Moving Beyond Sectarianism

A resource for
Young Adults
Youth and Schools

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Although it has been my task throughout this year to develop, write, illustrate, edit and pilot materials for the MBS young adults resource pack, it would not have been possible without the large number of people and young adults who entered into this process with me and I would like to acknowledge and thank the following in particular:-

Cecelia Clegg and Joseph Liechty, on whose research these resources are based, who provided supervision, support, teaching, advice and encouragement; Craig Sands co-worker, writer and editor of the MBS resource pack for adults, for his friendship and support; Ken Kearon, Director, the staff and members of the Board of the Irish School of Ecumenics for their advice and encouragement; the members of the steering group who attended the meetings and their organizations - Brigid Lenane, Churches Peace Education Programme; Eamon McCallion, Community Relations in Schools (CRIS); Mary Potter; Corrymeela Community; Anne Kilroy, Lagan College; Bill Cooper, Lower North Belfast Area project; Madeline Kingsberry, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and Hedley Abernethy, YMCA - Craigavon District Partnership Project. Their support was crucial to the whole process of reading, revising and re-writing these resources. In addition I would like to thank Paul Smyth, Youth Council, Gail Cooke, S.E.E.L.B; Joan Bennison, Roger McCune and Charley Sproule, Council for the Curriculum Examination and Assessment (CCEA) and Michael Arlow, Citizenship Education Project, University of Ulster for information, advice and encouragement. During the piloting process I was very grateful for the contributions of the young adults themselves, for their participation and courage and for all that they taught me in their feedback and evaluation. I would like to thank the schools and youth clubs that agreed to pilot the resources and the leaders/teachers who led and co-facilitated programmes during the piloting: Chris Craig, Ballycastle High School; The Chaplaincy and the RE dept., Lagan College; Bill Cooper, Lower North Belfast Area Project; Siobhan Harvey, Loreto Grammar School; Gary Trew, Massereene Community College; Jim Valente, North Belfast Area Project; John Peacock, members of St John’s and St Joseph’s Interchurch group and Paddy White and David Stanfield, Youthlink.

Finally I would like to thank all those funding agencies without whom the production of this resource pack would not have been possible; The Christendom Trust; The Community Bridges Programme of the International Fund for Ireland; The Department of Education for Northern Ireland; The Joseph Rank Benevolent Fund; The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and a private donor.
For the last six years Cecelia Clegg and Joseph Liechty, Irish School of Ecumenics, have been researching ways of ‘moving beyond sectarianism’. Their research and insights are published in a book, Moving Beyond Sectarianism. This resource pack is part of the next stage of making their findings widely available in the community in the youth/schools sector. As this resource is for use in both sectors, the illustrations may show young people in casual clothes or in school uniform, and their facilitator will be named as a leader/teacher.

The aim of this pack is to make available practical, attractive, experiential and multi-media resources, many of which have been piloted in and are appropriate to both school and youth settings, which will facilitate the exploration of some key issues and themes from the research. As this work is ongoing the resources are in a binder so that further material can be added to the appropriate sections as more is learnt about sectarianism and ways of moving beyond it.

The model of a tree starting with the seed is the key to using these resources. This model was chosen because sectarianism is a system with processes acting on and within each of us, in a similar way to the different processes operating on and within a tree. However no model is perfect and the main reason for using the tree is to help you find the section of the resource you need. There are six sections:-
Section one - Seeds

This section is designed to help you get the most out of these resources. It contains:

- a preparation for leaders/teachers using them - getting started
- a curricular plan/approach to using the resources
- a report of how the pilots were planned, some models of working, the outcomes and evaluation
- a bibliography and a list of organizations offering resources and skills training

Section two - Roots - the historical and theological roots of sectarianism

This section is a synopsis of the findings of Joe and Cecelia’s research into the historical and theological roots of sectarianism. In it we explore:

- sectarianism in Irish history
- theological roots of sectarianism
- when a religious idea is sectarian and
- ancestral voices

Section three - Trunk - understanding sectarianism

The central part of the tree is the trunk and its bark, a tough outer skin, which protects the tree from drying out, from cold weather, and from damage by insects and other creatures. The form of the trunk is determined by its habitat. How does the sectarianism from the surrounding habitat affect the life we live and the ‘baggage’ we bring into our relationships? The trunk section contains a synopsis of the central part of the research. In it we explore:

- different ways of understanding sectarianism
- the relationship between intentions and consequences
- a definition of sectarianism
- how sectarianism works as a system
- dynamics and varieties of sectarianism
- understanding reconciliation and
- how we might redeem identity and belonging as we move beyond sectarianism

This section is central to developing our understanding of the processes involved in the system of sectarianism.
Section four “Branches” - tools for understanding and moving beyond sectarianism

Working with a wide variety of groups since 1995, Joe and Cecelia developed several tools or models for thinking about sectarianism and how to counter it, including the pyramid of participation in sectarian attitudes brought from previous work. The models are ones that many groups and individuals found helpful in understanding some aspect of sectarianism. There are six of these branches:-

- the pyramid of sectarian participation
- benign apartheid
- the level
- approaches to dealing with difference
- mitigation and
- bifocal vision

All of these tools help us to ‘branch out’ as we learn more skills for dealing with difference at different levels - toleration; empathy; acceptance; and identification; taking a negotiating or mitigating approach.

Section five “Leaves” - action learning resources

The learning from the activities, some of which are listed on the leaves in this section, is hopefully one which will bring understanding and healing to the participants. The activities include:-

- learning games; closures
- quiz
- adventure learning - physical action-learning challenges to help young people warm up; co-operate and work together as a team; and build trust.
- group work
- storytelling
- art/craft activities
- puppets

Section six “Sap” - worship resources

Sap is a vital juice, which gives the tree vitality and energy. These worship resources are offered to promote positive ways of relating that might give us energy and hope, the fruits of which we can carry in right relationships with others right back to our roots. They can be used in an assembly or provide a closure for some of the action-based learning activities.

Ongoing Resources
As additional material for the file becomes available, it can be downloaded from the website of the Irish School of Ecumenics:-
Web: http://www.iol.ie/-ise
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Shape of the Resources</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **SEEDS**                 | • getting started  
|                           | • a curricular plan  
|                           | • a report of the pilots  
|                           | • a bibliography and a list of organizations offering resources and skills training |
| **ROOTS**                 | • sectarianism in Irish history  
|                           | • theological roots of sectarianism  
|                           | • when a religious idea is sectarian  
|                           | • ancestral voices |
| **TRUNK**                 | • understanding sectarianism  
|                           | • intentions and consequences  
|                           | • a definition of sectarianism  
|                           | • how sectarianism works as a system  
|                           | • varieties of sectarianism  
|                           | • understanding reconciliation  
|                           | • redeeming identity and belonging |
| **BRANCHES**              | • the pyramid of sectarian participation  
|                           | • benign apartheid  
|                           | • the level  
|                           | • approaches to dealing with difference  
|                           | • mitigation and  
|                           | • bifocal vision |
| **LEAVES**                | • learning games; closures  
|                           | • quiz  
|                           | • adventure learning challenges  
|                           | • group work  
|                           | • storytelling  
|                           | • art/craft activities  
|                           | • puppets |
| **SAP**                   | • worship resources |
Using the resources and getting started

Links with the curriculum

The pots

Bibliography
Getting Started

This resource contains material for teachers and youth workers to use with young adults focusing on sectarianism and ways of moving beyond it. It is strongly recommended that anyone wishing to use activities in this resource in either the formal school or informal youth sectors and not familiar with ‘circle time'; small group work; and experiential, action-based learning with young people seek and attend some training before using them. There are a number of organizations that provide such training and they are listed in the bibliography and skills section.

Where you start with the work will depend on:-

• your own readiness for it
• your preparation and training
• how well the work fits into an existing curricula to which you are already committed
• your knowledge and perception of the needs of the group

How you use the resource will depend on:-

• how much time you have available
• the size of your group
• how the work you do fits into the whole school or whole youth and community plan
• how both the activities and their evaluation fit into the curriculum you need to follow
• how progressive your work is

When you use these resources remember:-

• prepare and evaluate each session. The PROCESS is as important as any perceived end result
• participants also need preparation before they undertake this work
• evaluate early, change if necessary
• STOP if you think something isn’t working
• closure is important – end on a positive note
• confidentiality – warn young people about the vulnerability that goes with sharing a story. Support may not be available
• join a support network for yourself – this is not easy work. (There is a list of organisations in the bibliography and skills section that might be able to help)
• give time to preparing the working environment (See ‘Getting Started’ in the Games part of the Leaves section)

These resources are very focused on sectarianism and are intended to be part of a whole approach to Community Relations work. There are many other groups involved in Community Relations work in both the statutory and voluntary sectors and representatives of some of those groups have been partners in both the steering and the piloting of these resources and they are listed in the acknowledgments. The bibliography and skills section also includes a list of some of the resources produced by a number of organizations, which will compliment enrich and extend the reach of these resources.
It is also important to consider how both yourself and the group you are working with are going to progress and allow the work you do in this and any other resource to be sustained over space and time.

- How is the work that you do going to be passed on to others?
- How does the work that you do continue over time?

**Health and Safety**

*Adventure Learning*

For anyone who hasn’t been involved in adventure learning before, there are a number of health and safety issues which you would need to be aware of before you start

- Remind people of their own personal responsibility in taking part in these activities
- Give a brief outline of what is going to happen
- Check for suitable clothing/footwear
- Check for any existing injuries/health problems
- You need to be aware of individual group members at all times, particularly when they are being lifted up and through anything
- Check the condition of the structure, ensuring that there are no projections, splinters etc on the framework.
- Take extra care in wet conditions
- Ensure head protection for those being lifted and look out for loose clothing getting caught
- Warn about potential strain injury lifting heavier group members
- Design your own risk assessment for whatever activity you do and build it into your own health and safety policies
- Make sure you are covered with adequate insurance

The Bibliography and skills section contains some information which might help you.

Finally it must be emphasized that these materials are meant to provide a RESOURCE. They do not train you how to facilitate. If you do not feel confident about using any of the resources, please seek further information and training.
Links with the Curriculum

The resources for Moving Beyond Sectarianism can be easily fitted into school or youth service curricula. This section just gives brief examples of how they might fit into three curricula in particular:

- 1. Cultural Heritage and Identity - a contributory module to GCSE Social and Environmental Studies produced by Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment. Theme 2 Culture: Similarity and Diversity

- 2. The Youth Work Model for Effective Practice produced by the Department of Education Northern Ireland

- 3. The Religious Education Draft produced by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment for the Leaving Certificate Applied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course/ Learning Outcomes - Students will be able to:-</th>
<th>Identity and belonging through music/symbolism</th>
<th>Relationship of Identity and belonging to nationality and religion</th>
<th>Negative consequences of stereotypical thinking - sectarianism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand more about their own identity</td>
<td>The Quiz</td>
<td>'Where am I' and 'Where do I belong' Large Group work</td>
<td>Stereotypes exercise and First Thoughts (following Pyramid Web adventure learning game)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand that attitudes resulting from a sense of identity are not always positive</td>
<td>The Relief of Derry Symphony</td>
<td>Walls and Bridges</td>
<td>The Definition of Sectarianism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand more about the system of sectarianism</td>
<td>The Story Quilt and Badges of Identity</td>
<td>How do you feel? Storytelling</td>
<td>Puppet workshop Story - The ordinary decent citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn ways of dealing with difference and moving beyond sectarianism</td>
<td>Spirals exercise Discussion</td>
<td>Street Theatre - The Balloon Discussion Balloon debate</td>
<td>Puppet story Geronimo Grub</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important when designing your programme of work with your group to note that the resources in this pack are very focused on sectarianism - understanding it and moving beyond it. It is only a small part of a whole approach to community development, and so you will need to draw on a number of resources produced by a range of statutory and voluntary organizations. Some of these are listed in the bibliography section. Possible programmes for using with some of the activities from this resource pack are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young people will be able to</th>
<th>Personal and social development</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Acceptance and Understanding of others</th>
<th>Values and beliefs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand more about their own identity within their local and wider communities</td>
<td>Stereotypes exercise</td>
<td>Adventure learning A Pyramid Web and First Thoughts exercise</td>
<td>'Weaves of Identity' exercise</td>
<td>The story of Robert Traill Discussion Storytelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build relationships with acceptance, understanding respect and tolerance towards others</td>
<td>Trips Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and Belfast</td>
<td>Walls and Bridges activity</td>
<td>Making a story quilt using newspaper cuttings</td>
<td>Dramatic reading The House that Jack built Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore and clarify their values and beliefs within the system of sectarianism</td>
<td>'Where am I?' and Three corners exercise</td>
<td>Spirals exercise</td>
<td>The quiz Story 'The Field'</td>
<td>Puppet workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn ways of dealing with difference, transforming conflict and moving beyond sectarianism</td>
<td>A line of Sectarianism Negotiation</td>
<td>Bridge That Gap An indoor adventure learning activity Discussion</td>
<td>Jigsaw exercise and wool web</td>
<td>The Syrophoenician Woman or Parables Good Samaritan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Module 2 of the Religious Education Draft is entitled ‘Our Religious Story’. Attempts to match learning outcomes and topics from four of the units in that module to some of the material in this resource pack are outlined in the grid below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course/ Learning Outcomes - Students will be able to:-</th>
<th>Unit 1 Religion and Story</th>
<th>Unit 2 Religious Communities; interfaith dialogue and ecumenism</th>
<th>Unit 3 Religion and the local community</th>
<th>Unit 6 Religion and the media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience the power of story to communicate a truth on many levels</td>
<td>Telling our faith stories with the influences of sectarianism using the story quilt and items of identity</td>
<td>Looking at stereotypes-drawing them. Using the Spirals exercise to tell our stories</td>
<td>Looking at the Level - possible use of puppets to stimulate class debate about the Level in the local community</td>
<td>The Balloon drama; discussion about sectarianism and the media and a balloon debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the similarities and differences between religious groups in Ireland</td>
<td>'How do you Feel?' Listening to true stories about sectarianism</td>
<td>'I’m not prejudiced' drama discussion-how sectarianism works against dialogue</td>
<td>Dealing with difference - Role Plays. Discussion of similarities and differences</td>
<td>Make a star quilt using newspaper cuttings. Discuss negative mixing of religion and politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the contribution of religious groups in their local community</td>
<td>The Pyramid - Sectarianism as a structure/system Discussion</td>
<td>Geronimo Grub Moving beyond the borders. 'Cross border peace talks</td>
<td>Draw Billy and Seamus - Discussion about Stereotypes and hardening the boundaries</td>
<td>Play - Naked Sectarianism revealed. Pride denial and influence of media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify any bias prejudice or hidden agenda where such exists</td>
<td>The Pyramid—Discussion about intentions and consequences</td>
<td>'Where am I and where do I belong?' Large group work on identity and place</td>
<td>'My Place' - Discussion of past, Present and future</td>
<td>A quiz—a fun way to find out how politically aware we are</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seeds

The Pilots

Planning; Methods of work; and Outcomes and Evaluation

The resources were piloted in both the formal school and informal youth sectors:-

- Ballycastle Youth
- Massereene Community College
- Youthlink Kairos Group
- Loreto Grammar, Omagh
- Lower North Belfast Area Project and North Belfast Area Project
- Lagan College

Planning:-

Sessions were planned to fit in with various curricular demands:-

- In Lagan College, an integrated post-primary school, a year 13 group of about 80 young people in the 16-17 age group, were already timetabled to look at sectarianism for one period a week (40 minutes) over about 10 weeks between January and March. I was invited to join a team of teachers sometimes working with the whole large group and sometimes working in small groups.
- In North Belfast there was some difficulty experienced in trying to find a local venue neutral and safe enough for young people to come to, so the Lower North and North Belfast Area Projects met separately, in different venues at the same time. We worked out the same programme of six two-hour sessions together and I joined each of them alternately for three sessions each.
- In Massereene Community College, a board-controlled school in Antrim, I worked with 20 young people, a year 11 group in the 14-15 age group, and their teacher over ten weeks. The class, an RE class, was not working at exam level and had the time and opportunity to try out some of the resources. The teacher managed to negotiate with a colleague for extra time with the group every other week, so some of the sessions lasted 30 minutes, and others an hour.
- The Ballycastle Sunday Night group consisted of young people between the ages of 14 and 23 from the Ballycastle area. The group was inter-community. The leader chose to work over six two hour sessions, of which I would be present during three. We shared the facilitation.
- In Loreto Grammar, a Catholic maintained school in Omagh, I worked with about 20 young people, a year 14 group in the 17-18 age group, and their teacher over five weeks. Another similar group would do the same work with the teacher on her own, later in the week.
- The Youthlink Kairos group was an interchurch group of about 30 young people from St. John’s Presbyterian Church and St. Joseph’s Catholic church. We hoped to meet over three sessions, but the foot and mouth crisis meant that the sessions during a planned residential didn’t go ahead, and we had only one during a Sunday evening at one of the church halls.
Methods of working:-

Such different pilot groups meant that a whole range of approaches were used in trying out these resources. What did become very obvious was the need for training particularly in the schools. Teachers are not so familiar with action-learning and experiential approaches, so when it came to using the activities in the LEAVES section there was a need for us to work alongside one another in a training/learning environment. For example in Loreto, the work I led with the teacher observing/participating during one session, the teacher led on her own with another group later in the week.

