



# **Building Peace After War:**

**Trainer Skills for a Balanced  
Masculinity, Biography Work  
and Conflict Transformation**

**Introductory Course  
Training of Trainers (ToT) Manual**

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## Acknowledgment

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The Training of Trainers manual is the result of many years of work with Lebanese ex-combatants and their openness to engage in a thorough process of inner transformation, including a critical reflection of their perceptions of masculinity. The manual is also the result of a series of workshops and focus group sessions with ex-combatants, youth, and educators conducted over the past years. Fighters for Peace would like to take the opportunity to thank all these participants for their trust, openness and active involvement.

Fighters for Peace would also like to acknowledge the courage of a young, professional and dedicated clinical psychologist, Fahd Hassan, who was able to win the trust and the hearts of FFP's ex-combatants and shape their view of a balanced masculinity, which became the central theme of this manual. Also, FFP would like to thank the contributor Christina Foerch Saab, who pioneered Biography Work in Lebanon with FFP's ex-combatants starting in 2015, as a method to facilitate a process of critical self-reflection, self-awareness and strengthening of inner resources and resilience, spanning over a decade. The NGO would also like to acknowledge the relentless efforts of Assaad Chaftari, himself is an ex-combatant, role model and trainer in peace building and insider mediation. Last, but not least, the manual would not have been possible without the copy editing of the dedicated peace building professional, academic and mediator Sonia Nakad.

The translation from English into Arabic was done by Souha Takaji, and the graphic design by Dreambirds' Hani Ramadan.

Fighters for Peace

Beirut, December 2025



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## About Fighters for Peace

Fighters for Peace (FFP) is a Lebanese non-partisan, non-religious, and non-profit organization founded in 2014 by a small group of ex-combatants from the Lebanese Civil War, some of whom were former enemies who chose to unite for dialogue, reconciliation, accountability, prevention of political violence, and sustainable peace. FFP serves both as a self-help network supporting individuals leaving violent or extremist groups in their transformation and reintegration, and as a public advocacy platform engaging especially youth to learn from the memory of the civil war to build a more peaceful and stable Lebanon. Its uniqueness lies in being led by ex-combatants who serve as volunteers, trainers, facilitators, and public speakers, sharing their testimonies of non-violence and lessons learned from the war. Today, FFP includes 150 members, men and women, ex-fighters, activists, researchers, and artists from across Lebanon and abroad. Since 2014, it has implemented around 770 activities in Lebanon and internationally, covering peacebuilding, reconciliation, cultural productions, prevention of violent extremism, reintegration of ex-fighters, restorative justice, and youth peace education, reaching over 67,000 participants. In 2024, FFP received the Fondation Ghazal & Fondation de France Peace Award in recognition of its pioneering work in peacebuilding and reconciliation.

## About the Project

With the recent war between Israel and Hezbollah, this project focuses on the transformative role of youth, the importance of ex-combatants as positive role models, and non-violent perceptions of masculinity as key mechanisms for peacebuilding. Centered on protection, prevention, and social cohesion, the initiative supports the Lebanese population, particularly youth and young adults, but also older generations such as ex-combatants who suffered from multiple trauma and displacement, to cope with trauma and loss due to the recent war through psycho-social support. By promoting trauma-informed peacebuilding, the project seeks to counter-influence the war and its societal impacts by bridging generational, social, and sectarian divides, reducing risks of marginalization, sectarianism, and violence. Ex-combatants, who serve as advocates for a non-violent masculinity, play a pivotal role in guiding young generations, especially those born after the civil war, toward peaceful conflict transformation. The project “Building Peace After War: Youth, Gender and Social Cohesion in Lebanon” encourages adults and youth to embrace non-violent perceptions of masculinity and actively engage in “memory work,” preserving the lessons of past wars to prevent the recurrence of violence. Through therapy sessions, workshops, intergenerational dialogues, and public events, the initiative empowers adult and young persons as peacebuilders who can foster a cohesive future for Lebanon.



## Authors:

**Fahd Hassan** is a licensed clinical psychologist, research consultant, and human rights advocate with over ten years of experience conducting research and developing culturally sensitive interventions with youth, refugees, migrant workers, older adults, women survivors of abuse, men who engage in domestic violence, and ex-fighters. He is clinically and academically dedicated to peacebuilding, promoting inner peace through emotional regulation and self-compassion, family peace through addressing domestic violence, and societal peace through confronting systemic violence. At KAFA, Fahd conducted Lebanon's first study on masculinity ideals and the need for mandatory rehabilitation for men who engage in domestic violence, adapted the rehabilitation program "CHOICE: A Program for Men" to the Lebanese context, and developed its evaluation tools. Since March 2023, he has been providing psychotherapy to men through the CHOICE program and previously offered psychotherapy to women survivors of abuse at the Amel Association. Over the past two years, he has worked closely with ex-fighters at Fighters for Peace through focus groups and psychosocial support sessions, leading to the development of the balanced masculinity framework for peacebuilding that underpins this manual.

**Christina Foerch Saab** is a political scientist, journalist and film maker and made over 20 documentaries and recorded many testimonies about the Lebanese civil war. Being born in West Germany during the times of the Cold War, she became a peace advocate as a teenager and peacebuilding has been a constant guide throughout her life. She co-founded Fighters for Peace in 2014 and is responsible for programs and international relations. She has a certificate in Biography Work and Motivational Interviewing (MI) and introduced these coaching methods to Lebanon, where she applied them in the work with ex-combatants for many years. She contributed to training manuals in peace education as well as to various academic publications about the roles of ex-combatants and former extremists in preventing violent extremism and peace building, bridging practical work with academia. She is a member of the expert pool of the European-led Radicalization Awareness Network RAN and the follow-up organization EU Knowledge Hub on the Prevention of Violent Extremism.

**Assaad Emile Chaftari** served as a senior intelligence official in the Christian Lebanese Forces during the Lebanese Civil War (1990–1975). In 2000, he wrote a letter of apology to all his victims which was published in the national Lebanese press. He is co-founder and vice president of Fighters for Peace and member of Initiatives of Change. Engineer and Masters in Business administration by studies, he got a certificate in Insider Mediation from The Hague based Clingendael Institute and has conducted many trainings in Insider Mediation, Peace Building and Conflict Transformation.

**Sonia Nakad** is a political scientist specialized in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and arms control, with a strong commitment to education and training. Currently, she serves as a consultant, trainer, and instructor in different Lebanese universities, leveraging her extensive background in both practical and academic settings. Her initial experience stems from her fieldwork as a peacebuilder. She has been working as a trainer and consultant with various NGOs and INGOs in Lebanon and the MENA region. As an activist, she encounters different conflicts in which she serves as a mediator and provides training on peacebuilding and conflict resolution skills to empower stakeholders in resolving their disputes.

## Introduction

Lebanon has lived through numerous cycles of war, displacement, and political division that have shaped how people understand themselves, others, and the world around them. Today, building peace requires more than technical skills; it requires emotional awareness, balanced views of masculinity and femininity, healthy communication, an understanding of how systems and violence shape daily life, as well as peacebuilding strategies and skills. This manual was developed to support ex-fighters, teachers, youth workers, and community facilitators who are committed to guiding a new generation toward peace, social cohesion, and non-violent relationships. It brings together personal experience, psychological insight, and practical tools to help participants reflect on their identity, regulate emotions, communicate with empathy, understand systems, and build a culture of peace.

The manual integrates the lived experience of ex-combatants with evidence-based approaches from psychology, gender studies, biography work, and peacebuilding. It offers a path for transforming personal pain into collective wisdom and encourages youth to see ex-fighters as models of responsibility, accountability, and hope.

## Who Is This Manual For?

### This manual is designed for:

- Ex-fighters who wish to train teachers, youth leaders, and community facilitators in peacebuilding and gender sensitive approaches.
- Teachers and educators who want to use the manual directly with students and youth groups.
- Youth workers, social workers, and community organizers involved in dialogue, psychosocial support, or conflict prevention.
- NGO staff and volunteers who lead workshops on identity, emotional health, gender roles, and peacebuilding.

It can be used with youth, adults, and mixed groups, with content adaptable to different ages and backgrounds.

**Disclaimer:** This training manual reflects the views of the authors only and does not necessarily represent the views of the donor.

## **How Should This Manual Be Used?**

**This manual is designed as a practical, step-by-step guide that allows facilitators to:**

1. Lead structured sessions using clear instructions, activities, and reflection questions.
2. Share personal stories, especially when led by ex-fighters, to create authenticity and connection.
3. Adapt the content to the needs of the group, pace, and sensitivity of the participants.
4. Create safe spaces for dialogue, emotional expression, and reflection.
5. Encourage experiential learning through role plays, group discussions, grounding practices, and biography work.
6. Connect personal experiences to larger social and systemic realities in Lebanon.

Facilitators are encouraged to move at a comfortable pace, avoid pushing or pressuring participants to share beyond their comfort, and always prioritize emotional safety and respect.

## **Who Should Facilitate the Sessions?**

**The sessions in this manual are best delivered by:**

- Ex-fighters trained in facilitation, who can speak from lived experience and model transformation from violence to peace.
- Teachers and youth leaders trained through the ToT program.
- Facilitators with experience in community work, psychosocial support, or peace education.

**Ideal facilitators are individuals who can:**

- Hold a non-judgmental space
- Encourage participation without pressure
- Listen with empathy
- Manage emotional topics with sensitivity
- Support youth and adults in moments of distress
- Share personal stories responsibly and safely

## **Structure of the Manual:**

The manual is organized into three main sections, each containing units and sessions.

### **Each session includes:**

- Objectives
- Materials and preparation
- Activities with detailed instructions

## **Section 1: Balanced Masculinity and Femininity**

**Focus:** exploring gender expectations, redefining heroism, emotional regulation, healthy communication, and relationship with self.

- **Unit 1:** Stereotypical Masculinity and Femininity versus Balanced Masculinity and Femininity
- **Unit 2:** Emotional Regulation and Healthy Relationships

## **Section 2: Biography Work and Systemic Approach**

**Focus:** personal life stories, identity, community systems, and how individuals both influence and are influenced by their environment.

- **Unit 3:** Me, Myself and Man: How Have Different Perceptions of Masculinity Changed Over My Personal Lifetime?
- **Unit 4:** Looking at Systems

## **Section 3: Peacebuilding**

**Focus:** understanding conflict, communication, mediation, and how societies are rebuilt after war.

- **Unit 5:** Understanding Peacebuilding and Conflict
- **Unit 6:** Communication, Active Listening, Dialogue, Negotiation, and Mediation
- **Unit 7:** Building a Culture of Peace

Each section builds on the one before it, moving from personal reflection, to understanding systems, to engaging in active peacebuilding.

# **Section 1:**

## **Balanced Masculinity and Femininity**

**Prepared By: Fahd Hassan**

## Introduction

Lebanon's history, marked by war, displacement, and social fragmentation, has deeply shaped the way men and women understand themselves and each other. Over decades, cultural and political systems have reinforced rigid ideas of masculinity and femininity: men as protectors, providers, and authority figures, and women as caregivers, nurturers, and moral anchors of the family. While these roles once offered survival and a sense of belonging in times of instability, they now often restrict emotional expression, mutual understanding, and healthy relationships.

This section of the manual seeks to create a safe and reflective space for participants to explore what it truly means to be a man or a woman in today's Lebanon. It encourages both men and women to question inherited stereotypes and to recognize how these expectations can contribute to pressure, emotional pain, and social tension. Through experiential activities, storytelling, and dialogue, this section guides participants toward a more balanced understanding of humanity; one that integrates strength with empathy, assertiveness with care, and courage with emotional honesty. In this balance lies the foundation for peace: peace within oneself, peace between individuals, and peace across communities.

### The Sensitivity of the Topic in Lebanon

Addressing masculinity and femininity in Lebanon requires cultural and emotional sensitivity. These topics touch not only gender, but also religion, tradition, class, and collective trauma. Conversations around gender often awaken memories of past violence, fear of social judgment, and anxiety about moral or political agendas. For many men, discussions about masculinity can feel like an attack on their identity or authority. For many women, conversations about femininity can bring up feelings of exhaustion, silence, or invisibility. Facilitators should approach these discussions with compassion, neutrality, and respect for diversity. The goal is not to criticize culture or impose new models, but to create a space of reflection and growth; one that honors participants' experiences while inviting them to imagine healthier alternatives. Facilitators are encouraged to:

- Begin every session by affirming safety, confidentiality, and mutual respect.
- Recognize that defensive reactions often come from pain, not resistance.
- Use inclusive language that avoids moral or political polarization.
- Acknowledge Lebanon's complex history; how war, sectarianism, and discrimination have shaped gender expectations.
- Emphasize shared humanity by conveying that balance is not about men becoming "less masculine" or women becoming "less feminine," but about everyone integrating both strength and sensitivity.
- Remind participants that personal healing and social peace are inseparable; when individuals learn to communicate with empathy and regulate emotions, communities become safer and more resilient.

