual coaching, as well as individual work on developing intercultural competence as they were able. The participants were chosen by Musalaha. Two of the original ten Musalaha leaders were not able to take part in the training. Musalaha leaders who did participate included two Israeli Messianic Jews (both born and raised in America), three Israeli-Palestinians, one West Bank Palestinian, and two Americans. Participants were between 30 and 60 years of age and had worked for Musalaha for one to eight years (except for the director, who had been with Musalaha for 25 years). Participants included two men and six women.

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[6] Leedy and Ormrod, 141.

[7] Yin, 1072, Kindle.

Time Frame

The project was intended to take place over a six-month period. The project time was shortened to four months due to Musalaha's summer camp schedule, which made the original time frame unfeasible.

Research Method

The goal of the research project was to create a set of principles for increasing intercultural competence that is appropriate for Musalaha reconciliation leaders in the Israeli-Palestinian context. The researcher used a mixed method approach that included both quantitative and qualitative features. The researcher used a quantitative method to assess the participants' intercultural competence both before and after the training took place. The researcher used numerous qualitative methods to gather additional data during the four-month period regarding participants' individual and group development in intercultural competence. The researcher also examined relevant documents that provided a broader background to the current research.

Research Instruments

Intercultural Development Inventory

The first step in the project was the assessment of intercultural competence through the Intercultural Development Inventory.

> The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is an assessment tool that measures the level of intercultural competence/sensitivity across a developmental continuum for individuals, groups, and organizations and represents a theoretically grounded measure of this capability toward observing cultural differences and commonalities and modifying behavior in cultural context.[8]

[8] Mitchell R. Hammer, "Additional Cross-Cultural Validity Testing of the Intercultural Development Inventory," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 35 (2011): 475.

Many assessments of intercultural competence are available.[9] The researcher chose to use the IDI in this project because the

> IDI has been rigorously tested and has cross-cultural generalizability, both internationally and with domestic diversity. Furthermore, in developing the instrument, psychometric scale construction protocols were followed to ensure that it is not culturally biased or susceptible to social desirability effects (i.e., individuals cannot "figure out" how to answer in order to gain a higher score).[10]

Research also indicates that the "IDI has predictive validity as tested within study abroad in terms of knowledge of host culture, intercultural anxiety, intercultural friendships, and post sojourn overall satisfaction with the study abroad experience."[11] While Musalaha operates within a context of domestic diversity rather than a study abroad situation, knowledge of the cultural other, ability to manage intercultural anxiety, ability to develop intercultural friendships, and having a positive view of one's intercultural interactions are all important aspects of Musalaha's programs. Therefore an assessment that can aid in evaluating participants' preparedness for intense intercultural interactions could be valuable in developing programs suitable for individuals' developmental levels.

Participants took the IDI both before group and individual training sessions began and after the conclusion of the training.

Observations during Training

The project involved two four-hour training sessions. All eight participants attended the first training. Two of the eight were unable to participate in the second

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[9] Alvino E. Fantini, "Assessing Intercultural Competence: Issues and Tools," in *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence,* ed. Darla K. Deardorff (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 466-474.

[10] Hammer, "New Frontier," 117.

[11] Hammer, "Validity Testing," 486.

training due to work and family obligations. The first training provided an overview of intercultural competence and the process of development as well as an explanation of the IDI group results.

The second training session involved Ecotonos, a simulation for collaborating across cultures. Using Ecotonos provided the opportunity to learn about cross-cultural interactions in a more active manner, as opposed to the more cognitive approach used in the first training session. Training literature suggests that the impact of "cross-cultural roleplays is perceived to be stronger due to the process of practicing new behavior in an intercultural safe setting."[12]

Observations were made during both training times and recorded in notes both during and after the training.

Short Written Answers at Conclusion of Training

At the end of each training session participants spent 15 minutes writing brief answers to questions regarding the information and activities from the training time.

Discussion at Conclusion of Training

After participants provided written answers to questions a discussion covering the questions and other topics related to the training followed for 15 to 30 minutes. The final discussion was recorded.

Individual Training

The researcher met with each of the participants for one hour to go over individual IDI results and their individual development plans (IDP). Five of the eight

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[12] Joost J.L.E. Bucker and Hubert Korzilius, "Developing Cultural Intelligence: Assessing the Effect of the Ecotonos Cultural Simulation Game for International Business Students," *The International Journal of Human Resources Management* 26, no. 15 (2015): 1995.

participants also met for a second hour of individual coaching after the second group training. Notes were taken during and after each individual meeting.

Data in Musalaha Documents

Two Musalaha documents were also included as sources of data. First, *Musalaha: A Curriculum of Reconciliation*[13] provided information on current curriculum, programs, and goals of Musalaha. Second, *You Have Heard It Said: Events of Reconciliation*,[14] provided narratives of Musalaha participants regarding their experiences both living in Israel-Palestine as well as their involvement with Musalaha.

Interviews from Previous Research Project Conducted by Researcher

As an additional source of exploring cultural issues that currently impact the reconciliation process among Musalaha participants, interviews from a previous research project undertaken in the fall of 2016 were also reviewed. These interviews included both Israeli Messianic Jews and Palestinian Christians who had been involved with Musalaha programs for numerous years. The women reflected on their experiences with Musalaha and on their interactions with Israelis and Palestinians both in reconciliation programs and in the community in general.

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[13] Musalaha Staff, *Musalaha: A Curriculum of Reconciliation*, 2014.

[14] Jonathan McRay, *You Have Heard It Said: Events of Reconciliation* (Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2011).

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The research project included both quantitative and qualitative data. While the pre- and post-IDI provided primarily quantitative data, observations during both group times and individual meetings, recorded discussions at the end of each group meeting, and written answers to brief questions at the end of each group meeting provided qualitative data. Additionally, to provide a wider context to the findings, the researcher explored documents that included findings from an earlier research project with the women's groups at Musalaha that was completed during the fall of 2016, Musalaha's curriculum, and a book that recorded narratives from Musalaha participants regarding their experiences with Musalaha and with the surrounding community in general.

The original plan was to include ten leaders in the intercultural development training over a period of six months, including two group training times and three individual one-hour times. Ten leaders took the pre-IDI, but one was no longer working for Musalaha by the time the training began and one was unable to attend the training due to a family emergency. The scores of the two who did not participate in the training were not included in the group results. The training period was also shortened to four months due to Musalaha's summer camp schedule. Two group training times of about three to four hours each were included. Originally the plan was to meet three times for individual coaching with at least seven of the participants for one hour each time. Because of scheduling challenges, five of the participants attended both training sessions and also met twice individually with the researcher. One attended both training sessions but only

met with the researcher once for an extended individual time. Two participants were only able to attend the first training and met individually with the researcher only once each. Of the original eight participants, three stopped working with Musalaha shortly after the training concluded and two of these three moved out of the country. The two who left the country took the post-IDI from abroad. The IDI reports note that in some cases when people are undergoing "significant professional or personal transitional experience (e.g., moving to another country, traumatic event)" their "individual responses to the IDI may reflect their struggle with this transitional situation rather than their more stable orientation toward cultural differences."[1] The post-IDI results of the two participants who left the country are included in the findings, but any conclusions made on the basis of these results are made cautiously, with the recognition that the results were possibly skewed to some extent due to the stressful nature of the transition these two participants were going through at the time they took the post-IDI.

Pre-IDI

IDI Terminology

The IDI provides information both on a group's Perceived Orientation (PO) as well as its Developmental Orientation (DO). The PO "reflects where the group as a whole *places itself* along the intercultural development continuum"[2] while the DO "indicates the group's primary orientation toward cultural differences and commonalities along the continuum *as assessed by the IDI*."[3]

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[1] Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 2.

[2] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 5.

[3] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 5.

The Orientation Gap (OG) refers to the difference between the PO and the DO. A gap of more than seven points indicates a "meaningful difference" between the PO and the DO and "the larger the gap, the more likely the group may be 'surprised' by the discrepancy between their Perceived Orientation score and their Developmental Orientation score."[4] If the PO is more than seven points higher than the DO this indicates that the group has overestimated their intercultural competence.[5] If the DO is more than seven points higher than the PO then the group has underestimated their intercultural competence.[6]

Trailing Orientations (TO) refer

> to those orientations that are "in back of" the group's Developmental (DO) on the intercultural continuum *that are not "resolved."* When an earlier orientation is not resolved, this "trailing" perspective may be used to make sense of cultural differences at particular times, around certain topics, or in specific situations. Trailing Orientations, when they arise, tend to "pull one back" from one's Developmental Orientation for dealing with cultural differences and commonalities. The IDI identifies the *level of resolution* that groups have attained regarding possible Trailing Orientations.[7]

Leading Orientations (LO) are those that are "immediately 'in front' of the Developmental Orientation (DO). A Leading Orientation is the next step to take in further development of intercultural competence."[8]

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[4] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 5.

[5] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 5.

[6] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 5.

[7] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 5.

[8] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 5.

Musalaha Pre-IDI Results

The Musalaha group's PO score was 123.06, which indicates that the group rates its own capability in understanding and appropriately adapting to cultural differences within Acceptance, reflecting an orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference in one's own and other cultures in values, perceptions, and behaviors.[9]

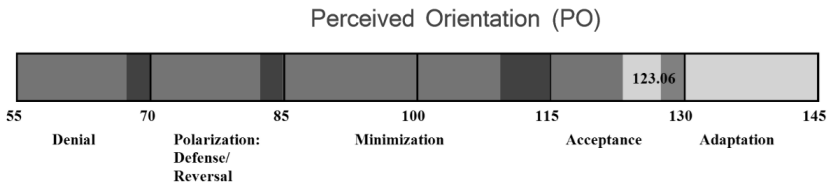

Figure 3. Pre-IDI Perceived Orientation.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 6.

The Musalaha group's DO score was 92.76, which indicates that the group's primary orientation toward cultural differences is within Minimization, reflecting a tendency to highlight commonalities across cultures that can mask important cultural differences in values, perceptions, and behaviors.[10]

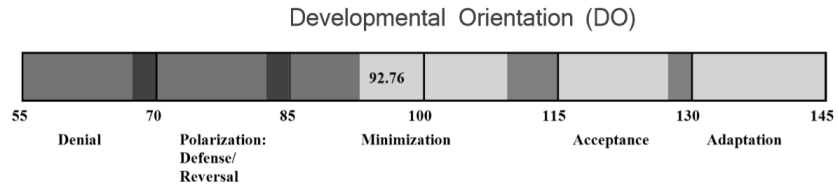

Figure 4. Pre-IDI Developmental Orientation.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Pre-IDI Developmental Orientation, Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 6.

[9] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 6.

[10] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 6.

The OG between the PO and the DO for the Musalaha group was 30.30 points, indicating that the group has substantially overestimated their "level of intercultural competence and may be surprised that their DO score is not higher."[11] The OG for individuals ranged from a relatively insignificant gap of 10 to an enormous gap of 51, indicating a notable dissonance.

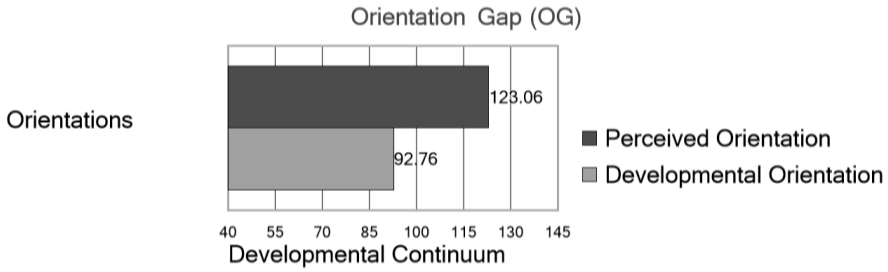

Figure 5. Pre-IDI Orientation Gap.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Pre-IDI Orientation Gap, Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 6.

Figure 6 indicates the range of developmental orientations within the Musalaha group.

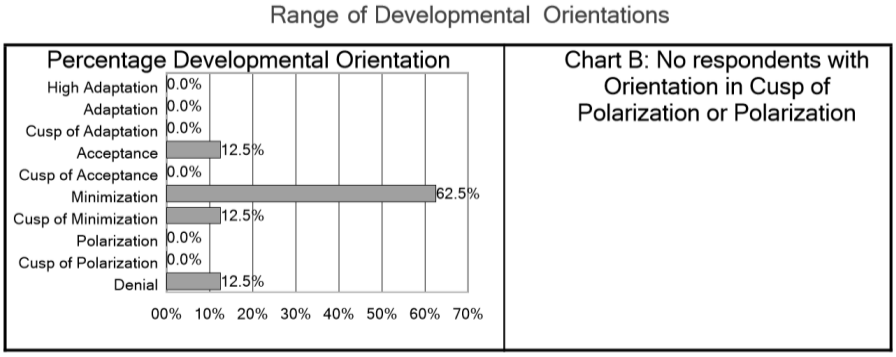

Figure 6. Pre-IDI Range of Developmental Orientations.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Pre-IDI Range of Development Orientations, Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 7.

[11] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 6.

The pre-IDI DO results included one participant in Denial (58), one participant in Cusp of Minimization (84), five participants in Minimization (85, 90, 95, 99, 102), and one participant in Acceptance (125).

In groups where the range of orientations is narrow, it is likely that the group will have "a more consistent perspective they use when confronted with cultural differences and similarities."[12] In groups where the range of orientations is wider, particularly if the group includes both monocultural and intercultural mindsets, the range "reflects a lack of consensus on how the group makes sense of and adapts behavior to cultural differences and commonalities."[13] The Musalaha group exhibits a wide range of orientations in both monocultural and intercultural mindsets, indicating that they will likely "find it difficult to achieve a 'shared vision and focus' for meeting educational objectives in a culturally diverse environment."[14]

Finally, the Musalaha group results indicated two Trailing Orientations (TO).

> Trailing Orientations essentially represent alternative "currents" that flow through an orientation. When trailing issues arise, a specific situation or decision is then made from the perspective of this "earlier" orientation rather than the Developmental Orientation or mindset that characterizes the predominant way the group deals with cultural difference challenges. When this happens, there is often a sense that "we have been going one step forward and now we just went two steps back." When a group has trailing orientations, it is not uncommon for "progress" in building intercultural competence to have a "back and forth" quality in the group or organization as a whole, as these earlier orientations arise. As the group begins to "move past" or resolve the trailing orientations, a more consistent sense of progress and "shared focus" emerges.[15]

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[12] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 7.

[13] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 7-8.

[14] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 8.

[15] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 8.

The Musalaha group results reveal a Defense Trailing Orientation, which means that "there are certain times, topics or situations that Defense may arise."[16] A Defense Orientation is one in which individuals or groups view cultural differences in terms of "us and them" with an "uncritical orientation toward one's own cultural values and practices and an overly critical view toward other cultural values and practices."[17] Musalaha's group Defense TO score was 3.94.[18]

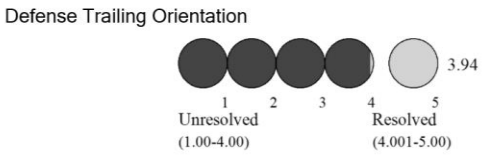

Figure 7. Pre-IDI Defense Trailing Orientation.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Pre-IDI Defense Trailing Orientation, Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 8.

A Defense TO of 3.94 is so slight as to be insignificant, but three individuals in the group had notable Defense TOs (3.0, 3.17, 3.5) that indicate a tendency to operate with an "us and them" mindset that is more critical of other cultures and less critical of one's own. These three included both Israeli and Palestinian participants.

The Musalaha group's second TO was a Reversal Trailing Orientation. A Reversal orientation means that "there are certain times, topics or situations" where individuals or groups will view cultural differences in terms of "us and them" with an "overly critical view towards one's own cultural values and practices and an uncritical

[16] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 8.

[17] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 8.

[18] Scores less than 4.00 indicate that a TO is not "resolved."

view toward other cultural values and practices."[19] Musalaha's group Reversal TO score was 3.53.

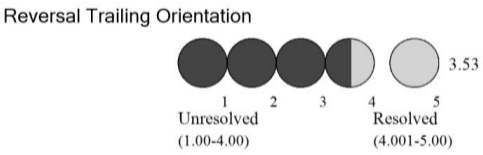

Figure 8. Pre-IDI Reversal Trailing Orientation.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Pre-IDI Reversal Trailing Orientation, Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 8.

All of the participants who were in Minimization or Cusp of Minimization had individual Reversal TOs ranging from 3.33 to 3.67. These included Israelis, Palestinians, and Americans.