The Programmes

All of the programmes had broadly the same aims and objectives.

Aims:

• To understand sectarianism as a system and how it works based on the research by Joe Liechty and Cecelia Clegg in their publication ‘Moving Beyond Sectarianism’.
• To raise awareness based on the findings of the research about the ways in which we and our communities have been implicated in sectarianism whether or not intending or desiring it
• To learn some skills for moving beyond sectarianism

Objectives:

• To follow a course of work over a varying number and duration of sessions
• To employ an action learning approach using games, quiz, discussions, large and small group work; and art and drama activities
• To also employ more formal learning approaches, presenting material from the research on overhead projector, and flipchart and giving time for feedback and discussion in small groups

Programme content:

The first smaller group sessions typically followed a programme like that outlined below:-

• Games (with desks pushed back and chairs in a circle) – see ‘Getting Started’ at the beginning of the ‘learning games section.
• Icebreaker – All Change
• Name Game
• Human Knots
• Getting to know you – paired interviews or hand prints
• Hopes/expectations/fears/contracting
• Buzz group - What is Sectarianism?
• Closure – Rainstorm

The other sessions varied widely in content.
Outcomes and evaluation

1. The Ballycastle Sunday Night Club

A major problem for the leaders was the task of combining known group resources with the research background material. They found some of the concepts difficult, especially the Pyramid. They decided to tackle the issue of sectarianism using the research findings and including their own materials from experiential work in the field. They also decided that what would work best for this group would be short input sessions, lots of group activity, and small and large group discussions.

As a teacher and youth tutor the leader felt that these materials might have worked better with a school group. He felt that the Ballycastle group needed to close after five sessions as the material was ‘on the verge of becoming boring’ and the reason for this he thought was that some of the group did not see themselves as sectarian. The trust exercises, badges of identity, maps, and discussion about the Level worked best with this group. The puppet workshop, quiz, and the discussion about the Pyramid did not work so well for them. Since the pilot has finished the youth tutor has found the resources very useful in class with the cultural heritage and identity module of Social and Environmental Studies (see Curriculum section).

The main recommendations were that people would need:

• at least one day’s training in order to come to terms with and understand some of the core material and findings from the research
• a better understanding about how this work can become embedded in the curriculum and more systemic
• some idea about how a group like this one can progress in their understanding of sectarianism

“It helped me to express my sectarian views”

2. Massereene Community College

This was a lovely group to work with and the fact that we had two preparation sessions followed by ten regular weekly sessions together throughout the term meant that we got to know each other and had an opportunity to try out many of the activities. The best sessions were a class discussion on the definition of sectarianism, and some work with the quilt and items of identity. The teacher had a lot of experience in community relations work and was confident about piloting a resource about sectarianism in his RE class. His relaxed way of working also won him respect with the group. He found the content of the resource stimulating and challenging and fitting well into the curriculum under ‘Caring for others’ and ‘Respect for different traditions’. The feedback from the young people was very helpful and included a number of useful comments:-
• As I learnt more about how the class felt and spoke out, I was able to do the same
• My feelings hardened when I saw a lot of Protestants drawing Catholic drawings
• It helped me to express my sectarian views
• I feel very mature now and would like to talk with other people, other schools
• It was not very helpful ’cause I don’t care about religion
• It teaches us to respect others and not to judge them for what they are
• To look at things from a different point of view
• I felt I could speak out more freely
• I have learnt it is both sides to blame. I can’t really take sides ’cause I am a Protestant and I live in a Catholic estate
• I got to know some members of the class I didn’t know

Future plans were:-

• For the teacher to use the resource next time with a mixed group from his own school (board controlled) and the neighbouring Catholic maintained school. Even though there were some Catholics in this class, many of the young people told stories about sectarian incidents in the town (Antrim).
• This resource would provide good preparation for a residential with two other neighbouring schools at Corrymeela, this year and in the future.

3. The Kairos group - Ormeau Road/Carryduff

The leaders from this group found the materials, particularly the research background, very helpful and hoped to make use of some of the worship resources. They used the quilt and the weaves with religious items of identity many of which they brought themselves as a follow up to some work they did on sectarianism during a residential. The leader hoped to use the resources again. The group itself is large and this presented a problem in getting through some of the activities in the available time.
4. Loreto Grammar School

The teacher working with the class had a number of comments and suggestions:

- The students could have focused more on the theory of sectarianism. Whilst the resource developed them emotionally and socially, it did not present an intellectual challenge
- Adequate time must be given to relate the theory to concrete experiences
- Follow-up suggested, the students producing a leaflet or video on sectarianism
- The programme was restricted by the fact that this group are all from the same religious denomination
- The teacher would have benefited from some sort of training
- Reservations about how the programme will work in a grammar school. Recommends use with keystage 3 and 4 and teacher training

“We are all involved - until we admit that we can't move past sectarianism”

This sixth form group found the ‘three corners’ exercise, the definition of sectarianism and the small group discussions most helpful. Here are some comments from their feedback:

- I became aware that sectarianism was not always obvious and that everyone can be sectarian by ignoring the issues
- I don't think this course has much relevance for same religious groups. Perhaps the activities would have held more significance in an integrated group? I do think that the school should have more interaction with schools of different denominations.
- Everyone is involved in the prolonging of sectarianism - this course opened my eyes and this was of real benefit
- Showed up our own sectarianism which we need to face up to
- More time is needed to fully become aware of how much sectarianism involves everyone - definitely involve cross-communities together
- More students throughout the school should take part in this
- We are all involved - until we admit that we can't move past sectarianism
- Could maybe be better if longer - to gain confidence to speak out
- More work with younger students
- Have mixed groups of different schools
- All the schools in N. Ireland should do these classes but more of them. I feel that we were just getting into it.
5. Lower North Belfast area project

“Is sectarianism more between Protestants and Protestants than Protestants and Catholics since the ceasefire?”

This group had completed a ‘Positive Protestant’ personal development programme raising self-awareness and building confidence, so their level of commitment to the course was very good. Their contributions were honest and direct. They particularly enjoyed and made full use of the puppet session and during the discussion after the ‘definition of sectarianism’ they had a number of reflections about moving beyond sectarianism and some questions:

- People need to stop being afraid
- Take the weapons out
- Create a stronger police service
- Lawlessness with drugs and feuding needs to stop
- More drop-in centres to help create community
- More incentives for training/awards
- More jobs
- Will the change to move beyond sectarianism be generational?
- Is sectarianism more between Protestants and Protestants then Protestants and Catholics since the ceasefire?

These young people are living in areas which still experience a high degree of sectarian tension and the map they made of their community showed it to be surrounded by walls of division and ‘no-go’ areas. They also expressed hope for the future and a wish to follow up their learning as a group by meeting with young people from the Catholic community

- There were plenty of activities that gave me an insight into sectarianism – it brought out a lot of my feelings
- Next step – to meet Catholics and get along with them and see what their views are.

North Belfast Area Project

This group was so committed to a number of other projects that they were unable to be at all the sessions. However the young people made very valuable contributions to the sessions that they did get to. Again the puppet session and one with community maps went well and there was a good response to the discussion following the ‘definition of sectarianism’. Both groups from North Belfast, one Protestant and one Catholic expressed the wish that they might have the opportunity to meet.
6. Lagan College

This group was very large and the teachers and myself worked together as a team delivering work over eight sessions during the spring term. Four of the sessions were with the large group and four were in small groups. The most popular large group session with the students was the introductory one with three of the teachers sharing their own personal experiences of sectarianism. The quiz was impressive and we managed to have three rounds in just half an hour with 80 students, and the presentation of a prize to the winning team at the end! During the small group work, discussions centred on topics relevant to issues arising in school and the quilt, flags and other items of identity proved to be useful resources. An option was also given to some of the students to visit the peace line. Some of the young peoples' comments were very interesting:-

- The visit to the peace line made me realise how bad sectarianism can get
- You should learn more about this when you are younger
- Start this programme in the fourth year
- I don’t really think about or worry about sectarianism but some things that were said helped me understand more
- I think talking is OK but let’s do something
- This course made me more aware of the two distinct sides of the community in Northern Ireland – people need to realise that their religion is the same as the other
- Not just a topic in class - we need to include moving beyond sectarianism in our everyday life for it to make a large difference in our lives
- It is a subject greeted with hostility, however these types of discussions bring about a change of opinion
- I was shocked and slightly embarrassed by the openness and how frank and blunt the discussions were
- I felt that I could not always voice my opinion about my own religion in the fear of offending anyone
- Challenge peoples’ views rather than being ‘nicey, nicey’ about the issues

“It is a subject greeted with hostility, however these types of discussions bring about a change of opinion”
Conclusions

There were a number of the resources that had mixed success, and others that were found to be unsuitable. In some cases we have considered what might be the optimum conditions for some of these resources and in others what needs to be removed or re-written.

• Some groups found sessions with the puppets really helpful, others felt uncomfortable or ‘childish’ and self-conscious using them and had difficulty getting into telling their stories. Puppetry worked best in the groups where the young people had a lot to say about sectarianism because they lived in areas where sectarian tension was high and had many stories to share. Having the puppets to ‘speak through’ gave them an opportunity to tell them. The groups/participants who had the most difficulty were possibly those who didn’t see themselves as sectarian, or understand yet how it affected them so didn’t have a particular opinion to express or story to tell.

• Some liked the ‘games’ some didn’t and some would have preferred not to have had so many after the initial meeting.

• Some groups used their own resources along with the findings of the research in the large and small group work and this was very helpful as the whole point of these resources is to encourage teachers/leaders as they learn more about the system of sectarianism to use the most appropriate materials for communicating that learning to the young adults with whom they work.

• The quiz that we tried proved to be a bit difficult for some of the groups and has been re-written.

• The quilt, weaves and various art projects were the most popular resources. They gave the young adults working with them an opportunity to tell their stories of how sectarianism affects their lives and their communities, and provided a rich training/learning environment for leaders/teachers, facilitators, and young people alike. One comment was made that the timing of these resources was important. It was recommended that they be used after a couple of initial meetings looking at the definition and understanding what sectarianism is.
Bibliography and Skills

The following organizations can offer advice and training on Community Relations work

**Department of Education**
The Community Relations Branch has delegated the responsibility for administration of the School's Community Relations Programme (SCRP) and the Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme (YSCRSS) to the five Education and Library Boards. Each board has staff with a specific remit for EMU and Cultural Heritage and SCRP and other staff for YSCRSS. The Department also channel funding through the Youth Council for Northern Ireland, in the form of their Community Relations Youth Service Support Scheme (CRYSSS). This funding is specifically for headquarters youth organizations. The Youth Council has a full time community relations officer.

**Belfast Education and Library Board**
Contact Tel (028) 9056 4000

**South Eastern Education and Library Board**
Contact Tel (028) 9056 6200

**North Eastern Education and Library Board (Schools)**
Contact Tel (028) 9448 2267

**North Eastern Education and Library Board (Youth)**
Contact Tel (028) 2566 2271

**Southern Education and Library Board**
Contact Tel (028) 3751 2200

**Western Education and Library Board**
Contact Tel (028) 8241 1411

**The Youth Council**
Offers advice and funding support to headquarters youth organizations
Contact Paul Smith Tel (028) 9064 3882, E psmyth@youthcouncil-ni.org.uk
Web: [www.youthcouncil-ni.org.uk](http://www.youthcouncil-ni.org.uk)

**JEDI**
There is a partnership project in the youth sector known as JEDI (Joined in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence), which is working on policy, practice and training in the areas of community relations and education for citizenship. At the time of going to press there are no training resources or funding available through JEDI, but we advise that you visit the website at [www.jedini.com](http://www.jedini.com) for further information

**Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)** - All subjects website [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)
Counteract  
Contact Paul Burke (028) 9023 7023

Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland (ECONI)  
Contact Linda Gould (028) 9032 5258

NICE (Northern Ireland Children’s Enterprise)  
Contact Grainne McKenna (028) 9066 8867

The Community Relations Training and Learning Consortium  
Contact Elaine Rowan (028) 8772 9610
Info@CRTLC.org

The Irish School of Ecumenics  
Contact Yvonne Naylor (028) 9038 2750

The Mediation Network  
Contact Maire Patton (028) 9043 8614

TIDES Training  
Contact Mary Montague (028) 9020 3519

Workers Education Association  
Contact Colin Neilands (028) 9068 7710

YMCA  
Contact Mark Hammond (028) 9032 7757

Youthlink  
Contact Paddy White Tel (028) 9032 3217

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)  
For training, advice, and resources on race relations and promoting diversity  
Contact Karima Zahi Tel (028) 9023 8645

INNATE an Irish Network for Nonviolent Action Training and Education, is an informal network existing in N. Ireland and the Republic. It has available a variety of resources, including training materials on peace nonviolence and campaigning. It produces a monthly newssheet, Nonviolent News (10 issues a year).  
Contact Tel/Fax (028) 9064 7106 e-mail innate@ntlworld.com  
Website http://members.tripod.co.uk/innate

The Play Resource Centre  
The Play resource collects non-toxic materials on a regular basis from firms throughout N. Ireland for creative reuse, encouraging environmental awareness and providing resources for play, arts, and education. Membership is open to all groups working with children and young people.  
Contact Deirdre Lavery Tel (028) 9077 3802
Books

The following reading resources may help further your understanding of Community Relations work and sectarianism:

- **Moving Beyond Sectarianism**
  Joseph Liechty and Cecelia Clegg,
  Columba Press 2001

- **Northern Ireland: A Comparative Analysis**
  Frank Wright pub. Gill and Macmillan

- **Relationship to Reconciliation**
  Mary Montague *(The Corrymeela Community)* 2001

- **Evangelicals**
  Glenn Jordan  ECONI

- **The State we’re in How can we change it?**
  Brigid Lenane
  The Churches Peace Education Programme

- **Various papers from Mediation Network are available on their website**
  www.mediation-network.org.uk

- **The Catholic Church and the Foundation of the Northern Ireland State**
  Mary Harris

- **Northern Nationalism**
  Eamon Phoenix, 1995 Ulster Historical Foundation

- **The Common Ground**
  ATQ Stewart

- **A Briefing Paper on Ireland**
  David Stevens, Inter Church Centre,
  48 Elmwood Ave., Belfast

- **Breaking Down the Enmity**
  Irish Inter-Church Meeting
  48 Elmwood Ave., Belfast

- **The Catholics of Ulster**
  Marianne Elliott  2000 Penguin Press

- **Northern Protestants**
  Susan Mc Kay  2000 Blackstaff Press

- **Drawing Support 1 - Murals of The North of Ireland**
  Bill Rolston, pub. Beyond the Pale

- **Drawing Support 2 - Murals of War and Peace**
  Bill Rolston, pub. Beyond the Pale

- **We are the People**
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**History**

| Dancing to History’s tune            | Brian Walker 1996 Inst. of Irish Studies QUB |
| Roots of Sectarianism in Ireland     | Joseph Liechty 1993 Irish Inter Church meeting 48, Elmwood Avenue Belfast |
| In Search of a State                 | Fionnuala O’Connor, Blackstaff Press |
| We are The People                    | Geoffrey Beattie, 1992 Heineman Press |
| Modern Ireland 1600-1972             | R.E. Foster, Penguin Press |
| Plantation to Partition              | Peter Roebuck Blackstaff Press |

**Literature**

| The Rattle of the North – an Anthology of Ulster Prose | Patricia Craig 1992 Blackstaff Press |
| All of us Here                                       | Polly Devlin, published in ‘The Rattle of the North’ |
| Crossing the Lisburn Road                             | Michael Longley, published in ‘The Rattle of the North’ |
| A Rage for Order – a Poetry of The Troubles           | Blackstaff Press 1992 |
| North                                                | Seamus Heaney 1966 Faber and Faber |
Seeds