### This section includes two units:

**Unit 1:** Stereotypical Masculinity and Femininity versus Balanced Masculinity and Femininity

**Unit 2:** Emotional Regulation and Building Healthy Relationships

# Unit 1: Stereotypical Masculinity and Femininity versus Balanced Masculinity and Femininity

## Introduction

This unit invites participants to reflect on how society defines what it means to be a man or a woman, and how these definitions shape behavior, emotions, and relationships. In Lebanon, ideas about masculinity and femininity are influenced by family, religion, culture, and the history of war, often creating narrow roles for both men and women. Stereotypical expectations can pressure men to appear strong and unemotional, and pressure women to be gentle, selfless, and quiet. These roles limit everyone and can lead to emotional pain, misunderstanding, and imbalance.

This unit encourages participants to question these stereotypes, explore their sources, and consider the personal and social consequences of living within them. It introduces the idea of balanced masculinity and balanced femininity, which allow men and women to express a wider range of human qualities. The goal is to help participants see that balance supports emotional well-being, healthy relationships, and peaceful communities.

## This unit includes two sessions:

- **Session 1:** Understanding Masculinity and Femininity in Our Society
- **Session 2:** Redefining Heroism: From Violence to Peacebuilding

## Session 1: Understanding Masculinity and Femininity in Our Society

### Overall Objective: self-reflection

### Specific Objective:

To help participants explore stereotypical ideals of masculinity and femininity, understand how these ideals affect men and women, and discover ways in which a more balanced understanding can foster peace and well-being.

Duration: 120 minutes

### Materials and Preparations:

- Two Flipcharts
- Markers in different colors
- Sticky notes for reflections and inputs
- Pens and paper for participants' personal notes
- Copies of the flyer "From Violence to Peace: Rethinking Manhood in Lebanon"
- Projector or printed visuals from the extended online flyer
- Arrange chairs in a semi-circle or U-shape to create an open and equal space for participation

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Ice breaker plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To encourage participation and clarify expectations at the start of the session</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> This ice breaker invites participants to briefly share why they chose to join the session or what they hope to gain from it. It creates an open atmosphere, helps the facilitator understand participants' expectations, and sets the tone for honest and meaningful engagement throughout the workshop.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b> Invite each person to share one short sentence answering either: - "Why did I join today?" - "What do I hope to get from this session?"</p> <p><b>Facilitator's Notes:</b> Keep the answers brief and pressure-free. This activity helps set a collaborative tone, clarifies expectations, and builds trust before moving into deeper discussions.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Opening Discussion: What Does It Mean to Be a Man/Woman?</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>Identifying common expectations placed on men and women</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> This activity invites participants to reflect on the messages they have received through their lives about how men and women should behave and compare these ideas across the group. By sharing personal insights, participants begin to recognize how these expectations shape identity, emotion, and relationships.</p> <p><b>Guiding Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the stereotypical ideal of masculinity and femininity entail?</li> <li>• Who taught us what it means to be a man or a woman?</li> <li>• What happens when a man or woman doesn't fit those expectations?</li> </ul> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write participants' answers on flipcharts under "Man" and "Woman."</li> <li>• Expect words such as: strong, leader, provider, emotional, caregiver, sensitive, fragile.</li> <li>• Encourage reflection and ask: "What is the impact of these expectations on a person?"</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Gender Box Exercise</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>To recognize the social rules that limit men and women</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> Participants work in groups to map the hidden rules society places on men and women and the judgments that occur when someone steps outside these rules. This activity helps them see how limiting these boxes are and opens space for honest discussion about pressure, identity, and emotional expression.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divide participants into four mixed-gender groups of 5-4 people each. Two groups draw a box titled 'A Real Man Should...' and two groups draw a box titled 'A Real Woman Should...'</li> <li>• Instruct participants to write or draw, inside each box, what society expects. Examples: "A man should never cry," "A woman should always care for others."</li> <li>• Instruct participant to write or draw, outside of the box, what society says or does when someone steps out of that box. Examples: "If a man cries, he is called weak."</li> <li>• Ask the groups to present their boxes to everyone.</li> </ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Guiding Questions for Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What happens when we live inside these boxes?”</li> <li>• “How does this affect the way we treat ourselves and others?”</li> <li>• “How does this shape relationships between men and women?”</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Note:</b> Share a personal or collective story. For example, an ex-fighter might say: <i>“During the war, showing fear was seen as weakness. Later, I learned that real courage is being able to admit fear and choose peace instead of violence.”</i></p>
<p><b>The Price We Pay</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>To reflect on the personal costs of gender expectations</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity guides participants to reflect on the personal and emotional costs of trying to meet rigid gender expectations. By sharing their experiences, they gain awareness of how these pressures affect well-being and how both men and women lose parts of themselves in the process.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite participants to reflect silently for 2 minutes on the following question: “What price have you personally paid for trying to fit society’s expectations of being a man or a woman?”</li> <li>• Ask volunteers to share short reflections and highlight common patterns such as: emotional suppression, pressure to provide, fear of judgment, loss of freedom, or lack of self-expression.</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Notes:</b> <i>“When we’re trapped by these expectations, both men and women suffer. Men may hide pain or use aggression to protect their image, while women may feel silenced or undervalued. Peace begins when we give ourselves permission to be whole.”</i></p>
<p><b>The Balanced Human</b></p> <p>Duration: 30 minutes</p>	<p>To Understand the value of balanced masculinity and femininity</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity helps participants understand the concept of balance between masculinity and femininity and how embracing both sets of qualities strengthens emotional health, relationships, and community peace. Through personal stories and group reflection, participants explore how balance allows people to move beyond stereotypes and connect with their shared human essence.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity helps participants understand the concept of balance between masculinity and femininity and how embracing both sets of qualities strengthens emotional health, relationships, and community peace. Through personal stories and group reflection, participants explore how balance allows people to move beyond stereotypes and connect with their shared human essence.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute the flyer <i>“From Violence to Peace: Rethinking Manhood in Lebanon.”</i></li> <li>• Invite an ex-fighter to share a personal story about masculinity; how stereotypical ideals influenced their path to war, and how embracing balanced masculinity helped them become a peacebuilder.</li> <li>• Present insights from the extended online flyer, explaining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o What balanced masculinity and balanced femininity mean,</li> <li>o How behind every man and woman lies a shared human essence,</li> <li>o How balance supports emotional regulation, self-compassion, healthy communication, and positive relationships.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Guiding Questions for Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “How can each one of us start adopting a more balanced view of ourselves as men and women?”</li> <li>• “What changes might that bring to our relationships and our communities?”</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator’s Notes:</b> At the end of this activity, invite participants to share one sentence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One stereotype I want to let go of is...”</li> <li>• “One quality I want to embrace in myself as a balanced man/woman is...”</li> </ul>
Total duration: 120 minutes		

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## **Session 2: Redefining Heroism: From Violence to Peacebuilding**

### **Overall Objective: self-reflection**

#### **Specific Objective:**

- To help participants reflect on how the image of the hero and the experience of war have shaped society's understanding of masculinity, courage, and honor, and to dismantle the idea that heroism is defined by violence, domination, or carrying weapons.
- To inspire participants by sharing the story of an ex-fighter of the Lebanese civil war who now dedicates his life to peacebuilding, demonstrating that true strength lies in empathy, emotional regulation, dialogue, and unity.

Duration: 90 minutes

#### **Materials and Preparations:**

- Two Flipcharts
- Markers in different colors
- Sticky notes for reflections and inputs
- Pens and paper for participants' personal notes
- Power Point presentation showing images of war, destruction, and peace rebuilding in Lebanon
- Arrange chairs in a semi-circle or U-shape to create an open and equal space for participation
- Prepare a short, honest personal story from the ex-fighter about their transformation from violence to peace

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Ice breaker plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To encourage participation and clarify participants' expectations at the start of the session</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> This ice breaker invites participants to briefly share why they chose to join the session or what they hope to gain from it. It creates an open atmosphere, helps the facilitator understand participants' expectations, and sets the tone for honest and meaningful engagement throughout the workshop.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b> Invite each person to share one short sentence answering either: - "Why did I join today?" - "What do I hope to get from this session?"</p> <p><b>Facilitator's Notes:</b> Keep the answers brief and pressure-free. This activity helps set a collaborative tone, clarifies expectations, and builds trust before moving into deeper discussions.</p>
<p><b>Opening Discussion: Who Is a Hero?</b></p> <p>Duration: 45 minutes</p>	<p>To rethink heroism by challenging its association with violence and guiding participants to see peacebuilding as the real expression of strength and courage.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This opening discussion invites participants to reflect on how they define heroism, examine how war and violence have shaped the image of the hero in Lebanon, and reconsider courage through the lens of peacebuilding. Through guided questions and the ex-fighter's story, participants explore the difference between destructive power and constructive strength.</p> <p><b>Guiding Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you hear the word "hero," who or what comes to your mind?</li> <li>• What makes someone a hero in your eyes?</li> <li>• Who are considered heroes today; according to what you've learned from your upbringing, education, and social media?</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write participants' responses on a flipchart; highlight recurring themes (power, dominance, protection, violence, sacrifice).</li> <li>• Encourage respectful discussion, emphasizing that all opinions are welcome</li> <li>• If participants mention influencers, celebrities, or fighters as heroes, use these as entry points to discuss the difference between power and purpose.</li> </ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Facilitator Story:</b>  The ex-fighter shares his personal story to dismantle the false sense of heroism tied to violence. Below are three suggested narratives, but feel free to share your own authentic story; the examples below are simply illustrative.</p> <p><i>“When I was young, I believed that carrying a weapon made me powerful and that fighting brought honor. People called us heroes, but the truth is that war is filled with fear, loss, and pain. There is no pride in fighting your own people. The noise of war silences emotions and hardens the heart. Real courage came years later, when I faced my fears, apologized, and started rebuilding peace.”</i></p> <p><i>“We were once taught that the hero is the one who holds the gun, but today we know that the real hero is the one who holds himself, transforms anger and pain into empathy, and works for unity. True heroism is not in fighting your brothers and sisters but in standing with them for a peaceful Lebanon.”</i></p> <p><i>“I learned that true heroes are those who protect their country, not their sect or region. They build relationships, educate others, regulate their emotions, and unite with their brothers and sisters for the good of Lebanon.”</i></p> <p><b>After sharing, the facilitator asks participants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After hearing this story, can you redefine the word “hero”?</li> <li>• Is the hero someone who holds a weapon against his brother or sister in the same country?</li> <li>• Is the hero someone who dominates others and makes them feel powerless?</li> <li>• What does stereotypical masculinity teach us about heroism? What does balanced masculinity teach us about heroism?</li> <li>• What type of hero would you rather become?</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion Prompts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you think that courage and strength can be expressed without violence? In what ways?</li> <li>• What kind of courage does peace require?</li> <li>• What values make someone a peacebuilder?</li> </ul> <p>Finally, encourage participants to share examples of people they consider heroes in peace; activists, teachers, doctors, volunteers, or family members who inspire others through kindness and integrity.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>From A War Hero to A Peacebuilder</b></p> <p>Duration: 30 minutes</p>	<p>To support participants in visualizing a hero rooted in compassion and accountability and in recognizing peacebuilding as the highest form of heroism.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity guides participants to redefine heroism by imagining the kind of person they want to become. Through drawing or writing, they explore values such as empathy, honesty, emotional regulation, and responsibility, and collectively create a shared vision of the hero as a peacebuilder.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask participants to draw or write “The Hero I Aspire to Be.” It can be a single word, symbol, drawing, or sentence.</li> <li>• Encourage them to focus on qualities such as honesty, kindness, emotional regulation, responsibility, humility, and love.</li> <li>• Invite a few participants to share their drawings or reflections with the group.</li> <li>• As a group, create a shared flipchart titled “The Hero as a peacebuilder.”</li> <li>• Write down words the participants mention (e.g., patience, forgiveness, respect, empathy, truth, dialogue).</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link participants’ reflections to the facilitator’s personal journey: the transformation from fighting for identity to fighting for peace.</li> <li>• Reinforce that education, compassion, and self-awareness are the strongest weapons a person can carry.</li> </ul> <p>Finally, invite participants to share one sentence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One quality I admire in a hero of peace is...”</li> <li>• “One step I will take to become a peacebuilder is...”</li> </ul>
<p>Total duration: 120 minutes</p>		

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## Unit 2: Emotional Regulation and Building Healthy Relationships

### Introduction

This unit invites participants to turn inward and explore one of the most important elements of peacebuilding: the ability to understand, regulate, and express emotions in ways that strengthen, rather than damage, relationships. In societies shaped by war, displacement, and long-standing gender expectations, many people grow up believing that emotions are dangerous, shameful, or signs of weakness. Men are often taught to suppress sadness and fear. Women are often taught to silence their anger and prioritize others over themselves. These messages create internal conflicts that later appear in relationships, communication patterns, and reactions to stress.

This unit offers a different path, one where emotional awareness becomes a source of clarity, strength, and responsibility. By reconnecting with their emotions, participants learn that vulnerability is not an enemy to masculinity or femininity but an essential part of human balance. When emotions are understood rather than suppressed, individuals can respond instead of react, choose values over impulses, and create relationships rooted in honesty, respect, and empathy.

Through practical exercises, breathing and grounding practices, reflective discussions, and skills-based activities, participants discover how emotional regulation is a form of personal peacebuilding. Healthy communication, empathy, self-compassion, and balanced inner dialogue become tools for transforming conflict into connection, both within oneself and with others. The journey begins with recognizing our emotional world and ends with building relationships that honor dignity, understanding, and care.