Two of the participants in Minimization also had Denial and Disinterest TOs, indicating that for these individuals there are

> certain times, topics or situations that Denial may arise (an orientation that likely recognizes more observable cultural differences (e.g., food) but may not notice deeper cultural difference (e.g., conflict resolution styles) and/or avoid or withdraw from cultural difference.[20]

Participants with Denial and Disinterest TOs included one Israeli and one Palestinian.

The one participant in the group who was operating from an Acceptance orientation at the time of the pre-IDI had TOs in Minimization (3.44), Similarity (3.2), and Universalism (3.75), indicating that for this individual

> there are certain times, topics or situations that Minimization may arise (an orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and

[19] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 8-9.

[20] Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Individual Profile Report Prepared for Individual" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 8.

> principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences). This can take can take one of two forms: (1) highlighting commonality that masks equal recognition of cultural differences due to less cultural self-awareness, more commonly experienced among dominant group members within a cultural community, or (2) highlighting commonalities that masks recognition of cultural differences that functions as a strategy for navigating values and practices largely determined by the dominant culture group, more commonly experienced among non-dominant group members within a larger cultural community.[21]

Finally, the Musalaha group's Leading Orientation is Acceptance through Adaptation.

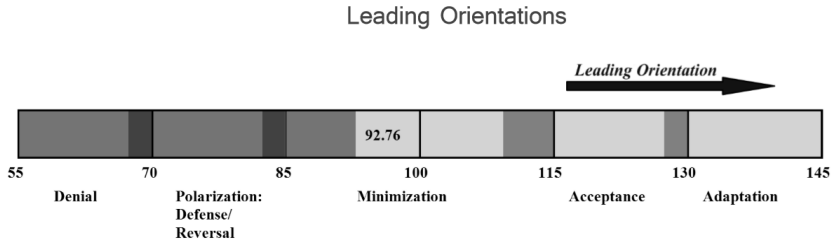

Figure 9. Pre-IDI Leading Orientations.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Pre-IDI Orientation, Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 9.

> Acceptance is focused on both increasing cultural self-awareness and learning culture general and culture specific frameworks for more deeply understanding patterns of difference that emerge in interaction with people who are from other cultures. In addition, Acceptance involves the capability to make moral and ethical judgments in ways that take into consideration other cultural values and principles as well as one's own cultural values and principles. As the group begins to more fully recognize and appreciate cultural differences, it is well positioned to look for ways to shift cultural perspective and adapt behavior around cultural differences.[22]

First Group Meeting

On May 10, 2017 the researcher met with the Musalaha leaders as a group for the first time for a three- to four-hour training session. The purpose of the first group training

[21] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Individual Profile Report," 8.

[22] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 9.

was to introduce the ideas behind the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) as well as review the results of the group pre-IDI.

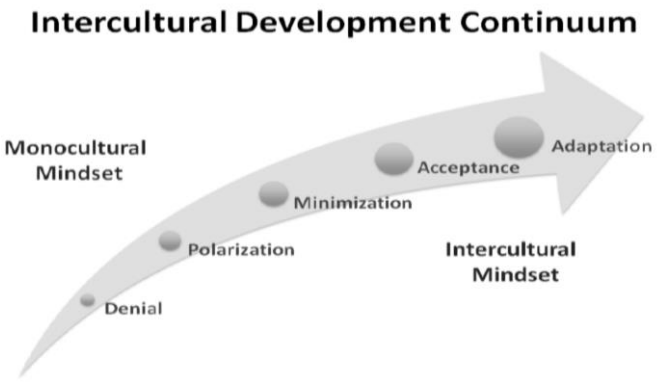

Figure 10. Intercultural Development Continuum.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Continuum, Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 3.

Answers to Written Questions

Toward the end of the first training session, participants provided written answers to the following questions.

1. What are one or two things that you think were most important in what we discussed today (personally or work-related)?
2. What parallels or interactions do you see between intercultural development and reconciliation?
3. Do you have any questions or concerns about the IDI? Do you see any potential negative sides to using it as a tool in reconciliation?
4. How do you feel about the IDI from a biblical perspective? Do you feel this is something a follower of Jesus can embrace as a tool or as a source of greater self-understanding? Any concerns in this area?
5. Any other comments or thoughts from the day?

Five of the eight participants provided written answers.

In answer to the first question, participants noted the importance of the discussion during the day about the parallels or intersections between the different intercultural orientations and the work of reconciliation. They commented that understanding Polarization and Minimization were especially valuable in reconciliation work. Gaining an understanding of the IDC concepts and how they relate to the work of reconciliation was also seen as valuable. One participant commented on the importance of the concept of the spectrum (or continuum) and also the importance of recognizing that it is possible to develop in intercultural competence through using practical tools. Finally, one participant commented on the value of learning about strategies to help people move from one stage to another, as well as the value of determining where they are when they begin with Musalaha.

In answer to question two, one participant pointed out the similarities between helping people move forward in intercultural competence and helping them move forward in reconciliation. Another expressed the belief that the concepts of intercultural competence and the work of reconciliation are highly compatible and that the IDI appears to be a good and even necessary tool in reconciliation work. One participant felt that the most important parallels were in the relationship between the development of intercultural competence and the stages of reconciliation, including the obstacles that exist in moving from stage to stage. Finally, one participant commented that seeing the world from the perspective of others and valuing those perspectives are important in both reconciliation and intercultural development.

In answer to question three, one participant wanted to know more about how the IDI interacts with the questions of human rights. Another asked how participants in Musalaha programs would be able to use the IDI if they were not computer-literate or if they did not speak English.[23] Another commented on the challenges of using such a nuanced tool in a multi-language group. One participant expressed concern that the information covered during the day did not address the issue of group dynamics with regard to the development of intercultural development. Another participant had no concerns and simply commented that the IDI was helpful.

In answer to question four, one individual felt personally comfortable with the IDI but noted the possibility of some participants or community leaders dismissing it as sociology or psychology and therefore not suitable in Christian circles. Two participants expressed no concerns. One said that there did not appear to be any conflicts. One felt that many of the principles of intercultural development had parallels in biblical principles and therefore should be embraced by Christians. Another felt that the IDI could be a good tool to help people to reflect and to understand themselves, and that by doing so they would be fulfilling the greatest commandment.[24]

In answer to question five, one participant comment on feeling challenged and surprised that as a group working in reconciliation, they scored mid-level. The participant expected that they would score higher. Another mentioned looking forward to the

[23] The IDI is only available online. It is available in Arabic (which several of the leaders used when taking it) as well as numerous other languages but it is not available in Hebrew, which would limit its usefulness in Jewish communities. Many Hebrew speakers are fluent in English however, and all of the Musalaha leaders are capable in more than one language.

[24] Mark 12:29-30.

individual debriefings[25] and said it would have helped to have more simplified handouts during the portions of the presentation where they needed to follow along with the details. Finally, one participant expressed the belief that the IDI had been developed in an individualistic culture and the materials would need to be adjusted to consider group dynamics.

Observations during First Group Training

In discussion, the Musalaha group passed over the Denial orientation quickly and with little comment based on their assumption that it was unlikely to occur often due to the diversity of their context in Israel-Palestine. However, the descriptions of Polarization and Minimization resonated with the group, and the obstacles faced in developing beyond both. The participants noted that parallels exist between their work in reconciliation and the descriptions of Polarization and Minimization. They commented that many of the details of the IDC helped to clarify what they saw and experienced with participants in Musalaha programs.

While recognizing the positive aspects of Acceptance and Adaptation, Musalaha participants raised some concerns about both. It was necessary to make the point several times that Acceptance does not necessarily mean agreement with the values, perceptions, or behavior of cultural others but it does mean a deep understanding of cultural differences and commonalities. It seemed difficult for most participants to grasp the difference between agreement and Acceptance, which fits the dominant Minimization orientation of the group. One participant expressed exasperation with how Israelis see themselves as victims when they so obviously have a more powerful position in the

[25] Individual results on the IDI were reviewed in private meetings after the first group training.

conflict. The researcher briefly discussed the long history of oppression of the Jews and the ways this has become part of their identity as a people. Deeply understanding this aspect of Jewish identity would demonstrate Acceptance. Operating from an Acceptance orientation, however, does not necessarily mean agreeing with the common Jewish perspective of seeing themselves exclusively as victims in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

In discussing Adaptation, the Musalaha leaders raised questions about the difference between Adaptation and assimilation as well as questions about what Adaptation looks like in a domestic diversity context like Israel-Palestine. While it was relatively easy for the group to grasp what Adaptation might look like if a person moves to a different country and adjusts to the culture, it was more difficult for them to imagine what Adaptation looks like when one is adapting to numerous different cultures in one's own country.

Part of the difficulty was that the experience of the researcher was primarily one of moving to a new country and adapting to that culture; as such, most personal examples of development fell into this type of illustration. Also, in the past most materials related to the development of intercultural competence were originally designed to help people to develop in situations where they were the foreigners in a different country (including some used in this project), though this is beginning to change.[26] It was difficult for the Musalaha participants to take examples of how to develop intercultural competence as a foreigner in a different country and find ways to apply those same principles in their context of interacting with multiple cultures within their own country. Some participants felt that the knowledge and skills of Adaptation as described in the IDI were intended

[26] Storti, 283-284.

only for people moving to different cultures and were not suitable or realistic for use in a domestic diversity situation as in Israel-Palestine. It is essential in both situations, however, for people to be able to shift cultural perspectives and to change behavior in authentic and culturally appropriate ways.[27] Determining who will adjust to whom and discerning what behavior is appropriate in ever-changing domestic diversity contexts, especially when deep conflict exists, requires a high level of intercultural competence. Leaders without Adaptation level skills will be limited in their ability to navigate these complexities.

As the Group Profile Report predicted, the substantial Orientation Gap in the Musalaha group between the Perceived Orientation and the Developmental Orientation caused some surprise. In initial conversations, the subject was met with surprise and disappointment or simply silence. In later conversations, some participants expressed their doubts about the accuracy of the IDI, as it seemed unlikely to them that a group of reconciliation leaders working in such a diverse context could score in the middle range of intercultural competence. Others were disappointed in their results but accepted them as accurate. (The later conversations are discussed in the sections on observations during the second group training and the recorded discussion.)

The Group Profile Report for Musalaha indicated that because the Musalaha leaders' primary orientation was in Minimization, they would tend to focus on commonalities across cultures "in both human *Similarity* (basic needs) and *Universalism* (universal values and principles)," which could "mask important cultural differences in

[27] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 36.

values, perceptions and behaviors."[28] Also, because the Musalaha leaders fell into a wide range of orientations, they would likely "find it difficult to achieve a 'shared vision and focus' for meeting educational objectives in a culturally diverse environment."[29] This seemed to be the case as the leaders discussed some complicated intercultural situations that have occurred in Musalaha. The discussions were primarily disagreements between participants operating from a Minimization orientation and the one participant who was operating from an Acceptance orientation over how to manage conflicts between those who are culturally different in a manner that would enable them to meet their reconciliation goals.

One issue they discussed at length was a hypothetical situation involving three teenage boys: one Palestinian Muslim, one Palestinian Christian, and one Jewish (not Messianic). Though the situation which framed the discussion was hypothetical, the conversation included frequent reference to actual situations Musalaha leaders have faced in making decisions about designing programs and facilitating multicultural and multi-religious groups. In the hypothetical situation, the three teenage boys are working toward reconciliation through mutual understanding and respect. The conflict in the situation surrounded the Jewish boy's unwillingness to attend the Christian boy's religious celebration at his church (specifically Christmas), even though the Christian boy had attended the Jewish boy's religious celebration at the synagogue. All of the Musalaha leaders have faced similar situations in their personal lives and in leadership contexts, and they brought these experiences into the discussion.

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[28] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Group Profile Report," 6.

[29] Bayes and Hammer, "IDI Individual Profile Report," 8.

The Musalaha leaders in the Minimization orientation argued that the group's facilitator should begin the group by leading the boys through a discussion that would lead to a common rule that everyone would respect the other's holidays by attending those events (many shared their experiences doing this in similar situations they facilitated), or that the Christians should just accept the Jewish or Muslim boys' refusal to attend their religious celebrations because this would demonstrate Christian humility (this was also a decision some of the leaders had made in their personal lives in similar circumstances).

The person in Acceptance argued that neither solution was acceptable, raising the issue of Palestinian Christians being minorities in both Palestinian Muslim and Jewish communities. They felt that the power imbalance that exists because of the Palestinian Christian's minority situation meant that neither treating everyone the same nor requiring the Palestinian Christian to simply give in were appropriate solutions. The person in Acceptance expressed doubts that the Palestinian Christian boy would feel empowered to negotiate a fair agreement if the group set up "rules of respect" among themselves because Palestinian Christians often feel pressure to compromise or give in to others. Likewise, the person in Acceptance did not feel that telling the Christian boy to give in and just accept that the Jewish boy would not attend a Christmas service was appropriate if the goal of the group of three boys was reconciliation, as true reconciliation requires equality and a balance of power. The discussion carried on for some time, with both the Minimization and Acceptance sides feeling that the other side did not understand their points. The focus in the discussion seemed to be more on making others understand one's

own point than seeking to understand the point of the other. No mutually agreeable solution was found.

One aspect of the situation that was missing throughout the entire discussion was an attempt to understand the Jewish boy's refusal. While the person in Acceptance strove to help the others understand the perspective of a teenage Palestinian Christian and the challenges and vulnerabilities he faced as a minority in a violent conflict situation, no one considered the possibility that asking a Jewish person to attend a Christmas service in a church may not be the same thing as asking a Christian to attend a holiday service at a synagogue. While most Christians feel no hesitation about entering a synagogue, Jewish history and culture make it difficult (and in the eyes of some Jews, impossible) for Jews to enter a church building.

If the boy in question was operating from a Polarized orientation (which would be a likely assumption in this context), neither trying to pressure him to comply with "rules" that require him to attend religious services when he has expressed his discomfort in doing so nor avoiding conflict by asking the Christian Palestinian to give in and accept that the Jewish boy is not going to do so will help any of the boys move forward in intercultural competence or reconciliation. Instead, "the strategy for individuals and groups at Polarization is to help them recognize when they are overemphasizing differences without fully understanding them; and, second, to help them search for commonalities and adopt a less evaluative stance toward understanding differences."[30] Perhaps attending the religious celebrations of the other is something that should be postponed until the group facilitator is able to help the boys move at least to

[30] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 33.

Minimization. Until then, the focus could be on finding ways to learn more about both self and other and developing an awareness of the tendency to slip into a judgmental "us and them" mentality, which cuts off the opportunity to learn and understand.

As a group, the Musalaha leaders were not able to come to agreement among themselves on how to manage a complicated intercultural reconciliation situation like the one proposed in the hypothetical circumstances because they were operating at different intercultural development orientations (including both monocultural and intercultural/ global mindsets). Furthermore, they did not make a thorough effort to consider the different intercultural orientations, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of the boys involved in the hypothetical situation before proposing solutions. The dominant Minimization orientation of the group made it difficult for them to discuss cultural differences in values, perceptions, and behaviors beyond a superficial level. Instead, the solution to conflicts was often simply requiring everyone to follow the same rules to make things fair, or maintaining that Christians being humble and giving in to the demands of others is always the right solution.

If the Musalaha leaders were operating from an Adaptation orientation, then they would be more able to demonstrate "both Cognitive Frame-Shifting (shifting one's cultural perspective)"[31] and a better understanding of "Behavioral Code-Shifting (changing behavior in authentic and culturally appropriate ways)."[32] Leaders in this situation would then be able to mentor the boys through a process of understanding their cultural differences with regard to attitudes toward religious buildings and religious

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[31] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 36

[32] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 36.

practices, as well as help them to find ways to communicate and behave that would demonstrate respect for the other without compromising their own deeply held beliefs or pressuring others to do the same as they worked towards reconciliation.

Some Observations from Recorded Discussion

In the discussion at the end of the training participants noted aspects of the IDI that were particularly positive. One commented that there are many similarities between the processes of reconciliation and intercultural development, and that the information was especially helpful in clarifying obstacles that prevent people from developing beyond Polarization or Minimization. Another participant commented on the importance of seeing things from other people's viewpoints and the responsibility one has to be more aware in caring for other people.

The Musalaha leaders discussed concerns as well. One participant raised the issue of the challenge of helping people move through the stages of intercultural development in a context where so many have experienced trauma, abuse, and violence. Development in a conflict context poses many challenges that people in more peaceful situations would not face.