Selected poems of John Hewitt  
Alan Warner(ed) 1981 Blackstaff Press

The Collected Poems of John Hewitt  
Frank Ormsby (ed) 1992 Blackstaff Press

Poets from the North of Ireland  
Frank Ormsby  1990  Blackstaff Press

Confetti  
Ciaran Carson  1990 Bloodaxe Books

Selected Poems  
W.B. Yeats  1992  Penguin

Selected Plays  
Sean O’Casey

The 1916 Poets  
Ryan - an anthology 1995 Gill & Macmillan

Meeting the British  
Paul Muldoon 1987  Faber & Faber

(Poetry can be very effective for an examination of the Republican/Unionist mindset and the cyclical nature of our perceptions of ourselves as the colonised or colonisers)

Practice

Different Tracks – an experiential handbook for practioners

Community Conflict Skills  
Mari Fitzduff  Community Relations Council 1999

Bridging The Gap  
c/o Habitat for Humanity
Tel (028) 9024 3686

A Strategy for Peace - Training in Cross-community skills and issues  
Youth Link NI 1994

Ways out of Conflict Resources for Community Relations Work  
Duncan Morrow and Derrick Wilson 1966 Understanding Conflict Trust

ECONI - Evangelicals asking Questions action pack  
ECONI

Us and Them  
The Workers’ Educational Association (NI)

Away from Home and Safe Getting Residentials right  
1997 Patricia Gormley and Arlene Bell (ed)

Co-operation Ireland offer fresh new ideas for Community Relations work on their website www.thinkbucket.org
Contact Jonny McEwan Tel (028) 9032 1462
Investing in our future
A community relations resource pack
The Boys Brigade, N.I. Region
Speak Your Piece (1996)
Accompanying booklet to ‘Off The Walls’ video
School of Education, U.U. Coleraine BT52 1SA
Forthcoming
First Contact Manual
Community Relations in Schools (CRIS)
The Open Classroom
Contact John Herron (028) 9060 5250
Knowing Me Knowing You
The Citizenship Development Programme
Contact Eva Johnston (028) 7138 2632
www.transformconflict.org
Videos and CD ROMs
Off The Walls (1996) video
Channel 4 Schools PO box 100,
Warwick CV43 6TZ
The Two Traditions video
Radharc video (available from Ulidia
Resource Centre, Belfast
Creating Community
Video resource
Corrymeela Community
Tel (028) 9050 8080
A State Apart CD ROM
EDCO or B.B.C. shop Tel (028) 9032 5672
The Symbols Interactive Experience
CD ROM 1916 - Lest we forget
Details of the programme and training
The Nerve Centre
Tel (028) 7126 0562
support materials are available at the website
www.symbols.org.uk
‘Seeing Sense’ – for young adults
12 -15 – citizenship and human
rights education
Game circuit CD ROM
Derry City Council and Holywell Trust
Contact Geraldine O’Kane (028) 7126 4641
email geraldineo@btconnect.com
Videos on loan from N.I. Educational Video Library
Ulidia Teacher’s centre
Tel (028) 9049 1058 ext 24
Resource Directories
Who’s Who in education for Diversity?
Forum On Community Understanding
and Schools (FOCUS) group
Tel Norman Richardson (028) 9038 4328
Citizenship Education in N.I. keystage3
Resource Directory
Available from
University of Ulster Coleraine
Tel (028) 7032 4699
Dealing with Difference – a directory
of Peace reconciliation and CR projects in NI
Community Relations Council
Tel (028) 9022 7555
A Skills guide – a directory of
Community Relations trainers
Community Relations Council
Tel (028) 9022 7555
### Seeds

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<tr>
<th>The Cultural Traditions Directory</th>
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<td>Wild Goose Publications</td>
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| ‘Jesus and Peter’       | J Bell and G Maule 1999  |
| off the record conversations | Wild Goose Publications |

| ‘Travelling the Road of Faith’ | Jacynth Hamill (ed) 2001 |
| Worship Resources of the Corrymeela Community | Corrymeela Community |

| ‘Time Passes’ | Kathleen Davey 1994 |
| Poems        | Corrymeela Press    |

### Other Resources

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<th>EMU The Games Book</th>
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<th>Peer Mediation Manual</th>
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SECTARIANISM IN IRISH HISTORY

History and Communal Memory

Ways of approaching the past can be represented as a continuum with personal identity at one end, communal memory in the middle and formal academic history at the other end.

Personal identity ---------- Communal memory--------- Academic history

In Ireland, the three points on the continuum are more closely related than in most Western societies today. In fact, certain emotive events and issues can effectively collapse the continuum into a single point, so that a challenge to how a person interprets history, or to how his community understands it, is received as an attack on personal identity.

This collapse is also the collapse of the boundary between past and present. No topic is more likely to trigger the collapse of the boundary between past and present than sectarianism because its central themes are popularly understood as constants in Irish history, the same today as in the past.

“No topic is more likely to trigger the collapse of the boundary between past and present than sectarianism.”

These dynamics leave a tension between how historians understand history and how the past is remembered by communities. Communal memory corresponds with myth, neither of which should be disregarded. Their primary function is to embody in story form truths that help us understand who we are as a community, where we came from and where we stand in relationship to other groups. What matters then is less the literal factual truth and more the way a community understands the story, the meaning they take from it.

The more nearly one approaches the epicentre of conflict in Northern Ireland, the more likely one is to find these difficult dynamics concerning history and the boundary between past and present. A change in a view of the past or even allowing for the past to be left in the past requires work that is at least as much pastoral and political as it is historical.

Identities in Opposition

In the 1600’s the churches spent much of their energy defining their beliefs in terms of what they were not or why others were wrong. This is a distortion of positive human needs such as belonging and the ability to feel free to be different. It can be termed ‘Identity in opposition’.
Identities in Opposition = the process of defining or affirming our identity using the difference of a group outside of our own to describe what we are not.

e.g. Theology in the context of the reformation era depended on knowing what beliefs one rejected as much as on what one accepted:

- Patrick Corish “To be Catholic now was to know why he was not a protestant”
- Alan Falconer “The role of the churches in the situation of conflict in Ireland has been to reinforce the alienation of the different communities by developing theologies in opposition”

Although this form of identity may be based on the positive need for belonging and the freedom to be different, there may be a pressure for ‘members’ of a group to conform in order not to ‘let the side down’.

The role of religion in: conflict, violence and catastrophe.

The following quotes offer insights into the historic mixing of religion and politics in Ireland:-

1575 Earl of Kildare “They, his followers would kill all the English churles and throw them into the sea”

1574 Ulster Military Campaign "how godly a deed it is to overthrow so wicked a race the world may judge: for my part I think there cannot be a greater sacrifice to God"- English officer

1579 James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald expedition "partook more of the nature of a religious crusade than any other Irish movement of the century." The only object of his military campaign was to secure the administration of Christ’s sacraments to a Catholic people in a Catholic rite. 700 soldiers were paid for by Pope Gregory XII and granted the same plenary indulgence and remission of sins as those who fought the Turks for the Holy Land. War against the heretical Protestants was couched in the concepts of the crusades.

The 1641 Rising, the Williamite wars, the Penal laws and the Plantation provided more links between religion and violence; hatred and oppression:

1645 Cornelius O'Mahony a Jesuit urged forces to ‘kill your heretic adversaries’.

1649 Oliver Cromwell slaughters Catholics at Drogheda and Wexford, victims including clergy, women and children.

1662 The Protestant Irish parliament makes 23 October, the day of a failed Catholic attempt to seize Dublin at the outset of the Rising in 1641, an annual Holy Day. Sermons were preached on why Catholics could not be trusted.

Protestants remembered 1641, Catholics 1649; neither remembered the other. A divided society produces divided memories.
Conversion

In Ireland the sixteenth-century Protestant reformation was almost entirely a STATE phenomenon. It became another English method for subjugating and civilizing Ireland. Occasional conflict between the political needs of the state and the religious needs of the reformation were always resolved in favour of the state. For the most part, however, the established church, the Church of Ireland, saw little problem with allowing their conversion efforts to be connected with social order, state control and other political power issues.

Through much of post-reformation Irish history, the state sought to subjugate Catholics, or otherwise make them loyal, but the established Protestant church had so great a task just maintaining itself that little effort was put into converting Catholics to Protestantism. Neither the Protestant ideal of converting Catholics nor the state’s need to make Catholics loyal went away, however.

By the late 1700s, penal laws against Catholics no longer seemed justifiable to many people. At the founding of the Evangelical Society of Ulster in 1798, George Hamilton preached from Luke 14.23: ‘Compel them to come in.’ He argued, however, that ‘Gospel compulsion’ could only mean evangelism and conversion, never state power or any other use of coercion.

At the same time, the state continued to see Catholics as a political threat to a peaceful Ireland, and the church saw them as religiously wrong, so attempting to convert Catholics seemed to many an excellent way to deal with both problems. Once again, conversion was linked to the political control of Catholics.

One result was the nineteenth-century evangelistic campaigns, sometimes called the Second Reformation or Protestant Crusade. In this period conversion efforts became highly visible and contentious. Stories of conversion were the lifeblood of the Protestant efforts. Denying the stories was essential for the morale of Catholics, who dismissed conversions as insincere and motivated by greed—to live a Protestant and die a Catholic was the best of both worlds, they thought.

Evangelistic efforts to convert Catholics coincided with the Irish Famine 1845-39 to tragic effect, summed up in the idea of ‘souperism’: the hard to prove and hard to deny allegation that some Protestants offered food (usually soup, hence ‘souperism’)
Roots

to desperate Catholics only on the condition that they meet some religious obligation, perhaps attending a bible class or worship service.

The census of 1861 demonstrated that Protestant conversion efforts had failed to alter the religious demography of Ireland, but religious conflict was now a feature of Irish public life and conversion more contentious than ever.

Separation

Sectarianism both creates and requires separation, to which the Christian churches have contributed greatly; marriage and family life being one main area:-

eg. Pope Pius X's Ne Temere decree of 1907, which led to a situation in which 'Catholic clergy would not officiate unless both parties had promised that all the children would be Catholic.' One study concluded that as a result of Ne Temere the Protestant population of the Republic of Ireland fell at a rate of 1% per year between 1946 and 1961. In 1970, the papal decree Matrimonia Mixta removed the requirement that the Protestant partner promise to rear the children within the context of the Catholic faith and tradition.

This and other religion-inspired practices that result in separation are not intended to be sectarian (rather their design is to build strong communities) and indeed are not necessarily so. In a society plagued by sectarianism, however, such practices can easily reinforce and further it.

Sacred Violence, Politics as religion

The intersection of religion and politics can be both constructive and destructive.

No matter how we may define our religion or lack of it, our effective religion is the thing we give our highest priority, in particular those things we hold as non-negotiable, which we will not or cannot compromise. Political scientist Frank Wright argues that 'nationalisms are not merely 'like religions - they are religions.' In Christian terms this is idolatrous, i.e., it supplants loyalty to God.

Both Catholic and Protestant beliefs and paradigms have, respectively, shaped political events in Ireland, both directly and indirectly.

eg.

-1912: The religious nature of the Solemn League and Covenant for Ulster and the Protestant churches' support for the Covenant's absolute rejection of Home Rule 'By all means which may be found necessary'.

- The religious nature of Patrick Pearse's oath-prayer and the heavy religious overtones of his brand of Irish Nationalism. On Easter 1916 Pearse's fusion of Christ's sacrifice and national sacrifice was most seductive.

- There is a similarity between Eamonn De Valera's statement that 'the people have never a right to do wrong' and the doctrine of 'error has no right' (see the section below on 'Theological Roots of Sectarianism').
Theological Roots of Sectarianism

The churches (around and after 1500s and 1600s), in a struggle for ascendancy and survival, shared a combination of three doctrines:

1. Providence
   This is the simple, basic teaching that God is at work in the world and that the faithful Christian can discern God's will and purpose by reading the signs of the times.

2. One true church, outside of which is no salvation

3. Error has no right
   This doctrine was developed in the fourth and fifth centuries by St. Augustine to justify the use of state coercion to suppress heretical opponents: because they are radically in error, they have no right to express or hold their beliefs.
   This doctrine has been the principle behind every use of coercion, especially state coercion, for religious purposes.

Dangerous Combinations:

The first two could be problematic but need not be; they are more problematic when combined. The third, error has no right, is inherently sectarian, however, and combines disastrously with the others.

- **One true church + providence**
  Easily reduced to 'God is on our side.'

- **One true church + providence + error has no right**
  Add 'God is on our side' to 'error has no right' and the implication is 'God wants us to suppress others.'

- **One true church + error has no right:**
  If your church is the one true church and error has no right, then it is your duty to see that error is suppressed by whatever means necessary. From this viewpoint tolerance is no virtue—tolerance is a deadly vice.

These doctrines did not emerge on the fringe, they were shared by the three main churches (Catholic, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian). Thus sectarianism is rooted in the Irish mainstream, not the fringe. They represent principles that would cause oppression regardless of who was in power.

These elements are best placed in the European context of reformation/counter-reformation conflict and in the violence and catastrophe which marred the 16th and 17th centuries in Ireland (see history section).
When is a Religious Idea Sectarian?

Our intent is not to dismiss truth claims but rather to take them very seriously and to ask: Can we make truth claims without being sectarian? Which religious ideas are inherently sectarian and which are not?

On the one hand attempts to dismiss all religious truths as inherently sectarian are misguided and false. On the other hand we recognize that religious ideas can and do contribute to sectarianism. We intend to show the compatibility of religious truth claims with ecumenical and reconciling perspectives.

A sectarian religious idea is likely to fall under one of three headings:-
- It hardens boundaries between groups
- It dehumanizes another group; or
- It imposes on another group.

1. Hardening boundaries – Education segregated on a religious basis, and practiced in a sectarian society, can easily harden boundaries and therefore reinforce the sectarian system. What can reasonably be expected of people is to be alert to unintended consequences and to mitigate them as far as possible.

2. Dehumanising – When a group has been judged incapable of change they have been dehumanized in a fundamental way. Dehumanising has no positive purpose and therefore needs to be eliminated from our moral practice not merely mitigated.

3. Imposing combines sectarian intent and will with the power to do something about it. Like dehumanizing, it has no positive function and therefore must be eliminated. Imposing is sectarianism in its most acute form. When the other imposes on us what we could previously dismiss as their problem it becomes our problem as well. For much of their history the Christian churches have been only too happy to employ coercive imposition in its strongest crudest form, state imposition. Imposition has no basis in Christianity’s original teachings and early development, as recorded in the Bible.

A spirit of imposition is closely linked to a stunted and distorted expression of two basic and complementary human needs: the need to belong and the need for freedom to be different. Healthy expressions of these needs require groups to engage in a process of observing, constructing and negotiating difference. We want to note at least three stages we regard as essential.

- The first stage involves the linked activities of observation, discernment, evaluation and judgment, applied both externally to other groups and internally to our own group. What is crucial is that identity is necessarily formed in relationship, however minimal, to others. We need to know: we are not you; how we are not you; and why we are not you.
• This leads to a **second stage** of informal negotiation with others, out of which arises our understanding of our own identity, other’s difference, and the relation between them.

• A **third stage** involves agreement – probably informal and even unspoken - with others about where the boundaries of difference and similarity between us lie.

Clarification: negotiation in the second stage and agreement in the third can be informal, implicit and minimal practices.

Note that identity continues to rely on relationship at every stage. A spirit of imposition arises when a person or group attempts to cut out the necessary element of relationship. It not only does an injustice to the party being judged, it fundamentally distorts the judgment involved and therefore damages the group doing the judging.

• To prevent the possibility of truth claims having destructive consequences, they are best made in the context of relationship. In general the greater the extent and quality of the relationship, the less likely it is that a truth claim will have sectarian consequences.

• Concerning sectarianism, the most basic question that must be asked of a truth claim is, Does the idea contain within it a logic that inherently hardens boundaries, dehumanises or imposes? If the idea is shown somehow to have inherently destructive consequences, three basic questions must be considered.

• Can the idea be **discarded**?

• Can it be **altered** in a way that removes those consequences?

• Can the negative consequences be **mitigated** in any way?

If a group cannot or will not discard, alter, or mitigate, then their intention to deal with sectarianism is at least called into question.

• Building community means building bridges as well as walls. This work requires a vision of peace and the perseverance and patience to pursue it.