### This unit includes three sessions:

- **Session 1:** Emotional Regulation
- **Session 2:** Communication and Conflict Resolution
- **Session 3:** Relationship with Self

## Session 1: Emotional Regulation

**Overall Objective: Acquire practical emotional regulation tools**

**Specific Objective:**

To help participants reconnect with their emotions, understand that vulnerability is a source of strength, and learn practical tools for emotional regulation. This module emphasizes that peacebuilding begins with self-awareness and emotional balance, where strength means mastery over one's reactions rather than suppression of feelings.

Duration: 120 minutes

**Materials and Preparations:**

- Two flipcharts
- Markers in different colors
- Sticky notes for reflections or anonymous sharing
- Pens and paper for participants' personal notes
- Arrange chairs in a semi-circle or U shape to maintain visibility and equality among participants
- Prepare a short reflection or story from the ex-fighter about how learning to deal with emotions helped them find peace after the war

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Ice breaker plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To encourage participation and clarify Aexpectations at the start of the session</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> This ice breaker invites participants to briefly share why they chose to join the session or what they hope to gain from it. It creates an open atmosphere, helps the facilitator understand participants' expectations, and sets the tone for honest and meaningful engagement throughout the workshop.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b> Invite each person to share one short sentence answering either: - "Why did I join today?" - "What do I hope to get from this session?"</p> <p><b>Facilitator's Notes:</b> Keep the answers brief and pressure-free. This activity helps set a collaborative tone, clarifies expectations, and builds trust before moving into deeper discussions.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Opening Discussion: What Are Emotions</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>To open a dialogue about emotions, their importance, and how society teaches men and women to express or hide them.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity opens a conversation about emotions and how they shape our lives. Participants explore what emotions mean to them, which ones feel safe to express, and which ones they have learned to hide. Through guided questions and shared reflections, the group begins to understand how family, society, and gender expectations influence the way we deal with anger, sadness, fear, and other feelings. The activity helps participants see emotions as important signals that guide our needs and relationships, rather than signs of weakness.</p> <p><b>Guiding Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you hear the word emotion, what comes to mind?</li> <li>• Which emotions are easy to show, and which are harder to express?</li> <li>• How were you taught to deal with anger, sadness, or fear when you were young?</li> <li>• Do you think emotions are signs of weakness or strength, and why?</li> </ul> <p>Facilitator Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write participants' answers on the flipchart using two columns: Allowed Emotions and Hidden Emotions</li> <li>• Encourage openness and reflection. Highlight gender differences, for example, men are taught to hide tears, and women are told not to show anger</li> <li>• Explain that emotions are signals, not weaknesses. They help us understand our needs and the needs of others</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Reflection (Suggested):</b> <i>“During the war, I was told to hide fear and sadness. I thought strength meant not feeling. But over time, I realized that emotions do not disappear, they wait inside until they explode. Real courage came when I learned to name what I feel, take a breath, and respond instead of react.”</i></p>
<p><b>Breathing and Grounding: Cooling the Fire</b></p> <p>Duration: 40 minutes</p>	<p>To teach practical techniques for emotional regulation and stress reduction.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity introduces participants to a simple breathing and grounding practice that helps calm strong emotions. By using slow and intentional breaths, they learn how the body can shift from tension to ease. The exercise shows that emotions can either overwhelm us or support us depending on how we manage them. Through guided breathing and brief reflection, participants discover how this technique can help them find calm during moments of anger, stress, or conflict.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain that emotions are like fire, they can burn or warm depending on how we manage them.</li> <li>• Introduce the “Cooling the Fire exercise” and guide participants through it for three to five minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Sit comfortably, close your eyes if you wish</li> <li>o Take a slow breath in through your nose, count to four</li> <li>o Hold for seven seconds</li> <li>o Exhale slowly through your mouth, count to eight</li> <li>o Repeat three times</li> <li>o Notice where tension is in your body and let it soften</li> </ul> </li> <li>• After the exercise, invite reflection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o What did you notice in your body</li> <li>o How can this help you in moments of anger, stress, or conflict</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize that breathing and grounding create space to choose how to act</li> <li>• Encourage participants to use these techniques before reacting or making decisions</li> <li>• Invite them to explore other cooling strategies such as exercising, listening to music, taking a walk or time out, calling a friend, connecting with nature, or praying</li> </ul>
<p><b>Values that Guide My Reactions</b></p> <p>Duration: 40 minutes</p>	<p>To help participants connect emotional regulation to their personal and communal values.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b></p> <p>This activity helps participants understand the difference between acting from immediate emotions and acting from personal values. Through simple examples and quiet reflection, they learn how emotions can pull them toward reactions that create more stress, while values guide them toward choices that reflect the person they want to become. By identifying the values that matter most to them, participants begin to see how emotional regulation is connected to inner strength, responsibility, and peace in daily life.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain: “We always have two roads when emotions appear. One is emotion based behavior, and the other is value based behavior. On the first road, emotions drive our actions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o I feel sad, so I stay in bed and feel even sadder.</li> <li>o I feel unmotivated, so I avoid work, which lowers my motivation more.</li> <li>o I feel angry, so I react with aggression and worsen the situation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the second road, values drive our actions.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o I feel sad, but I value friendship, so I go out and feel better.</li> <li>o I feel unmotivated, but I value success, so I start working and regain energy.</li> <li>o I feel angry, but I value respect, so I communicate calmly instead of attacking.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ask participants to reflect silently for one minute and then ask them to write six values that will guide their behavior from now on, such as respect, communication, empathy, dignity, forgiveness, and honesty.</li> <li>• Invite participants to share their values aloud and to commit to living by them in daily interactions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When we act from our values, we act from strength, not fear. Regulating emotions is not about suppression; it is about aligning our behavior with the kind of person we want to be and the kind of society we want to build.</li> <li>• Peace begins within us. When we learn to calm the storm inside, we stop creating storms around us.</li> <li>• True strength is not in silence or reaction but in choosing our response with wisdom and care. Finally, invite participants to share one sentence:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One emotion I want to manage better is...”</li> <li>• “One value that can guide me in moments of stress or anger is...”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Total duration: 120 minutes		

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**Catanese, L. (2024, August 8).** *Self-regulation for adults: Strategies for getting a handle on emotions and behavior.* Harvard Health Publishing.

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## Session 2: Communication and Conflict Resolution

**Overall Objective: Acquire practical communication and conflict resolution skills**

**Specific Objective:**

- To help participants develop practical communication skills that promote empathy, active listening, and assertive expression.
- This module highlights how stereotypical masculinity (dominance, control, silence) and stereotypical femininity (submission, compliance, self-sacrifice) often create barriers to healthy dialogue.
- To embrace balanced masculinity and femininity, which enables accountability, responsibility for one’s emotions, and the ability to express needs, draw boundaries, and communicate respectfully.

Duration: 120 minutes

**Materials and Preparations:**

- Flipcharts
- Markers in different colors
- Printed role-play scenarios (4–3 short conflict examples)
- Sticky notes for reflections
- Pens and paper for participants’ notes
- Arrange chairs in a semi-circle or U-shape to encourage interaction

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Ice breaker plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To encourage participation and clarify Aexpectations at the start of the session</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> This ice breaker invites participants to briefly share why they chose to join the session or what they hope to gain from it. It creates an open atmosphere, helps the facilitator understand participants’ expectations, and sets the tone for honest and meaningful engagement throughout the workshop.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b> Invite each person to share one short sentence answering either: - “Why did I join today?” - “What do I hope to get from this session?”</p> <p><b>Facilitator’s Notes:</b> Keep the answers brief and pressure-free. This activity helps set a collaborative tone, clarifies expectations, and builds trust before moving into deeper discussions.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Opening Discussion: How We Communicate</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>To explore how gender expectations influence how we listen, express ourselves, and handle disagreements.</p>	<p><b>Short Description</b> This activity helps participants explore how gender expectations shape the way they speak, listen, and handle disagreements. By sharing personal experiences, they begin to notice patterns of dominance, silence, or avoidance in communication and reflect on what balanced communication looks like when strength and care work together.</p> <p><b>Guiding Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are men and women taught to express anger, sadness, or disagreement?</li> <li>• How do stereotypical ideas of dominance and submission affect our communication?</li> <li>• What happens when one person always talks and the other always stays silent?</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator's Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write key words on the board: dominant, submissive, reactive, calm, silent, expressive.</li> <li>• Invite both male and female participants to share how these expectations affected their relationships.</li> <li>• Explain that balanced communication begins when both strength and care come together; when we speak with honesty but also with empathy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Role-Play: Walk in My Shoes</b></p> <p>Duration: 30 minutes</p>	<p>To help participants practice empathy, perspective-taking, and non-defensive listening by stepping into another person's situation.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity invites participants to step into another person's experience during conflict. Through short role plays, they practice empathy, active listening, and understanding the feelings and needs of others. The goal is to move away from control and withdrawal, toward dialogue, accountability, and shared understanding.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divide participants into small mixed-gender groups of 4–3 people. If the group is large, form 5–4 groups.</li> <li>• Explain clearly that we are not here to perform or judge. The goal is to feel what it is like to be in someone else's place; to understand their emotions and see the conflict from both sides.</li> <li>• Distribute one short conflict scenario to each group (see Handout 1 below).</li> <li>• Ask them to read it together, assign roles, and discuss how each character feels and might respond.</li> <li>• Give groups 12–10 minutes to act out their role-play (2–1 minutes per roleplay and 7–5 minutes for reflection).</li> </ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Guiding Questions</b>            After each role-play, lead a short debrief discussion using the questions below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What emotions did you feel while playing your role?</li> <li>• What did you notice about how you listened or reacted?</li> <li>• Did anything shift when you tried to understand the other side's point of view?</li> <li>• What does this teach us about communication in real life?</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Notes:</b>            You can elaborate further by explaining that in many conflicts, we get stuck between dominance and submission; one person wants control, and the other withdraws or gives up. But true communication lies in balance. When we pause to understand the other person's feelings and needs, we move from wanting to win to wanting to connect and that is the foundation of peacebuilding.</p> <p><b>Optional Extension:</b>            Ask each group to repeat their role-play, this time applying balanced communication skills presented in Activity 4 below (active listening, 'I-statements,' respectful tone). Discuss how the second version felt different.</p>
<p><b>React or Respond?</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>To help participants understand that communication rooted in emotional balance is not about suppressing emotion or staying silent but about expressing it responsibly.</p>	<p><b>Short Description</b>            This activity teaches participants the difference between reacting out of emotion and responding with awareness. Through real life examples, they learn how impulsive reactions can escalate conflict, while thoughtful responses create understanding and peace. The activity encourages participants to pause, reflect, and choose actions guided by respect and values.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b>            Step 1 – Explain the difference between reaction and response:            In a conflict situation, we usually react; we act on impulse, emotion, or ego. A response, on the other hand, comes from awareness, respect, and choice. It is the difference between being driven by emotion and guided by values.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content												
		<p><b>Write on board</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="727 226 1449 786"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="727 226 1086 282">Reactions</th> <th data-bbox="1086 226 1449 282">Response</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="727 282 1086 367">Quick, impulsive, emotionally charged</td> <td data-bbox="1086 282 1449 367">Calm, intentional, value-based</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="727 367 1086 490">Focused on defending the self or attacking the other</td> <td data-bbox="1086 367 1449 490">Focused on understanding and expressing needs</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="727 490 1086 575">Often escalates conflict</td> <td data-bbox="1086 490 1449 575">Often de-escalates conflict</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="727 575 1086 660">Comes from wounded ego or fear</td> <td data-bbox="1086 575 1449 660">Comes from clarity and self-respect</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="727 660 1086 786">Leads to regret or guilt</td> <td data-bbox="1086 660 1449 786">Leads to peace of mind and connection</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Step 2 – Present Conflict Triggers and Reflect:</b></p> <div data-bbox="727 857 1449 1771" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Situation 1:</b> Online insult  <b>Reaction:</b> You reply with anger or post a public insult.  <b>Response:</b> You pause, decide if it's worth engaging, and say calmly, "I felt disrespected by your comment. I prefer to discuss things respectfully."</p> <p><b>Situation 2:</b> Interrupted by a friend  <b>Reaction:</b> "Can you stop interrupting me for once?"  <b>Response:</b> "I feel unheard when I'm interrupted. Can I finish my point before we continue?"</p> <p><b>Situation 3:</b> Ignored opinion  <b>Reaction:</b> Withdraw or give the silent treatment.  <b>Response:</b> "I felt dismissed when my idea wasn't considered. I'd like to share it again."</p> <p><b>Situation 4:</b> Credit stolen at work  <b>Reaction:</b> Confront them publicly.  <b>Response:</b> "I noticed our idea was presented without my name. Let's acknowledge our shared effort next time."</p> </div> <p><b>Guiding Questions for Discussion:</b></p> <ul data-bbox="727 1839 1449 2018" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What made the reaction impulsive?</li> <li>• What made the response balanced?</li> <li>• Which one preserves dignity and peace?</li> <li>• How would you like to behave next time you get triggered; react or respond?</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator Notes:</b>  Emphasize that balanced response = awareness</p>	Reactions	Response	Quick, impulsive, emotionally charged	Calm, intentional, value-based	Focused on defending the self or attacking the other	Focused on understanding and expressing needs	Often escalates conflict	Often de-escalates conflict	Comes from wounded ego or fear	Comes from clarity and self-respect	Leads to regret or guilt	Leads to peace of mind and connection
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Leads to regret or guilt	Leads to peace of mind and connection													