Another concern was that while the expectation that the intercultural development stages of Denial, Polarization, and Minimization would resonate with participants in Musalaha groups, many may feared that moving into Acceptance or Adaptation would mean compromising their values and their faith. The question was raised here as well regarding how one can speak to moral issues in a cross-cultural context. The Musalaha leaders frequently assumed that Acceptance and Adaptation mean agreement, or at least remove the possibility of judgment. Several times throughout the day the point was made

that Acceptance and Adaptation do not necessarily mean agreement with other's values or behaviors, and do not remove the possibility of speaking against values or behaviors one feels are wrong.

From Acceptance and Adaptation orientations one can more clearly see situations from the perspective of the other and understand them. In earlier orientations, the opportunity to learn about and understand the other's point of view is often cut short by quick judgments or attitudes of superiority. In the end, one may be able to speak more effectively to moral questions (such as human rights issues) from Acceptance or Adaptation orientations because of a deeper comprehension of the values and beliefs underlying the actions of the other.

One participant felt that the IDI and the concepts introduced in the Intercultural Development Continuum may be appropriate for people in Western cultures moving into a different culture but may not be suitable for situations of domestic diversity. Research backing the validity of the IDI and its suitableness in domestic diversity contexts as well as non-Western ones was briefly presented at the beginning of the training, but this participant had stepped out during that time. The researcher offered to provide printed copies of numerous studies regarding the validity and research behind the IDI and these were delivered to the Musalaha office the next week.

Another concern was that one participant felt the IDI appeared to be an individualistic instrument that does not take into account group dynamics and the pressures people would face in attempting to develop in an intractable conflict setting. In the presentation that day there was probably more of an emphasis on individual development because the presentation focused on the development of the leaders present

rather than on participants in Musalaha as groups. The researcher feels that the Intercultural Development Continuum does address the issues of group dynamics and group pressure, and extra effort was made to include this material in the Literature Review chapter as a result of this question. The researcher also believes that understanding the dynamics of intercultural competence development through the IDI can help Musalaha participants better understand the group pressures they face as members of their respective communities in an intractable conflict. It can also help them understand the ways in which they can either work together as Musalaha groups to support one another in both reconciliation and intercultural competence development, or how they as groups can hinder both.

Some time was spent discussing how knowing the intercultural competence level of new Musalaha participants through IDI testing could help by enabling the leadership to place them in groups according to their level and then focus on curriculum that is appropriate to their level. Participants in the group training recognized from their own experience that introducing sensitive topics to unprepared participants can be so detrimental that those participants might withdraw from the process altogether. The Musalaha leaders also recognized how having a person who is still deeply in Polarization in a group training or discussion on a sensitive topic can disrupt the learning process for the whole group, even if the majority of people are in Minimization.

Some time was spent discussing the issues noted in the written responses regarding the possibility that some participants or communities might object to the use of the IDI because they would consider it inappropriate to use what they see as humanistic or psychological tools in a faith setting. In some cases Musalaha participants have limited

experience with these types of tools as well as limited biblical, theological, and philosophical knowledge that would help them to evaluate the tools' appropriateness. The Musalaha director had addressed these types of objections before and felt confident doing so again if necessary.

One participant raised the possibility of doing a brief presentation on the Intercultural Development Continuum for a larger group of Musalaha leaders to test their reactions to it. In the end this did not happen, but a couple more Musalaha leaders who were not part of the training did take the IDI after the initial group session and spent time with the researcher going over the concepts of the Intercultural Development Continuum and their individual IDI results.

Individual Meetings

In the weeks following the first group meeting, the researcher met with seven of the eight participants to go over their individual IDI results. One participant was unable to do so until after the second group training. The researcher met again with five of the participants for a second individual session.

Some participants expressed feeling nervous about their results at the first meeting. It was clear that confidentiality was important to them. If Musalaha decides to use the IDI in any capacity in the future, it will be important that they respect participants' privacy with regard to their IDI results in order to maintain trust.

Most participants responded positively to their IDI results in the sense that they were interested in understanding what they meant and asked many questions about how to develop greater intercultural competence. A few were more hesitant in accepting the results as accurate and had questions in this area, but even in these cases they expressed

interest in how to go about developing and possibly more openness to accepting the results by the end of the time together.

The Intercultural Development Plan (IDP), which each participant received during the individual meeting, begins by challenging the myth that people will automatically develop greater intercultural competence as they gain more experience with different cultures or if they travel to or even live for extended periods of time in different countries.[33] The reality is that "intercultural competence does not simply happen as a result of being in another culture."[34] The IDP explains that

> developing intercultural competence is a *self-reflective, intentional process* between yourself (and your cultural group) and other culture group's perceptions, values and practices. It is this self-reflective, intentional process that is highlighted in this Intercultural Development Plan.[35]

The IDP goes on to discuss many different intercultural learning opportunities, but in the end issues another reminder that

> it is not simply participating in activities or attending cultural events that is important; rather it is the *intentional reflection on the cultural patterns of commonality and difference* that makes up these activities/ events that will contribute to your intercultural competence development.[36]

Some participants expressed frustration that the plan to develop intercultural competence does not provide more concrete steps or information. Some felt that this was information they already knew and were frustrated that regardless of their knowledge they were still in the Minimization orientation. The researcher discussed the reality that developing intercultural competence is more complex than simply gaining knowledge.

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[33] Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Intercultural Development Plan Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 2.

[34] Bayes and Hammer, "Intercultural Development Plan," 2.

[35] Bayes and Hammer, "Intercultural Development Plan," 5.

[36] Bayes and Hammer, "Intercultural Development Plan," 5.

Recognizing the need to moderate judgment and develop a practice of intentional reflection on the cultural patterns of commonality and difference was more challenging for some than for others.

In discussing specific cultural differences with participants during the individual meetings, the researcher noted a tendency among some participants to say they already know what a person from a particular cultural group would say or believe regarding a certain topic. While the participants may not have been inaccurate in their information, they tended to demonstrate a surface level understanding. Frequently it appeared that the certainty that one already knows something brought an end to any further serious inquiry or reflection. At times it seemed to indicate an unwillingness to question one's own understanding of both the other and self in preference for retaining one's current perspective on both. The researcher encouraged participants to consider embracing different ways of increasing self-reflection such as intercultural journals, frank conversations with trusted cultural others, or coaching. Participants were encouraged to recognize that quick judgment can cut off learning. Once one is certain of complete knowledge it is not likely one will try to learn more. Participants were encouraged to consider the value of living with ambiguity and continually considering the possibility there is something more to learn, both about the self and the other, in these areas where they felt certain of their knowledge.

Second Group Meeting

The majority of the time in the second group meeting was devoted to playing Ecotonos: A Simulation for Collaborating across Cultures. Six of the eight original Musalaha leaders were able to participate in the second group training. Because the

simulation required at least nine participants, two Musalaha interns and the wife of one of the Musalaha leaders joined the group while playing Ecotonos and for the initial briefing afterward.

Research indicates that "the use of Ecotonos cross-cultural role-play supports the development of CQ[37], specifically metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral CQ."[38] It also "shows an increase in the development of confidence in cross-cultural encounters."[39]

Ecotonos begins with each group receiving three or four cultural rule cards. The groups determine among themselves how they will express these cultural rules. They also develop a story or myth that explains who they are as a people. In the next step the monocultural groups begin to work on a problem or task provided by the administrator of the simulation. After working on the problem or task in monocultural groups, the groups then mix and continue to work on their tasks in multicultural groups, all the while expressing their cultural rules. Finally, the simulation ends and everyone comes together for a one-hour debriefing.

Ecotonos is designed so that participants will experience some of the stress, confusion, and emotional pressure that occur in real cross-cultural interactions. Participants did express frustration during the simulation but for various reasons. At the midpoint one group said, when interacting in their multicultural group, that they were just going in circles and did not see the point of continuing. They felt they were just repeating themselves and wasting their time. Ecotonos is designed in such a way that cultural differences can hinder the ability of people to work together and solve problems if the

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[37] Cultural Intelligence.

[38] Bucker and Korzilius, 1.

[39] Bucker and Korzilius, 1.

participants do not seek to understand the differences they experience or if they are unable to see both the strengths and weaknesses in their own cultural behavior as well as the strengths and weaknesses in the other. While each cultural group recognized that they were having difficulties working together, they had not up to this point focused on understanding the values or story underlying the other's behavior.

The Ecotonos instructions at the midpoint of the multicultural group time are to remind the group to follow their cultural rules[40] and encourage them to try to find one strategy they could focus on to accomplish their task. The participants who expressed their frustration at being stuck were instructed in this way and left to finish their task. Later the participants explained that they shifted their focus after these instructions to try to understand the other and find a way to work with differences to find a mutually agreeable solution. In the end, after moving past the initial sense that they were stuck and just wasting their time, they were able to come up with a creative and brilliant solution that neither monoculture could have come up with on their own.

The experience of feeling that a conflict is impossible to resolve and yet still seeking to understand the other and, in the end, finding a way forward that leads to a solution that is better than either group had initially proposed is one of the potential powerful benefits of using a simulation like Ecotonos. The knowledge gained in participating in Ecotonos is not just cognitive; it is experiential and involves cognition, emotion, and behavior. In the debriefing time that followed the simulation, participants were able to reflect on their interactions and the emotions they experienced during the

[40] At the beginning of the simulation each group receives three or four cultural rule cards that they must follow throughout the simulation. Each group has different rule cards and does not know what rules the other group has.

simulation, and to begin to gain an understanding of both the strengths and weaknesses of their ways of coping with cultural differences.

Some participants seemed to experience stress during the simulation because of certain dominating personalities in the group and because of previously established patterns of relating to one another that made it difficult for everyone to feel they could participate fully. It seems that if a group is already experiencing some interpersonal tensions, these can be exacerbated in the simulation. Ecotonos may be more effective if used in groups where relationships are good. Interpersonal tensions that existed before the simulation seemed to cause some people to shut down and limited their participation.

Answers to Written Questions

Toward the end of the second training session, participants provided written answers to the following questions.

1. What are one or two of the most important things you learned from today?
2. How might Ecotonos (or other simulation activities) be used in Musalaha?
3. What have you been doing to develop intercultural competence since we last met? List specific activities and the time spent on them.
4. How do you feel about your intercultural competence development?
5. Give one or two examples of how you might use what you have learned about intercultural competence in your work.
6. Are there any questions or concerns you have at this time?

In answer to the first question, several participants noted the importance of learning about other cultures before interacting with them. One commented as well on the value of occasionally doing some ongoing learning about a culture one is familiar with in

order to refresh. One participant commented on seeing the value of learning about the other culture as well as one's own. One participant said realizing the importance of accepting and understanding others was valuable. Another mentioned interest in seeing how colleagues interacted with cultural difference. One participant realized that there is a possibility that people can agree on something but for totally different reasons or values. Another learned that it is important to ask questions when interacting with people of different cultures to understand their perspective. Finally, one participant learned that it is valuable to actively seek to identify the cultural values of those who are culturally different and to name them so that one is more conscious and aware of them.

In answer to the second question, participants suggested numerous potential uses for Ecotonos in Musalaha. Several felt it would be helpful to use Ecotonos in separate Israeli and Palestinian communities before coming together with cultural others for reconciliation activities to help them learn about cultural challenges they might face and to begin to develop strategies for successful cross-cultural interaction. One felt it might be used on the second day of an extended first group meeting, after ice-breaking activities. Another felt it would be suitable for mixed groups (Israelis and Palestinians) who are more advanced in the reconciliation process, but not with new groups. One participant noted the value of the opportunity to have a cross-cultural interaction without the added pressure of dealing directly with the specific cultures in conflict. Finally, one participant felt that Ecotonos could be a valuable tool for training volunteer leaders.

In answer to the third question, participants noted a wide range of activities in which they had engaged since the previous group meeting including reading books, talking with individuals more advanced in intercultural competence than themselves,

talking with another qualified administrator of the IDI (not the researcher), watching foreign films, talking to relatives from different cultural backgrounds, and talking with spouses from different cultural backgrounds.

In answer to the fourth question, one participant recognized the need to be more proactive in developing intercultural competence. Another commented on feeling positive about being more self-aware and empowered to work intentionally to progress, while at the same time having feelings of discouragement and uncertainty that she will improve. One participant acknowledged feeling shocked and disappointed with the individual IDI results and was now feeling more aware of cultural issues. Finally, one participant wrote, "I feel comfortable with how I am progressing."

In answer to the fifth question, one participant who facilitates Musalaha groups said, "I will do more exercises helping people understand different cultural behaviors and values." Another planned to use the increased knowledge of intercultural competence in how she goes about planning meetings and making action plans. Another facilitator commented on how learning about intercultural competence is helping her to communicate in a better way with groups from different cultural backgrounds. One participant commented that the IDI is only a tool that can be used in reaching reconciliation, but that it is a useful tool.

In answer to the sixth question, only one participant raised concerns. This participant said that "it seems the IDI philosophy is more academic and less practical, so I'm not sure. Maybe it is the unique situation here (Occupation), or maybe it was the uniqueness of our group where so many of us are living such extremely intercultural lives already. At the end, I'm less impressed with the IDI than I expected to be. Not

unimpressed, just less impressed. My personality is to love these kinds of inventories, but this one seems to be missing something."

Observations from Second Group Training

When participants discussed their experience with Ecotonos, the most prevalent comment was that they recognized more fully the importance of making an effort to learn about different cultures before working together. Participants also recognized the need to build relationships and get to know one another before working together. The Musalaha leaders noted that they recognized more the need to value the opinion of the cultural other and they were able to see both positive and negative aspects in areas of cultural difference. Participants commented on the need to understand the values of those who are culturally different when working with them. They also recognized the need to know another culture's story.[41]

While the groups were interacting during the simulation some participants did make an effort to explain their own culture to the others and to try to understand the other's culture. However, these efforts were limited, and in at least one case even led to a misunderstanding because people assumed understanding without verifying their assumptions.

During the first group training the participants were introduced to D.I.E. (Describe, Interpret, Evaluate) as a means of first seeking to understand cultural difference and avoiding jumping to evaluation. During one part of the debriefing at the end of Ecotonos the participants were asked to describe the behavior they saw during the simulation, but were not reminded of the D.I.E concept. Three of the nine people who

[41] Early in the simulation each group developed a "story" that explains their culture. These stories were not shared with the other group until the end.

participated in the simulation were not part of the first training and therefore were not familiar with the D.I.E. concept. Out of more than a dozen comments, three were descriptions of behavior while the others were evaluations, mostly in negative terms. Those few descriptive comments did seem to indicate some conscious effort to stick with describing and to avoid beginning with evaluation. When reminded of the D.I.E. tool the leaders were able to look again at their comments written on a large paper in front of them and to recognize both descriptive and evaluative statements. There was some discussion about how beginning with evaluating rather than describing and seeking to understand hindered their ability to work together. Considering that the Musalaha leaders had only been exposed to the D.I.E. tool once as a group and in limited ways during individual meetings, one would not expect this skill to be fully developed. That there was some evidence of attempts to use descriptive words before being reminded to do so and because the leaders were able to quickly recognize descriptive and evaluative statements after being reminded seems promising. The leaders grasped the concept but need more opportunities to practice it for it to become habit.

Before beginning the final recorded discussion, the researcher asked the Musalaha leaders who had taken part in the first group training to put groups of statements made by people at each of the different orientations on the IDC with the correct orientation. The leaders split into three groups. All three of the groups correctly placed Denial, Polarization, and Minimization statements. Two of the three groups reversed Acceptance and Adaptation. As there had been far more discussion related to Polarization and Minimization during the first group training than Acceptance and Adaptation, and also because the majority of people in the group were in Minimization, it was not surprising

that there was still some confusion on the difference between Acceptance and Adaptation.

Some Observations from Recorded Discussion

As in the short written answers, the Musalaha leaders noted the importance of making an effort to learn about other cultures as well as the importance of building relationships with those who are culturally different.

One participant commented on experiencing the same kind of stress in the simulation that she experienced every day as a foreigner living in the Israeli-Palestinian culture, noting the need to be more aggressive than she liked to be and feeling the need to defend herself.

Another participant talked about the different communication styles of Israelis and Palestinians. Israelis tend to be more aggressive, talkative, expressive, and unconcerned about the feelings of others. Palestinians, on the other hand, are careful not to hurt people's feelings and they have been taught from childhood to be careful about what they say outside of the home on sensitive topics. It can take a long time for Palestinians to feel comfortable sharing their feelings in a group. They have learned that if they share their opinions in public, they and their families might pay a high price for it. Additionally, Palestinian women have been taught not to talk about politics and religion and so have limited experience in engaging in these kinds of discussions. They need time to develop these skills. The participant raised the question about how to overcome this communication gap.