• People who have been abused or perceive themselves to have been abused will have difficulty hearing the abuser. A context of sectarian conflict shapes how we hear and receive every communication – including religious truth claims – especially when it comes from those with whom we are in conflict.
There are many different kinds of religious ideas and truth claims:

1. We are different, we believe differently
   Sectarianism characteristically approaches difference, especially religious and political difference, with suspicion and in judgment. In a sectarian society, handling difference well can mean that the simplest observations about difference need to be made sensitively and perhaps accompanied by disclaimers. They need to be received with a generous spirit, slow to take offence. Religious difference is not inherently sectarian, just as the need for freedom to be different is the necessary compliment of the human need to belong.

2. We are right

3. We are right and you are wrong
   These express the human need to understand what is true and right, intellectually and morally. The connected needs to know what is true and what is right are inescapable aspects of being human. Defenders of religious truth claims need to justify rather than merely assert their convictions.

4. You are a less adequate version of what we are
   is a potentially sectarian statement. It could cause hardening of boundaries and dehumanising and allow or smooth the way for imposition, but it is not inherently sectarian if the statement is made in the context of a relationship of genuine mutual respect.

5. You are not what you say you are

6. We are in fact what you say you are
   If statements 5 and 6 are not to be sectarian, those making them must make a fine but crucial distinction between claiming the right to say you are not what you say you are but nonetheless recognising the right of the other party to define themselves as they wish, even if the party making the judgment objects.

7. What you are doing is evil
   is an inherently sectarian statement because given its radical nature it will inevitably harden boundaries and dehumanise and allow imposition. All the same, it is an extreme but necessary part of any repertoire of moral discernment. Mitigation will be crucially important if the moral benefits are to outweigh the sectarian consequences.

8. You are so wrong that you forfeit ordinary rights
   corresponds to the classical formulation ‘error has no right’ and to imposition, so this is sectarianism in a strong form.

9. You are less than human

10. You are evil
11. You are demonic
Our three final statements are grouped as they are all inherently sectarian in much the same way. Each hardens boundaries; each dehumanizes; each could allow imposition and provide a rationale for it. People may do evil but they do not become evil. We find no circumstances in which these are necessary or useful.

Our intent is not to dismiss truth claims but rather to take them more seriously and to ask: Can we make truth claims without being sectarian? Which religious ideas are inherently sectarian and which are not?
**Ancestral Voices**

And ‘mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!  
Kubla Kahn Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The ancestral voices of which Coleridge speaks not only prophesy war, they exult in conflict and call their heirs to sacrifice for the ancestral cause. Ancestral voices are those memories, symbols, beliefs, actions etc. from our past that affect how we experience our world now. They are often so well integrated into our present identities and cultures that we may not be aware of them.

Such voices sound most powerfully in times of crisis. This has been one of the dynamics of confrontation at Drumcree especially in 1996 when ancestral voices got a hearing that may have surprised both others and themselves.

People who want to resist the ancestral voices do so in several ways:

- Some flee to the opposite pole and then ignore or oppose the ancestral voices, rendering themselves an object of suspicion and contempt, a Lundy.

- Some voices finally only disappear with the extinction of the community.

- They can also be countered, contained, diminished, and finally left all but powerless. What is required is to re-tune our ears to alternative voices. What is far more constructive is for a community to learn to hear its own ancestral voices anew. Other ancestral voices emanating from the very same source, offer healthier alternatives, sometimes an antidote to their poisonous counterparts.
Constructive ancestral voices can silence destructive ones.

We see it most strikingly in Sinn Fein and ECONI (Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland), groups we mean to equate only in terms of the structure of change in which they are currently engaged.

‘What is required is to re-tune our ears to alternative voices.’

The ancestral voices of Republicans call their heirs to fight until the last body drops for an all-Ireland republic. Republicans now accept that a united Ireland can only come about by consent not by violence. This means that a united Ireland may never come into being, and if it does no one can say when. Sinn Fein, in moving from physical force to constitutional politics, has probably brought with it a higher percentage of Republicans than in any parallel situation in Irish history.

The ancestral voices that challenge ECONI are both hard and soft. The hard one upholds a virulent anti-Catholicism; the more elusive voice calls evangelicals to stay away from the concerns of the world and say little about them, leading lives individually and collectively of little public impact. ECONI has confronted these voices, and its significance is that it is challenging the sectarianism of conservative Protestantism, while remaining evangelical and by employing evangelical logic. They are challenging the bigoted ancestral voices by calling forth the best of the ancestral voices.
Trunk

Redeeming Identity

Varieties of sectarianism

Sectarianism as a system

Definition of Sectarianism
Understanding Sectarianism

Sectarianism exists:
- In the hearts and minds of individuals
- In the kind of structures we create in society
- In our attitudes to one another
- In what we say and do
- In the things we leave undone/unsaid
- In negative judgments about someone else’s behaviour

It is rarely a label we apply to ourselves, as our own sectarianism is the hardest to recognise.

Sectarianism involves:
- Religion (Religion as a form of Ethnicity and as our structures for devotional faith)
- Ethnicity and nationality
- Politics
- Religion and politics

In our judgment ‘sectarian’ and ‘sectarianism’ are clearer and more useful when used in negative terms and this will be our practice.

If Christians wish to save ‘religion’ from disrepute the way to do it is not to deny the relationship between sectarianism and religion but to recognize the link and to change accordingly.

Reconciliation is the CORNERSTONE of our understanding of the main goal and dynamics of moving beyond sectarianism.

We have worked at developing a rigorous notion of reconciliation built on the interlocking dynamics of forgiveness, repentance and justice.

We also recognise that not all differences can be reconciled so we hope to develop ways of dealing with difference short of reconciliation.
Reductionism

Sectarianism continually seeks to reduce everything to the lowest common denominator. Because either/or logic prevails one misses some of the interesting questions a both/and approach might inspire. For example describing a particular event as either religious or political, when in fact, it is more likely to be both.

There are four varieties of reductionism:-

1. **Either/or reasoning: the reductionism of false choices.** In the logic of sectarianism, every question has one answer, a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer; black and white are the only shades of opinion allowed; every decision is either/or. In sectarianism, maybe, grey, and both/and hardly exist, but reality is more complex.

2. **Reducing religion to doctrine.** But religion is much more than doctrine. Thinking clearly about the role of religion means taking seriously: religion as shaper of individual and communal worldview; religion as church institutions; religion as a community-building dynamic and as communities; religion as a social institution and agent of socialisation; religion as a source of moral formation.

3. **The reductionism of dismissing religion as a mere boundary marker.** Religion is just one possible boundary marker from a group which includes at least: race; language; nationality; ethnicity; and ideology. To varying degrees these boundary markers are not mere boundaries; they have content.

4. **The reductionism of seeking the fundamental.** There are two forms of seeking the fundamental, legitimate and illegitimate. The legitimate form argues that a particular factor in a conflict may be understood as fundamental, but that does not mean that the other factors are insignificant. The illegitimate form falsely believes that if one factor in a conflict has been established as fundamental it can become the focus to the exclusion of every other factor because they are then regarded as insignificant.

Every attempt at single-cause explanation—political, religious, cultural or any other—will fail to account for the complex actions of individuals and societies. Sectarianism involves religion and politics and economics and a host of other factors. Only approaches that can take in this whole range stand a chance of understanding sectarianism and moving beyond it.
Relationship between Intentions and Consequences

A claim of purity of intent does not protect us from being judged to be acting or speaking in a sectarian way. There can be sectarian outcomes of speech, actions, omissions or decisions, which were not intended by us. We can do, say, or decide things with one set of intentions in mind which are, in our terms, wholly good, justifiable, and possibly even necessary. Yet our action, speech or decision can have a sectarian outcome. For example:

- Moving yourself and your family out of a mixed residential area to live in one that is exclusively your own. The intention is good, for the safety of your family, and who could be faulted for doing so?

However, the corporate effect of such individually sensible and blameless movements is to reinforce sectarianism still further. Sectarianism—as a system that can maintain itself by feeding on logical responses to situations it has created—is a wonder of adaptation.

One way to gauge whether or not speech, an event, an action or a decision can be judged to be sectarian, is to look, not only at the intention of the person or group involved, but also at the outcome or potential outcome of the speech, event, action or decision, in as far as this can be foreseen. If the outcome entails developing or augmenting one or more destructive patterns of relating, then the action or event can be judged to be sectarian. The most potent destructive patterns of relating which we have identified are: hardening the boundaries between groups; overlooking others; belittling or demonising others; justifying or collaborating in the domination of others and physically attacking or intimidating others. The importance of the distinction between intentions and consequences is that it allows us to expose the operation of the sectarian system at a point where it is most subtle. This point is the distortion of the good intentions of any person or group, in particular those who are actively committed to pursuing peace and reconciliation.

There can be actions, however, which in one context take on sectarian overtones, but in another context would be deemed more or less benign or at least irrelevant. For example, large Orange parades in Co. Donegal each year pass off virtually without incident, because the Catholic/Nationalist population, who are the majority in their jurisdiction, feel no threat from the parade. The context in Donegal allows a degree of toleration, which is not possible in the contested atmosphere of Northern Ireland, without some measure of dialogue and negotiation.
We are aware that one of the dangers with this type of distinction of intentions and consequences is a risk that people could use it negatively, by claiming destructive outcomes, in order to prevent others from taking actions. For example, when organising a socio-political panel discussion we find that some invitees refuse to take part if certain other parties are going to be present. We are then faced with choices. We can decide not to invite those whose presence is contentious; in this case we can rightly be accused of being sectarian by overlooking them. Alternatively, we can invite them anyway and accept that others will absent themselves and that therefore voices will not be heard. In this latter case, we might be tempted to say that this was their choice; they opted to exclude themselves. It is also true that in fact we set up the situation in a way that overlooked their concerns. The issue of whether or not we agree with their concerns is secondary. Here we are dealing primarily with the implications of destructive patterns of relating and, in this instance, it appears that there is no way to avoid a sectarian outcome, other than to cancel the event or to hold two separate panels.

Whilst we are arguing that the assessment of outcome is key to judging whether or not an action is sectarian, we also want to affirm that in the short term it may sometimes be necessary to make decisions or to take actions which have explicitly sectarian outcomes in order, or in the hope that, in the longer term, other choices may become possible. What is crucial here is to know that we are choosing a sectarian option, to know why we deem it to be so important that it is not to be avoided, and what we hope will be the movement that will make this type of choice redundant in the long term.

Understanding the complex relationship between intentions and consequences then is, in our opinion, crucial to understanding how to judge whether speech, actions or decisions are potentially or actually sectarian in nature. A claim that we had no intention of being sectarian cannot immunise any of us from responsibility for sectarian outcomes of our speech, actions or decisions. Moreover, to claim purity of intent, whilst persisting in behaviour which has sectarian outcomes, is to strengthen and lend legitimisation to the sectarian system.
Definition of Sectarianism:

The working definition we have presented is comprehensive and therefore also general. In fact it could work, at least in a rough way, as a definition of nearly all negative ‘isms’. Only the line about religion gives the definition clear specificity. If we were to substitute a line about gender or race, for example, we might have a reasonable definition of sexism or racism. In addition to refining this general definition, therefore, we have worked at identifying and analysing the varieties and dynamics of sectarianism, the different ways that sectarianism is expressed in particular instances.

Sectarianism is...

a system of attitudes, actions, beliefs and structures:
• at personal, communal and institutional levels
• which always involves religion and typically involves a negative mixing of religion and politics...

which arises as a distorted expression of positive human needs especially for belonging, identity and the free expression of difference...

and is expressed in destructive patterns of relating:
• hardening the boundaries between groups
• overlooking others
• belittling, dehumanizing or demonizing others
• justifying or collaborating in the domination of others
• physically or verbally intimidating or attacking others

It is a system...

The most difficult thing to grasp about sectarianism is that it is a system and that therefore all our actions are interdependent. It suits the sectarian system that the majority of us should feel ourselves to be powerless and locked into ‘opposing camps’ without choice. Fear of our own side is sometimes greater than fear of others, diffusing creative energy.

It arises as a distorted expression of positive human needs especially for belonging, identity and the free expression of difference.

We view sectarianism as a distorted expression of aspects of humanness that are essentially positive – the path beyond sectarianism must be one of transforming or redeeming, not smashing it because we risk damaging the good along with the evil.

The term ‘distorted expression’ can cover all behaviour on a spectrum from the mildest antipathy to murderous rage. We distort identity by expressing it negatively over and against the other. The impact of negative identity is to create a situation where we require a threatening ‘other’ in order to maintain this identity or sense of who we are. Any move to change the status of the ‘other’ from threatening to friendly precipitates some form of identity crisis for us. Strong positive identity in one or more shared areas may allow people to transcend negative identity and to form creative alliances.
It is expressed in destructive patterns of relating:

hardening the boundaries between groups

Physical boundaries include:-
• painted kerb stones
• murals and slogans on gable walls. Murals are not just folk artifacts but a crucial factor in the politicization of the community. The problem is their content, a potent means of hardening the boundaries.
• asking for barriers to be erected

Emotional boundaries include:-
• pushing different groups apart, creating a vacuum of knowledge
• cutting off groups from one another and setting up deeper tensions
• acting to impede those reaching out across the divide, perhaps by ostracising or threatening them
• unspoken messages people give one another e.g. with whom it is acceptable to associate with.
• inducing the suspension of normal rational thought (don’t ask questions)
• myths and rumours – them and us. Rumours and fear combine to seal off the two communities from one another more effectively than any number of physical barriers

Conceptual boundaries include:
• language, e.g. black protestants, Sinn Fein/IRA

overlooking others

To overlook is simply to ignore the existence, needs, rights or aspirations of the other. The politeness of overlooking masks its enormous potential for destroying personal, communal and group relationships through:
• language – e.g., ‘the people of Ulster’ ignores Catholic/Nationalists, while ‘the Irish people’ either overlooks ‘Protestant/Unionists or subsumes them into the Irish nation.
• turning off the TV, radio.
• prayers, the form of which excludes those not familiar with it.
• the way in which the churches write about what they believe (does it make assumptions and/or unfair judgments about another group or expression of faith?)
• feeding into the well established system of antagonized division.

belittling or demonising others

In its most aggressive form belittling involves caricaturing and making fun of or mocking another’s tradition or personal experience. The more gross the expression of Sectarianism the easier it is to identify and to attract support for tackling it. Much more difficult to tackle are the more ‘acceptable’ forms. ‘Demonising’ overlaps with ‘belittling’ in the process of caricaturing the other. In demonising it is aimed primarily at inducing fear and hatred of, or shock at the tradition, practices, representations, or beliefs of the other.
SECTARIANISM

...Is a system of attitudes

actions, beliefs and structures

at personal, communal and institutional levels

which always involves religion, and typically involves a negative mixing of religion and politics.
Which arises as a **distorted** expression of positive human needs especially for...

**belonging identity and free expression of difference**

and is expressed in destructive patterns of relating

* hardening the boundaries between groups
* overlooking others
* belittling; dehumanising; or demonising others
* justifying or collaborating in the domination of others
* physically or verbally intimidating or attacking others
It is too easy, even for those of us who are willing to acknowledge some personal responsibility, to point our fingers at them.

justifying or collaborating in the domination of others

This includes any behaviour which supports or actively has a hand in suppressing, dominating or discriminating against the other or their tradition on the basis of their political or religious allegiance. This is a classical abuse of power. For example, elements of the denial of rights and the suppression of the culture of others are exemplified in any dispute over parading. The paramount dynamic here is to enforce our will over and against their will. The Orange Order needs to make the transition from their image of traditional power holders. The ‘residents’ need to make the transition from their image of themselves as second class citizens. The role and power of some paramilitary groups in local areas is perhaps the best example of the type of within-tradition domination spawned by the conflict – what began as necessary protection has developed an economic aspect in extortion etc.

physically intimidating or attacking others

The bottom line in destructive relationships is the total breakdown of trust and respect, which is evidenced in physical violence or in the threat of physical violence. The need to organize our lives around violence or the threat of it means we have developed patterns that actually contribute to maintaining the sectarian system. Assimilation means that you are allowed to go on living with our group as long as you give up your identity and become totally like us.

Any move beyond sectarianism will require that we expose and change these patterns.
Sectarianism as a System

A system involves different parts that relate to/affect each other in some way and maintain certain processes.

Central to the work of MBS is the concept that sectarianism can exist and operate at individual, communal and institutional levels. These different ‘parts’ all play a role in maintaining the processes involved in sectarianism.

Individuals who ‘do not have a sectarian bone in their body’ can still be part of the sectarian system. I may not feel sectarian but my actions, beliefs, attitudes etc. can be distorted to produce sectarian outcomes.

E.g. A violent experience may prompt me to move from a mixed area to a ‘safer’ area with ‘my own kind’. This separation is a product of sectarianism and can also further support the system. Where I live has become part of the sectarian system.