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p>+ choice. Explain that every time we pause before reacting, we reclaim our power. Responding instead of reacting is not weakness; it's self-mastery and respect, both for ourselves and for others. You can be firm without being violent, and calm without being weak.</p>
<p><b>I-Statements and the Empathy–Concern Empathy Approach</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>Teach participants to communicate needs and set boundaries respectfully by combining self-expression (I-statements) with empathy for the other person's perspective.</p>	<p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the “I-Statement” Structure: “I feel [emotion] when [situation] because [reason]. What I need is [request].” Example: “I feel hurt when you shout because it makes me feel disrespected. I need you to speak calmly.”</li> <li>• Introduce the Empathy–Concern–Empathy Technique: This method balances firmness with compassion, especially during emotional conversations. Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Empathy: Acknowledge the other person's feelings. “I understand you're upset because you wanted to be heard.”</li> <li>o Concern/Assertion: Express your feeling or need using an “I-statement.” “I feel uncomfortable when voices are raised because I need calm to express myself.”</li> <li>o Empathy Again: End with care or cooperation. “I really value our relationship and want us both to feel respected.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Practice in Pairs: Use real or mild examples (lateness, broken promises, feeling ignored). Both partners practice being speaker and listener. Example: <p>“I see that you are frustrated (Empathy). I feel sad when our talks turn into shouting because I need calm and respect (Concern). I want us both to feel safe to talk, even when we disagree (Empathy).”</p> </li> </ul> <p><b>Guided Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did it feel to speak using this method?</li> <li>• Was it hard to mix empathy and assertiveness?</li> <li>• What changed when you began and ended with empathy?</li> </ul> <p>Facilitator's Notes: You can add that balanced communication means expressing our truth while honoring others' humanity. It's not about winning or silence; it's about connecting through honesty, care, and respect. Peace doesn't mean avoiding conflict; it means learning to talk and listen with respect. Invite participants to share one sentence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One thing I learned about myself when I communicate is...”</li> <li>• “One skill I will practice to build peace in my relationships is...”</li> </ul>
<p>Total duration: 120 minutes</p>		

## Handout 1

### Role-Play Scenarios Walk in my shoes

Divide the participants into 5–3 persons per group depending on the group size. Distribute 1 scenario for each group and ask them to prepare role plays.

#### **Scenario 1: The Interrupted Friend**

Two friends are in a group discussion. One keeps interrupting while the other is speaking. The interrupted friend feels unheard and angry.

Roles: -1 The interrupter, -2 the friend who feels ignored, -3 an observer.

Key focus: Highlighting respect, listening, and expressing emotions calmly.

#### **Scenario 2: The Overprotective Parent**

A father forbids his daughter from visiting a friend's neighborhood because it's "unsafe." She feels controlled and angry.

Roles: -1 The parent, -2 the daughter, -3 a mediator.

Key focus: Understanding fear, safety, and autonomy.

#### **Scenario 3: The Teasing Partner**

A man jokes publicly about his girlfriend's family background. She laughs but feels humiliated.

Roles: -1 The man, -2 the woman, -3 an observing friend.

Key focus: Understanding emotional sensitivity and respect.

#### **Scenario 4: The Political Disagreement**

Two coworkers argue about which political leader is to blame for Lebanon's current situation. It turns personal and offensive.

Roles: -1 Coworker A, -2 Coworker B, -3 a colleague engaging in de-escalation.

Key focus: Respecting different opinions and managing emotions.

#### **Scenario 5: The Broken Promise**

A friend promised to help with a project but never showed up. The other feels betrayed.

Roles: -1 The absent friend, -2 the disappointed friend, -3 a mutual observer.

Key focus: Highlighting accountability, forgiveness and honesty.

#### **Scenario 6: The Silent Team Member**

During a group activity, one member stays silent. Others think he doesn't care, but he feels anxious and unheard.

Roles: -1 The silent member, -2 the frustrated teammate, -3 a facilitator.

Key focus: Recognizing silence as an emotion and not as disinterest.

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## Session 3: Relationship with Self

**Overall Objective: strengthen the relationship with oneself**

**Specific Objective:**

- To help participants strengthen their relationship with themselves through self-awareness, self-compassion, and emotional responsibility.
- To challenge the idea that self-care is weakness; a belief rooted in stereotypical masculinity (control, toughness, silence) and stereotypical femininity (self-sacrifice, guilt, and emotional over-giving). Participants discover that balanced masculinity and femininity allow for strength with gentleness, power with vulnerability, and care without shame.
- To integrate lessons from all previous modules and help participants envision the kind of man or woman they aspire to become; one who embodies balance, peace, empathy, and strength in relationship with self, others, society, and the world.

Duration: 150 minutes

**Materials and Preparation:**

- Flipchart
- Markers in different colors
- Blank sheets and pens for reflection
- Reflection Handout (see below)

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Ice breaker plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To encourage participation and clarify participants' expectations at the start of the session</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> This ice breaker invites participants to briefly share why they chose to join the session or what they hope to gain from it. It creates an open atmosphere, helps the facilitator understand participants' expectations, and sets the tone for honest and meaningful engagement throughout the workshop.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b> Invite each person to share one short sentence answering either: - "Why did I join today?" - "What do I hope to get from this session?"</p> <p><b>Facilitator's Notes:</b> Keep the answers brief and pressure-free. This activity helps set a collaborative tone, clarifies expectations, and builds trust before moving into deeper discussions.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Opening Discussion – How Do I Treat Myself?</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>To explore how participants usually relate to themselves and how gender expectations shape their inner voice.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity helps participants explore how they usually speak to themselves when they feel emotional or make mistakes. By comparing harsh and kind inner voices, they begin to see how family messages, social expectations, and gender roles have shaped the way they treat themselves. The activity encourages a more caring and balanced relationship with the self.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask: “When you make a mistake or feel emotional, what do you usually tell yourself?”</li> <li>• Write responses under two columns: Harsh Voice (e.g., “I must be strong,” “I shouldn’t cry,” “I failed”) and Kind Voice (e.g., “It’s okay to feel tired,” “I did my best”)</li> <li>• Discuss: “Where do you think these messages come from: family, society, war experiences, or gender roles?”</li> <li>• Link to gender: “Stereotypical masculinity teaches men to hide pain and appear in control. Stereotypical femininity often teaches women to prioritize others and ignore their own needs. Both cause suffering. Balanced masculinity and femininity remind us that being human means caring for ourselves, not just enduring.”</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator’s Notes:</b> Explain that the way we speak to ourselves shapes our peace of mind. Self-respect includes self-care; we cannot build peace outside if we are at war inside.</p>
<p><b>Mindfulness Practice: Breathing Compassion Toward Self</b></p> <p>Duration: 35 minutes</p>	<p>To help participants connect with self-compassion physically and emotionally through mindful breathing, and to understand that being kind to oneself is an act of inner strength, not weakness.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity guides participants through a gentle breathing exercise that allows them to connect with self-compassion. Through calm breathing, soft attention, and kind intentions toward themselves, they learn that caring for their inner world is an act of strength. The practice helps them experience how kindness, awareness, and acceptance can bring peace to the body and mind.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b> <b>Step 1 – Introduce the Concept of Self-Compassion</b></p> <p>Before starting the exercise, say: “We will start by explaining the meaning of self-compassion. Self-compassion is treating yourself with the same understanding, care, and patience that you would offer a friend who is suffering.”</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p>It means recognizing that everyone struggles, makes mistakes, and feels pain; and that we don't need to punish ourselves for being human. Self-compassion has three parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Kindness instead of harsh self-judgment: speaking gently to yourself rather than with blame.</li> <li>o Common humanity instead of isolation: remembering that you are not alone in your difficulties.</li> <li>o Mindfulness instead of over-identification: noticing your emotions without letting them control you.</li> </ul> <p>In stereotypical masculinity, people are taught to 'tough it out' and hide pain. In stereotypical femininity, people are often taught to care for others but forget themselves. Balanced masculinity and femininity remind us that real strength includes the courage to care for ourselves."</p> <p><b>Step 2 – Guided Mindfulness Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask participants to sit comfortably, close their eyes, and place one hand on the chest.</li> <li>• Use the following breathing script:  "Take a slow breath in through your nose... and exhale through your mouth.  With every breath in, imagine you are breathing in calm and care.  With every breath out, let go of judgment and pressure.  Silently repeat these words:  May I be kind to myself.  May I find peace within me.  May I accept both my strength and my softness."  </li> <li>• Let participants continue this practice for 5-3 minutes while talking gently and with love to themselves</li> <li>• You can ask participants to write a short letter for themselves to show love and kindness (they can write what they love about themselves and their strength, and they can talk to parts where they would like to improve, with love and not judgement, accepting where they are now and where they are heading to.</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 3 – Debrief Discussion</b></p> <p>Ask participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you notice during this exercise, in your body or emotions?</li> <li>• Was it easy or hard to offer kindness to yourself?</li> <li>• What difference would it make if you spoke to yourself this way every day?</li> </ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Seeking Help as Strength</b></p> <p>Duration: 35 minutes</p>	<p>To reframe seeking psychological or emotional help as a form of responsibility and courage, not shame.</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity invites participants to rethink what it means to ask for help. By reflecting on common beliefs and gender expectations, they learn that reaching out is not a sign of weakness but a responsible and courageous choice. The activity encourages participants to see support, healing, and connection as part of building inner and outer peace.</p> <p><b>Instructions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin by asking: “What comes to mind when you hear someone say, ‘I need help?’”</li> <li>• Write answers on a flipchart; expect words like weak, shame, dependency, fear, or respect.</li> <li>• <b>Facilitate reflection:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o “How do social or gender norms shape our willingness to ask for help?”</li> <li>o “How could reaching out prevent harm, to ourselves or others?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator’s Notes:</b> <b>Highlight the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stereotypical masculinity states: Real men don’t ask for help.</li> <li>• Stereotypical femininity states: Good women help everyone else first.</li> <li>• Balanced humanity states: Strong people care enough to seek healing and support.</li> <li>• Asking for help is not a sign of failure. It’s an act of accountability to yourself, to your loved ones, and to your community. The journey toward peace begins when we stop suffering alone.</li> </ul> <p>Finally, invite participants to write or share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One kind thing I will tell myself this week is...”</li> <li>• “One way I can care for myself without guilt is...”</li> <li>• “One step toward healing I am ready to take is...”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Final Reflection Exercise: The Man/Woman I Aspire to Be</b></p> <p>Duration: 40 minutes</p>	<p>Self-reflection on the person they aspire to become</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b> This activity brings together all the lessons from the entire program and invites participants to reflect on the person they aspire to become. Through quiet reflection, writing, and optional sharing, they explore their values, their relationship with themselves, and the kind of presence they want to bring into their families and communities. The exercise helps participants imagine a balanced and compassionate version of themselves and encourages them to see peace as a daily practice that begins within.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Instructions:</b> The facilitator explains that this final exercise brings together everything we have explored, from understanding masculinity and femininity, redefining heroism, managing emotions, communicating with empathy, to building a relationship with self. Peace begins when we are at peace within ourselves and radiates outward, into our families, communities, and the world. The facilitator adds that today, we will take time to reflect on the person we aspire to be: a balanced human being who leads with compassion, integrity, and courage.</p> <p><b>Part 1: Guided Reflection: Looking Within</b> Invite participants to close their eyes for a moment, take a deep breath, and imagine the best version of themselves. Then ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o When you picture the man or woman you aspire to be, what qualities do you see?</li> <li>o How does this version of you relate to yourself with self-compassion, especially when you make mistakes or face challenges?</li> <li>o How does this version of you respond to stress, conflict, and difference?</li> <li>o How does this version of you show love, empathy, and responsibility toward others?</li> </ul> <p><b>Part 2: The Handout: “The Man/Woman I Aspire to Be”</b> Distribute the reflection sheet below and guide participants through the questions so they can fill it out and keep it with them.</p> <p><b>Part 3: Sharing Circle (Optional)</b> Invite participants to share one or two sentences beginning with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The man/woman I aspire to be is...”</li> <li>• “One thing I will practice to bring more peace into my life is...”</li> </ul> <p>Encourage listening without judgment or interruption.</p> <p><b>Facilitator Notes:</b> Peace is not a destination but a practice. The man or woman you aspire to be already exists within you, waiting to be nourished through awareness, compassion, and responsibility. Balanced masculinity and femininity allow you to live with courage and care, strength and softness, action and reflection. The more you live in balance, the more peace you create in the world around you.</p>
Total duration: 120 minutes		

## Handout 2

### The Man/Woman I Aspire to Be

#### Section 1: My Values and Qualities

- What are the three core values that I want to live by; the principles that will guide my decisions, behaviors, and relationships in daily life?
- What qualities do I want to strengthen within me?
- Which stereotypes or beliefs do I want to let go of?

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#### Section 2: My Hero Within

- What does heroism mean to me now?
- What kind of hero do I want to be; one who dominates or one who heals?
- How can I practice courage, accountability, and empathy every day?

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#### Section 3: My Relationship with Emotions

- How do I respond to my emotions, with judgment or compassion?
- Which emotion do I want to manage differently from now on?
- What helps me find calm and balance in difficult moments?