The leaders talked about how Ecotonos could be a valuable pre-reconciliation tool that could prepare Israelis and Palestinians in their separate communities to eventually

meet in mixed groups. Participating in the simulation in their monocultural groups could be a way to introduce issues of cultural differences and the emotional pressures that accompany them in a safe context, without the added pressures that automatically come into play when interacting directly with people and issues related to the conflict.

If participants in Musalaha groups had the same experience with Ecotonos that the Musalaha leader did, then one could expect group participants to have a greater understanding of the need to learn about different cultures and their "stories" in order to work and communicate with them better. Each community would have the opportunity to gain greater cultural self-understanding as well as greater understanding of the other before their first meeting as a mixed group. They could also begin to develop strategies for interacting with and learning about those who are culturally different.

Along with the potential benefits of using Ecotonos as a pre-reconciliation tool, potential drawbacks were also noted. The simulation is designed to create situations that people face in real life cross-cultural interactions, along with the emotional reactions that accompany them. The possibility exists that people who are deeply polarized may end up being more polarized after taking part in the simulation because of the emotional stress they experience during the simulation. Facilitators would need to evaluate the appropriateness of the simulation for their groups and also be sure to provide necessary support for those who take part in it by doing a thorough debriefing. One Musalaha leader suggested running the simulation once in a monocultural group and discussing with the group their strategies for understanding the other. The discussion could include developing questions they could use to begin to understand the values of the other.

Running the simulation a second time could give participants the opportunity to practice using those strategies and questions.

The final part of the debriefing included a time for participants to choose something they were committing to do in the weeks ahead to improve their intercultural competence and to discuss it with a partner. Participants were encouraged to check in with their partner in a couple of weeks to discuss progress on their goals. One participant committed to finding ways to improve her communication skills, especially when she needed to communicate in a language that was not her first. Another participant who recognized that they could have avoided many of the difficulties they faced in the simulation if they had learned about the culture of the other beforehand committed to reading something about an actual cultural other. One of the interns who joined the group for the day committed to ask more questions and to make an effort to get to know more individuals from one of the cultural groups in the region, which so far had seemed difficult to get to know. Another participant committed to trying to be more sensitive with followers concerning differences that occur between goal-oriented cultures and more relationally-oriented cultures. Finally, one participant who was already reading a book to understand one of the cultural groups in this region committed to making an effort to use this resource to try to find culturally appropriate ways to deal with situations.

In the final half hour of the second group training the Musalaha leaders who had participated in both group training times shared final thoughts. One Palestinian participant, commenting on the value of the two group trainings, but even more on the impact of a five-day Musalaha trip to the desert with a group of Christian and Muslim Palestinians, shared the following:

> I feel it's useful to me to hear all of this because it helps me to understand and accept people even in my culture like Muslims. We are living in the same culture and the same place, but we don't understand each other. We have different traditions, different ways of thinking. Since I started to work with Muslims at the beginning of this year, I have begun to realize I don't know many things about them. I was raised and taught certain ideas about them, about how they think about us, but when we were together five days and five nights in the desert, I discovered that I really don't know them. It was really a great experience for me and I learned new things. I learned to accept them as they are. I wasn't accepting them before. I had ideas about them and, I don't know, I didn't want to love them because they are different than me but I learned to accept them as they are. It helped me a lot.

A participant commented again that there is value in taking some of these steps toward developing intercultural competence before bringing Israelis and Palestinians together by interacting with different cultures within their own communities. In the case of Muslim and Christian Palestinians, differences certainly exist. But so do many similarities, which make taking steps to understand one another easier than it is between Palestinians and Israelis. Likewise, many different cultural groups exist within Israeli Jewish society. Finding ways to bring together different groups who are not facing such intense conflict to develop intercultural competence could be a valuable pre-reconciliation step.

Another Musalaha leader shared the intention to use what she learned from Ecotonos in arranging meetings. She mentioned some recent challenges faced in a meeting where cultural misunderstanding hindered progress. She felt that she needed to be more intentional in planning meetings that would involve people from multiple cultural backgrounds, and suggested that participating in exercises like the Ecotonos simulation might be something leaders involved in these meetings should take part in before working together. As Musalaha leaders develop greater intercultural competence they will become better able to act as a bridge between different cultures in circumstances

like the one she faced in directing meetings with people from multiple cultural backgrounds.

The final discussion with the Musalaha leaders focused on the comments made by one participant in which he raised several concerns regarding his sense of disappointment with the IDI. He reported that he normally loves personality inventories and the opportunity for individuals to learn about one another, to grow as a team, and to learn about one's self, but he felt that the IDI was abstract and not very practical in real life.

Very likely, if one expects the IDI to be like personality inventories such as MBTI or DISC then there will be some disappointment. Personality inventories often provide extensive information regarding many aspects of an individual's personality and how he or she might interact with people with different personalities. Personality inventories do not evaluate personalities in the sense of placing one above another; each one has both strengths and weaknesses. The IDI, on the other hand, focuses exclusively on assessing intercultural competence and places individuals or groups on a continuum according to their abilities. It does not provide information on personal characteristics, although it does provide insight into how people at different orientation levels interact with cultural difference and how they can develop greater intercultural competence.

It is possible that the IDI came across as abstract or impractical, at least to some of the participants, due to the limited time for training. Ideally the training would have included several additional group and individual sessions over a much longer period of time, which would have provided greater opportunity to apply the concepts in more personal ways.

The same participant also questioned whether the IDI had been administered before to a group with so many intercultural marriages and who are living in such an extremely cross-cultural setting, suggesting that possibly the IDI results were not accurate because of what he perceived as a unique setting or group of people. He went on to say that it seemed a bit aloof on the part of the IDI to come in and make this evaluation of the Musalaha leaders, whom he felt are obviously far advanced in intercultural competence compared with the average American in terms of knowing to ask questions and to be sensitive to basic cultural differences. He felt that whereas anyone else observing the Musalaha leaders would say that they were adapting, the IDI says they are minimizing and that this was a reason to question its accuracy. He also expressed the belief that someone who has traveled will have acquired a base level of sensitivities. While he felt they might be at different levels, he still felt that these sensitivities had to be there because of cross-cultural experience from traveling.

The participant is working with the assumption that cross-cultural experience, whether through cross-cultural marriage, travel, or living and working in a cross-cultural setting, necessarily means that a person has a high level of intercultural competence. His assumption is that because the Musalaha leaders have extensive cross-cultural experience (arguably more than the average American) due to cross-cultural marriages, travel experiences, or simply being born and raised in an extremely diverse setting that this alone demonstrates their intercultural competence and therefore calls into question the IDI results that place Musalaha as a group in Minimization. In reality, research demonstrates that extensive cross-cultural experience does not automatically translate

into intercultural competency.[42] It is not unusual for people with considerable cross-cultural experience to be interculturally incompetent.

Another participant also expressed a feeling of being judged by the IDI and even some sense that her own culture was being judged by it, but later said she felt more comfortable understanding the IDI as measuring how people interact with difference rather than speaking specifically of Israeli or Palestinian cultures. The IDI itself does not comment on or judge any particular culture. Possibly, discussions between participants that explored similarities and differences between Israelis and Palestinians may have contributed to her sense of her own culture being judged. The dominant Minimization orientation of the group may also have led some to feel uncomfortable pointing out differences or exploring generalizations about different cultures.

Difficulty accepting IDI results seems to be common. Researchers who have used the IDI extensively note that

> some people are eager to learn how they score but get defensive when they hear their results. In fact, most participants perceive themselves to be more culturally competent than they really are. More than 70 percent usually fall short of competence the first time they take the IDI.[43]

While some participants raised questions at different times during the training about the accuracy of their individual or group IDI scores, their arguments focused either on their belief that due to their cross-cultural experience they were more interculturally competent than the results indicated, or the belief that their circumstances of living in Israel-Palestine were different than the circumstances of others who have used the IDI.

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[42] Paige and Vande Berg, 36.

[43] Holly G. Miller, "Intercultural Competence: Not Just for Missionaries Anymore," in *Trust Center for Theological Schools* (Spring 2013), accessed August 22, 2017, http://www.intrust.org/Magazine/Issues/Summer-2013/Intercultural-competence-Not-just-for-missionaries-anymore.

Therefore they felt that the IDI was not a suitable tool to evaluate people in this setting. When participants expressed doubts about the accuracy or suitableness of the IDI, at no time did they make comments that would suggest that they had engaged with any of the research concerning the validity of the IDI.

Other participants were consistently positive about the IDI. One participant commented that being exposed to the IDI information and individual results was empowering because it provided tools that could be used to grow and progress. This participant also brought up earlier conversations about the experiences of others who had lived for years in cross-cultural circumstances and whose work and education would lead them to expect they would be in Adaptation, but who were surprised and disappointed to find they were in Minimization. Faced with the results, these people chose to accept that the IDI might have something valuable to say regarding their intercultural competence and made an effort to develop. After developing greater intercultural competence, they could look back and see that they previously had been operating from a Minimization orientation before, despite their experience, education, and personal sense that they were at a higher level of competence.

Commenting on intercultural competence, a participant raised the following question: “In terms of growth can you compare it to marriage where just because you have been married for 50 years it doesn’t mean you are doing it well? Just because you have the experience of 30 years in the Middle East [doesn’t mean you are doing it well].” She also went on to comment that “when you work cross-culturally that means you are bumping up against and experiencing differences but not studying it or learning from it.

Just because you experience difference doesn't mean you know or understand it." Both comments fit well with research regarding intercultural competence development.

Finally, one participant commented that when she shared with a family member her individual IDI results that indicated that she had been minimizing differences and had some negative views of her own culture (Reversal), the family member confirmed that it was an accurate assessment.

Post-IDI

The Musalaha leaders took the post-IDI six to nine weeks after completing the second group training, which gave them additional time to engage in activities that could increase their intercultural competence if they chose to do so.

In the post-IDI the Musalaha group's PO was 125.6 (2.54 points higher than the pre-IDI PO), which falls in Acceptance.

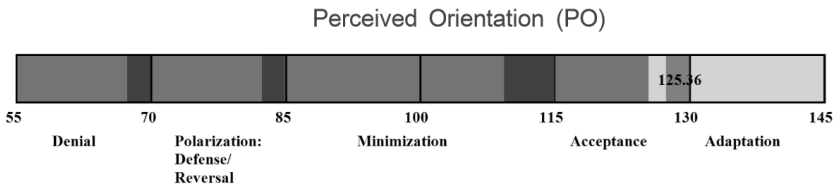

Figure 11. Post-IDI Perceived Orientation.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 6.

The post-IDI group DO was 98.91, an increase of 6.15 points from the pre-IDI DO, but still falling in Minimization. Individually, post-IDI scores ranged from 73 to 130.

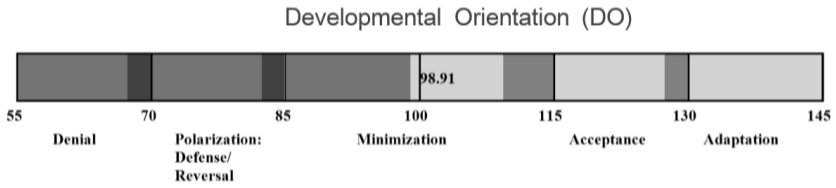

Figure 12. Post-IDI Developmental Orientation.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 6.

The post-IDI orientation gap was 26.45 (3.85 points less than the pre-IDI OG). Individual OGs ranged from 8 to 41 in the post-IDI.

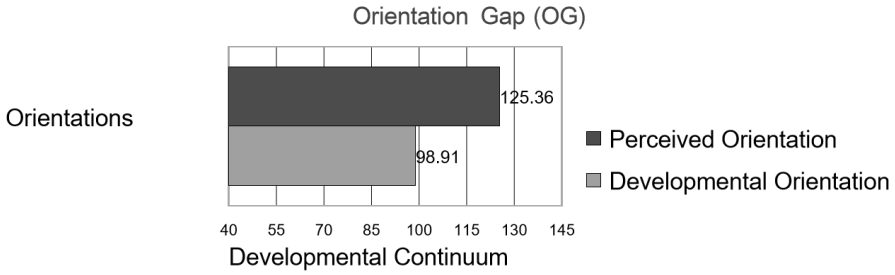

Figure 13. Post-IDI Orientation Gap.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 6.

The post-IDI results indicated that the range of development orientations for the Musalaha group was still wide in the post-IDI.

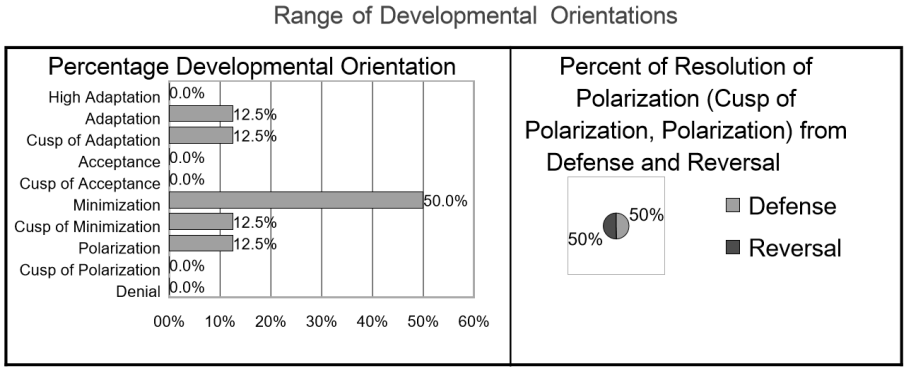

Figure 14. Post-IDI Range of Developmental Orientations.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 7.

Post-IDI results included one participant who moved from Denial into Polarization (73). One participant remained in Cusp of Minimization (82) but dropped slightly and one participant remained in Minimization but dropped as well (88).[44] Three remained in Minimization but increased by five to six points (90, 96, 100). One moved from Minimization to Cusp of Adaptation (129) and one moved from Acceptance to Adaptation (130).

The post-IDI results indicated that as a group, the Musalaha leaders had resolved their defense TO. Individually, one of the participants who was in Minimization with a defense TO (3.0) resolved it by the time of the post-IDI. One of the participants who was in Minimization did not resolve the defense TO, but made progress in that direction (from 3.5 to 3.85). One participant who was in Cusp of Minimization had the same defense TO score in the post-IDI as before (3.17).

The post-IDI results indicated that the Musalaha leaders as a group still had a TO in reversal of 3.78, but showed an improvement from the pre-IDI reversal Trailing Orientation of 3.53.

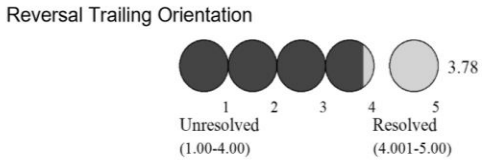

Figure 15. Post-IDI Reversal Trailing Orientation.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 9.

[44] As noted earlier, the lower scores are likely indicators of the pressures these two participants faced when they moved to a new country rather than an accurate representation of their intercultural competence.

Individually, two of the participants who were in Minimization in the pre-IDI resolved their reversal TOs by the time of the post-IDI, including the participant who moved from Minimization to Cusp of Adaptation. Two participants in Minimization had exactly the same reversal TO scores in the post-IDI (3.44 and 3.67). Two individuals who were in Minimization and Cusp of Minimization had slightly lower reversal TO scores in the post-IDI.[45]

The participant who moved from Denial to Polarization had TOs in Denial (3.71) and Disinterest (3.25). Moving from Denial to Polarization, however, indicates that this participant made progress in each of these areas as well as resolving an Avoidance TO.

Finally, the participant who moved from Acceptance to Adaptation resolved TOs in Minimization, Similarity, and Universalism.

The Leading Orientation in the post-IDI was Acceptance through Adaptation, as in the pre-IDI.

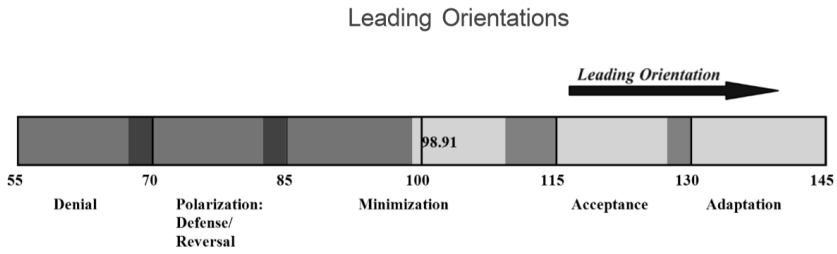

Figure 16. Post-IDI Leading Orientation.
Source: Debra Bayes and Mitchell R. Hammer, "Intercultural Development Inventory v. 3 (IDI): Organization Group Profile Report Prepared for Musalaha" (Berlin, MD: IDI, LLC, 2017), 9.