Even when our intentions have positive potential or are based on good reasons, they can never the less be distorted by the sectarian system and result in destructive outcomes. E.g.

• The things people do to build strong communities and strong congregations are well meant and have positive outcomes, but at the same time they can also serve to exclude others and harden boundaries between groups.

In fact sectarianism does not really require any direct, active response at all from most of us; it simply requires that we do nothing about it.

In the beginning sectarianism fed on ‘Big Hate, Big Violence, Gross Injustice’ e.g. The Elizabethan Wars in Ireland, The Plantation periods, the 1641 Rising, Cromwell, The Williamite Wars, The Penal laws, etc.

Now that sectarianism has been long established, it no longer requires large amounts of violence. Just an occasional act will suffice, because the sectarian system disposes us to judge others by the worst actions of their community.

Because sectarianism is so well established and such a ‘successful’ system it will need to be challenged in a range of creative ways for a long time to come if we are to move beyond it.
Dynamics and Varieties of Sectarianism

**The hardest type of sectarianism to see is one's own.**
What others identify as sectarian in us, we see as loyalty to truth, justice, and community.

For our current purposes, we confine our examination of varieties to religious forms of sectarianism. The dynamics apply much more widely, of course, but because our work has been with a largely church-based constituency, we have less experience applying them to the main political orientations in Northern Ireland, and still less to state and secular liberal sectarianism.

At this point, we have not chosen to abandon identifying sectarianism with groups, but to make this approach secondary to identifying varieties by their core dynamic, how they characteristically work. We are currently working with nine themes and sub-themes. All sectarianism can be understood as a destructive way of dealing with difference, and this works in two main ways, by magnifying difference and by minimising difference. Magnifying difference often takes the form of a search for truth and purity, which typically results in separation. Minimising difference, on the other hand, has two main variants, failing to recognise that every new inclusion creates a new opportunity for exclusion and failing to recognise and respect difference, the latter having patronising and assimilating variants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectarianism as a destructive way of dealing with difference</th>
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<td>Sectarianism as the magnifying of difference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sectarianism as the minimising of difference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sectarianism as an outcome of the search for truth and purity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Separation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patronising</td>
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Sectarianism as the magnification of difference:

E.g. Magnifying difference takes both fundamentalist Protestant and conservative Catholic form.

‘It is the fact of separation as much as the cause of separation that allows for distorted stereotypes’

Fundamentalist Protestant:

Anxiety to maintain the pure orthodox truth by being separate from those who disagree: ‘Come ye out from among them’, ‘Touch not the unclean thing’. The separation may not be absolute, only a superficiality where contact exists. We are not saying that the doctrine of separation is bad theology or unbiblical, although we believe it to be severely limited theology and that it ignores huge and central aspects of the Bible. Rather we are saying this doctrine is prone to sectarianism because it causes, in terms of our definition, destructive patterns of relating through hardening of boundaries and demonizing. If people wish to maintain it, this is their privilege, but they must recognize that they may well be choosing sectarianism along with separation.

It is the fact of separation as much as the cause of separation that allows for distorted stereotypes.

Conservative Catholic:

Based on a sense of being the one true church, or at least the most true church, and in practice largely a mirror image of fundamentalist Protestant sectarianism. The primary points of maintaining separation include communion, marriage, and education. Perhaps the suffering of the potent sectarianism of the Stormont regime (1921-72) makes it difficult to see.
**Sectarianism as the minimizing of difference:**

Most often practiced by liberals who are likely to understand themselves as opposing sectarianism. Measured by consequences rather than intentions, however, minimizing difference is marked as sectarian by hardening boundaries, overlooking others and belittling, even demonizing.

Every new inclusion creates a new opportunity for exclusion e.g. Ecumenical sectarianism – it is possible that by alliances, creative response, progress away from separation etc we can threaten or exclude other groups. This can be almost impossible to avoid and indeed should not become a paralyzing fear. At least the worst affects can be mitigated by thoughtful, creative responses.

Failure to recognize and respect differences

We can minimize difference by failing to recognize it. Not all difference can or should be reconciled and people may need to feel at least that this is acknowledged.

Patronising- e.g. (ecumenical, evangelical, and Catholic sectarianism):
- Those long experienced in dealing with sectarianism may be of real benefit to the newcomer only if they avoid ‘been there, done that’ assumptions and respect differing starting points, contexts and beliefs.
- Evangelical confidence in pronouncing what is or is not ‘Christian’.
- Catholic dissolving of different Protestant groups into the category of ‘non-Catholics’, i.e. ‘not us’.

Assimilation – e.g. (liberal sectarianism, especially liberal Catholic):
The rush to inclusion could feel presumptuous or imperialistic to those who are acutely aware of what divides us. The intention to include could have the effect of repelling.

**Intra-tradition sectarianism**

Significant tensions and conflict can exist within groups. Groups can feel that they should be united even though they are not and they may feel let down when someone dissents.

It can be useful to look at types of sectarianism in terms of groups as matching pairs occupying opposite ends of a continuum, based on groupings that share similar elements:

To illustrate some of the dynamics involved in intra-tradition sectarianism, we have organised types of sectarianism, understood in terms of groups rather than themes, as matching pairs occupying opposite ends of a continuum, with both poles claiming to be the more authentic heirs of a shared legacy.
This works best with the main political and religious forms of sectarianism, but less well with ecumenical, state, and secular liberal sectarianism.

We do not observe within the ecumenical movement the dynamics characteristic of the other continua, perhaps because ecumenism is a comparatively recent phenomenon and so has had less time to develop such patterns. Ecumenism may also be different, however, by virtue of having little concept of formal membership, by drawing participants from other traditions without removing them from those traditions, and not least because of its principled, central commitment to unity.

State sectarianism simply does not fit the categories we develop here, because the state does not have a comparable internal dynamic.

Secular liberalism might be paired with a category like ‘religious’ or ‘traditional’ to yield at least a weak version of the dynamics we describe, but the pairing would not constitute a tradition in anything like the sense of the other four we use.

Fundamentalism and evangelicalism have not disappeared from the scheme as we present it here. They have been subsumed under the general category conservative Protestantism, of which they are different expressions.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Political</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Protestant</td>
<td>Conservative Catholic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libral Protestant</td>
<td>Liberal Catholic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unionist</td>
<td>Nationalist</td>
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Those situated at the bottom of the continua are likely to regard their end as ‘moderate’ and to criticise the other end as ‘extreme’; alternatively, they might identify themselves as ‘progressive’ and the others as ‘reactionary’ or ‘fundamentalist’. Those located at the top, however, are likely to regard themselves, whether or not they use these exact words, as ‘traditional’ or ‘pure’, while the other end is ‘compromised’ or ‘sold-out’.

For our immediate purposes, and without really resolving the issues at stake, we are going to describe the upper end of the two religious continua as ‘traditional’ and the lower end as ‘moderate’ on the grounds that these terms would be agreeable to those being described. Moderates are not necessarily any less committed to the tradition than are people at the traditional end; they simply disagree with the way the traditionalists relate to the tradition and advocate another way. Even so, moderates are unlikely to describe themselves as traditional, whereas those at the traditional end would readily accept this description of themselves.
Understanding Reconciliation

Positive needs for belonging, identity and the free expression of difference are basic to our humanness; that we distort these things by expressing them negatively over and against the ‘other’ is the problem.

Difference is not always bad. How we deal with difference is important; whether or not we are prepared to take responsibility for the consequences of our actions/ lack of action, beliefs and attitudes, is important.

‘I don’t have to stop being me.’

The point of positively dealing with difference is so that we can move towards reconciliation. One way to describe reconciliation, in Christian terms, is as the processes and structures necessary to bring all the elements of the cosmos into positive and life-giving relationship with God and with one another.

Some approaches to sectarianism:

- Focusing too exclusively on immediate practical manifestations at the expense of addressing the more long-term question of tackling its roots.

- Demonising those seen to be acting in an obviously sectarian manner allowing the majority to pretend they are not implicated.

- The non-sectarian approach – ‘sectarian free zones’. Simply by being ‘inclusive’, and putting a non-sectarian policy in place, ignores the pervasiveness of sectarianism as a system and the need to challenge those of us who think we are non-sectarian to name and face our responsibility for contributing to the system.

Calling people BIGOTS is just another negative label in a society full of them. A better way of responding is to say that you think the person is supporting sectarianism by...(be specific about what you think they are doing). The path of moving beyond sectarianism must be one of transforming or redeeming not smashing.
Redeeming Identity and Belonging

Introduction
To produce an adequate theological investigation of sectarianism would require several volumes. Joe and Cecelia’s approach to sectarianism is based on the belief that it involves a distortion of human needs for belonging and identity. Since a Christian’s primary belonging and identity is expressed through membership of a Church or faith community, they have concentrated their theological reflections on what it means to be church in a society riven by religious and political antagonism. They begin with a reflection on what it means to be church in general and then they look at how the churches and faith communities in Northern Ireland have lived up to their calling to be ‘Church.’

What it means to be Church
There are four traditional marks of the church, it is: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. It is one because the one God, who is creator and redeemer, calls the Church into being. It is holy because God has sanctified it through the Holy Spirit. It is catholic in the sense that it is called to bring the Word of God to the whole world. It is apostolic in that it bears witness to Jesus and has a Christ-centred mission to all people.

According to a recent study by the World Council of Churches (WCC) the nature of church is koinonia or communion. In other words, the Christian church as a whole, and each particular church or faith community in particular, is called to live deep, authentic, just and loving relationships both within their own group and with those who are not members. This understanding of Church as communion can be traced back through history to the apostle Paul.

The mission of the Church is to bring all things together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (Eph 1:9-10) It is, therefore, a mission of reconciliation, understood as a movement to bring all things into life-giving relationship with God and with one another. Reconciliation involves the whole of the created world and not just human beings.

The model of ‘Church’ that they develop, with its vision of the nature of Church as ‘communion’ (koinonia) and its mission as ‘reconciliation,’ is one in which relationship is fundamental: relationship to self, relationship to God, relationship to others within the faith community and to those outside it. In the service of those relationships, the call to Christian discipleship, as individuals and as Church, is radical in terms of the attitudes of openness, and inclusivity that it demands and the boundary crossing that it entails. At the same time, this inclusivity and boundary crossing are not indiscriminate; they are to be exercised with discernment based on criteria drawn from the ministry of reconciliation of Jesus Christ whose mission the Church shares. Central to these criteria is the truth that in the life and death of Jesus, God has given priority to grace over justice, and this, therefore, must be a primary stance for all Christian faith communities.
Distorted Identity and Distorted Belonging
In the course of the research they have identified a number of characteristics to do with the identity and belonging of faith communities in Northern Ireland that have become distorted into a pattern of relationship negatively ‘over against’ others that is recognisable as sectarian or tending towards sectarianism. Of the possible candidates for inclusion in this section, they focus on just three: religious-national nature of churches, separation, and superiority and self-righteousness.

The Religious National Nature of Churches
Churches have carried well and willingly a heavy pastoral burden during the Troubles and have acted largely as a restraining influence on the violence. Political scientist the late Frank Wright observed that religious communities in Northern Ireland are also national communities. Cecelia and Joe argue that churches have engaged in idolatrous shifts of loyalty by allowing loyalty to nation or to nationalism to subvert their being and mission as Church. Churches have developed a concept of successful ministry, which entails working for their own, with their own, on behalf of their own in order to build up their own; this behaviour is counter to an understanding of church as communion and its reconciling mission. They name this as religious-political tribalism and argue that sometimes ministers have become nothing more than chaplains to the tribes. Moreover, their research has shown that many ministers are not well equipped at initial or ongoing formation to deal with ministry in a society riven by antagonised religious and political division. Some ministers are also hampered by despairing resignation about the situation, by fear of attack from their own if they reach out to the other community, or by ‘overload’ of work that diminishes time and energy for cross tradition activities. A few ministers preach and act as if their faith community was co-terminus with their national community and as if God blesses and ordains their social and political philosophy. Joe and Cecelia criticise the churches for accepting the oppositional political system instead of using the concepts of communion and reconciliation to critique it and to move towards a more co-operative model.

‘...People find life within their community so satisfying that they feel no need to reach out to any group beyond their boundary’

Separation
They argue that churches and faith communities have allowed the healthy boundary maintenance of distinct groups to develop into divisive separation that can fuel antagonised division. Four dynamics of divisive separation are identified. Firstly fear, fear of contamination by those who are religiously other, fear of being absorbed by the other or fear for physical safety. In this dynamic people are treating others as lepers to be avoided or allowing the vulnerable to be persecuted or allowing the stranger to be driven from their midst. These actions directly contradict Jesus’
relationship with lepers, Peter’s insistence that God shows no partiality and the biblical injunction to welcome the stranger. Secondly self-absorption, people find life within their community so satisfying that they feel no need to reach out to any group beyond their boundary, especially if it might be uncomfortable to relate with those groups. Communion only with their own group contradicts the biblical imperative to cross boundaries which is evident for example in the story of the Good Samaritan. Self-absorbed inertia, even for reason of doing other good works, is not an option for churches living in a society riven by religious-political division, if those churches are to be true to their calling. Thirdly disdain, people choose to keep themselves separate from a particular person, group or organisation because they dislike, disagree with, scorn or despise what they do, or say or stand for. They stop listening to what the other has to say and so cut themselves off from any reasonable opportunity to have their myths about the other debunked. The gospel challenges this perspective by repeatedly showing the need for openness, conversation and a willingness to be changed by the other. Jesus neither dismisses nor ignores people, even those who oppose him. Fourthly theological convictions, these can be divided into Roman Catholic and Protestant convictions. The Roman Catholic church’s self-understanding that the unique church of Jesus Christ subsists in it, leads to a sense of self sufficiency in that church. Self sufficiency that is not modified by institutional commitment to reach out to the other tradition can undermine work for peace and reconciliation and can convey a sense of disdain for expressions of Protestant Christianity. Among Presbyterian, Methodist and Church of Ireland Churches there is an acceptance that the Roman Catholic Church is a Christian church even if they are uneasy with some Catholic practices which they regard as unbiblical, e.g. the place given to Tradition, the role of the Virgin Mary, the Pope etc. These churches maintain in force historical documents that contain statements, which are offensive about Roman Catholicism. Some have tried to minimise the hurtfulness of the statements but have not moved to supersede them. The inability to supersede them puts in question their commitment to positive relationship with the Roman Catholic Church and leaves in their tradition material that gives power and weight to elements which are anti-Catholic. Among Evangelicals there are a range of convictions, which can lead to separation. Some see Roman Catholicism as irredeemably in error and want to maintain absolute purity and scrupulous separation. Others while regarding the Roman Catholic Church as in error are prepared to work with Catholics in areas that touch civic life. Some in this latter group also accept that some individual Catholics live evidently holy and Christian lives.

‘Christianity does not nullify cultural identity but subordinates it to identity in Christ’

Superiority and Self Righteousness
Enshrined, often unconsciously but sometimes consciously, in ‘idolatrous shifts of loyalty’, physical intimidation, self-absorption, disdain and theological convictions are collective understandings that one group, which is defining itself over against the other group in terms of culture or power or religious belief, is superior. In religious circles this sense of superiority can also overflow into self-righteousness. Such superiority and self righteousness is challenged by Paul’s emphasis on one new humanity coming into being out of the Jewish and Gentile communities, his insistence that justification is by grace through faith, and his fundamental insight that Christianity does not nullify cultural identity but subordinates it to identity in Christ.
Use and abuse of Scripture

This is a large and complex topic, to which they did not attempt to do justice, but gave a few illustrations of what they consider to be destructive uses of scripture that are likely to encourage or give apparent legitimacy to dynamics of sectarianism. They focused on three: uses of Old Testament scripture which ignore the fulfilment of the old covenant by the new covenant in Christ; the use of scripture to support or give authority to political ideologies; and applying scripture out of context. A selective use of scripture is always problematic, for example, religious separatists use Old Testament injunctions such as "come ye out from among them," injunctions that were intended to separate believers from sinners, as if the New Covenant evidenced in Jesus’ boundary breaking ministry to sinners had not happened. Using scripture to give authority to political ideologies mixes religion and nationalism in a way that is idolatrous, e.g., the text of Deuteronomy 7:2 on a mural alongside the motto ‘For God and Ulster.’ Applying evocative passages of scripture out of context can simply be a means to demonise the other, e.g. in describing the Roman Catholic Pope as ‘antichrist.’