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**Section 4: My Relationship with Self**

- How do I want to speak to and treat myself when I experience failure, pain, or struggle?
- What words of kindness or encouragement do I want to tell myself?
- What does self-compassion mean to me?

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**Section 5: My Relationship with Others**

- When I feel hurt or angry, how do I want to express myself so that I am honest yet respectful?
- How can I listen and speak with more empathy and respect?
- What boundaries or needs do I need to express with love and clarity?

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**Section 6: My Relationship with the World**

- How can I contribute to peace in my family, community, and country?
- What does living in harmony with nature, humanity, and existence (or God) mean to me?
- How can I embody peace not only as an idea but as a daily practice?

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# **Section 2:**

## **Biography Work and Systemic Approach**

**Prepared By: Christina Foerch Saab**

## Introduction

Biography work considers a person's lifeline (past, present, and future) and how personality develops across life stages. Applied to balanced masculinity, it encourages men to reflect on how their values, strengths, and experiences shape a grounded and authentic sense of being male.

While earlier sessions focused on the individual, this section widens the perspective to a systemic view. Balanced masculinity is influenced by family expectations, peer groups, cultural norms, and historical contexts, which shape ideas of what it means to "be a man."

By looking at the systems each person belongs to, this section explores how messages about masculinity can support or hinder the individual, and how people can also influence and reshape these systems. This systemic lens offers a more holistic understanding of how masculinity is formed and transformed through the interplay between individuals and the environments around them.

### **This section includes two units:**

- **Unit 3:** Me, Myself and Man: How Have Different Perceptions of Masculinity Changed Over My Personal Lifetime?
- **Unit 4:** Looking at Systems

## Unit 3:

# Me, Myself and Man: How have different perceptions of masculinity changed over my personal lifetime?

### Introduction

Biography work is an approach that takes into consideration the lifeline of a person (past-present-future), including the different stages of life (early childhood, childhood/ kindergarten, school years/ vocational training, young adulthood, adulthood, future), considering that people develop their personality over a lifetime. Biography work follows a systemic approach in the sense that it considers that the individual human being is part of broader systems that influence the individual (family/friends/colleagues; a certain moment in history, broader society) and that not all life decisions are free of influence from society.

Biography work has as its objectives self-reflection and increasing awareness of one's values, characteristics, and strengths. Biography work is voluntary, and no one is forced to share his/her findings with others in the group if they do not feel comfortable doing so. The other principle, as in counseling sessions, is that "what is said in the room stays in the room" and is not spread to others.

### This unit includes two sessions:

- **Session 1:** Circle of Life
- **Session 2:** Tree of Life: Visualizing of Being a Man – Being a Balanced Human

## Session 1: Circle of Life

### Overall Objective: self-reflection

#### Specific Objective:

- Self-reflection: How has my concept of masculinity changed over time? How does masculinity define my identity today?
- Rediscovering memories, sharing stories: What kind of memories/stories/anecdotes would I like to share with others? What kind of lessons learned would I like to pass on to young men/boys? How can I integrate parts of my changed/developed masculinity into my testimonies about the Lebanese civil war?

Duration: 75 minutes

#### Materials and Preparations:

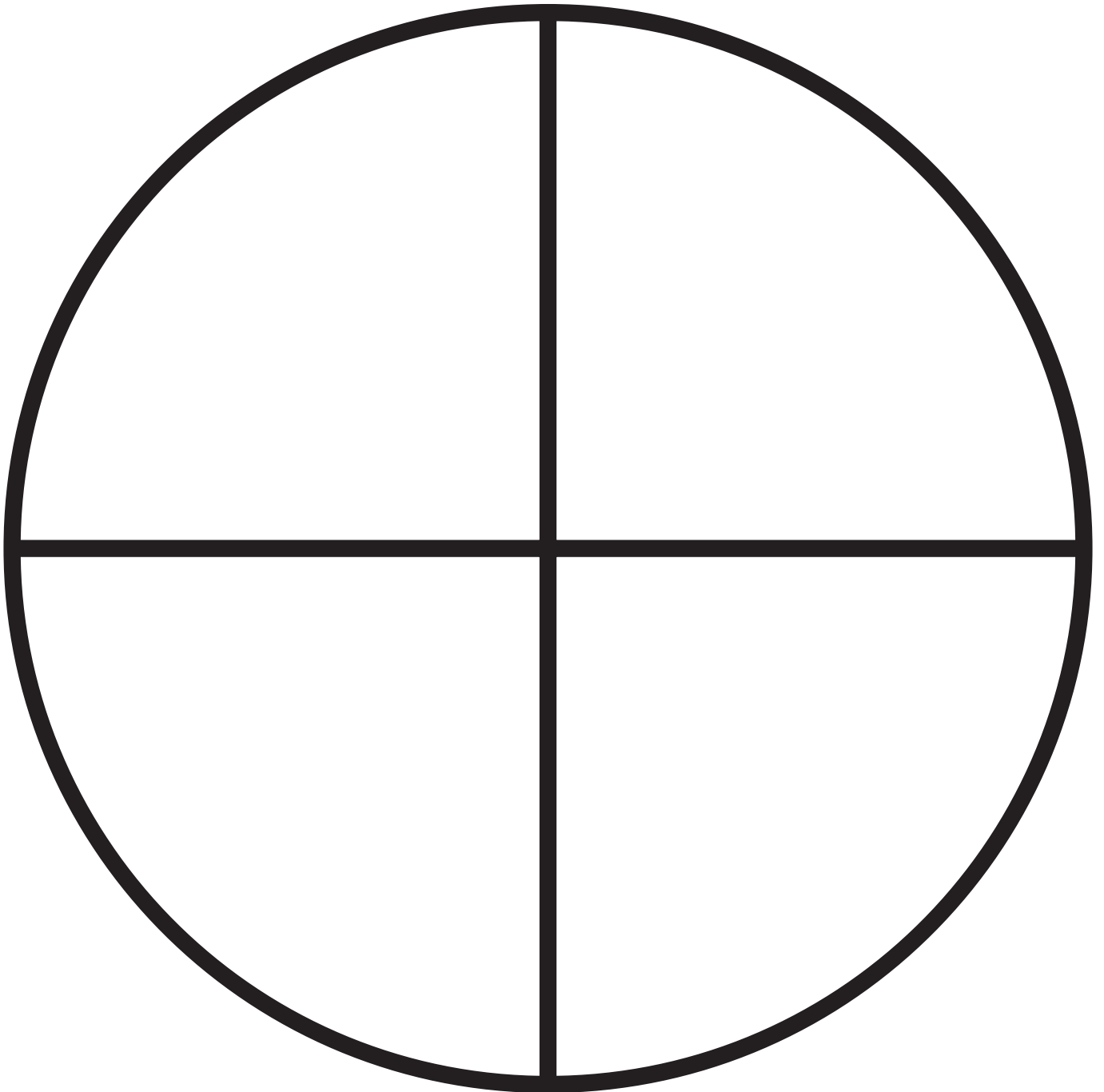
- 2 small balls, one with a happy face and one with an angry face
- Flipchart papers, flipchart, markers
- A4 papers, colored pencils
- A4 papers for all participants with the Circle of Life (see handout 3: “Circle of Life”)

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Ice breaker plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To set the scene, getting participants to share something personal</p>	<p><b>Short description: Happy ball, angry ball</b></p> <p>This ice breaker’s purpose is to encourage everyone to talk about something personal (however small it might be) and to share it with the group.</p> <p>Participants stand in a circle and pass around one ball with an angry face and one with a smiley face. While holding the ball with an angry face, they briefly share a challenging moment/experience from the past week with the group. While holding the happy face ball, they briefly share a positive moment from the past week with the participants. Then they hand the two balls over to the next participant.</p> <p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the last week, can you share with the group a challenging moment/experience?</li> <li>• During the last week, can you remember a happy moment/positive experience you want to share with the group?</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b></p> <p>Participation is voluntary, yet encouraged, so that participants open up to each other and share something personal with the group.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		Remind the participants that everything shared in the room will stay in the room. An atmosphere of trust must prevail.
<p><b>Writing/ drawing on Circle of Life Individual work</b></p> <p>Duration: 45 minutes</p>	<p>Self-reflection on masculinity throughout the different life phases</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> The purpose of this exercise is for participants to reflect on their lifetime in terms of life phases. Each quarter of the circle represents one specific phase in the life of the participant. Depending on the target group, the set of questions differs a little.</p> <p><b>For adults, divide the 4 sections into:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Childhood</li> <li>2. Teenage years</li> <li>3. Adulthood</li> <li>4. Future</li> </ol> <p><b>For youth, divide the 4 sections into:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Early childhood</li> <li>2. Elementary school</li> <li>3. Teenage years/present</li> <li>4. Future</li> </ol> <p>For each part of the circle, the participants write or draw something relevant in terms of perceptions/ experiences of masculinity. For example, for the quarter (early) childhood: How did you perceive being a small boy? What did adults expect of you? Were you able to show emotions or not? Once this quarter is completed, the participants move to the second quarter, and so on, until the circle is completed.</p> <p>The guiding questions are listed on a separate sheet (see “Handout 3 facilitator”).</p> <p>Notes for the facilitator: Prepare enough copies of the circle divided into 4 parts (see “Handout 4 for participants Circle of Life”). Familiarize yourself with the guiding questions beforehand.</p>
<p><b>Plenary group Joint reflection</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To share lessons learned through the exercise “Circle of Life”</p>	<p>Both for adults and youth: They can share the results of their “Circles of Life” in the plenary group on a voluntary basis. How has “masculinity” changed for each participant over a lifetime? See “Guiding questions for the Circle of Life for adults” and “Guiding questions for the Circle of Life for Youth”.</p> <p>Was this self-reflection exercise useful? What have I learned?</p>
<p>Total Duration: 75 minutes</p>		

## Handout 3

### Participants worksheet: "Circle of Life"



## Handout 4

### Facilitator worksheet

#### Guiding questions for the Circle of Life for adults

Split life into 4 quarters:

##### First quarter:

What defined me as a boy/young man as a child?

How do I see myself back then as a boy?

What were my hobbies?

Who was an important person who influenced me?

Can I summarize this period in a symbol?

##### Second quarter:

What defined me as a teenager/young man (possibly during the war)?

What was expected from me as a man/hero?

How did it feel?

Can I summarize this period in a symbol?

##### Third quarter:

How do I identify myself as a man now? How does it feel?

Has my perception of masculinity changed over time, and if yes, how?

Can I summarize this period in a symbol?

##### Fourth quarter:

How do I see myself as a man in the future? Would it be different from how I live/perceive manhood currently, in the present?

What are my wishes for the future as a man? What do I wish for others, particularly for youth/young men?

Can I summarize this period in a symbol?

##### General remarks:

This exercise is individual work.

You should be writing and drawing a symbol for each quarter.

Write the key findings for each quarter on a sticky note and post it on the flip chart.

## Handout 5

### Facilitator worksheet

#### Guiding questions for the Circle of Life for youth

Split life into 4 quarters:

##### **First quarter:**

What defined me as a boy in my early childhood (before school)?  
What made me “a good boy” versus “a bad boy”?  
What characteristics were expected from me by my family/parents?  
How did it feel?  
Who was an important person who influenced me?  
Can I summarize this period in a symbol?

##### **Second quarter:**

What defined me as a boy during elementary/middle school?  
What was expected from me as a boy by my parents and teachers?  
How did it feel?  
Can I summarize this period in a symbol?

##### **Third quarter:**

How do I identify myself as a young/teenage man now?  
What characteristics of being a man are expected from me (from teachers/parents/peers)?  
How does it feel?  
Has my perception of masculinity changed over time, and if yes, how?  
Can I summarize this period in a symbol?

##### **Fourth quarter:**

How do I see myself as a man in the future?  
Would it be different from how I live/perceive manhood currently, in the present?  
What are my wishes for the future as a man?  
Can I summarize this period in a symbol?

##### **General remarks:**

This exercise is individual work.  
You should be writing and drawing a symbol for each quarter.  
Write the key findings for each quarter on a sticky note and post it on the flip chart.