Between the two group training times and individual meetings Musalaha leaders received five to ten hours of training in intercultural competence. Five of the eight participants attended both group training times and met twice individually with the

[45] Again, likely due to the pressures of moving to a new country.

researcher. One of the eight participants attended both group training times but only met once individually. Two of the eight participants were only able to attend one of the group training times and met only once individually. Also, during the training period five of the eight participants reported engaging in activities to help them develop intercultural competence. These activities varied from watching foreign films, reading books, attending cross-cultural events, and talking with friends from different cultural backgrounds to spending five days in the desert with a mixed group of Muslim and Christian Palestinians. The Intercultural Development Plan (IDP) that each participant received along with their pre-IDI results suggests as a guideline for those who want to develop that they "should plan to spend approximately thirty to fifty hours of concentrated effort at building intercultural competence to achieve a gain of one full orientation (or more) along the Intercultural Development Continuum."[46] As noted earlier, these efforts must focus not only on attending cultural activities or events but, even more importantly, on reflection.[47] Spending thirty to fifty hours in cross-cultural settings by itself will not necessarily increase intercultural competence.

Participants in the Musalaha leaders group who indicated in written responses and comments made during both group and individual meetings that they accepted the accuracy and value of their IDI results invested a substantial amount of time in activities that develop intercultural competence. They also demonstrated a depth of reflection in their comments following these activities that showed considerable progress in

[46] Bayes and Hammer, "Intercultural Development Plan," 5.

[47] Bayes and Hammer, "Intercultural Development Plan," 5.

intercultural competence development, which was confirmed by an increase in their scores (as much as 15 to 27 points) and a move up to new orientation levels.

One person who accepted the IDI results and demonstrated considerable interest during the individual meeting to learn more about the IDC and apply it to her own situation saw an increase of 6 points in her post-IDI, even though she was only able to attend one group training and one individual meeting. Participants who at times seemed to accept their results and at other times rejected them, but nevertheless made some effort to involve themselves in activities that could increase intercultural competence, saw some improvement in their post-IDI scores (5 points each, and in one case a move up to a higher orientation).

One participant did not communicate acceptance or rejection of the pre-IDI results, was only able to attend one group training, and did not indicate involvement in any activities to increase intercultural competence beyond discussions of the material with another Musalaha participant. Post-IDI results for this participant were slightly lower than pre-IDI scores.

Another participant communicated rejection of the pre-IDI results and did not indicate involvement in any activities to increase intercultural competence beyond some discussion of the material with another Musalaha participant. This participant's post-IDI result was lower than the pre-IDI. In both cases where participants had lower post-IDI than pre-IDI scores, it is likely that the pressures of the move to a different country, which took place after the training concluded but before they took the post-IDI, had a negative effect on their scores. If the move had not taken place before the post-IDI, their rejection of the pre-IDI scores (or at least a lack of interest in them) as well as their

minimal effort to participate in activities to increase intercultural competence between pre- and post-IDIs would lead one to expect their post-IDI scores to remain essentially the same as their pre-IDI scores. It is impossible to know this for certain, however.

Data from Musalaha Narratives

The researcher explored narratives of Musalaha participants that were recorded in a book and published in 2011 as well as a blog entry posted on Musalaha's website on July 10, 2017 to provide a broader framework for understanding the role of intercultural competence among Musalaha leaders and the context in which they work. The researcher also conducted personal interviews with numerous women involved in Musalaha's women's programs during the fall of 2016 and reviewed these in light of the current research. Musalaha's reconciliation curriculum was also reviewed.

Musalaha addresses the issue of separation between Israelis and Palestinians in its curriculum.

> A policy of separation is very strong within both Israeli and Palestinian societies. For the most part, interaction between our two peoples is limited, and most social, cultural, and education initiatives are undertaken within our respective communities separate from each other. Little opportunity for relationship building is available to use, and one of the few ways we are able to meet one another, speak with each other, and develop relationships is through people to people encounters initiated by reconciliation and peace work organizations.[48]

While only one person who participated in this research project was in the Denial orientation on the Intercultural Development Continuum in the pre-IDI, several other individuals who have connections with Musalaha took the IDI. Though the number of people who took the IDI was too small to draw any definite conclusions, among the 12 people who did take it there was an unusually high number falling into the Denial

[48] Musalaha Staff, 19.

orientation. On average only 3.05% of people fall into Denial,[49] but among the group with connections to Musalaha who took the IDI, 33% were in Denial. Those in the Denial orientation came from three different nationalities. While a high number of people in Denial may seem surprising in a context as diverse as Israel-Palestine, the social, religious, political, and physical barriers that exist do seem to enforce a separation that makes it possible for members of different groups to live in such isolation that they remain in a Denial orientation despite the diversity around them.

Evan Thomas, an Israeli Messianic Jew, explained that in the Israeli military "we had been trained not to look into the faces of the people we were searching … so as not to become acquainted with or familiar with anyone."[50] Palestinians, especially in the West Bank, likewise have little contact with Israelis apart from soldiers. While Israeli-Palestinians interact more with Israeli-Jews in their daily lives than do West Bank Palestinians, social pressures enforce separation so that contact is often superficial.

Musalaha has used desert trips for more than 20 years to bring together Israelis and Palestinians. In their curriculum, they explain

> In the desert, we are forced to depend on one another, work together, engage in discussions, teachings, and taxing physical activities. In the stillness of the desert, we are able to shake off the policy of separation and forge meaningful relationships while participating in non-threatening activities. The unique atmosphere of the desert expedites the process of breaking down negative feelings of dehumanization and demonization both sides have towards each other.[51]

Many Musalaha participants who have gone on these desert trips describe them as being transformative experiences. Sara Atwood, an Israeli Messianic Jew, describes her

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[49] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 32.

[50] McRay, 220, Kindle.

[51] Musalaha Staff, 21.

desert trip as the "first time in her life that she was on equal ground with people she once thought of as her enemies. Throughout the week she felt like a wind was crumbling her stereotypes in the face of friendship."[52] Commenting on a day spent in jeeps exploring canyons in Wadi Rum, Atwood reflected

> You're very close to each other and you really have to listen to the other side in such a tight place. You can't really get away if you wanted to. The only thing you have to do is listen. I realized that they share the same kind of pain, but on the other side of the hallway I guess. And then, in the evenings, we were split up again, one Israeli and one Palestinian, and we had to sit down and pray with each other and again we found so much in common and dropped so many of our differences in the desert. It really showed how human we all are. We did the opposite of dehumanization really fast."[53]

Raed Hanina, a Palestinian Christian, had many humiliating and dehumanizing experiences with Israeli soldiers that left him filled with anger and bitterness. "My picture was clear" he said, "they are my enemy."[54] When he received an invitation to go on a Musalaha Desert Encounter, he did not want to go but after struggling with it for several days, he decided to "give it another chance."[55] Though he initially avoided the Israelis, he was eventually paired up to pray with one whom he recognized instantly as a soldier.[56] After some resistance, Hanina finally shared with the Israeli his recent humiliating experiences with soldiers as well as his traumatic childhood experiences.

> I told him everything, about the checkpoints, about the Dead Sea, about Hebron, about my brother when we were young. And he sat there and listened. He said he saw even worse things done to people, and he said he had quit the army because he cannot be in the army and be a believer at the same time, because they do not go together. … And then he prayed for me, and we prayed together, and I thought:

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[52] McRay, 319, Kindle.

[53] McRay, 323, Kindle.

[54] McRay, 453, Kindle.

[55] McRay, 456, Kindle.

[56] McRay, 459, Kindle.

> here is an Israeli who was in the army praying for me in the desert for the things the army had done to me. … And this, this cleansed me.[57]

Ronza Saba, a West Bank Palestinian Christian and the one Musalaha leader who participated in this research project who originally scored in the Denial orientation on the pre-IDI, participated in a desert trip that included Palestinian Muslims and Christians in between taking her pre-IDI and her post-IDI. Saba's post-IDI score was 15 points higher than her pre-IDI, a considerable increase in such a short period.[58] Despite living in a Muslim majority community, Saba had little real interaction with Muslims before the desert experience. Her comments below provide a good description of how a person can operate from a Denial orientation despite living in a diverse community.

> This was the first experience for me to be with Muslims. I have never had a relationship with the other, a Muslim, although we live in the same place and the same country. However, our education and our upbringing have given us a lot of incorrect beliefs and misconceptions about the other in our minds. We often assign labels and stereotypes that are false. This desert trip was the ideal opportunity for the group to discover the other and learn about them. I am used to seeing Muslims in the streets, taxis and in shops, but I never had a close friendship with a Muslim before this trip.[59]

Saba goes on to describe how the time in the desert impacted her.

> I learned so much from the time together, and really saw individual Muslims for who they are—good people who are my neighbors. I discovered this when I decided to open my heart to them. I saw them in a different way than ever before. After four days with each other, talking and singing, playing and also discussing challenging topics, I came to know each group member in a personal way, and I became close to everyone. I saw great people, without the misperceptions I had learned from my community. … On the last day we finally felt we could call ourselves a group. Before this trip I did not feel like there was any commitment to each other. We only recognized and knew each other's faces and names. But after

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[57] McRay, 468, Kindle.

[58] Individual IDI scores are confidential. Ronza Saba gave permission for her name and scores to be used in this paper.

[59] Ronza Saba, "Discovery in the Desert," Musalaha, accessed August 25, 2017, http://www.musalaha.org/blog/2017/7/10/discovery-in-the-desert.

> the desert journey we started to know each other in a real and meaningful way. … We began to speak and treat others as human beings, without thinking about the background of the person.[60]

Musalaha's desert encounters seem to be an effective means of helping people who are either in Denial (characterized by the use of broad stereotypes of the other, a limited ability to understand cultural differences, and a general avoidance or disinterest in cultural others) or defensive Polarization (characterized by an "us and them" mentality and a superior attitude that sees others as less than human) to progress in developing intercultural competence. While it was not a planned part of this research project, the timing of Saba's desert trip between her pre- and post-IDI provides some empirical evidence of the effectiveness of Musalaha's desert encounters in intercultural competence development.

Sometimes intense encounters with the other can lead to reversal, which is still in the Polarization orientation. But rather than overly criticizing the other culture and being uncritical of one's own, in reversal people are overly critical of their own culture and uncritical of the other. One Israeli Jewish participant who had grown up in a right-wing Israeli family returned from her desert trip with a different perspective.

> I came back from that trip and was very, very left-wing, you know, questioning Israel and supporting Palestinian rights. My parents are very right-wing. I mean, they came here because they believed God wanted Jews to be here. Eventually we just stopped talking about it. But, I guess I've become more moderate since then. I think I belong in Israel.[61]

Reversal still maintains an overly simplified view of both self and other. It may help Musalaha leaders to have a greater awareness of the dynamics of intercultural competence development and to understand reversal, so they can address this possibility

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[60] Saba.

[61] McRay, 726, Kindle.

with participants in desert trips and other Musalaha activities. Moving to Acceptance or Adaptation requires the ability to see the positive and negative in both one's own culture as well as in others. Being able to see both the positive and the negative in self and others is also one of the goals of reconciliation.[62]

Not all Musalaha participants are involved in desert trips, but early interactions in Musalaha programs do tend to focus on building relationships and trust. One of the challenges Musalaha faces in helping participants move forward in both reconciliation and intercultural competence is the tendency of participants not to want to press forward beyond friendly relationships to discuss controversial topics related to the conflict.

In discussion during the first group training, Musalaha leaders recognized the challenge of convincing participants to press on to develop beyond Minimization. Leaders commented on the tendency of Israeli participants to be satisfied with the friendly relations with Palestinians they have found in Minimization and for Palestinians to remain in Minimization out of a desire to be accepted and avoid conflict. The difficulty is that when "responsibilities and tasks can be accomplished successfully using commonality strategies *without the need* to attend to difference, Minimization mindsets are reinforced and are often successful."[63] In such a deeply polarized society, simply having friendly relationships with the other can feel like a substantial success. Pressing in to understand and discuss differences can feel inappropriate and divisive after working so hard to develop friendly relationships with the other. Unfortunately, however, these friendships often seem unable to withstand the pressures that come when Musalaha

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[62] Musalaha Staff, 24.

[63] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 34.

programs lead them to discuss controversial topics surrounding sensitive issues in theology or politics, or when violence in the region increases.

In interviews with participants in Musalaha's women's groups in the fall of 2016, the researcher found evidence of Musalaha participants struggling to maintain relationships when discussions or situations forced them to face differences. One Israeli-Palestinian woman described how Israeli-Jews in her group had shown her much affection and given her many gifts, but when they realized she did not accept the Messianic Jewish interpretation of the Jewish relationship to the Land, they ended the relationship. It was deeply painful to her when she realized the women she had considered friends would only accept her if she believed as they did. There was no place in their minds for friendship apart from full theological agreement.

In another instance, an Israeli-Palestinian talked about posting something on her Facebook page regarding Palestinians in Gaza during a time when Israel was bombing Gaza. The response from the Israeli-Jewish women in her Musalaha group suggested that any expression of sympathy for people in Gaza was support for Hamas and terrorism. The Israeli-Palestinian woman responded by saying that she was not supportive of either Hamas or terrorism but that she did have sympathy for the situation of the Palestinian people in Gaza. Her Israeli-Jewish friends cut off communication with her from that time. This Israeli-Palestinian woman talked about the need to persist in reconciliation through painful moments like these. She had experienced several instances of rejection from Israeli-Jewish women she had considered friends when she or other Palestinians expressed views that differed from theirs. While it is not certain that she has been able to see some of these situations from the perspective of the Israeli-Jews, she strongly

expressed her desire to keep talking and to try to understand even when there was disagreement. She felt a great loss at these moments when communication was cut off. In general, during times of violence in this region, people withdraw into their own communities and focus on their own suffering. Even speaking of the suffering of the other is seen as a betrayal of one's own group. To be able to put one's self into another's shoes and try to see the situation from their perspective is a particularly difficult skill to exercise during times of intense conflict.

Many women spoke of the emotional pain of reconciliation. There were many stories of hearing things from the other side that were offensive or hurtful. Israeli-Jews reported that they often felt they were being blamed for all of the sufferings of the Palestinian people at Musalaha events, while their own suffering was not recognized. Israeli-Jews felt they were being attacked and shamed when Palestinians shared their narrative. A few different women mentioned a situation where a Jewish narrative was presented along with a Palestinian narrative. At the end of the Jewish narrative, the speaker offered an apology to the Palestinians for the suffering the Jewish people have brought to them. The Palestinian speaker, on the other hand, did not offer any apology or recognition for the suffering the Jewish people have experienced because of the Palestinian people. The situation caused anger and distress for the Israeli-Jewish participants, and it seems many of them did not continue participating in Musalaha programs after this event.

Theological disagreement can be particularly painful for both Palestinians and Messianic Jewish believers. Some of the Palestinian women spoke of the sense that Israeli-Jews feel they are superior. Palestinians are sensitive to interpretations of

Scripture that regard Jews exclusively as the chosen people. Palestinian theology points rather to the chosen people being all those who now follow Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles. Many Messianic Jews consider this view to be replacement theology, which disregards the place of Jews in God's plan. Many former participants have not been able to accept these theological differences and have ended their participation in Musalaha programs because of them.

An Israeli-Jewish woman cited times when different narratives led to anger and pain among women. She mentioned specific things that were difficult for Palestinian women to accept about her story, such as her belief that God has called Jewish people to return to the Land and that her presence here represents obedience to that call. She also mentioned specific situations that were hard for members of her community, such as the knife violence that occurred in fall of 2015. Throughout the conversation she continually stopped her own narrative and told the story from the perspective of the other side as well. She shared her concern for young Palestinians, recognizing their frustration at the situation in the West Bank and their loss of hope for the future. She said that even though she did not agree with the violent actions of the young people, she was sympathetic to their anger and despair over the unfairness of the current situation. Though she attempted to see the situation from the perspective of the other in these areas, the one area where she did not provide an alternative Palestinian perspective was regarding her theological perspective of the relationship of the Jew with the Land today. While all the women expressed how they value the way Musalaha programs have helped them to see other viewpoints, there are some aspects of differing narratives that continue to be difficult for both sides to see from the perspective of the other.