‘Only when churches recognise and own their distorted expressions of identity and belonging will they be able to begin to transform them’

Transforming Identity and Belonging

Only when churches recognise and own their distorted expressions of identity and belonging will they be able to begin to transform them. Such transformation is in keeping with the promise made by God in Christ to make a new creation (2 Cor 5:17-18). The task for churches and faith communities is threefold. Firstly, it means moving from a predominant hermeneutic of suspicion of others towards a hermeneutic of suspicion of their own positions and motivations. It is a movement away from beginning by blaming others to first, radically, and perhaps unilaterally, taking responsibility for their own implication in sectarianism. The key theological theme of this task is repentance. Some of the questions facing churches and faith communities are:

- in what way have we been engaged in "idolatrous shifts of loyalty?"
- in what way have we contributed to and mirrored oppositional relationships in our own communities and with others?
- in what ways have we separated ourselves from others through: not welcoming the stranger; self-absorption; disdain; or our sincerely held theological convictions?
- in what way have we been tempted into self-righteousness and assumptions about superiority?
- in what way have our models of successful ministry failed to adequately address the antagonised religious and political divide in society?
- in what ways have we used or abused scripture or tolerated or condoned its abuse?

Secondly, it means moving from a predominant hermeneutic of retrieval of all that makes them different from and superior to others towards a hermeneutic of retrieval of identity in Christ and of the boundary breaking inclusiveness lived by Jesus Christ. It is a movement away from constructing identities negatively over against others to developing identities in the kind of positive relationship that respects and leaves space for difference, without necessarily implying
agreement. The key theological theme of this task is forgiveness. Some of the questions facing the churches and faith communities are:

- how can we help one another to face the cost of forgiveness and the forbearance of vengeance?
- how can we help one another to recognise that we are all both victims and perpetrators in this conflict?
- who do we need to forgive, and what do we need to make that possible?
- from whom do we need to seek forgiveness and what do we need to make that possible?
- what are the resources within our tradition that speak a theology of grace and a theology of forgiveness?
- what kind of structures and processes might we put in place, within our tradition and across traditions to help one another to let out the hurts, and to ritualise remembering, forbearance and forgiveness?
- how might we change our patterns of worship so that they more adequately convey and reflect the message of the priority of grace and of self-emptying forgiveness?

Thirdly, it means moving from a predominant hermeneutic of negative engagement with others towards a hermeneutic of positive engagement with those who are different, or who are antagonistic. It is a movement away from the type of separation that augments ignorance, fear and division to the type of engagement that brings the wisdom and the challenge of Christian discipleship to bear on differences within and between traditions. The key theological theme of this task is kenosis, self-emptying. Some of the questions facing the churches and faith communities are:

- what among our truth claims or in our way of living our confessional identity is not essential and might be modified or let go?
- which of our truth claims and ways of living our confessional identity are not negotiable? Are these expressed arrogantly or humbly? Can they be re-expressed?
- what strategies of mitigation could we put in place to ameliorate the effect of what is not negotiable?
- what are our resources and strategies for dealing with difference within our own tradition?
- what models of, or lessons about, relationship have we as churches and faith communities to offer to society? How best might these be expressed?

CONCLUSION
It is clear that Churches and faith communities in Northern Ireland have developed distorted expressions of both identity and belonging, which contribute to and are exacerbated by sectarianism. In no small part, churches mirror the oppositional styles of relationship characteristic of sectarianism. The process of redeeming these distorted expressions is a demanding one. It entails a re-orientating or retrieval of parts of the Christian tradition and resources, the living of which have become overlaid by negative elements. It will be a radical renewal of what it means to be ‘Church’ called to live communion, koinonia, and to exercise a ministry of reconciliation.
The Pyramid of Sectarian Participation

The model was first developed by the Working Party on Sectarianism (WPS), 1991-1993.

It aims to provide an image of how one could participate in sectarianism without intending to and how sectarianism is supported by, and related at a number of levels and groups.

The WPS drew out two main defining features of the Pyramid:

- People at each level, when it comes to the crunch, disclaim responsibility for the words and action of the layer above
- Each level grows out of the one below and could not exist without support or permission from below.

The implication, therefore, is that we disown the layers above us at times and yet we provide support and permission. Ambivalence and inability to act are factors in this.

But why such ambivalence, without which the sectarian pyramid ought to crumble, when people disown the layer above? To understand this ambivalence, it is helpful to change the image from a pyramid to a tent held up by a centre pole, representing the dominant, basic division in society between Catholic-nationalist and Protestant-unionist. The centre pole of division keeps the tent standing because, much as people may dislike, disdain, oppose and fear ‘their’ paramilitaries and some of their politicians and community leaders, people cannot dismiss the fear that these paramilitaries and leaders may, in some crisis, be all that stands between them and the threat emanating from the other side of that centre pole.

Without this ‘centre pole’ cross-community abhorrence of some sectarian actions just might collapse the sectarian tent.

- All acts of sectarianism from the obvious to the subtle are related
- Many people who regard themselves as innocent of sectarianism are in fact implicated.
- The best of intentions can lead to sectarian consequences.
- The pyramid gives people an image that reveals how one can be complicit in sectarianism even without intention.
- Opting out of the pyramid is not really possible. Although each level of the pyramid disowns the one above it, each level also depends on the one below it for support.
- All sectarianism is connected within a single framework.
- It is the tension between the two sides which keeps the pyramid from collapsing.

Psycotic Killers, at the peak of the pyramid, commit acts of violence that seem to have little rationale beyond creating sectarian terror.

Paramilitaries whilst not admitting to sectarianism, have had their violence exposed as one of the most effective purveyors of sectarianism.
Leaders (political; religious and other) sometimes use platform, pulpit or the pages of the press to express bigoted or inflammatory statements.

Ordinary decent people encourage by vote, religious view and private opinion the attitudes, justification etc. of the layer above them. They may participate in organizations that have taken a sectarian stance or acted in sectarian ways. By doing nothing we allow the sectarian system to carry on unhindered. Even those whose work is directed against sectarianism find themselves ironically dependent on sectarianism for future employment.

Implications When it comes to the crunch people at each level disclaim responsibility for the words and actions for the layer above. Yet each level grows out of the one below and could not exist without support or permission from below. The dynamics running between the levels are shown to be as important as the boundaries separating them. Most people would be horrified to be told they are connected with the violence at the top of the pyramid, yet it is not hard to see how each individual stone supports the total structure.

'It is too easy to scapegoat, and scapegoating is a widespread middle class practice in Northern Ireland, including good church goers.'

Johnston McMaster, Churches on the Edge (Catalyst 2000)

What is the worst form of sectarianism?

Firstly, that which involves violence and secondly, our own sectarianism because it is the one about which we can do something.
The False Allure of Benign Apartheid

Our purpose here is to warn against understandings of peace that fall short of reconciliation, settling instead for what we call benign apartheid; simple co-existence of communities as separate as ever, but living without violence.

Benign Apartheid can look attractive for a number of reasons:
- The simple desire for safety
- The disdain, distaste or just lack of interest in the other community

Each level depends on the one below it for support e.g. doing nothing of real substance to challenge, rhetoric that lends support etc.

The structure remains in place because of the tension between the two sides.
• Conflict weariness and supposed political realism leading to the conviction that no more than peaceful co-existence is possible in Northern Ireland and therefore the pursuit of something more is a waste of time and possibly counter-productive.

• The contentment of church members who are fully and happily occupied with life in their own church community, their vision extending no further

The alternative vision for Benign Apartheid is that of RECONCILIATION.

Reconciliation is a key biblical concept. It has to do with the loving and life-giving relationship of God with humanity and with positive relationships between people and within the whole of creation. In terms of reconciled human relationships, the key to this vision is in following a strand of biblical teaching on how to relate to neighbours, even when those neighbours are pagans, oppressors or enemies. This kind of reconciliation is based on recognising that our welfare is bound up with the welfare of others and depends on seeking what is good for all those whom we live among. Jesus directly commands ‘Love your enemies’. The circle of neighbours extends even to those from whom we are most alienated and includes practical service, even to those who have treated us badly. To call someone a neighbour is essentially reconciling logic because a neighbour is someone whose wellbeing, present and future, is tied up with ours. When the circle of neighbours embraces enemies as well our welfare is immediately tied to everyone with whom we co-exist.. The call for former enemies to be reconciled in Christ and in the church is fundamentally incompatible with apartheid, benign or otherwise. Benign apartheid can only be accepted as a temporary arrangement, preferable to active antagonism, on the way to a more authentic reconciled peace.

The allure of benign apartheid is false and deceiving. Some political form of reconciliation, accompanied and undergirded by a broader religious, cultural and social reconciliation, offers us the best hope of sustainable peace – political pragmatism and Christian principle press us in the same direction.

The Level

The Level might in any given situation tell us things like:

• Where we may shop and where we ought to shop
• What we can talk about with our own
• What we may talk about with others
• What it means to join a different church
• Which sports are mixed and which are separate
• Where we should live
• To whom we may sell land

• The Level represents a certain community equilibrium. It sets limits people rarely talk about and that are not consciously taught, but that everybody knows and most people usually accept and observe.
• The Level will include some understanding of what are the costs or penalties incurred by violating it.
• The Level sets the point one does not go beyond in sectarian terms, and also sets limits beneath which we should not fall (what destructive patterns of relating are acceptable and unacceptable). When tainted by sectarianism the Level stifles growth, nurtures sectarianism and persuades us that a low level is a tolerable level, maybe even the best we can achieve or the best we ought to desire. The Level needs to be exposed, named, identified and understood.
• The Level can resist efforts to lower it as well as to raise it. More established folk in a town sometimes talk regretfully about new people moving in who will not understand or live by the local level.
• The Level is a local phenomenon. Some features are characteristic almost anywhere, e.g. few Catholics join the RUC, few Protestants join the GAA. However different towns have different levels e.g. in some locations Catholic and Protestant children hardly play together at all, whereas in other settings they do.
• Many of the local variations in the Level seem to have no rationale beyond arbitrary custom. The local nature of the Level is further indicated by the way it resists outsiders and outside pressures.
• The Level depends on stable communities that intuitively know the limits and boundaries.
• The Level hinders increased contact and cooperation.
• The Level is brittle and does not always cope with all the pressures put upon it.

Approaches to Dealing with Difference

We are not describing anything that people do not already know, but are putting it into a framework which helps them to understand better their relationship with the various types of difference.

• Sectarianism breeds a type of binary logic, which suggests that if I cannot agree with you then I must reject you.

• Rejection means not simply to disagree but a whole range of actions on a scale- dismiss, ignore, be antagonistic towards, dehumanize, demonise or attack.

• Sectarianism typically works through stages from being suspicious of, to magnifying and then rejecting difference. The liberal counter to such a process is to seek to cherish diversity.

• How do we prevent ourselves falling into rejection of the person or group, even while radically disagreeing with them?

• For Christians there is an added complication because we are called by Christ to love all people including our enemies.

• Only when we can be very honest with ourselves about where we are, in the process of dealing with difference that we find troubling, are we in a position to recognize the need to change our attitudes and approach.
Dealing with difference in our own group

Learning to deal positively with diversity within single tradition groups can be almost more difficult than between groups. Two major elements are at work:

• Facing diversity opens up a process of questioning the ‘certainties’ that many people thought they had about their own tradition - what is the truth?
• The unity of the group is one of the chief sources of security for members in a situation of threat. It is easier to deal with the ‘other’ side that you expect to be different, than to face family, neighbours, friends and people with whom you have worked or worshipped for years.

A Model for Dealing with Difference

There are two keys in the process of helping people to deal with difference:

• To help them grasp that agreement and acceptance are not the same.
• To help them to identify other positive ways of relating such as toleration and empathy which stop short of acceptance.

Rejection

Contrary to popular perception rejection is not a state of no relationship. It is possible to agree with some of the attitudes or positions of those we reject within the framework of an overall destructive and oppositional relationship.

• Rejection expresses itself in patterns that can broadly be described as either ‘ignoring’ or as ‘antagonism’.
• Rejection as Ignoring – In this mode we behave as if the other does not exist or impinge on our world.
• Rejection as antagonism – In its active form, this is most readily recognised in all forms of attack whether physical or verbal. In its passive form, it is expressed in a rigidity of view and a refusal to engage even when the other seeks or offers engagement.

Resignation

The mode in which we view the present state of difference leading to conflict and division as the way the world is. We believe that the present situation cannot be changed, so trying is a waste of energy, and we must learn to live with it.

• It leads easily to a justification for adopting benign apartheid as a means of resolving the situation.
• Resignation is a downward spiral which tends to accentuate the need for unity and conformity within their own group.
• It is a very difficult position out of which to break because it saps the creative energy and hope needed for envisaging another way forward.
Dealing with Difference Process

Toleration
- Toleration is the state in which a person or group can just about stomach the other's view as a possible way of looking at the world. It is a barely positive concept, and has nothing to do with the positive virtue of being a tolerant person.

Empathy
- Empathy is the ability to put ourselves into the shoes of another, to see the world from their standpoint, to understand their feelings and the logic of their way of being or acting, and to be able to communicate that understanding to them.
- For most of us this is an uncomfortable place to be especially when we are trying to empathise with people who have hurt or offended us.
- It is only when we can empathise with someone that we can really challenge him or her in a positive and constructive rather than destructive way.

Acceptance
- Acceptance is a positive relationship between individuals or groups in that they can acknowledge differences and disagreements, even serious divergences, yet sustain them within a continuing state of mutual respect and esteem.
- The development of acceptance demands ongoing relationship, generosity of interpretation and a deepening empathy for the other.
- It requires a willingness to accept the other's story of ‘how things are’ as genuine and coherent within itself, even when it differs substantially from our version of ‘how things are’.

Agreement
- Agreement is common understanding of and assent to a particular approach or approaches to a specific issue or issues.

Identification
- The level of identification has two poles one of which is positive ie ‘standing alongside the other’. Standing alongside the other can help people to become more themselves and more true to their tradition, not less.
- The negative pole is ‘losing one’s own identity’. The twin tendencies to demonise one’s own tradition and to unrealistically glorify the other tradition is the sectarian dynamic applied in reverse.

Conclusion
The purpose and importance of this model is to debunk the lie that to accept is to agree and that to disagree is to reject.
Dealing with Difference Process Model

**Encountering Difference**

**Toleration**
This is barely positive; neither agreement nor acceptance but allows contact. It should not be mistaken for ‘tolerance’ that is the positive virtue of being a ‘tolerant’ person.

**Empathy**
- Empathy is a skill involving seeing the world from the others point of view: ‘Putting yourself in the other’s shoes’.
- It involves some form of relationship and active listening.
- To challenge without empathy risks being misunderstood as an attack.

**Acceptance**
- A relationship that can acknowledge differences and disagreement yet sustain ‘respect’ and ‘esteem’.
- It may be very difficult to get to this stage if certain destructive patterns of relating continue.

**Identification**
Positive = Standing along side others
Negative = losing your own identity
Progress away from resignation and rejection requires:-

- Some commitment to better relationships.
- Discussion on appropriate ways of relating to each other.
- Neither minimizing nor magnifying differences. If real differences exist then they need to be acknowledged and their potential destructive outcomes need to be 'mitigated'.

Conditions that encourage people to move out of rejection and resignation modes:-

- Changes such as the Belfast Agreement or changes in personal circumstances.
- Recognising negative consequences.
- Seeing positive gain.
- Support that minimises the risks involved in encountering the other.

Mitigation

In any conflict situation a capacity to compromise is a vital skill. People give up things they desire and value as the necessary cost of peace. In the absence of some ability to compromise, conflict is all but inevitable and likely to be destructive.

Some ideas and commitments may be effectively non-negotiable; beyond the reach of compromise. Abandoning these beliefs is too high a price for peace because it is at the cost of our integrity, identity and allegiance. Mitigation is the scheme we want to propose for dealing constructively with situations where conflicting non-negotiables lead to sectarianism and yet cannot be compromised.

- By mitigation we mean the capacity to lessen or eliminate possible negative outcomes of a belief, commitment or action. Negotiation works by neglecting, rejecting, changing or working around a problematic belief or practice, while mitigation maintains the belief or practice in question, but seeks to nullify destructive consequences. What cannot be negotiated can sometimes be mitigated.

- Mitigation is a mix of skills, habits, and mindset that is accessible to everyone.

- Mitigation is both a tool for making truth claims in a constructive way and a standard of judgment for assessing the integrity of truth claims made by others.

- A defining feature of mitigation is that it seeks to lessen destructive consequences arising from within a tradition by appealing to resources from that same tradition. By contrast, negotiation may use resources from within the tradition, but it will often apply some principle of judgment borrowed from an external source.
Mitigation is a mix of skills, habits, and mindset that is accessible to everyone.