## Session 2:

### Tree of Life: Visualizing Being a Man – Being a Balanced Human

**Objective: Self-reflection & increased awareness**

**Specific Objective:**

Visualizing the concept of “balanced masculinity” on the “Tree of Life” through each participant’s set of characteristics and values

Duration: 75 minutes

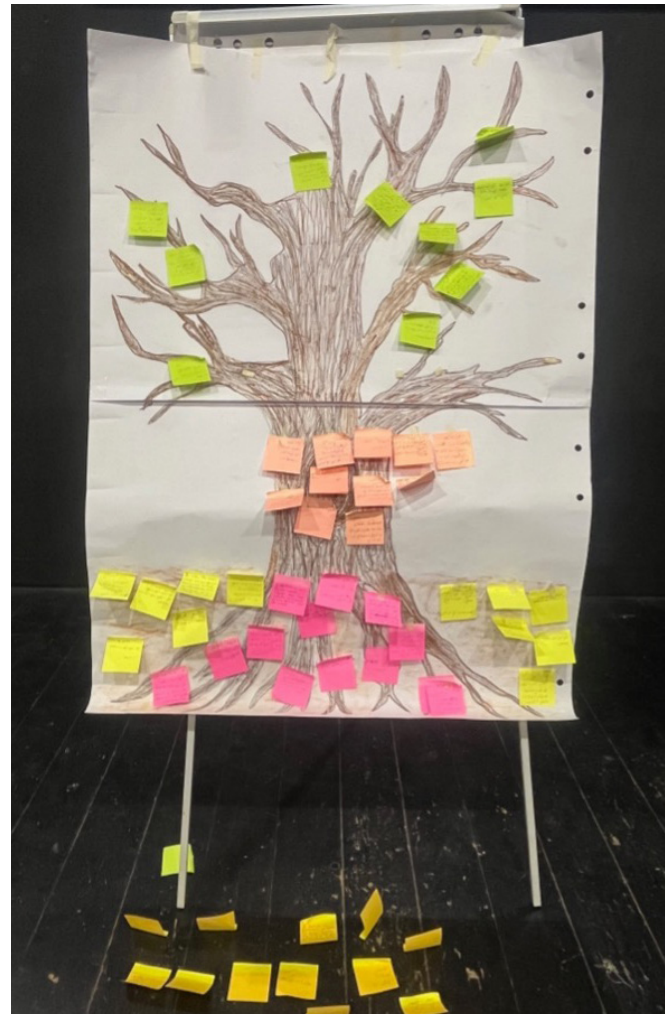
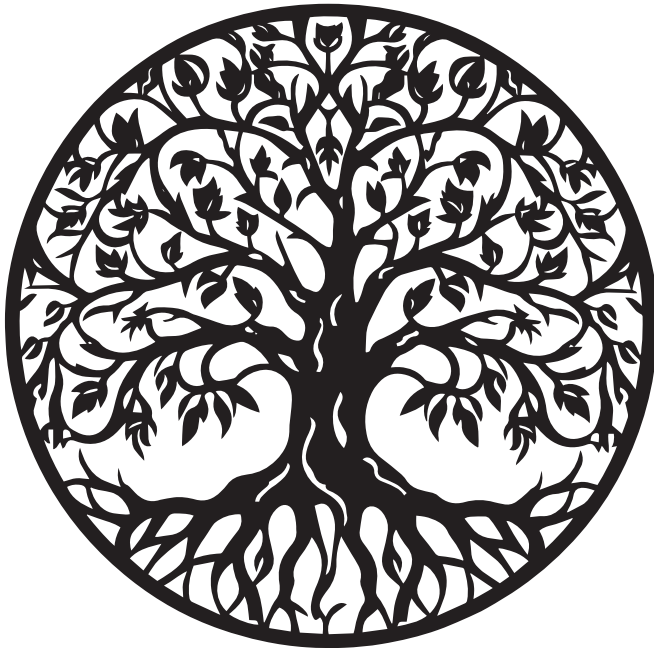
**Materials and Preparations:**

- 2 small balls, one with a happy face and one with an angry face
- Flipchart paper with the “Tree of Life” drawn on it
- Flipchart
- Markers
- Sticky notes in different colors
- Pencils

Activity	Objectives	Content
<b>Ice breaker plenary group</b>  Duration: 15 minutes	To set the scene, getting participants to share something personal	<b>Short description:</b> <b>Happy ball, angry ball</b> This ice breaker’s purpose is to encourage everyone to talk about something personal (however small it might be) and to share it with the group. Participants stand in a circle and pass around one ball with an angry face and one with a smiley face. While holding the ball with an angry face, they briefly share a challenging moment/ experience from the past week with the group. While holding the happy face ball, they briefly share a positive moment from the past week with the participants. Then they hand the two balls over to the next participant.  <b>Guiding questions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• During the last week, can you share with the group a challenging moment/experience?</li><li>• During the last week, can you remember a happy moment/positive experience you want to share with the group?</li></ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b>            In case session 1 and session 2 are done on the same day, there is no need to repeat the ice breaker.            Participation is voluntary, yet encouraged, so that participants open up to each other and share something personal with the group. Remind everyone that everything shared in the room will stay in the room. An atmosphere of trust must prevail.            (it is the same ice breaker as in session 1).</p>
<p><b>Individual work on “Tree of Life”</b></p> <p>Duration: 45 minutes</p>	<p>Self-reflection            Visualization of the concept of “balanced masculinity”</p>	<p><b>Short Description:</b>            The facilitator prepares a big tree on a flip chart and distributes sticky notes as well as pens and pencils to the participants. The facilitator tells the participants that in this session, they will visualize their identity as a balanced man with the help of the symbol of a tree. Each part of the tree stands for a part of their identity and personality, as well as the community/society that surrounds them.</p> <p>The participants work successively on the different parts of the “Tree of Life”:            They write down their thoughts on colored sticky notes and glue them on the flip chart paper where a big tree is drawn on (see photos as reference). The facilitator encourages a process of self-reflection through posing the following questions step by step.</p> <p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <p><b>1. Roots:</b> The roots represent their ancestral origins: Where do I come from? Which village, which community? Who were my parents, grandparents, what’s my language, religion, culture? The participants write down their thoughts on sticky notes and glue them on the roots of the big tree on the flip chart.</p> <p><b>2. Soil:</b> Soil is the material that symbolizes what feeds my life: relationships/friendships that help us thrive, hobbies/regular activities, and things we enjoy in life.</p> <p><b>3. Trunk:</b> The trunk represents what makes us strong as humans/ as a balanced man: Values, identities, ...</p> <p><b>4. Branches:</b> The branches stand for hopes and dreams, for your own life, but also for your loved ones, and for society in general. The participants write down their aspirations, dreams, hopes, wishes on the sticky notes and place them in the branches.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>5. Leaves:</b> They represent important people in our lives; people who have a positive influence on us.</p> <p><b>6. Fruit:</b> represents the legacies we hope to leave behind for our community: Once I am gone, what do I want to leave behind in this world?</p> <p><b>7. Compost:</b> Compost represents all the things/ thoughts/ideas that we want to discard: values, people, episodes we no longer want to have in our lives.</p> <p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b> Prepare the tree on a big flip chart; prepare enough materials for the participants (sticky notes, pens, pencils), and familiarize yourself with the set of questions.</p>
<p><b>Plenary group Joint reflection</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To share lessons learned through the exercise “Circle of Life”</p>	<p>Both for adults and youth: They can share the results of their “Circles of Life” in the plenary group on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>Was this self-reflection exercise useful? What have I learned?</p>
<p>Total Duration: 75 minutes</p>		



## References

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## Unit 4:

# Looking at Systems

### Introduction to the Systemic Approach

In the previous sessions, the focus was on the individual: emotions, human relations, embracing difficult situations in life, and how to overcome challenges. In this chapter, the focus will broaden from the individual to the collective, pursuing a more systemic approach. This chapter will examine different systems, which systems the person is part of, and how each individual is connected to the systems identified. This chapter also takes a look at whether systems affect the individual positively or negatively and ultimately, how the individual can exert influence over the systems he/she is part of. Looking at systems allows us to get a more holistic view of complex realities, and hence, also a more complete picture of understanding existing problems. In the systemic approach, interactions and interconnectedness between the individual and the systems are looked at, such as recurring patterns, behaviors, and relationships between the individual and the broader systems he/she is part of. Therefore, this chapter will take a deep dive into the systems that surround us as individuals, and the interaction between the individual and the systems that are around the individual.

### This unit includes two sessions:

- **Session 1:** Systems and Me
- **Session 2:** Understanding Individual and Systemic Violence, and Exploring Positive and Negative Systems

## Session 1:

### Systems and Me

**Overall Objective: self-reflection on the individual and how he/she is embedded in broader society or “systems.”**

#### Specific Objective:

- All humans are part of systems. Hence, this session seeks to understand one’s role in broader societal systems (for example, the individual and family/community, the individual and religion, the individual and school/workplace, the individual and the political system, etc.).
- There are inter-dependencies between the individual and the different systems, and systems can influence the individual and vice versa. This exercise seeks to explore what systems individuals are part of and how they are connected.

Duration: 75 minutes

#### Materials and Preparations:

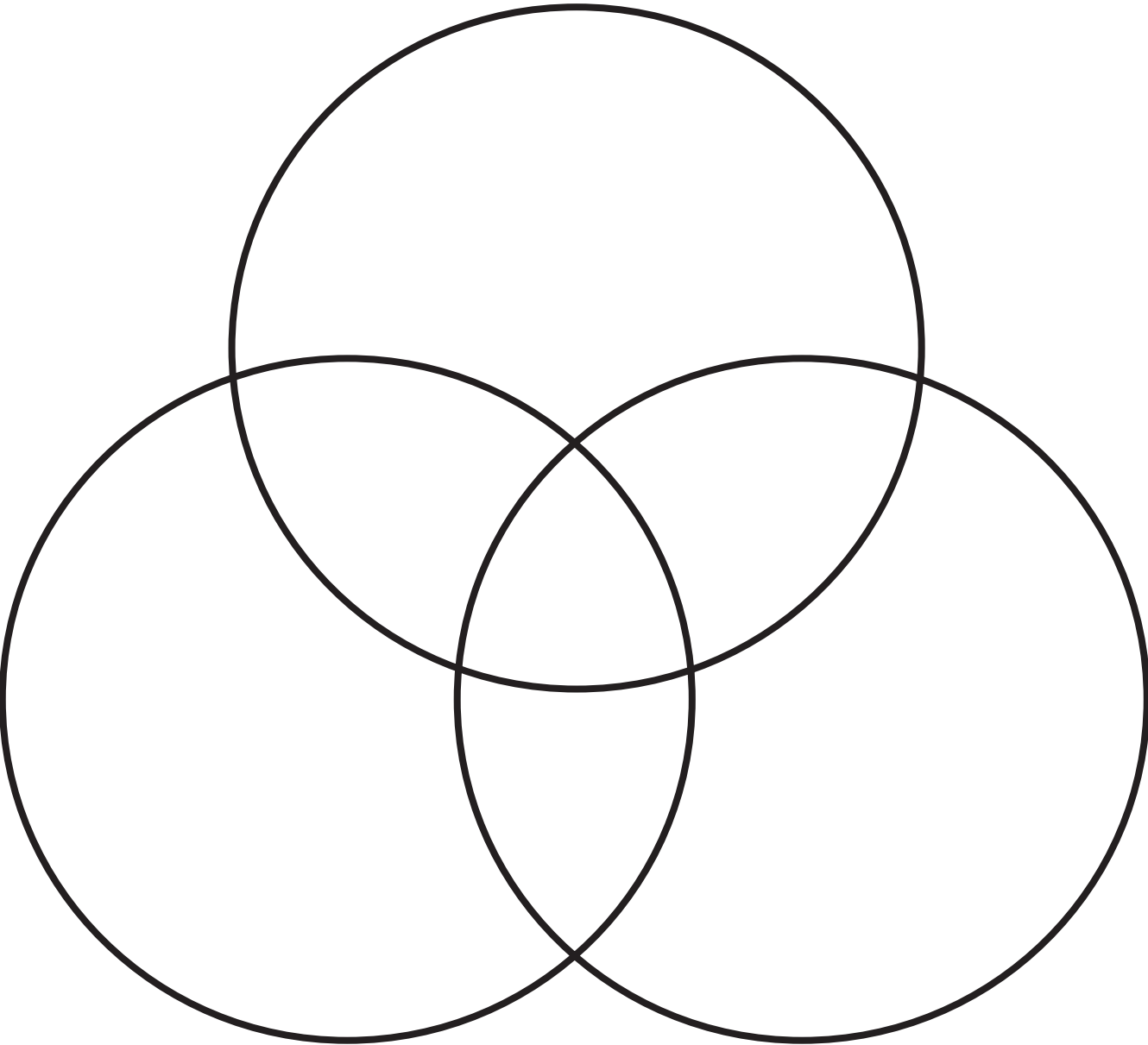
- Flipchart paper & flipchart board, markers
- Big Venn diagram on the flipchart
- A4 copies of the Venn diagram for all participants
- Extra papers (A4)

Activity	Objectives	Content
<b>Plenary group exercise</b>  Duration: 10 minutes	Brain storming	<b>Description:</b> In this exercise, the group explores through brain storming the question of what kind of systems exist. Examples of systems: family, friends, school, colleagues, volunteer groups/hobbies, religious groups, political parties, political system, etc.  <b>Guiding question:</b> What types of systems can you recall?  <b>Notes for the facilitator:</b> Encourage as many participants as possible to share their answers in the group brainstorming. Write down the results on a flipchart.
<b>Individual work on the Venn diagram</b>  Duration: 30 minutes	Self-reflection on a person’s role and on the different systems that surround the individual	<b>Description:</b> The exercise has as purpose to better understand which systems influence our lives. The facilitator distributes A4 copies of the Venn diagram to the participants (see “Handout 6 for participants: Worksheet Venn Diagram”). Each participant fills in the Venn diagram individually, writing down all the types of systems they are part of (me, my family/school/friends/peers/colleagues/religious group/political party/volunteer work/scouts/etc.)