The women who participated in the interviews in the fall of 2016 did not take the IDI, so their exact orientations on the IDC are not known. The stories these long-term participants in Musalaha women's programs shared often suggest Minimization and in some cases possibly even Acceptance or Adaptation, but evidence of Defense attitudes and behaviors surfaced among many when they faced the pressure of discussing sensitive issues such as theological differences or during stressful circumstances, such as times of increased violence. Part of the challenge in these circumstances is also the pressure they feel from their own communities to conform to expectations of group loyalty. Musalaha notes in their curriculum

> *conflict is made communal* because of the "us versus them" attitude. Alone, people are defenseless and weak, but there is power in numbers. People naturally seek protection and acceptance in a group, identifying, for example with a religion, ethnicity, a tribe, or a geographic location. This is where the "same versus other" dynamic comes into play, but in a communal setting. Instead of looking with hostility at someone who is different from "me" it is looking at someone who is different from "us."[64]

Just like the reconciliation process, development in intercultural competence has individual and communal aspects, both of which must be addressed if people are going to be able to move on to Acceptance and Adaptation, particularly in an intractable conflict context.

Regarding the goals of reconciliation, the Musalaha curriculum describes the later stages of reconciliation.

> As we have slowly but gradually built up these relationships, participants have a firm foundation from which to continue engaging with important issues related to the conflict. In this stage, participants are able to listen to each other's grievances in the context of relationships, and they are able to listen without being defensive. Due to the maturity that has developed through the process, they are able to understand that both sides have legitimate grievances, and recognize and accept

[64] Musalaha Staff, 5.

> one another without feeling threatened. Participants are also willing to recognize the shortcomings of their own people and recognize how their own side has contributed to the breakdown of relationship and violence in the conflict.[65]

In the final stages of reconciliation

> participants who have been perpetrators of violence or who have held bitterness as a result of the conflict often feel liberation from guilt. Participants who have been victims feel free to let go of blame. Both sides feel that issues have been considered and addressed within the context of relationship, and feel comfortable enough to return to their own societies and begin advocating the very process they themselves have gone through.[66]

People who are operating from a Denial orientation, with its severely limited ability to even recognize (much less understand) culture difference in self or others, or Polarization, with its "us and them" evaluative mentality that leads to simplistic and stereotyped understanding of others and attitudes of superiority, cannot reach these reconciliation goals. While developing to the point of Minimization is progress (and will especially feel so in a deeply Polarized society in that it makes it possible to have friendly relations with the other), it is also limited in its ability to understand situations from other viewpoints. The ability to see the situation from the perspective of the other, to recognize and accept the other without feeling threatened, and to have a deep understanding of one's own culture as well as the other are Acceptance and Adaptation level abilities.

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[65] Musalaha Staff, 24.

[66] Musalaha Staff, 25.

CHAPTER SIX: PROJECT DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION

The qualitative and quantitative data gathered in field research were analyzed to develop principles regarding the development of greater intercultural competence among leaders of multiple cultures who are engaged in reconciliation work in the Israeli-Palestinian context.

The findings in the research project point to four main areas. First, because certain myths can stand in the way of people's intercultural development it is important to address these myths early in training so that they will not lead to resistance that can hinder intercultural competence development.

Second, because people are often inaccurate in their self-evaluation of intercultural competence, it is imperative that groups like Musalaha find objective means of assessing intercultural competence (such as the IDI) so they can more accurately evaluate both leaders' and participants' development needs as well as the effectiveness of various programs and curriculum.

Third, humility is foundational to intercultural competence. Cross-cultural knowledge and experience are essential, but without cultural humility interactions with cultural others will always be tinged with ethnocentrism.

Fourth, developing intercultural competence can be more difficult in the context of an intractable conflict due to the emotional resistance that results from trauma. It may be necessary to first focus on developing intercultural competence through interactions with cultural others who are not viewed as an enemy so that people are able to learn in a

context that feels emotionally safe and avoids the psychological barriers that can hinder the development of traumatized individuals and groups, with the hope that these skills and competencies will later transfer spontaneously into their interactions within the conflict. Even among those who have a high level of competence, intercultural interactions may require "special measures" to ensure that all can participate on an equal footing.[1]

Finally, both the strengths and weaknesses of the current project will be considered.

Discussion

Myths That Can Hinder Development of Intercultural Competence

Numerous myths exist surrounding the development of intercultural competence, several of which impacted some of the participants in the study and may have impeded their development. Addressing these issues up front may prevent them from becoming stumbling blocks.

First, many people assume that the development of intercultural competence is only important for people who "work across national borders"[2] and is not suitable for domestic diversity situations such as exist in Israel-Palestine. Certainly in the past most cross-cultural training focused primarily on those who would travel to or live in a culture other than their own. The reality is, however, that intercultural competence is just as essential in domestic contexts because of the diversity found there as well. As Deardorff

[1] Huber and Reynolds, 25.

[2] Darla K. Deardorff, lecture, 2015.

explains, "Intercultural competence is for everyone who works … with humans."[3] Whether at home or abroad, interacting successfully with cultural differences requires people to be able to deeply shift cultural perspectives as well as adapt behavior across cultural differences and similarities.[4]

Part of the continuing misperception may stem from training and materials that contain more examples of intercultural interactions and development in cross-border circumstances than in domestic diversity contexts. When a person travels to or lives in a foreign country, the focus is on the foreigner adjusting to the host culture in seeking to understand its perspectives and making appropriate changes in behavior. It is more likely to be primarily a one-way adjustment. In a domestic diversity situation, however, it is not as straightforward who adjusts to whom, and exactly which behavior will be most appropriate in any given circumstance.

One of the challenges of developing intercultural competence is that simply learning information about the cultural other is not sufficient. Intercultural competence requires deep reflection and a growing understanding of one's self and one's own culture, which can be a demanding and uncomfortable process. Because

> intercultural competence involves learning about and interpreting other people's cultural perspectives and relating them to one's own, interculturally competent individuals are able to use their intercultural encounters to learn about and reflect critically on their own cultural affiliations. Due to the enculturation process in which cultural beliefs, values and practices are acquired particularly during childhood and adolescence, it can be difficult to psychologically decentre from one's own affiliations. Interculturally competent individuals acquire a more critical awareness and understanding of their own cultural positioning, beliefs, discourses and values through comparing and relating them to those of other people. For this reason, intercultural competence not only enhances one's

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[3] Deardorff, lecture.

[4] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 31.

> knowledge and understanding of other people; it also enhances self-knowledge and self-understanding.[5]

In cross-border situations people may recognize, at least in theory, the need to go through this complicated process as they learn to live with and interact with cultural others. In domestic diversity contexts, however, people may be less likely to expect or be prepared for the emotional and psychological demands they will face when attempting to develop intercultural competence.

A second myth that should be addressed early on is the belief that cross-cultural experience necessarily leads to intercultural competence. If a person has considerable cross-cultural experience and works in a diverse setting, as do most Musalaha leaders, the person may assume it is a given that he or she has a high level of intercultural competence. It is critical to explain from the beginning that cross-cultural experience does not necessarily guarantee that a high level of intercultural competence is present. If this point is not addressed early on, it is more likely that defensiveness will become an issue when individuals are faced with IDI or other assessment scores that are not as high as expected. Erroneous expectations may lead people to dismiss low scores as evidence of the inaccuracy of the assessment rather than a true representation of their level of intercultural competency.

Asking questions about the development, validity, and cultural suitability of assessments like the IDI is important, particularly when their use is considered in a context as complex and sensitive as Israel-Palestine. As noted earlier, however, the few individuals in the project who questioned their IDI scores did so not because they had interacted in any way with research regarding the validity of the IDI but because of their

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[5] Huber and Reynolds, 24.

firm belief that cross-cultural experience necessarily leads to intercultural competence. Because they had had a great deal of cross-cultural experience (through marriage, work, and travel), they were unwilling to accept the idea that their scores could reflect an accurate assessment of their intercultural competence. If one dismisses a lower than expected score as inaccurate because of an assumption that one's cross-cultural experience is a certain indicator of a high level of competence, then most likely that person will not make much effort to develop in this area and so will not show much if any increase in post-training IDI scores. This was the case for a few people in this project.

No assessment can provide a comprehensive evaluation of a person, especially when it is evaluating something as complex as intercultural competence. It would seem reasonable, however, to give serious consideration to results from an assessment like the IDI, which has been used extensively in many different contexts and cultures and has been the object of considerable research and validity testing.[6] Thoroughly addressing the reality that cross-cultural experience does not necessarily lead to intercultural competence prior to receiving IDI scores may lower people's expectations of high scores and lessen the tendency to defensiveness, which can hinder development.

Need for Accurate Means of Evaluating Intercultural Competence

The IDI results indicated that the Musalaha leaders had a substantial gap between their perceived orientation and their developmental orientation. Inaccurate self-assessment in intercultural competence is common and can mislead people into believing they are more competent than they are. An assessment like the IDI may be necessary to

[6] Mitchell R. Hammer, "Why Should You Consider Using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)?" (2017): 14.

create an awareness of the need to develop as well as some guidance for how to go about it.

As mentioned before, several leaders who did not take part in the research project but have or have had leadership roles within Musalaha also took the IDI and the results indicated an unusually high number of people in Denial. Some of the Musalaha leaders felt that this result must be an indication that the IDI was not a suitable assessment for the Israeli-Palestinian context. The Musalaha curriculum itself, however, acknowledges a strong policy of separation that exists in both Israeli and Palestinian communities. Narratives of Musalaha participants recorded in *You Have Heard It Said* likewise testify to strong social separation. Social barriers created because of religious, political, and racial differences can create the kind of isolation that allows a Denial mindset to exist even in the midst of diversity.[7]

Leaders operating in a Denial or Polarization mindset will not have the abilities necessary to lead others through the process of reconciliation and could very likely hinder the progress of participants. Placing people in Denial or Polarization in a leadership role that requires a high level of intercultural competence may also cause a great deal of stress for these individuals, and in the end a sense of failure, as they will constantly struggle to do a job for which they are not equipped. It would be far better to support these individuals in continued development in intercultural competence to prepare them for future leadership responsibilities than to place them in a role for which they are not yet prepared.

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[7] Bennett, "Toward Ethnorelativism," 32.

People operating from a Minimization orientation will likewise be limited in helping participants reach the stated reconciliation goals of Musalaha, which require an Acceptance or Adaptation orientation. The tendency of people operating from a Minimization orientation to focus on commonalities to the point of overlooking real and relevant differences as well as limited cultural self-understanding can create a situation where cultural others feel they are not heard.[8]

In a process as sensitive as reconciliation it is essential that participants have the confidence and security of knowing that they are heard and understood by their leader. Confidence that one is understood by the facilitator of a group can enable a participant to press on, even when there are moments of limited understanding between participants. A lack of confidence that one is understood by the facilitator can mean that even small slights or misunderstandings between participants can lead to withdrawal from the reconciliation process, possibly even permanent withdrawal. Placing leaders in positions appropriate to their skill level and supporting their continued development requires an accurate assessment of intercultural competence. Particularly in an organization like Musalaha, where understanding and negotiating cultural differences is foundational to reaching their most central goals, a means of accurate assessment such as the IDI can be vital to success. Leaders cannot lead others beyond where they have gone themselves. Musalaha will struggle to reach its reconciliation goals if its leadership continues to operate from a dominantly Minimization orientation.

Using an assessment like the IDI can also assist Musalaha in evaluating the effectiveness of their curriculum and programs. The early stages of reconciliation have

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[8] Hammer, "Using the IDI," 10.

many parallels with the early stages of the IDC (Denial, Polarization, and Minimization). Musalaha's description of the later stages of reconciliation also has many parallels with the description of intercultural development orientations of Acceptance and Adaptation (ability to shift perspectives, demonstrate empathy, ability to see strengths and weaknesses in self and other). Musalaha currently uses questionnaires to assess their programs. The questionnaires are mainly a form of self-report as the participants evaluate their changes in attitudes and the knowledge and abilities they have acquired. Just as self-reports by study abroad students often declare that they have been "transformed"[9] by their experiences abroad when in reality they do not demonstrate evidence of greater intercultural competency upon their return,[10] it is likely that these questionnaires face the same sorts of limitations as far as providing accurate or useful information.

One reason for these limitations is that "self-reports are notoriously unreliable in the sense that an individual may not have enough knowledge about the topic being discussed to draw valid conclusions about it."[11] Another reason is that individuals may also fall victim to "what testing experts call 'social desirability bias'; that is, she may be telling us what she believes we want to hear."[12] The IDI is designed in such a way as to guard against social desirability bias.[13] Even though the IDI questions do not directly address issues of conflict and reconciliation, the IDI does evaluate the intercultural orientation of individuals and groups, which can provide considerable clarity regarding

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[9] Vande Berg et al., 22.

[10] Vande Berg et al., 72, Kindle.

[11] Vande Berg et al., 22.

[12] Vande Berg et al., 24.

[13] Hammer, "Using the IDI," 14.

which stage they are most likely at in the reconciliation process. Individuals in Denial or Polarization will be in the beginning stages of reconciliation and those in Minimization will have made progress but will not yet have reached the later stages of reconciliation.

Using an assessment such as the IDI might better enable Musalaha leaders to place participants in groups according to their intercultural development orientation and thereby provide training specifically targeted to their level. Just because individuals choose to participate in Musalaha activities does not necessarily mean they are at a high level of intercultural competence or that they are prepared for interactions with the other. Far from desiring to understand the other and to begin to see the conflict from other perspectives, some participants come to Musalaha with the idea that reconciliation is about convincing the other to agree with their perspective.[14]

If current leaders fall into a wide range of orientations, one can expect that participants in Musalaha activities will as well. Individuals in Denial, Polarization, and Minimization have different developmental needs. During group discussion, Musalaha leaders acknowledged that when individuals or groups are not ready for particular material or programs, their involvement in the training can set them back in the reconciliation process.[15] They also recognized that having even a few individuals in a group who are not prepared for the activity or material presented can have a detrimental effect on the entire group.[16]

Another reason for using an assessment such as the IDI rather than relying only on questionnaires or other forms of self assessment is the reality that Israel-Palestine is a

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[14] Group training discussion, Musalaha offices, May 10, 2017.

[15] Group training discussion, Musalaha offices, May 10, 2017.

[16] Group training discussion, Musalaha offices, May 10, 2017.

deeply polarized society. In the context of an intractable conflict, bringing opposing sides to the point of Minimization where they can recognize the common humanity of the other and have friendly relations with them is a considerable achievement. It can feel almost miraculous in comparison to the hostilities and divisions that plague the rest of society. In such contexts people may feel satisfied with their interactions from a Minimization orientation and not be motivated to develop further unless some form of assessment such as the IDI makes them aware of the limitations of Minimization.

An assessment such as the IDI may also be an important step in providing the clarity necessary to create training and programs that will better enable both leaders and participants to develop to Acceptance and Adaptation and advance to the later stages of reconciliation. The IDI is certainly not the only means of evaluating intercultural competence but at this stage, with a leadership operating primarily from a Minimization orientation, it may be the simplest step for Musalaha to take toward developing intercultural competence among its leadership. Other means of evaluating intercultural competence, such as the PEER method introduced in chapter three, may eventually be a better fit for the social and cultural context, but the students who participated in the PEER method had the benefit of considerable training in intercultural competence concepts and ethnography as well as the guidance of instructors with high levels of intercultural competence. Successfully implementing an approach such as the PEER method in Musalaha would require at least a few staff to be operating from an Acceptance or Adaptation orientation and to have had some additional training in how to support participants through a process like the PEER method.

As in the past, so today humility is often seen as a negative concept. In most dictionaries the definition of humility includes "low self-esteem."[17] In contrast, it is "clear that when 'experts' (philosophers, theologians, sociologists, psychologists, and other wise persons) delve into the broader significance of humility, they have a different—and much richer—notion of this construct."[18]

Rather than low self-esteem or self-deprecation, humility is an "accurate assessment of one's abilities and achievements."[19] Humility includes an "ability to acknowledge one's mistakes, imperfections, gaps in knowledge, and limitations (often vis-à-vis a 'higher power')."[20] It demonstrates an "openness to new ideas, contradictory information, and advice."[21] It requires keeping "one's abilities and accomplishments—one's place in the world—in perspective (e.g., seeing oneself as just one person in the larger scheme of things)."[22] A person with a sense of humility "is no longer phenomenologically at the center of his or her world. His or her focus is on the larger community, of which he or she is a part."[23] A person with humility has a "relatively low self-focus, a 'forgetting of the self,' while recognizing that one is but part of the larger universe."[24] Because of the ability to let go of "the very human tendency toward

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[17] June Price Tangney, "Humility: Theoretical Perspectives, Empirical Findings and Directions for Future Research," *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 19, no. 1 (2000): 71.