Examples:

The Jewish people and the death of Jesus. A mitigating reading of the text ‘his blood be on us and our children’ (Matt. 27.25) might work in at least two ways. One reads the text as specific and historical: this is a statement about what a particular mob did on a particular day and, despite their words, they have no power to call down wrath on future generations. Another mitigating strategy would interpret the text as general and universal: readers should not assign blame to a particular group, but recognise that the mob in question, those religious leaders, even that Roman ruler, could have been us. This is not a story about a particular group of Jews, it is a story about us all - a story about universal human failure and responsibility.

Anti-Catholicism. One of the mitigating resources available within conservative Protestantism is a distinction between religious separation and social separation. This distinction allows at least neighbourly relations and potential cooperation in various enterprises without a religious element. Acting on their freedom to relate to, and work with Catholics outside the explicitly religious sphere has involved evangelicals in some important cross-community initiatives with Catholics.

Read by any Christian with a mitigating spirit, the Bible, and especially the teaching and example of Jesus, is revealed as a rich source of mitigating principles. Loving enemies is about behaviour as much as attitude. Forgiveness is always a form of love and practiced in hard cases it is especially the love of enemies. Forgiving enemies has been an important form of mitigation in Northern Ireland.
Bifocal Vision

Bi-Focal vision is a tool for helping us to move beyond sectarianism, with its over-simplified yes/no, /black/white, either/or habits of thought.

Some opponents of sectarianism try to respond to it by simple contradiction: whatever sectarianism does, they will do the opposite. But the opposite of an over-simplification is often an over-simplification itself.

Challenging sectarianism requires not contradiction but ‘bifocal vision’, the practice of seeing two things at the same time.

Bifocal vision requires not so much brain-power as a new framework of thinking. Intelligence never protected anyone from accepting the sectarian framework; they just thought within it and applied it in a more sophisticated way.

Anyone can adopt the framework of bifocal vision. It is having the capacity to keep several things in focus at once, what James Joyce called having two thinks at the same time.

The table gives examples of how it might work
### Bifocal Vision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTARIANISM</th>
<th>BIFOCAL VISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sectarianism is out there, it is someone else’s responsibility</td>
<td>sectarianism is out there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sectarianism is a matter of intentions</td>
<td>sectarianism is a matter of intentions sectarianism is a matter of consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diversity is a threat to be rejected</td>
<td>diversity is potentially enriching we have a range of strategies for dealing constructively with expressions of diversity that we cannot accept as enriching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difference cuts all the way down—we are ‘opposite religions’, we share nothing</td>
<td>difference is real there are always shared qualities beneath difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minimise difference</td>
<td>sharing is real difference is real sharing is real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion</td>
<td>inclusion recognition that every new inclusion creates the possibility of a new exclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>false either/or choices</td>
<td>both/and reasoning either/or reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our enemy is a demon</td>
<td>we have enemies our enemy is a human being, made in the image of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>truth claims</td>
<td>truth claims are good and necessary some truth claims are dangerous and must be mitigated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leaves

- Mime
- Quiz
- Collage
- Discussion
- Puppets
- Music
- Drama
- Craft
- Debate
- Poetry
- Games
- Art
Getting Started

The layout of the room

The optimum layout for these learning activities, the information sharing and the small group work is an open circle with no desks, chairs, or bags between the participants (students/young people and teachers/youth workers). This may be the first time teachers and students have worked together in such an informal atmosphere and some may find it uncomfortable at first. Usually such discomfort is short lived.

Be clear about your aims and objectives, realistic about your experience, and aware of your own strengths/weaknesses.

It is important that the teacher/facilitator is clear about the aim of the activity and the possible outcomes. The preparation of the students for the activity and its closure are important.

- Are you aware of the difficulties which might emerge for you from an activity? It might be a good idea to try it out with colleagues first of all
- Are you prepared for the responses/questions/discussion which may emerge from the activity?
- Are the students prepared ie. are they clear about the aims of the activity?
- Will there be enough time for everyone who wishes to participate?
- Will the space within the room be sufficient and appropriate for the activity?
- Will there be an opportunity for a review or follow-up if necessary?


**GAMES**

**Notes about using icebreakers, dividers, energisers, trust and co-operation exercises.**

All of these exercises are important learning activities that we can use to help the process of relationship building in our work. Different games have different aims and outcomes and can be employed for many different purposes. It is important not to undervalue them or to use them inappropriately.

- **Icebreakers** – As the name implies they help a group of new individuals to "break the ice", or a group who know each other within a formal classroom situation to get ready to meet in a new way in a less formal situation. These games are great levellers, bringing staff and students; facilitators and participants to the same level. Trainers/learners together.

- **Name Games** – Again as the name implies these games are for learning each other’s names. Participants can decide by what name they wish to be known by the rest of the group and communicate that in a fun way.

- **Group dividers** – These games help to split up a large group into smaller groups of 8 -10 for the purposes of getting to know each other better. They can randomly or more deliberately split a group according to the aims of the activity.

- **Co-operation** and group-building exercises – These help group members to see how the participation and sharing of the variety of gifts of each individual member is important to the well being of the whole group.

- **Trust exercises** – These exercises can be used by a group wishing to build upon some of the knowledge they already have of one another. People are more free to tell their stories when they feel security and trust within the group.

- **Energisers** – These are used for raising the motivation and energy level in a group. They help the group to focus on the tasks facing them.

Some of these exercises may work well for one group and not so well for another. Take into account any possible restrictions eg. if there is someone with a physical difficulty in the group, and do as much advance planning as possible. Examples of some of the games are given on the next few pages with the aims for each, and resources needed. There are many games around and books of them are available for purchase. See bibliography

**An Icebreaker Game**

**Everyone Change**

**Aims**
To have fun
To affirm difference
To help reduce tension
To encourage co-operation
To create a good atmosphere where everyone is mixing and on the same level.
Leaves

Equipment
Chairs in a circle, one less than the number of participants. With a large group the participants can sit on cushions or on the floor.

Time
5 – 10 minutes

- The person starting the game is without a chair, and stands in the middle of the circle. It is their aim to find a chair/space in the circle.
- The person in the middle says (for example) "Everyone wearing jeans change your seat".
- Everyone wearing jeans has to leave their seat and cross the room in order to find a seat on the other side of the circle. They cannot return to their own seat, or to one on either side of it. The person in the middle also tries to occupy one of the seats in the circle.
- The last person to find a seat or place in the circle will be next to stand in the middle and make another request (for example) "Everyone who washed their teeth this morning change".

Take care that no one is pushed off or against a chair. If there is someone with a physical difficulty, make a rule that everyone walks to find another place/chair.

This exercise can be used to focus on particular issues of difference, eg. gender, religion, politics, likes/dislikes.

There are also a number of variations to this game

Variations to Everyone Change

- The person in the middle can say (for example) "I have never travelled in a plane" or "I have never been a girl", and all those who have change.
- The facilitator stands outside the circle throughout the exercise and asks a number of questions or makes a number of statements (for example) "Change all those who:-
  - believe in God
  - want peace
  - want a United Ireland
  - think that the legal age limit for alcohol should be reduced to 16
  - want to go to university
  - think that women should stay at home to raise the children
  - want a job when they leave school
  - go to church
  - are British
  - are Irish
  - think that world poverty has nothing to do with them

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• have been to a place of worship other than their own
• enjoy meeting new friends
• are Unionist
• are Nationalist
• think that all marching should be banned
• like to have fun

A Large Group Building Game
Birthday Line up

Aims
To encourage co-operation
To encourage non-verbal communication
To enable members of the group to mix and learn more about one another

Equipment
None

Time
5 minutes

• The facilitator asks the group to line up in order according to their birthday. Those born on the earliest date in January at the front, those born on the latest date in December at the end, the rest in the middle.

• They are asked to do this in silence, using only non-verbal communication.

• The facilitator goes down the line as the participants call out their birthdays. It is the group’s responsibility if people have ended up in the right or wrong order, as the main aim of this exercise is group building and co-operation.

Variations

• Height line-up. This will involve more members of the group as a third person will usually have to decide which of a pair is shorter/taller.

• Try any of the line-ups standing on a low wall, or on chairs in a circle. The participants then have to hold on to each other as they pass to get to the right place, and this encourages more group building and co-operation.

• Give individual members of the group cards with statements written on them and the participants have to line up according to where in the line they think their statement belongs. For example a line of sectarianism, most sectarian at one end, least sectarian at the other. A list of possible statements to use in this are given on the next page.
Statements for a line of Sectarianism

• I’m not sectarian; I’m a Christian
• I am an ex political prisoner
• I am a member of Sinn Fein
• I am a member of the Ulster Democratic Party
• I shot an innocent person
• I am a member of the RUC
• I will not worship with Catholics
• I threatened a family out of their home
• I just keep within my own community and stay out of politics
• I painted ‘Taigs out’ on a wall in our village car park
• I painted a paramilitary mural on the gable wall of our house
• I wouldn’t marry a Protestant
• I think the Catholics should go and live in the South of Ireland
• I don’t have a sectarian bone in my body
• I don’t think that Catholics are Christians
• I get on well with people from the other side as long as religion and politics are not mentioned
• I’m not sectarian. I’m a good Catholic
• I wouldn’t talk to anybody as sectarian as that
• I pray that the people from that church will come to true faith in Christ
• I believe it’s the other side that started all the trouble and want to keep it going
• I believe the other side gets all the funding and we get nothing
• I am a member of the G.A.A.
• I blocked a road this July in support of Drumcree
• I support the Garvaghy Road Residents Association
• I am a member of the Orange Order
• I believe that Northern Ireland is our country and that the Catholics should adapt to our ways
• Some of my best friends are Catholics
• I believe that all Catholics are Republicans
• I don’t think that Protestants can be trusted
• I can’t believe anything a Catholic says
Group Divider Games

Dots and Jigsaws

Aim
To encourage co-operation
To encourage non-verbal communication
To divide a large group up into smaller groups
To encourage group building within the smaller group.

Equipment for Dots
Coloured dots in the same number of colours as you want groups.

Time 5 minutes
• Fix a coloured dot onto the forehead of each participant. Give some thought to how you want to mix the groups. Girls and boys; some noisy and some quiet etc.
• Ask the participants to stand up and move around the room in silence.
• Participants must find out what colour their dot is without talking.
• Once they know what colour their dot is, they find others with the same colour and that will be their group.

Equipment for Jigsaws
The same number of pictures as you want groups, cut into the same number as you want participants in the small group.

Time 10 minutes
• Give a jigsaw piece to each participant.
• Ask them to walk around the room and try to find people with jigsaw pieces that would go with theirs.
• Eventually the various members of the small groups find themselves together joining up their pieces to make the picture, and this becomes their first group building activity.

If you want to look at a particular theme - environment; gender; community relations; world development - this can determine the pictures you will use.

Small group-building Games

Human Knots

Aim
To encourage co-operation and teamwork
To encourage individuals within the group to discover each others strengths

Time 5 minutes
• Ask the members of the group to stand up in a circle facing each other
• Ask them to reach their hands into the middle of the circle without looking at any of them, including their own.
• Invite them to reach for and take hold of another hand in each of their own hands
• They will now be in a knot
• Tell them their challenge as a group is to get out of the knot without letting go of
  the hands.
• Ask if the group can say who the "leaders" were, or who were the "ideas" people.

Circle Knee Sit

Aim
To build trust.

Time
5 minutes

• Ask the members of the group to stand in a circle facing each other
• Ask them to turn 45 degrees to the right so they are facing each other's backs and to
  put their hands on the shoulders in front
• Make sure their hips are aligned and then ask them to slowly sit down
• The weight should be easily distributed by the group
• This will only work if each member of the team trusts the other
• If the group are happy and feel secure enough they can even "walk" like a caterpillar
  whilst still sitting on each other's knees and with hands on shoulders.

Small group team building and trust exercises
Adventure Learning activities for inside a building

Aims
To build trust and co-operation
To encourage teamwork - ideal for whole staff development

Time
Allow about 10 minutes for each activity

Preparation
Warn people about safety, and assure them that the exercises are not too risky but that they
require them to look out for one another. It adds to the excitement if people can use their
imagination. A good way to start if people are still in the large group before breaking up into the
small groups is to ask them to pretend you have a canister of acid in your hands which if dropped
will cover the floor and burn the feet of anyone who stands on it. Then drop it. People should get
up onto their chairs and then head for the door helping each other without stepping on the floor.

1. Feeling the place

   Equipment: Blindfolds

   Everyone in the group gets into pairs. One person wears a blindfold, the other leads that
   person. The "seeing" person leads their partner to any part of the building within a block,
Leaves and invites them to feel and smell an object (desk; chair; toy etc.). When they are satisfied they will recognise it again, they are led away, the blindfold is removed and they are asked to find it. The partners then swap and the “seeing” one takes a turn at being blindfolded.

2. Island Hopping
   Equipment: "stepping stones" - Six small flat firm cushions (church hassocks would be ideal) for a group of ten.

   The group has to get from one end of the hall to the other using the cushions and without stepping on the floor (which they could imagine is quicksand or something).

3. Line up in a circle standing on chairs
   Equipment: The same number of chairs as participants arranged in a circle.

   The group starts off in a random circle in front of the chairs. They are invited to stand on the chair. They have to arrange themselves in order according to age (oldest to youngest); height (tallest to smallest); or birthday (1st January to 31st December) without stepping onto the floor.

4. Bridge that Gap
   Equipment: An area marked out between two points in a room.

   The group have to form a human bridge across the gap between the two points, with only eg. two feet, two hands, and two bums touching the floor.

5. Sheep and Shepherd
   Equipment: Blindfolds for the sheep, which will be all of the group apart from the shepherd. An area will be marked out to which all of the sheep must return - the fold.

   The group have to work out a whistle code used only by the shepherd by which the blindfolded sheep will know which direction they must go to get to the fold.

6. Isotope
   Equipment: One 40 foot rope and two 20 foot ropes; a barrel; and a bottle filled with water (you can leave the top on or off as you wish) Arrange the large rope in a circle on the floor. Put the barrel in the middle, with the bottle of water on top.

   Tell the group that no-one is allowed to step over the rope, as the area around the barrel is “dangerous”! They have to get the bottle from the top of the barrel to outside the circle using only the two smaller ropes.
7. Squaring the circle

**Equipment:** Blindfolds and a large rope - 50-60 feet. Arrange the rope in a circle on the floor

Tell the group to stand in a circle around the outside of the rope. Ask each member of the team to put on a blindfold, and then put the rope into their hands. Their challenge as a team is to turn the circle into a square.

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**Energiser Games**

**Touch Blue**

**Aim**
To raise the energy level of a group and to encourage interdependence.

**Time**
5 minutes

- Ask the participants to walk around the room in any direction. This mixes them up so that when you ask them to stop they are more likely to be standing beside people they don't know so well.
- Tell them you are going to call out various things for them to touch. When you say "touch blue" they have to reach out to touch something blue eg. someone's blue jumper.
- Tell them that they must keep touching that whilst you call out the next touch eg. "touch red (or any other colour)" "touch shoes (or any other piece of clothing)".
- Eventually everyone is touching, supporting one another, standing on one leg etc., and enjoying making the connection with one another, as well as being energised ready for the next session.

**Hands in the middle**

**Aim**
To encourage concentration and focus the group

**Time**
5 minutes

- Ask the members of the group to get into a circle either on the floor with their hands spread in front of them palm down, or seated around a table with hands palm down on the table in front of them.
- Everyone raises their right hand and places it to the right of the left hand of the people beside them. Everyone takes turns to tap each hands in turn in the circle - This requires concentration and teamwork.
- To increase concentration two taps reverses the direction of the tapping.
Name Games

"Hot Potato"

Aim
To help people get to know each others' names better

Equipment
A bean bag

• Members of the group sit in a circle
• A bean bag represents a hot potato
• The "hot potato" is thrown from one member of the group to the other as quickly as possible (because it is hot!)
• As the person throws it they say their own name. Later as they get to know the other members of the group they call the name of the person they are throwing the "hot potato" to.

"My name is Yvonne and I like yoghurt"

• A subject is chosen eg. food.
• The first person introduces themselves saying their name and something they like beginning with the same letter as their name eg. my name is Yvonne and I like yoghurt
• The person on their right goes next and so on around the circle with everyone repeating the name/names of the group members that have been introduced before them finishing with themselves.

Name Graffiti

Equipment
A large sheet of paper and some large markers

• Each member of the group in turn, writes their name on a large sheet of paper in the middle of the circle
• They then write or draw something around their name that says or shows something about themselves eg. a musical note, a keyboard, a car, a puppet, a football, a palette and paintbrush, a bike etc.