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Guiding questions/instructions:</b>  <b>The participants write down:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ME (the individual/the participant) is located in the middle of the Venn diagram</li> <li>- The circles that are closer to the middle are the systems directly connected to the individual (for example, family, friends, school, etc.)</li> <li>- The circles farther away from the middle represent broader systems that still have influence on the individual (for example, religious group, political party, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare enough copies of the Venn diagram.</li> <li>• Familiarize yourself with the structure of the Venn diagram in order to be able to explain it to the participants.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sharing with the plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes</p>	<p>Sharing</p>	<p>The facilitator invites the participants to share their diagrams with the group on a voluntary basis.</p>
<p><b>Individual work on the Venn diagram</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>Self-reflection</p>	<p><b>Description:</b>  Participants continue to work on their Venn diagrams.  Now they have to think of the interdependencies between “the systems” and “Me”.</p> <p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the inter-dependencies between “Me” and “the systems” I am part of?</li> <li>• How can I look at the systems I wrote down through a gender lens? Are certain systems specific to a certain gender? (Example: all religious leaders are male).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Feedback of the plenary group/ Facilitator</b></p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes</p>	<p>Feedback</p>	<p><b>Description:</b>  The plenary group provides feedback to the facilitator.</p> <p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was new or interesting for you?</li> <li>• Was the exercise helpful to understand systems? Was it relevant to the participants’ realities?</li> <li>• Was there anything negative/not so interesting?</li> </ul>
<p>Total Duration: 75 minutes</p>		

**Handout 6**  
**To the participants:**

**Worksheet Venn Diagram**



## Session 2:

### Understanding Individual and Systemic Violence, and Exploring Positive and Negative Systems

#### Introduction:

This is an optional session on understanding individual violence versus structural or systemic violence. To better grasp how systems function and to distinguish between systems that are positive and those with negative influence, it is helpful to understand the difference between individual and systemic violence.

**Overall Objective:** self-reflection

#### Specific Objective:

Understanding one's role in broader systems, including the interdependencies within those systems and how they influence the individual and vice versa.

Total Duration: 90 minutes

#### Materials and preparation:

- Flipchart paper, flipchart board, and markers
- Copies of the Venn diagram for all participants (the same Venn diagrams that the participants used in the last session)
- Extra papers (A4)

Activity	Objectives	Content
<b>Introduction</b>  Duration: 5 minutes	Introduction	<b>Description:</b>  This session combines open discussion and brainstorming with a presentation by the facilitator. As an introduction to the theme, the facilitator informs the participants that this session will explore different types of violence: Individual violence versus systemic violence. The first part of the session is dedicated to individual types of violence, while the second part focuses more on systemic types of violence.
<b>Brainstorming Plenary group</b>  Duration: 10 minutes	Self-reflection on a person's role and on the different systems that surround the individual	<b>Description:</b>  First, the plenary group brainstorms together to identify the types of existing individual violence. The facilitator encourages the group to discuss the main types of individual violence. The facilitator writes down the results on a flipchart. The plenary group should be able to identify 5 main types of individual violence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical violence</li><li>• Sexual violence</li><li>• Psychological violence</li><li>• Verbal violence</li><li>• Financial violence</li></ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Recap/short presentation by the facilitator Or a joint discussion in the plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 20 – 15 minutes</p>	<p>To deepen the understanding of different types of violence</p>	<p>In case the plenary group did not come up with details about each type of violence, the facilitator holds a short presentation about the different types of violence:</p> <p><b>1. Physical Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involves using a person’s body or an object to exert control over another person.</li> <li>• Causes physical pain, injury, or harm.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples:</b> Hitting, slapping, pushing, restraining, or using weapons.</p> <p><b>2. Sexual Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occurs when someone is forced into unwanted sexual activity or when sexual behavior causes fear or discomfort.</li> <li>• Violates personal autonomy and bodily integrity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples:</b> Stalking, Rape, forced marriages, honor killings and genital mutilation.</p> <p><b>3. Psychological Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses threats, fear, or manipulation to control another person’s behavior or emotions.</li> <li>• Leads to feelings of worthlessness, fear, or loss of self-esteem.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples:</b> Intimidation, Gaslighting, Emotional blackmail, Isolation, Bullying.</p> <p><b>4. Verbal Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses spoken or written language to cause emotional or psychological harm.</li> <li>• Often undermines self-confidence and dignity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples:</b> Insults, Hate speech, Name-calling, Constant criticism.</p> <p><b>5. Financial Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involves controlling or misusing someone’s financial resources without consent.</li> <li>• Creates dependency and limits freedom.</li> </ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Examples:</b> Restricting access to money, Forcing debt, Withholding earnings.</p> <p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b> Prepare this session well, since you are giving a short lecture. You must familiarize yourself well with the different types of violence beforehand. It is recommended to read some of the resources listed at the end of this section.</p>
<p><b>Brainstorming Plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes</p>	<p>Self-reflection on a person's role and on the different systems that surround the individual</p>	<p><b>Description:</b></p> <p>First, the plenary group brainstorms together to identify the types of existing individual violence. The facilitator encourages the group to discuss the main types of individual violence. The facilitator writes down the results on a flipchart. The plenary group should be able to identify 5 main types of individual violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical violence</li> <li>• Sexual violence</li> <li>• Psychological violence</li> <li>• Verbal violence</li> <li>• Financial violence</li> </ul>
<p><b>Short presentation/ explainer by facilitator</b></p> <p>Duration: 20 minutes</p>	<p>To understand systemic or structural violence</p>	<p><b>Description: Short presentation</b></p> <p>The facilitator outlines the meaning of systemic or structural violence and gives examples. The facilitator explains that not all types of violence are visible. Systemic violence is built into laws, policies, and institutions that create inequality and prevent people from meeting their basic needs or accessing their rights.</p> <p><b>Key Characteristics of systemic or structural violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violence is institutionalized: embedded in governments, schools, religious, and economic systems.</li> <li>• Indirect harm: denies access to essential resources and opportunities.</li> <li>• Disproportionate impact: affects marginalized groups more severely.</li> <li>• Long-Term consequences: reinforces inequality and trauma across generations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of Structural Violence</b></p> <p><b>1. Racial segregation in NASA (1960s, USA):</b> A Black woman working at NASA was forced to walk long distances to use segregated bathrooms, reducing her productivity and opportunities. Once discovered, NASA abolished segregation in its facilities.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>2. Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon:</b> Palestinians are legally barred from owning land or building homes, leading to overcrowded camps and generations of economic hardship.</p> <p><b>3. Yazidi women in Iraq:</b> After the genocide, women could not inherit land if male relatives were killed. Advocacy efforts led to law reforms, allowing women to own family property.</p> <p><b>Forms of Systemic Violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racism</li> <li>• Sexism</li> <li>• Economic inequality</li> <li>• Discriminatory laws or institutional practices</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p><b>Systemic or structural violence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is institutionalized through laws and norms.</li> <li>• Prevents access to basic needs and human rights.</li> <li>• Sustains inequality through power imbalances.</li> <li>• Has long-lasting social and psychological impacts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b> Prepare this session well, since you are giving a short presentation. You must familiarize yourself well with the different types of violence beforehand. It is recommended to read some of the resources listed at the end of this section. Familiarize yourself with some examples of the different types of violence.</p>
<p><b>Short explainer By facilitator</b></p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes</p>	<p>To weigh systems: positive or negative?</p>	<p><b>Description:</b> In this section, the facilitator explains that systems can be both positive and negative. Systems can provide benefits such as stability, protection, knowledge, and financial revenues. However, some systems can be negative and may involve violence, for example, when an individual lives in a country dominated by authoritarian leadership.</p>
<p><b>Individual work on the Venn diagram / extra sheet of paper</b></p> <p>Duration: 20 minutes</p>	<p>To analyze systems: positive or negative?</p>	<p><b>Description:</b> In this section, the participants are asked to categorize the systems they identified earlier on the paper with the Venn diagram individually. They can either continue to work on the Venn diagram or use a new sheet of paper.</p>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which systems do I perceive mainly as positive/supportive?</li> <li>• Which systems do I perceive mainly as harmful/violent?</li> <li>• Which systems are both positive and negative?</li> <li>• Which systems contribute to my well-being and how can I profit from them?</li> <li>• Which systems bear the potential of violence?</li> <li>• How can I act within the systems so that I can influence them in a positive way?</li> </ul> <p>Participants have the choice to present their results to the group.</p> <p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b> Use the guiding questions and give participants the option to continue working on the Venn diagram or to start on a new sheet of paper.</p>
<p><b>Wrap up in the plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes</p>	<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>Wrap up in the group by asking the participants for a short feedback.</p> <p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did I learn?</li> <li>• Is it connected to my personal reality?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Feedback of the plenary group/ Facilitator</b></p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes</p>	<p>Feedback</p>	<p><b>Description:</b> The plenary group provides feedback to the facilitator.</p> <p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was new or interesting for you?</li> <li>• Was the exercise helpful to understand systems? Was it relevant to the participants' realities?</li> <li>• Was there anything negative/not so interesting?</li> </ul>
<p>Total duration:  Approx. 90 minutes</p>		

## Resources

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-therapy/types-of-therapy/systemic-therapy/>

<https://systemische-gesellschaft.de/systemischer-ansatz/was-ist-systemisch/methoden/>

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/violence/forms-violence>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structural\\_violence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structural_violence)



# **Section 3:**

## **Peacebuilding**

**Prepared By:** Assaad Chaftari

## Introduction

Peacebuilding is the process of creating lasting peace by addressing the root causes of conflicts and helping societies recover after violence or war. It goes beyond simply stopping fighting (peacemaking and peacekeeping). Indeed, peacebuilding focuses on establishing the social, political, and economic foundations that prevent future conflicts.

In brief, peacebuilding means helping people and communities transition from conflict and hatred to cooperation and stability. Effective peacebuilding involves dialogue, reconciliation, and community participation to ensure sustainable peace. It also requires long-term commitment from local actors, governments, and international partners to build resilient and inclusive societies.

### **This section includes three units:**

- **Unit 5:** Understanding peacebuilding and conflict
- **Unit 6:** Communication and peaceful means of conflict resolution
- **Unit 7:** Building a culture of peace

## Unit 5:

# Understanding Peacebuilding and Conflict

### Introduction

Achieving peace in a society that has experienced cycles of violence and war requires a deep understanding of both conflict and peace. It is essential to explore how individuals and communities perceive these concepts, as well as how they navigate and address them. Since humans often mix conflict and violence, their definitions of both are frequently inaccurate. Recognizing the difference between the two is crucial, as it helps us develop a clearer understanding of peacebuilding; an approach that goes beyond merely the absence of direct violence. True peace encompasses cultural and structural dimensions, fostering harmonious relations within society. Conflict, often viewed negatively, is actually a natural and inevitable part of human life, a main component of relationships and societal dynamics. Without understanding this, it is impossible to grasp the true nature of peace. Recognizing conflict as a natural aspect of human existence is the first step toward fostering genuine peace and sustainable reconciliation. This chapter aims to explore these fundamental ideas, emphasizing that peace is not just the absence of conflict or violence, but a positive state that can be cultivated through understanding and deliberate action..

### This unit includes two sessions:

- **Session 1:** Introduction to Peacebuilding
- **Session 2:** Understanding Conflict

## Session 1:

### Introduction to Peacebuilding

**Overall Objective: Gain practical knowledge and skills in peacebuilding.**

**Specific Objective:**

- Understand the difference between positive peace and negative peace
- Identify various types of violence

Duration: 45 minutes

**Materials and Preparations:**

- A flipchart with colored markers
- Notebooks and pens for participants
- Equip the room with separate round tables
- An LCD projector and a screen
- A PowerPoint presentation prepared by the facilitator about the main concepts of peace and violence

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Ice breaker plenary group</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>To encourage participation and to get the participants to know each other.</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> Participants form two lines facing each other and, as they move along, they have to share any information about their former or current affiliations (such as religious, social, political, cultural, or other) and discuss what sets them apart from their partner.</p>
<p><b>Group work: understanding peace</b></p> <p>Duration: 30 minutes</p>	<p>To develop knowledge and understand peacebuilding concepts and practices.</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> The facilitator divided participants into small groups, with each group tasked with defining specific peacebuilding-related terms. Based on the group size, the facilitator assigns a set number of terms for each group to work on. Once the groups complete their definitions, participants share and discuss their findings to reach a consensus. The facilitator guides the discussion using their knowledge and PowerPoint presentation to ensure that all concepts are accurately and clearly defined by the end of the activity.</p> <p><b>The terms are:</b> Peace Building – Positive peace – Negative peace – Types of violence – Direct violence – Structural violence – Cultural violence – Self-directed violence – Interpersonal violence – Collective violence. Notes for the facilitator: Familiarize yourself with the definition of the above terms. Prepare a PowerPoint that includes a clear explanation and examples of the terms.</p>
<p>Total duration: 45 min</p>		

## Session 2:

### Understanding Conflict

**Overall Objective: Gain practical knowledge and skills in understanding conflict.**

**Specific Objective:**

- Define Conflict and understand its characteristics
- Identify and explain the key elements that constitute a conflict
- Describe and differentiate the different types of conflict.

Duration: 45 minutes

**Materials and Preparations:**

- A handout should be prepared with an example of a conflict, with questions to answer about the understanding of the participants of the conflict analysis.
  - A flipchart with colored markers
  - Notebooks and pens for participants
  - Equip the room with separate round tables
  - An LCD projector and a screen
- A PowerPoint presentation prepared by the facilitator about the main concepts related to conflict.
- A conflict case should be prepared to serve as a conflict analysis example. Depending on the number and type of participants (students, teachers, ex-fighters, etc.), one or more cases can be used.