[18] Tangney, 71.

[19] Tangney, 73.

[20] Tangney, 73.

[21] Tangney, 73.

[22] Tangney, 73.

[23] Tangney, 72.

egocentric focus, persons with humility become ever more open to recognizing the abilities, potential, worth, and importance of others."[25]

For those with religious belief, humility includes a sense of the greatness of God and the right place of human beings in his presence. And yet here too "the emphasis is not on human sinfulness, unworthiness, and inadequacy, but rather on the notion of a higher, greater power and the implication that, although we may have considerable wisdom and knowledge, there always are limits to our perspective."[26]

Humility or lack of it is a common factor in the religious and spiritual issues explored in chapter three. Spiritual Questing requires the humility to be willing to question one's religious traditions, while Spiritual Grandiosity is a mindset that holds an inflated view of one's self and a sense of superiority over others. Christian meditative prayer continuously pulls one away from self-centeredness toward Christ-centeredness and a life that is defined by humility rather than selfish ambition or vain conceit. Spiritual well-being is defined as a "secure closeness in relating with God."[27] On the other hand, individuals who exhibit spiritual instability have "high levels of insecurity, mistrust, and fear of abandonment in their attachment to the sacred,"[28] which is not in line with an accurate understanding of one's place in relation to God. Likewise, those with spiritual instability frequently have negative feelings about themselves,[29] which does not

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[24] Tangney, 74.

[25] Tangney, 73.

[26] Tangney, 72.

[27] Sandage and Jankowski, 263.

[28] Sandage and Jankowski, 368.

[29] Sandage and Jankowski, 368.

demonstrate an accurate assessment of self. Real humility is grounded in spiritual well-being. In Philippians 2:1-2, Paul bases his call to humility on the Philippians' spiritual well-being, which is the result of being united with Christ.

A person with spiritual well-being, the courage to question his or her own beliefs, a healthy sense of humility, and a Christ-centered mindset will also likely be an individual who demonstrates Differentiation of Self (DoS) rather than enmeshment in his or her relationships. Paul's instructions to "in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others"[30] could easily lead a person who is spiritually unstable and lacking in real humility to live with a continual sense of inferiority, a compulsive need to please others and an unhealthy lack of awareness of his or her own needs. Instead, Paul's call assumes spiritual well-being, centered on Christ. It implies real humility, neither arrogant superiority nor cringing self-deprecation. With this foundation and this balance, Paul's call to humility in considering others above one's self and looking out for the interests of others, far from being a path of weakness and inferiority, is a prescription for spiritual maturity, strength, and unity in the Body of Christ. It is also essential in the development of intercultural competence.

Joshua N. Hook and C. Edward Watkins Jr. raise the question of why many psychologists

> despite such increasingly diversifying opportunities for cultural contact, despite being trained and steeped in the values of multiculturalism, and despite being designated as leaders in promoting multiculturalism and positive cultural engagement—continue to seemingly struggle to positively engage with culturally different individuals and groups.[31]

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[30] Philippians 2:4.

[31] Hook and Watkins, 661.

The answer, they suggest, lies in what they consider to be the "the very foundational cornerstone of any and all cultural contact: cultural humility."[32] Many of the characteristics of cultural humility are the same as the true humility discussed above.

> Intrapersonally, cultural humility involves a willingness and openness to reflect on one's own self as an embedded cultural being, having an awareness of personal limitations in understanding the cultural background and viewpoints of others; interpersonally, cultural humility involves an other-oriented stance (or openness to the other) with regard to aspects of an individual's or group's cultural background and identity. Some of the core features of a culturally humble stance have been empirically identified as being respectful and considerate of the other; being genuinely interested in, open to exploring, and wanting to understand the other's perspective; not making foreordained assumptions; not acting superior; and not assuming that much is already culturally known about the other.[33]

Some interculturalists point out the limitations of the Golden Rule, to "do to others what you would have them do to you,"[34] because the way a person wants others to treat one's self is culturally conditioned and could be entirely different from how a cultural other would want to be treated.[35] Paul's call to "in humility value others above yourselves" and to look out for "the interests of others"[36] provides the additional direction needed for living out the Golden Rule in the context of cultural diversity. Practically demonstrating love for one another in a multicultural context begins with humbly valuing others above self, rather than maintaining the attitude of cultural superiority "which breeds distrust and defensiveness."[37] From this humble stance, one

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[32] Hook and Watkins, 661.

[33] Hook and Watkins, 661-662, quoted in Hook et al., "Cultural Humility: Measuring Openness to Culturally Diverse Clients," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 60, no. 3: 353-366.

[34] Matthew 7:12.

[35] Deardorff lecture.

[36] Philippians 2:3-4.

[37] Guskin, 162.

can look out for the interests of the other, which will require taking the time and making considerable effort first to understand the interests of the other.

In the project with the Musalaha leaders, humility played a notable role. As mentioned earlier, defensiveness can be an issue for many when faced with their IDI results. Asking questions about the validity of an assessment such as the IDI does not necessarily indicate defensiveness. Asking questions about the suitableness of tools brought in from outside the culture is necessary. In an interview in 2014, Salim Munayer, the director of Musalaha, discussed the inappropriateness of bringing Western leadership training materials into a Middle Eastern context.[38] Concepts of leadership are culturally conditioned. Assuming that materials from the West can be used to train Middle Eastern leaders without making any adjustments beyond translation is an ethnocentric assumption that indicates Minimization, a tendency to focus on commonalities without attending to differences. When working with the IDI, however, it is essential to recognize that its purpose is to reveal the kind of mindset that leads people to behave in these types of cross-culturally inappropriate ways. And as noted earlier, while no assessment is perfect, the IDI "has been rigorously tested and found to possess high cross-cultural validity and reliability" and is a "cross-culturally generalizable (i.e., international and domestic diverse culture groups), valid and reliable measure of intercultural competence that does not contain cultural bias."[39]

Some Musalaha participants in the project objected to the IDI results, but when they did, they did not indicate in any way that they were doing so because they had

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[38] Salim Munayer, personal interview, 2014.

[39] Hammer, "Using the IDI," 13.

explored research related to its validity and found the IDI proven unreliable based on any concrete evidence. In the cases where participants raised objections, these objections were based on the expectations of Musalaha leaders that they would have high scores in intercultural competence. When their IDI scores did not meet those expectations, the results were at times questioned and even rejected as inaccurate. The Musalaha group involved in the research was too small to reach any definite conclusions, but among the participants who attended both group training sessions and met individually with the researcher for one and a half to two hours total, those individuals who accepted the accuracy of their IDI results and took part in extensive additional activities to develop saw substantial increases in their post-IDI scores (15 to 27 points). Individuals who at times seemed to accept their IDI results and made efforts to develop, but occasionally suggested they did not believe the IDI was an accurate indicator of their intercultural competency, saw five-point improvements in their post-IDI scores. The individual who most strongly expressed doubts about the accuracy of the IDI results had a post-IDI score that was lower than the pre-IDI score.[40] Also noted among individuals who saw limited or no increase in post-IDI scores was a tendency to quickly assume confident understanding of cultural others and limited evidence of deep self-reflection.

Hook and Watkins speak of the need for learning about cultural others. For this learning to take place, one must first

> recognize the need for that learning. Cultural humility, perhaps the missing link in much contemporary thought about multicultural interactions, may well be the foundation for *recognizing* that learning need and then acting accordingly; where

[40] Significant professional or personal transitional experiences can affect IDI scores and may have played a part in this individual's post-IDI results.

> such perspective is lacking, learning about and openness to the cultural other may in turn become increasingly unlikely.[41]

It seems likely that if a person assumes a high level of intercultural competence even if IDI results indicate otherwise, that person will make minimal effort to develop and will see either limited or no increase in post-IDI scores, even after a period of training and involvement in activities related to intercultural development. If, on the other hand, one humbly recognizes the need for growth and persistently takes steps to pursue it, growth seems probable.

Additionally, while some reasonable objections may be raised against the suitability of a strong focus on individual competency skills and development in collectivist, non-Western cultures, a focus instead on cultural humility with its relational emphasis may be a more suitable approach in a context such as the one Musalaha works in, which has a mix of individuals from both Western and Eastern backgrounds.

Intercultural Competence in an Intractable Conflict

Developing intercultural competence is difficult under any circumstances, but it is particularly challenging in the context of an intractable conflict where trauma can lead to deep emotional resistance. Resistance due to fear and anger creates barriers to developing intercultural competence for both dominant and non-dominant groups. Even in situations where people are seeking reconciliation, the imbalance of power between cultural groups may lead the more dominant group to expect others to adjust to the dominant culture rather than seeking to develop intercultural competence themselves. Non-dominant groups may acquiesce in an attempt to fit in or avoid trouble, or they may avoid interactions altogether.

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[41] Hook and Watkins, 662.

One means of circumventing the inevitable resistance to developing intercultural competence in a deeply conflicted society is to work through interactions with cultural groups who are not part of the conflict. Just as Kupermintz and Salomon's study[42] demonstrated, knowledge and skills learned in a context outside of the conflict and so avoiding the emotional resistance that can be a barrier to learning can be transferred and applied to the conflict situation. Rather than attempting to bring Israelis and Palestinians together immediately, it may be wise instead to begin training in intercultural competence within their separate communities, with a focus on interacting with cultures with whom they are not experiencing intense conflict. Christian Palestinians can work through the process of developing intercultural competence by interacting with and learning about Muslim Palestinians. Israeli Messianic Jews can do the same by interacting with and learning about one of the many different Jewish communities who live in Israel or, depending on where they live, with foreigners residing in Israel. Cultural simulations such as Ecotonos can also create a safe environment for Israelis and Palestinians to experience and learn about cultural differences in their separate communities before coming together for reconciliation activities.

Not only can such activities remove barriers to developing intercultural competence, which is essential to full reconciliation, they can also give participants time to develop in an environment where they are less likely to inflict emotional damage on others due to their ignorance and cultural insensitivity or to experience the same themselves. Harsh interactions have at times led some to drop out of Musalaha programs entirely. The reconciliation process is difficult, and everyone who goes through it will

[42] Kupermintz and Salomon, 296-298.

experience periods of pain and distress. But individuals who are in Denial and Polarization are more likely to both cause severe distress for others as well as to find it difficult to recover from perceived slights and offenses they might receive themselves. Persons who are at least in Minimization and also have a growing sense of cultural self-awareness and a keen understanding of the need to continue to develop intercultural competence will be more able to manage the challenges of reconciliation activities. It may be worth postponing direct interactions between Israelis and Palestinians in reconciliation activities until they have developed beyond Denial and Polarization.

Another barrier to developing intercultural competence in a conflict situation is the tendency of conflicting parties to engage in competitive victimhood. In cases of prolonged and violent conflict opposing groups "compete over various tangible and psychological resources."[43] Conflicting groups' determination to maintain their victim identity

> may stem from their construal of "victim" vs. "perpetrator" as *mutually exclusive roles*; only one group in the conflict can be "cast" into the victim role while the other must inevitably be the perpetrator. This zero-sum mindset may drive groups to engage in competitive victimhood.[44]

Being a member of the victimized group allows one to maintain a sense of moral superiority.[45] Groups clinging to the identity of victim express moral defensiveness.[46] The cost of maintaining victim status is its associations with "weakness and passivity."[47] On the other hand, the identity of perpetrator causes a loss in one's moral image, but

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[43] Shnabel et al., 867.

[44] Shnabel et al., 868.

[45] Shnabel et al., 871.

[46] Shnabel et al., 871.

[47] Shnabel et al., 871.

brings a sense of agency and power.[48] In a study conducted among Israeli Jews and Palestinians, Nurit Shnabel, Samer Halabi, and Masi Noor explored the value of a mutual victim and mutual perpetrator identity as a means to help groups in intractable conflicts to move forward from the polarizing mentality of competitive victimhood. In introducing a mutual victim and mutual perpetrator identity among Israeli Jews and Palestinians, Shnabel and colleagues found a reduction of moral defensiveness and an increased sense of agency, both of which led to a decrease in competitive victimhood and an increase in forgiveness.[49]

The success of Shnabel and colleagues' experiment aligns with the concepts of the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC), which notes that moving from Defensive Polarization to Minimization requires one to shift from seeing only the negative in the other and the positive in self to lessening criticism of others and being willing to criticize self, as well as being able to see commonalities with and recognizing the humanity of the other. It also fits with Musalaha's goals for the later stages of reconciliation where participants can see positive and negative both in themselves and in the other.[50] Developing intercultural competence among members of conflicting groups in an intractable conflict is complicated, but as Musalaha leaders develop into Acceptance and Adaptation they will be more able to find creative and effective means to guide Musalaha participants beyond competitive victimhood to reconciliation.

While a higher level of intercultural competence can aid in many aspects of reconciliation work, it cannot by itself guarantee reconciliation. One of the challenges of

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[48] Shnabel et al., 871.

[49] Shnabel et al., 867.

[50] Musalaha Staff, 24.

bringing Israelis and Palestinians together that Musalaha leaders commented on several times is the need to provide extra training and support to Palestinian women to prepare them for interactions with Israeli Jewish women. Musalaha leaders noted the challenge of bringing West Bank Palestinian women to the point where they feel safe to speak honestly and have the confidence and skills necessary to interact on equal terms with Israeli Jewish women in dialogue. Part of the challenge is cultural. In general, Palestinian women are taught not to speak publicly on subjects such as religion or politics and so have little experience discussing these or other controversial topics in public situations. Part of the problem is also the conflict situation, which has taught Palestinians that they are putting themselves and their families at risk if they speak their minds in public. In a conflict situation

> it is important to acknowledge that intercultural competence alone may not always be sufficient to enable individuals to engage in successful intercultural dialogue. This is because there are often systematic patterns of disadvantage and discrimination, and differentials in the allocation of resources within populations, which effectively disempower many groups of individuals with particular cultural affiliations from participating on an equal footing in such dialogue (irrespective of their levels of intercultural competence). These inequalities and disadvantages are often further compounded by disparities of power and by institutional constraints and biases which lead to the terms of the dialogue being dictated by those occupying positions of privilege.[51]

In such cases "special measures" must be taken "to ensure that members of disadvantaged or marginalized groups enjoy genuine equality of opportunity."[52]

To make it possible for all

> to participate fully in intercultural dialogue, the development of intercultural competence through education needs to be implemented in conjunction with and

[51] Council of Europe, "Living Together—Combining Diversity and Freedom in 21st Century Europe," report, meeting of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2011), 24.

[52] Council of Europe, 6.

> alongside measures to tackle inequalities and structural disadvantages, including giving special assistance to those with socio-economic disadvantages, taking action to counter discrimination, and remedying educational disadvantages.[53]

Musalaha already takes extra measures to prepare Palestinian women for interactions with Israeli Jews in recognition of the power imbalance and cultural differences. These extra measures do seem to make some difference, but the leaders recognize that they have not been able to overcome this problem and more needs to be done in this area. While a high level of intercultural competence will not in and of itself solve the problem, it is more likely that leaders who are operating in Acceptance or Adaptation rather than Minimization will be able to recognize situations where power and cultural differences are barriers in the reconciliation process, and to determine appropriate steps to improve the situation. Having leaders with a high level of intercultural competence does not ensure that this problem will be easily overcome, but if Musalaha leaders continue to operate from a dominantly Minimization orientation, it likely guarantees they will not make progress in this complex, sensitive, and yet vital aspect of reconciliation work.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Research Project

This project that explored issues of intercultural competence with Musalaha leaders was limited in both time and number of participants and in the availability of some of the participants to attend all of the activities. Originally the reseacher had hoped to include a third group session, which would have provided time to explore the theological foundation of the project (discussed in chapter two) as well as some of the religious and spiritual matters that either help or hinder the development of intercultural

[53] Council of Europe, 25.

competence (discussed in chapter three). Because a third group session was not possible with Musalaha's schedule, these topics were not included in the training beyond a few passing comments in the other group sessions.

The project was also limited to one quantitative assessment, the IDI. However, the researcher was able to spend between five and ten hours with each of the participants in both group and individual contexts, which allowed for extended periods of observation in the group as well as one-on-one interactions and provided additional qualitative confirmation of the IDI results.

