



INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR ETHNO-RELIGIOUS MEDIATION

Center of excellence for ethnic, racial and religious conflict resolution and peacebuilding

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Living Together Movement





About LTM

Living Together Movement is a nonpartisan community dialogue project hosted in a safe place of encounter to promote civic engagement and collective action. At the Living Together Movement forums, we encounter differences, similarities and shared values. We exchange ideas on how to foster and sustain a culture of peace, nonviolence and justice in the community.

Problem Solved

A rapid increase in misinformation or fake news on social media has caused an increase in polarization, hatred and fear. More and more people are living in fear and isolation. Mutual suspicion has increased. At the same time, the disruption of human-to-human contact caused by an increasing reliance on social media and other online platforms magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented widening of generation gap between young people and older adults causing loneliness and a decline in knowledge transfer.

Proposed Solution

We need to urgently reactivate in-person social contact and interaction in our communities through the creation of safe and trusting places of encounter.

Purpose

These places of encounter are needed to:

- Educate ourselves about our differences
- Discover our similarities and shared values
- Cultivate mutual understanding and empathy
- Build trust and dispel fear and hatred
- Celebrate and respect diversity
- Provide access to inclusion and equity
- Recognize and accept the same humanity in all peoples
- Preserve our cultures and ancient traditions
- Promote civic engagement and collective action
- Live together in peace and save our planet for future generations

Method

At these places of encounter, we host weekly dialogues, open-hearted conversations, compassionate & empathic listening, and diversity celebration. City residents come together every Monday evening to talk with, listen to, learn from, understand and share with one another. Each participant enriches the forum with a unique story. Everyone is given an opportunity to contribute to the discussion on the selected topic of the week. Forum discussion topics include, but not limited to, human dignity, forgiveness, peace, economy, education, employment/job, family, housing, food and water, healthcare, transportation, immigration, science, technology, race, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexuality, poverty, justice, policing, insecurity, violence, safety issues, public policies, climate change, human and group rights, foreign affairs, conflict, conflict resolution, and so on. Experts on the topic of the week are invited to offer insights. During the conversations, participants practice empathic listening and do not judge or criticize anyone. The goal is to truly understand the other before seeking to be understood and to generate mutually acceptable solutions to the issues discussed. This in turn leads to a collective action.

Dialogue Facilitators

The Living Together Movement forums are facilitated by skilled facilitators who are trained in intercultural communication and ethno-religious mediation.



Meeting Agenda

Opening Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Temperature Check (Just checking in on everyone)
Self-Care: Nourish Your Body and Soul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music and Food (Ethnic music and food of the week) • Poem
Mantra Recitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader: I am who I am and my ethnicity, race or religion is my identity. • Leader: You are who you are and your ethnicity, race or religion is your identity. • All: We are one humanity united on one planet and our shared humanity is our identity. • Leader: It is time: • All: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To educate ourselves about our differences To discover our similarities and shared values To live together in peace and harmony; and To protect and save our planet for future generations.
Conversation with Invited Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights from the Experts • Q&A (Facilitated Conversation with the Experts)
I-Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the things affecting peace and security in our community this week?
Collective Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What Can We Do to Help? • A Call to Action
Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of New Members • Other Announcements
Closing Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interfaith Blessing by Religious/Faith Leaders