Activity	Objectives	Content
<b>Plenary group: brainstorming</b>  Duration: 15 minutes	To understand the nature of conflict	<b>Short description:</b> The facilitator poses various questions related to conflict, its nature, and characteristics. Participants brainstorm and share their ideas to find answers, which the facilitator records on flipcharts. Once completed, the flipcharts are displayed around the room to serve as visual reminders, helping participants keep key concepts in mind as they move on to the next phase of conflict analysis.  <b>Guiding questions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you define conflict?</li><li>• What is the nature of a conflict? Is it a positive or a negative thing?</li><li>• What are the sources of conflict?</li><li>• What are the types of conflicts?</li></ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b> Familiarize yourself with the definition of the above terms. Prepare a PowerPoint that includes a clear explanation and examples of the terms. Below are the main ideas that should be developed in the PPT:</p> <p><b>1- Understanding Conflict:</b> A conflict is a dynamic process that occurs when two or more parties perceive their interests, goals, or values as incompatible, meaning each believes that achieving their goal will prevent the other from obtaining theirs. It's not always about fighting; sometimes it's just tension, competition, or misunderstanding. Conflict becomes a problem when it turns violent, destructive, or long-lasting.</p> <p><b>2- The Nature of Conflict</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Conflict is universal</li> <li>o Conflict is natural</li> <li>o Conflict can be positive or negative</li> <li>o Conflict changes over time</li> </ul> <p><b>3- Main Elements of a Conflict are:</b> Parties/Issues/Perceptions/Relationships/Behavior</p> <p><b>4- Main causes of conflicts could be:</b> Economic, political, social, cultural/religious, environmental, and psychological.</p> <p><b>5- Main types of Conflict are:</b> Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, and International.</p>
<p><b>Group work: Conflict analysis</b></p> <p>Duration: 30 minutes</p>	<p>To develop the ability to analyze a given conflict example through practice.</p>	<p><b>Short description:</b> The facilitator will prepare a short presentation explaining what conflict analysis is and why it is important. They will also clarify that various tools are used to conduct conflict analysis, but today, only three will be introduced: the Onion, the Tree, and the Conflict Mapping. The facilitator will briefly explain each of these tools. Following the explanation, a written conflict case will be distributed to the participants, who will then be asked to apply these three tools to analyze the conflict case. After they finish, the groups have to present their work to the plenary.</p>
<p>Total duration: 45 min</p>		

## Unit 6:

# Communication and Peaceful Means of Conflict Resolution

### Introduction

Whenever we say that violence should not be used to resolve conflict because conflict is inevitable but violence is not, we are emphasizing the need for alternative, non-violent means of addressing disagreements. This perspective recognizes that while conflicts are a natural part of human interaction, resorting to violence is neither necessary nor acceptable. Instead, we must explore and adopt peaceful techniques that enable us to resolve conflicts constructively and respectfully. This is why, in this unit, we will begin by examining different peaceful methods and communication strategies that can be used to effectively manage and resolve conflicts without violence. Understanding and applying these techniques are essential steps toward building a more peaceful and harmonious society.

### This unit includes two sessions:

- **Session 1:** Communication and Active Listening
- **Session 2:** Dialogue, Negotiations, and Mediation

## Session 1:

### Communication and Active Listening

**Overall Objective: Enable participants to understand the principles of effective communication and active listening**

**Specific Objective:**

- Identify and describe the different types of communication
- Understand the principles of non-violent communication and its importance
- Practicing non-violent communication techniques in various interpersonal scenarios

Duration: 40 minutes

**Materials and Preparations:**

- A flipchart with colored markers
- Notebooks and pens for participants
- Equip the room with separate round tables
- An LCD projector and a screen
- A PowerPoint presentation prepared by the facilitator about the main concepts related to communication.
- A PowerPoint presentation prepared by the facilitator about the main concepts of peace and violence

Activity	Objectives	Content
<b>Storytelling: in pairs exercise</b>  Duration: 15 minutes	Learn active listening, rephrasing, and summarizing.	<b>Description:</b> Participants form pairs (A and B). Person A speaks for 1 minute about a simple topic such as a favorite hobby, a childhood memory, or a weekend plan. Person B listens silently without interrupting or commenting. After A finishes, B is asked to summarize what A said in their own words. Then the roles are reversed, and the same process is repeated. After they finish, the participants go back to the plenary and describe what happened. With the help of the facilitator, the participants go through the main principles of communication and active listening.  <b>Notes for the facilitator:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication is the process of sharing information, ideas, feelings, or messages between people, groups, or organizations so that understanding is created.</li></ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It involves both sending and receiving messages through words, actions, gestures, or even silence.</li> <li>• Communication is how people connect and understand each other.</li> <li>• Different types of communication are:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Verbal communication: using spoken or written words (ex: speeches, letters, texts, etc.).</li> <li>o Non-verbal communication: using body language and facial expressions. Ex: tone, smiling, nodding, gestures, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Main barriers to effective communication are: language differences, lack of active listening, physical barriers, emotional barriers, cultural differences, assumptions and stereotypes, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Group work</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>Practice nonviolent communication</p>	<p><b>Description:</b> The facilitator goes through the main concepts of nonviolent communication. Participants, in turn, will create two scenarios: one illustrating violent communication and the other demonstrating nonviolent communication, and then perform them in front of the entire group.</p> <p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a peaceful way of speaking and listening that helps people understand each other without blame or anger.</li> <li>• It was developed by Marshall Rosenberg to promote empathy, respect, and cooperation, even during conflict.</li> <li>• Nonviolent Communication is a method of expressing yourself honestly and listening to others compassionately to build understanding and resolve conflicts peacefully.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Four Steps of NVC:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observation: State what happened without judging. Example: "When you interrupted me during the meeting..."</li> <li>2. Feelings: Express how you feel. "...I felt frustrated and ignored."</li> <li>3. Needs: Say what you need or value. "...because I need to feel heard and respected."</li> <li>4. Request: Ask clearly, not demand. "Would you be willing to let me finish next time?"</li> </ol>
<p>Total duration: 40 min</p>		

## Session 2:

### Dialogue, Negotiation, and Mediation

**Overall Objective: Participants will understand the different types of conflict resolution techniques, focusing on dialogue, negotiation and mediation, and the difference between them.**

**Specific Objective:**

Understand and apply dialogue and mediation techniques.

Duration: 40 minutes

**Materials and Preparations:**

- A flipchart with colored markers
- Notebooks and pens for participants
- Equip the room with separate round tables
- An LCD projector and a screen
- A PowerPoint presentation prepared by the facilitator about the main concepts related to communication.

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Storytelling: in pairs exercise</b></p> <p>Duration: 15 minutes</p>	<p>Learn active listening, rephrasing, and summarizing.</p>	<p><b>Description:</b></p> <p>The trainer will begin by asking participants to share the methods of peaceful conflict resolution they are familiar with. Using brainstorming, the facilitator will record the responses on the board. The facilitator will then clarify that, for this session, the focus will be on three specific techniques: dialogue, negotiation, and mediation.</p> <p>Next, the facilitator will divide participants into three groups (or more, depending on the number of participants). Each group will be assigned one of these techniques and tasked with working together to answer the following questions: the definition of the technique, its key features (such as purpose, participants, process, role of a third party, and expected outcomes).</p> <p>After each group presents its findings, the trainer will display a PowerPoint presentation to clearly explain each technique. The trainer will also correct any misconceptions or inaccuracies shared by participants during the presentations.</p>
<p><b>Group work</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>Practice nonviolent communication</p>	<p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b></p> <p>1- A dialogue is an open and respectful exchange of ideas, experiences, or feelings between two or more parties. Its main goal is understanding, relationship-building, and communication, and not necessarily agreement or decision-making.</p> <p><b>Key features:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To share perspectives and build mutual understanding.</li> <li>• <b>Participants:</b> Individuals or groups who want to learn from each other.</li> <li>• <b>Process:</b> Informal conversation, guided by ground rules like listening and respect.</li> <li>• <b>Role of third party:</b> Usually none.</li> <li>• <b>Outcome:</b> Increased trust, empathy, and clarity, and not necessarily a concrete agreement.</li> </ul> <p>2- A negotiation is a bargaining process where two or more parties with different interests try to reach a mutually acceptable agreement.</p> <p><b>Key features:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To reach a deal or resolve a conflict through compromise.</li> <li>• <b>Participants:</b> Parties who have the authority to make decisions.</li> <li>• <b>Process:</b> Direct discussion of interests, offers, and counteroffers.</li> </ul>

Activity	Objectives	Content
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Role of third party:</b> Usually none; parties negotiate directly.</li> <li>• <b>Outcome:</b> A binding or informal agreement (e.g., a contract, settlement, or decision).</li> </ul> <p>3- Mediation is a structured process where a neutral third party (the mediator) helps disputing parties communicate and work toward a voluntary and mutually acceptable resolution.</p> <p><b>Key features:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To resolve a dispute with the help of an impartial facilitator.</li> <li>• <b>Participants:</b> Conflicting parties + a neutral mediator.</li> <li>• <b>Process:</b> The mediator facilitates communication, identifies interests, and assists in generating options, but does not impose a decision.</li> <li>• <b>Role of third party:</b> Central; the mediator manages the process.</li> <li>• <b>Outcome:</b> Often a written agreement or understanding between the parties</li> </ul>
Total duration: 40 min		

# Unit 7:

## Building a Culture of Peace

### Introduction: Building Peace After War

After the destruction of war, peace is not simply the absence of conflict; it is the presence of justice, trust, and shared humanity. Rebuilding a nation requires more than reconstructing cities; it demands healing hearts, restoring relationships, and renewing hope. Lasting peace grows when former enemies choose dialogue over division, forgiveness over revenge, and cooperation over fear. By investing in truth, education, equality, and inclusion, societies can transform the pain of war into the foundation of a stronger, more united future.

Building a culture of peace means nurturing values, attitudes, and behaviors that reject violence and uphold human dignity. It calls for teaching respect and empathy, promoting fairness and participation, and ensuring that every voice is heard.

A culture of peace empowers individuals and communities to resolve conflicts through peaceful means of conflict resolution, to celebrate diversity, and to work together toward shared goals. When peace becomes part of everyday life, in families, schools, institutions, and communities, nations can move beyond the scars of war and build a future founded on understanding and cooperation.

**This unit includes one session**

**Overall Objective: To understand post-war recovery processes.**

### Specific Objective:

Encourage and motivate participants to take personal and small group initiatives to actively contribute to the process of recovery.

### Material and Preparation:

- A flipchart with colored markers
- Notebooks and pens for participants
- Equip the room with separate round tables
- An LCD projector and a screen
- A PowerPoint presentation prepared by the facilitator about the main concepts related to communication.


Activity	Objectives	Content
<b>Group work</b> Duration: 40 minutes	To understand recovery after a civil war	<b>Description:</b> The facilitator will ask participants to work in groups to discuss and answer the following question: What are the steps that should be taken to build a culture of peace after a war? Participants will collaboratively discuss their answers within their groups, then share and discuss them with the entire plenary. After the discussions, the facilitator will present a PowerPoint presentation outlining the main steps involved in building a culture of peace.

Activity	Objectives	Content
<p><b>Group work</b></p> <p>Duration: 25 minutes</p>	<p>Practice nonviolent communication</p>	<p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b>  <b>How to build a culture of peace after a war:</b>  1. Heal and reconcile: support trauma recovery, forgiveness, and truth-telling.  2. Rebuild trust: encourage dialogue between former enemies and promote inclusion.  3. Ensure justice and fairness: address war crimes and protect human rights.  4. Educate for coexistence: teach tolerance, empathy, and shared national identity.  5. Rebuild communities: restore livelihoods, homes, and essential services fairly.  6. Promote shared hope: celebrate peace through culture, art, and community projects.</p>
		<p><b>Description:</b>  The facilitator interactively explains the process of transitional justice with examples.</p> <p><b>Notes for the facilitator:</b>  Transitional justice refers to the set of measures a society uses to address past Human Rights violations and rebuild trust after violent conflict or authoritarian rule. Its goal is to ensure accountability, serve justice, and promote reconciliation. Common approaches include:  <b>1. Recognition of victims:</b> Giving voice to those who suffered, validating their experiences, and affirming their rights as citizens.  <b>2. Accountability:</b> Ending impunity by holding perpetrators responsible for serious crimes such as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.  <b>3. Reparations and redress:</b> Providing compensation, rehabilitation, or symbolic gestures (like apologies or memorials) to repair the harm done.  <b>4. Truth and acknowledgment:</b> Uncovering and documenting what happened through truth commissions or public inquiries to promote collective understanding.  <b>5. Institutional reform:</b> Reforming justice systems, the police, and other state institutions to prevent future abuse and rebuild public trust.  <b>6. Reconciliation and social healing:</b> Fostering dialogue between divided communities to rebuild relationships and create a shared vision of the future.</p>
<p><b>Group work</b></p> <p>Duration: 20 minutes</p>	<p>To set goals and actions for peacebuilding</p>	<p><b>Description:</b>  The facilitator will ask participants to work in groups to develop an action plan outlining practical steps for building a culture of peace and reconciliation in Lebanon.  Once the group work is completed, each group will present its results to the entire plenary.</p>
<p>Total duration: 40 min</p>		

## Join Us

You can reach us here and join us using the below links:

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