Language issues created some difficulties in the project. A few of the leaders struggled to follow the information in the first group training because a translator was not available. The leaders helped one another during the training, but it would have been better to have a competent translator when communicating about concepts that are relatively complicated and require some difficult vocabulary. The researcher was able to meet individually with two of these leaders later and go over the main ideas of the Intercultural Development Continuum using both English and Arabic to ensure a basic grasp of the concepts. During the second group training, Arabic translations of the information necessary to be involved in Ecotonos, the cultural simulation, were provided and made it possible for Arabic speakers to participate more fully.

Language may also be a barrier for Musalaha in using the IDI outside of their leadership group. Musalaha participants speak Hebrew, Arabic, English, and Russian. The IDI is available in all of these languages except Hebrew at this time. Many but not all Hebrew speakers are also fluent in English. Unless there is a Hebrew translation in the future, the IDI will be of limited use among Israeli Jews. Additionally, even though

people can take the IDI in multiple languages, the personal profile explaining their results and the Intercultural Development Plan (IDP) are only available in English.

While the researcher has had several years of experience living and working in cross-cultural contexts, she has limited experience working in domestic diversity settings. While intercultural competence is as crucial in cross-cultural interactions in domestic diversity settings as it is when crossing borders, it was difficult to convince some of the Musalaha leaders that this was the case. Examples and illustrations provided by the researcher in training materials and in sharing personal experiences focused on cross-border situations, and as such may have made it easier for some leaders to dismiss intercultural competence development as necessary only in cross-border cases and not in their domestic diversity setting in Israel-Palestine.

The Musalaha director expressed concern that because the IDI was developed in a Western and Individualistic context, this was a weakness in the research project and that it was not suitable for their Middle Eastern and more Collectivist setting. Considerable research regarding cross-cultural validity and use in a wide variety of cultures around the world, both Western and Eastern, would challenge this assumption.[54] Western approaches do tend to focus more on individual skills and knowledge, while Eastern approaches focus more on the relational. While Musalaha would need to make some adjustments in how they communicate about and use the IDI and concepts such as the IDC in their setting, there does not seem to be any sound reason to assume that they are unsuitable for use in a context like Israel-Palestine. Using an instrument like the IDI, which has been the subject of extensive testing, was a strength of the project. Using additional

[54] Hammer, "Using the IDI," 15.

assessments to test the findings still further would have enhanced the project, but given financial and time restraints, the IDI was the most reasonable choice for a single quantitative instrument.

Additionally, it is important to consider that four of the eight leaders involved in the project were born and raised in America (though two of them now hold Israeli citizenship), while the other four were raised in an Eastern context.[55] Participants in Musalaha groups are also a mix of both Western and Eastern backgrounds. Musalaha's current curriculum leans toward a more Western approach to communication. It seems reasonable to expect that future curriculum and activities directed at developing intercultural competence among Musalaha leaders and group participants will contain a mix of both Western and Eastern approaches. Perhaps Musalaha would benefit from experimenting with a method such as the PEER model for developing intercultural competence,[56] which has a relational focus and which could be used in conjunction with the IDI and the IDC.

Concluding Thoughts

As an organization, Musalaha is growing. Opportunities are opening before them not just in Christian and Messianic Jewish communities but in Muslim and Jewish communities as well. In order to make the most of these opportunities, it is essential for Musalaha to have a well-trained staff.

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[55] Neither Western nor Eastern background demonstrated any noticeable impact on IDI scores or individual growth. The person with the highest IDI score was from an Eastern background as was the person with the lowest IDI score. The person who showed the greatest individual growth during the training period was from a Western background as was the person who showed the least improvement. Everyone in between, in both IDI scores and individual growth, was a mix of both Western and Eastern backgrounds at every level.

[56] Holmes and O'Neill, 708.

Training leadership has always been a challenge for Musalaha. Individuals with the knowledge, skills, spiritual maturity, and depth of character necessary to guide others through the reconciliation process are not easy to find.[57] Musalaha leaders live in many different areas of the country and there are obstacles to bringing them together for training. West Bank Palestinians need special permission to enter Israel, and it is illegal for Israelis to enter Palestinian Territories. Locations where everyone can meet are few. Musalaha also faces financial limitations in supporting their staff, as Israeli law restricts the percentage of money NGOs can contribute to salaries. Leaders sometimes face pressure from their communities, families, and churches, many of whom see reconciliation work as a betrayal. Foreigners who serve with Musalaha face visa difficulties that limit the amount of time they can stay in the country.

Given all of these challenges, maybe it should not be surprising that four of the original ten leaders who were asked to participate in the training (which took place over four months) are no longer with Musalaha. Of the five remaining leaders who took part in the research, only four were able to attend both group training times and only three of those met for two individual times with the researcher. During the first group training session, work demands pulled several of the participants out at different times throughout the morning, which meant they missed portions of the information and interaction.

Trying to train leaders or even trying to plan leadership training under these circumstances is frustrating. Some of the resistance to Musalaha considering using the IDI in any future capacity (or any other substantial and focused means of developing intercultural competence) likely comes merely from feeling like it is just one more thing

[57] Salim Munayer, interview by author, June 22, 2017.

they have to do when they already have too much to do and too few capable leaders to do it.

The question Musalaha must face, however, is what it will cost them if they do not find a way to help their leaders develop a higher level of intercultural competence. Developing intercultural competence requires a focused, determined effort. It will not happen accidentally or as the result of haphazard or occasional efforts or training. Apart from a resolute determination to support staff development into Acceptance and Adaptation, it is highly doubtful that the Musalaha leadership will move beyond Minimization and, as followers rarely surpass their leaders, it is not likely the participants in Musalaha programs will either.

As noted before, Musalaha programs do seem to have had some success in moving people from Denial to Polarization and from Polarization to Minimization. In a deeply polarized society engaged in an intractable conflict, this is a considerable achievement. Individuals in Minimization recognize their common humanity with cultural others and can engage in friendly relations. Minimization is a "transitional mindset between the more monocultural orientations of Denial and Polarization and the more intercultural/global worldviews of Acceptance and Adaptation."[58] Leaders in the later stages of Minimization do at times demonstrate abilities to recognize and appreciate cultural commonalities and differences (Acceptance) and to shift cultural perspectives and adapt behavior appropriately (Adaptation), but they are still operating dominantly from a Minimization orientation that focuses on commonalities to such an extent that it prevents them from deeply understanding cultural differences.

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[58] Hammer, *Resource Guide,* 34.

The limitations of a leader in Minimization was recognized by the director of Musalaha when he commented on one of his Palestinian leaders who simply could not see the profound differences between her Palestinian theology and that of a Messianic Jew. Her focus was so completely set on their common faith and humanity that she was not able to delve into a full understanding of the other's perspective, which is essential in understanding the other. Interactions she will have with Messianic Jews that touch on these theological differences will likely leave the Jewish people feeling that she has not heard or understood them. A sense of a lack of understanding between those who are culturally different creates a lack of trust.[59]

One of the misconceptions common in Christian settings is the assumption that having a close relationship with Jesus or being filled with the Holy Spirit is all that is necessary to bridge cultural differences. It is similar to the assumption that if one is generally "good with people,"[60] he or she will easily be able to build relationships and interact with people from different cultures. In both cases, however, there is an ethnocentric assumption that interacting in a way that seems natural or just being one's self or even being filled with the Holy Spirit will enable one to communicate effectively with cultural others without the need to make the effort to learn about or deeply understand the other. In reality, our ways of interacting that feel entirely good and natural to us are culturally conditioned, and may seem anything but natural, normal or right to cultural others. We cannot assume that we will be understood by the cultural other as we intend. We also cannot assume that we will easily understand the values, beliefs, and

[59] Hofstede, 88.

[60] Storti, 2.

assumptions of cultural others as automatically as we do with those with whom we share the same cultural background.

The process of developing intercultural competence is often difficult, uncomfortable, and even painful. Because it involves learning not only about others but also deep self-reflection, it is psychologically and emotionally demanding. Leaders in Minimization have taken some steps in this direction, but they are primarily focused on commonalities as a means of avoiding the threat of cultural differences and the pain of questioning one's own perspective. Moving from Minimization to Acceptance and Adaptation requires a paradigm shift that enables a person to decenter from his or her own perspective and shift to seeing other cultural perspectives. It does not mean that one must agree with those views, but it does mean that one will deeply understand them.

Particularly in a conflict situation, making an effort to shift one's perspective to see the world as the cultural other perceives it requires a sacrificial effort. From a theological standpoint, one can say that it requires the "mindset" of Christ, a mind that humbly values others above self and demonstrates a sincere concern for their interests; a mind which, in love, pours itself out for the sake of and in service to the other.

In the final stage of reconciliation, as Musalaha defines it,

> participants deepen their relationships and take greater risks for reconciliation. Securely grounded in their identity in Jesus, the participants have developed the capacity to listen to the other side's grievances without feeling fundamentally threatened. They enjoy a confidence in the reciprocity of their relationship with the other, knowing that their grievances will also receive a respectful hearing. The two may still robustly disagree; in fact, it is likely that they will. But the participants enjoy a new freedom to truly hear and accept others and their differences for what they are.[61]

Furthermore,

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[61] Munayer and Loden, 230.

> this freedom is accompanied by a deeper appreciation of one's moral responsibility for the perpetuation of the conflict, as well as for the failings of one's own group. Far from self-hatred, the participant has developed a capacity for healthy self-criticism made possible because of the restoration of trust within relationship. …When both sides are secure enough to be self-critical, relational progress can be made. … The participants forego instinctive self-justification and acquire a willingness to seek after the truth, even if it does not portray their communities in the best possible light.[62]

Minimization is an improvement over defensive Polarization with its "us and them" mentality, attitudes of superiority, and words of denigration directed at the other. Minimization, with its ability to see the humanity of the other and to interact with the other in friendly relations, however, still falls short of true reconciliation. True reconciliation requires that each party clearly sees, genuinely hears, and deeply understands the other and yet, despite differences and even disagreements, embraces the other in the unity and love of Christ. If Musalaha is to reach their ultimate reconciliation goals, they must find ways to support the development of their leaders into Acceptance and Adaptation.

[62] Munayer and Loden, 231.

CHAPTER SEVEN: REFLECTIONS

Personal Experience in Developing Intercultural Competence

The idea of doing a project focused on intercultural competence began when I recognized my own need to grow in this area. Despite having lived and worked for many years in Muslim communities in Israel-Palestine and Jordan, I realized I was still struggling at times to find my way through complicated cultural situations. I was not sure how to move forward and began searching for information on how to continue to develop.

I can understand the disappointment and frustration my project participants experienced upon receiving their pre-IDI results. My initial IDI results in January 2017 placed me at the beginning of Acceptance. I too found myself working through disappointment as I had expected that given my cross-cultural experience, my score would be higher. One of the facilitators at the IDI Administrator training I attended a few days later shared her experience of initially scoring in Minimization, despite considerable cross-cultural experience. She spoke of her disappointment and surprise. Rather than rationalizing her results in some way that would allow her to dismiss them, she determined to take the results seriously and dedicated herself to taking steps to develop. When she retook the IDI three months later, she was in High Adaptation. Looking back, she realized how much she had been missing in cross-cultural interactions when she was operating from a Minimization orientation, and how much she had developed in those few months of focused and intentional effort. Her story inspired me.

I realized that if I was going to be able to be any help to the Musalaha leaders when I would begin working with them a few months later I would need to develop just as quickly, and given my circumstances, there was no excuse for me not to do so. I knew I would be reading hundreds of pages of research and writing on intercultural competence by some of the top people in the field for my literature review. I also knew I would be returning to Israel-Palestine in a few weeks, where I would continue to live in a dominantly Muslim community and where my closest friendships were with people who were born and raised in a culture drastically different from mine. I made the most of these circumstances. Upon my return I had many conversations with friends and neighbors asking questions and listening differently than I had before. I wrote frequently in an intercultural journal reflecting on what I was reading, conversations I was having, things I was noticing around me, and changes I was making in my behavior. It was not an easy or comfortable process. It caused me to reflect deeply on and reevaluate my years of cross-cultural work. At times I wondered if I was getting anywhere.

When I retook the IDI three months later, my score was in High Adaptation. By then I had learned that intercultural competence is not something we ever arrive at, but is instead a lifelong process. I continue to reevaluate and reflect on my previous work and to realize, more than ever, how much more there is to learn.

Struggles Foreign and Domestic

Most of this project took place between February and December 2017. During this time there were numerous shootings, stabbings, night raids, home demolitions, and other acts of violence related to the conflict in Israel-Palestine, including several in the neighborhood where I lived and in the streets where I walked.

During this time Europe has struggled with issues of nationalism, refugees, and terrorist incidents. Many international events have indicated a deficient understanding of cultural differences among world leaders. In the United States the political climate has become extremely polarized, with opposing sides frequently unable to communicate beyond name-calling and insults. At times this has led to violence. In all of this, American Christians have often demonstrated the same polarized mentality as the surrounding culture.

With my constant focus on questions of intercultural competence, I have followed the news this past year with interest. While my studies have given me greater insight into the dynamics that lead to these types of conflicts, they have also shown me how difficult it is to develop intercultural competence and the resistance many demonstrate when challenged to do so. Given the extraordinary cost on personal, local, and international levels when individuals and groups persist in operating from dominantly ethnocentric mindsets, the project has made me realize how urgently Christian leaders need to develop intercultural competence if they are going to be able to lead the church effectively and speak prophetically in the culturally complex world we live in today, regardless of whether they are working domestically or crossing national borders.

The Strength of Humility

In an environment as conflicted and violent as Israel-Palestine, where power is grasped for by both sides and held at all costs and where protecting the interests of one's own seems crucial for survival, the humility of Christ, who refused to use his legitimate power for his own advantage and who sacrificially sought the well-being of others, seems dangerous and naïve. I have come to see, however, that a person with true humility will

have the spiritual and emotional strength to manage the stress and anxiety that one inevitably faces in intense interactions with cultural others with integrity and courage.

A truly humble person will be a self-differentiated person, one who is able to step out of the emotional winds of rage and fear that drive his or her community. He or she will be able to comprehend circumstances from many different perspectives and make wise decisions with a concern for the well-being of all involved. A humble person will be able to see and acknowledge strengths and weaknesses both in one's self and one's community as well as strengths and weaknesses in cultural others. Such a person will have the spiritual authority to be a bridge-builder across cultures and a peacemaker in conflict. As Christ demonstrated on the cross, humility is strength.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research on intercultural competence development that includes larger numbers of Musalaha leaders and group participants over a longer period could prove useful in testing the findings of this project. Musalaha women's groups meet over a two-year period during which they work through Musalaha's reconciliation curriculum. Because there are so many parallels between the different levels of intercultural competence and the stages of reconciliation, administering the IDI to participants both before and after the two-year cycle and possibly at the one-year mark as well could provide Musalaha with valuable information while avoiding the problem of social desirability bias they are likely to face when using their standard questionnaires. The data gathered in such a project could provide indispensable information regarding the effectiveness of their current programs and potential areas for improvement.

A project comparing two Musalaha groups—one using the IDI and introducing IDC concepts and intercultural competence training, and one that does not—could be a useful means of testing the effectiveness and appropriateness of these tools and materials in the Musalaha context.

Explorations into how to best understand and communicate about intercultural competence, specifically in an Israeli-Palestinian context, could lead to valuable insights that could increase the effectiveness of intercultural competence training in Israel-Palestine and contribute to intercultural competence research throughout the world.

A broader use of the IDI in the general Israeli-Palestinian population to explore the effects of living in an intractable conflict on the development of intercultural competence could provide baseline information that could further aid Musalaha's outreach into resistant communities.

Finally, a project using both group and individual mentoring to help Musalaha leaders and group participants move from Minimization to Acceptance and Adaptation would be especially helpful to Musalaha's leadership development and future curriculum creation.

What Now?

While this project began from my own personal interest to become more capable in my cross-cultural interactions, it has ended with my desire to help others do the same. Throughout this project I have seen in both foreign and domestic contexts a pressing need for Christian leaders to develop the ability to deeply shift cultural perspectives and adjust behavior appropriately in cross-cultural circumstances, while at the same time seeing limited resources for helping them to do so. With the completion of this project and this

paper my student visa will end and I will return to the United States for a period of home service and a time of exploring opportunities for using what I have learned to help equip Christian leaders to serve successfully in culturally complex contexts, whether foreign or domestic.

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