Pattern Ball

Aim
To help people get to know each other's names better

Equipment
3 different coloured bean bags

• Members of the group sit in a circle
• A bean bag is thrown from the leader to another person in the circle to catch and their name is called
Leaves

• That person throws it to another naming them and so on until the bean bag returns to the leader
• The pattern of who throws or catches in what order is memorised by the group.
• This pattern is repeated several times, and different coloured bags are thrown at different stages of the pattern to keep everyone concentrating
• Just to check how well the group are concentrating, or learning the names try reversing the order of the pattern.

Paired Interviews

Aim
To help people to share information about themselves and to help members of the group to get to know each other better

Time
10 – 15 minutes (depending on the size of the group)

• Members of the group pair up with someone they don’t know so well
• They go to some part of the room for about 5 minutes to find out 5 pieces of information about each other that they will be happy to share with the whole group. (This will preferably be information they don’t think the rest of the group will already know.)
• They return to the group to share all the information they have learnt from each other, each person introducing their partner.

Hand Prints - an alternative to paired interviews

Aim: To begin to examine how we spend our time and what is important to us and to promote conversation in groups and ‘getting to know people’.

Time: 5 minutes

Group: This may work best with smaller groups who are wishing to get to each other a little better

Instructions:
• Get into twos within the small group
• Describe something about yourselves using the palms of your hands
• Palm = what relationships and values do you consider as being very important to you?
• Thumb = what activities are most important to you?
• Fingers = what ‘things’ are you interested in but are perhaps less important
• Wrist = what group/organization would you describe yourself as being most associated with?
• Introduce each other to the rest of the small group
Badges
If on a second meeting or if joining a larger group you need a reminder about names, try badges. Give everyone a sticker and marker and invite them to write their name.

- As a variation, they could write the name of someone else in the group they have met for the first time and say something they remember about them from the name graffiti, paired interviews, or palm prints.
- Another variation is to ask them to write their name and underneath the name of their hero or heroine. They can then tell the rest of the group about them.
- Under their name they might try writing something affirming about themselves, although this is usually a harder activity for most people.

The Blob Tree
A small group ‘levelling’ activity

Objectives: A small group activity to encourage honesty and openness about the way we feel about dealing with difference

Time: 20 minutes

Method: Give each member of the group a picture of the Blob tree, and ask them to pick which Blob would represent them when it comes to dealing with difference

Questions: Do you hide, feel sad and unsafe, or easy and confident.
Share with one another in twos and then with the small group

Discussion: Discussion will focus around the different ways we deal with difference

Feeling Faces Mural
A large group sharing activity

Objectives: To get to know how we as a group feel about being on the course/pilot

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: A large sheet of paper; pens/crayons/chalk

Method: Ask the young people to take a pen/crayon/piece of chalk and draw a face describing how they feel. They can communicate any hopes or fears they have. Step back and stand in a circle around the ‘mural’ when finished. The facial expressions will give the group some idea of the sorts of feelings we are bringing with us. We can make a group contract based on what we see and read.
The Blob Tree
Feeling Faces

[Diagram showing various faces expressing different emotions]
More Games
Revolving Circles

Aim
- To help the group to get to know each other
- To help the group relax
- To share information in an informal way

Method
- Put the group into two circles of equal numbers, one inside the other
- Ask the two circles to move. The inside circle will move in a clockwise direction, the outside group anticlockwise
- When you say stop, ask the people in the inside circle to face the people in the outside circle, and ask each other questions to find out three things that they don’t already know.
- Ask them to move again, and next time you say stop they should be opposite someone new to repeat the process
- You can repeat this process as many times as you wish, according to interest and the time available.

Alternative
Instead of saying move and stop, you could play and stop some music.

Name and action
For the more adventurous, each person needs to think of a name and action to express themselves.

Aim:
- This exercise is to help people get to know each other.
- The action reminds you of the name.
- It is a good warm-up/energizer.

Method:
- One person begins by saying, ‘my name is........and my action is...........
- The second person says, ‘his/her name is...........and their action is.........., my name is.............and my action is...........
- And so on.
Personal Shields

Aim:

- This exercise is to help people get to know each other.
- It is a good icebreaker/energizer.

Method:

- Photocopy the empty shield and give one to each person
- Ask them to write in each corner ‘The three things I most treasure’; ‘The person who has influenced me most’; ‘The place I would most like to visit’; ‘The greatest wish I have’.
- Let them walk about the room and share their shields with one another. You could combine this with revolving circles.
I Know that Hand

Aim:
• To help the group get to know each other
• To encourage interaction

Equipment:
• You may need blindfolds

Method:
• Divide the group into twos
• Each person takes the other’s hand and tries to notice by touch not sight, (blindfolded) anything that will help them to remember that hand.
• Let the group then move about without looking (blindfolded) exploring hands until they find their partner.

Clumps

Aim:
• To help the group to interact
• To encourage listening
• To observe co-operation or competition

Method:
• Invite the members of the group to walk about the room
• Call out a number 4; 6 etc. whereupon the people have to get into ‘clumps’ of that number
• Invite the group to move again and call out a different number etc.
• Ask people afterwards how inclusive/exclusive they were. Did they look out for their ‘friends’ or accept the stranger? How did people who couldn’t find a place in a clump feel?

Rainstorm - sound effects simulating the beginning and passing of a storm

Aim:
• To encourage co-operation and teamwork
• To reduce noise in the group and prepare them for listening

Method:
• Begin by explaining that whatever the person on your right does you do. Do not copy anyone else
• You start and change each action
• Start by rubbing palms together; then click fingers; clap laps; and thump feet; then work your way back through the actions until you get back to silence after rubbing palms.
• Why does it work/not work?
Affirmation Chairs

Aims:
• To affirm one another
• To encourage movement and interaction

Method:
• Have people sitting in a circle with one seat empty.
• The person sitting to the right of the empty hair invites someone in the circle to sit in it, and in saying why, affirming that person eg, ‘I would like …...to sit here because s/he inspires me/encourages me/ is good fun.’

Certificates

A very affirming thing to do when a group gives a lot of commitment to the course of work is to present them with certificates of participation, and course completion. See sample. This work requires a lot of courage and honesty and deserves some recognition. The presentation could be at a special event or assembly.
Closures

It is very important to have a good closure to:

- have some feedback and evaluation
- draw the work together
- affirm the group
- wish everyone well as they move on.

There are a number of suggestions, depending on the amount of time available and the appropriateness for your group.

Wool Web

Objective: To encourage the participants to share stories about their time together

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: One big ball of wool

Method: Sitting in a circle, one person (the facilitator) has the ball of wool and, holding onto the end, throws it to someone else in the circle naming them. They can then say a special thanks to that particular person and to the rest of the group, also saying what they learnt or will remember most. The person with the ball of wool is the next person to throw it to someone else and repeat the process. This continues until everyone has received the ball of wool and passed it on once. It should end up back with the facilitator and a ‘web’ pattern connecting everyone up. The facilitator can then make some comments about the ‘web’ and the interconnectedness of everyone.

Jigsaw

Objective: To encourage the participants to share information/feedback about their time together

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: White card and crayons/pens; scissors

Method: Sitting in a circle, give each of the members of the group a card shape and pens. The card could be cut into pieces that come together as a jigsaw, and numbered on the back to help get the pieces together again quickly. Ask them to draw or write some sort of review of their time together on the card. Give them some time to do this and then ask them to put their pieces together on the floor to make a collage or ‘group feedback’. If all the small groups are doing this, you might think of bringing them all together for a large group collage, made up of lots of individual responses within both the small and large groups.
QUIZ

Aims:

• To have fun finding out how much we do and do not know about sectarianism

• To encourage co-operation and team building within each small group

• To help young people to learn more about their history, politics, religious identity and the sectarian system

• To encourage them to work together as a team to inform one another – particularly relevant for inter-community groups

Spaghetti Quiz Aim:

• To bring a bit more equity into the competition between each small group, try a spaghetti quiz. It introduces chance and takes the focus off the score. The important aim is to have fun learning from one another.

Time:  1 hour

Equipment:
Large saucepan; ball of wool cut into different lengths for the ‘spaghetti’; scraps of paper; pens; pictures for picture round, symbols for symbol round; puzzle for puzzle round; tape and tape recorder for music round and prizes

Method:

• You will need a large saucepan and a ball of wool cut up into different lengths of ‘spaghetti’- from 3" to 23" and any length in between.

• Arrange the pieces in the pot with the ends hanging over the side, so that when you put the lid on, they all look the same length.

• When a team gets an answer right, someone is appointed to choose a piece of ‘spaghetti’ for their team.

• The pieces are all joined together, and at the end all the teams compare their lengths of wool.

• The team with the longest piece of wool ‘wins’. The chance element keeps the suspense going and everyone interested.
Rounds

• Start with getting the large group into smaller teams of 6-8 people

• Ask the teams to choose a name by which they will be known

• Take turns to ask each team a question. If they get it right, let one of them choose a piece of ‘spaghetti’. If they get it wrong offer a bonus to the next team. With the Symbol, Abbreviations, Party and Picture rounds, let the team complete the answers on the piece of paper, and ask each team to name the symbol/person in turn. Again, a piece of spaghetti is awarded for each right answer. With the Drawing round, hold up each team’s picture and award a piece of spaghetti if it is recognized. With the Drama round, award a piece of spaghetti for the effort of each team member ‘taking the stage’. With the Puzzle round award a piece of spaghetti for the first team to finish.

• Try to mix the rounds. The following is a possible order:-

1 General Knowledge round

2 Symbol round - use either the pictures or if available, badges of identity

3 Music round

4 History round

5 Picture round - match the politicians with the parties; or identify the people; the buildings; the church leaders.

6 Abbreviations round

7 Drama round

8 Drawing round

9 Party round

10 Puzzle round

• Finish by asking the teams to join up all their pieces of ‘spaghetti’ and compare the lengths to find out who has ‘won’. Award prizes as appropriate. A good idea one school had was to award a bag of 10 sweets 4 green and 6 orange representing the population of Northern Ireland!
General Knowledge

1. Name the characters in the television show, ‘Give my head peace’
   (Mao, Da; Cal; Uncle Andy; Billy; and Dympna)

2. When is St. Patrick’s Day celebrated?
   (17th of March)

3. Who was the first woman to become President of Ireland?
   (Mary Robinson)

4. What object has been given the name ‘Roaring Meg’?
   a) a drum
   b) a hurricane
   c) a canon
   (a and c)

5. From which Irish town did Marconi send his first wireless transmission?
   (Ballycastle)

6. What city is known as the ‘ecclesiastical capital of Ireland’?
   (Armagh)

7. Who was the first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland?
   (Brian Faulkner)

8. What does A.O.H. stand for?
   (Ancient Order of Hibernians)

9. What day do they parade on?
   (15th August, the Feast of the Assumption)

10. What colour are the collarettes of
    a) The Orange order
    b) The Ancient Order of Hibernians
    c) The Apprentice Boys of Derry?
    (a) Orange b) Green c) Red)

11. What is the harp the symbol of?
    a) Brian Boru
    b) The Province of Leinster
    c) The Royal Ulster Constabulary
    (all three)
Symbols
Music Round

1. Play No. 7, side 2, Star of the County Down by the Pride of the Ardoyne Flute Band
2. No. 4, side 1, Roddy McCorley/Star of the County by the John F Kennedy Memorial Pipe Band, Belfast

Which band is from the Catholic community and which is from the Protestant?

**Answer:**
1. = Protestant
2. = Catholic

3. Play: No. 1, side 2, Four Green Fields
   From: The Land We Love, Irish Songs of Freedom

What are the Four Green Fields supposed to represent?

**Answer:** The Four Provinces of Ireland

4. Play: No 4, side 2, The Sash from: Orange Songs of Ulster

Name the four places the singer tells us the Sash was worn at.

**Answer:** Derry, Aughrim, Enniskillen, The Boyne

5. Play: No.2, side 2, James Connolly
   From: The Land We Love, Irish Songs of Freedom

Why are they singing about James Connolly?

**Answer:** He was one of the leaders killed by the British Government for his part in the Easter Rising in Dublin, 1916

6. Play: No. 4, side 1, Derry's Walls
   From: Orange Songs of Ulster

Who were they guarding the walls of Derry against and what Gate was marched up to?

**Answer:** Against James II and the rebels. James II was trying to win back the English Crown. The gate James and his rebels marched up to is Bishop's Gate
History

1. On what day was the Battle of the Boyne fought?
   a) 12th July
   b) 12th August
   c) 1st July
   (answer: 1st July. The commemoration of the Battle takes place on 12th July because of changes from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar)

2. When did the great Potato Famine in Ireland begin?
   (1845)

3. What are 'stickies'?
   a) supporters and members of the Official IRA
   b) sweets
   c) self-seal envelopes
   (answer a) – so called because they secured the Easter lilies worn at Easter Rising commemorations with self-adhesive backing whilst Provisional supporters used a pin)

4. The Famine in Ireland (1845-49) reduced the population by millions through death and immigration. At this time who were known as 'Soupers'?
   a) People who gave soup to the starving
   b) People who changed their religion in order to receive soup
   (answer b)

5. The 'Act of Union in 1801 did what?
   a) Merge Ireland into Great Britain
   b) Merge Ulster with the rest of Ireland
   c) Merge Northern Ireland with Great Britain
   (answer a)

6. What relation was William to James? (Could be more than one below)
   a) Nephew
   b) Son-in-law
   c) Cousin
   (answer: a. and b. William was James’ sister’s son. He married his cousin who was the daughter of James.)

7. Who did the Pope at the time support?
   a) James 11
   b) William 111
   c) Neither
   (answer b. - The Pope asked for the Te Deum to be sung in every church in Austria to celebrate William’s victory. James was a threat to the Pope because of his alignment with Louis X1V of France)
Abbreviations Round

What do the following abbreviations mean?

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Drama Round

A person from each group chooses one of the following people out of the hat to act out for their group to guess:

- Tony Blair
- Gerry Adams
- David Trimble
- Gerry Kelly (The TV presenter)
- Uncle Andy (from Give my Head Peace)
- President Clinton
- Ian Paisley
- Bertie Ahern
Leaves

Drawing Round
A person from each group chooses a character from the hat to draw for their group to guess (no speaking or written words):

- A Protestant young person
- A Catholic young person
- A Republican
- A Loyalist
- Someone from The Republic of Ireland
- Someone from Northern Ireland

Puzzle Round
- Each group is given an envelope containing a picture cut into 8-10 pieces
- Each group should have the same puzzle/picture. The picture might be of a wall mural; a famous Assembly politician or an item of identity
- The teams are given three minutes to try to put the pieces together to make the picture
- Pieces of ‘spaghetti’ are offered on the basis of how well the teams got on.

Party Round
Put the person with the party

| Michael McGimpsey |  |
| Iris Robinson     |  |
| Gerry Kelly       |  |
| Gary McMichael    |  |
| Billy Hutchinson  |  |
| Brid Rogers       |  |
| Sammy Wilson      |  |
| Monica McWilliams |  |
| Alex Atwood       |  |
| Mitchell McLoughlin |  |
| Marietta Farrell  |  |
| John Alderdice    |  |
Adventure or Action Learning

The following activities may provide accessible ways into a discussion of some of the themes coming from the tools. These are all action-learning exercises for small groups. As well as getting young people warmed up, co-operating and working together as a team, building trust, they also provide a way of getting into some discussion in small group work later of some of the dynamics operating within the sectarian system.

Contents

A Pyramid Web
The Pyramid of Holes
Triangling the Circle
Flying in Formation
Team Pyramids

Health and Safety

For anyone who hasn’t been involved in adventure learning before, there are a number of health and safety issues which you would need to be aware of before you start. Check the preparation section at the front of this resource.
A Pyramid Web

Objective: To get members of the group thinking about their place in the pyramid of sectarianism and to see how the various layers of the pyramid are interconnected and dependent on one another.

Time: 20 minutes for the activity plus preparation time

Materials: A fixed frame and some nylon rope

Method: Using nylon ropes, fix them to a frame to make a triangular shaped web. The holes must be big enough for a person to get through. Each person in the group must get through by a different hole. The group must decide who goes first and through which hole recognizing that anyone going through the top hole will have to be lifted. Make sure the group receives a health and safety brief.

Questions: How did the group decide who would go through the top hole? Was the person going through the top hole happy with the decision? How did the people who went through the middle and bottom holes feel? What feelings did different members of the group experience?
Discussion: Start with a ‘first thoughts’ exercise.
Give the members of the group a pen and a piece of paper and ask them to write down their first thoughts when they hear the following:-

- Sinn Fein
- Teachers
- Ulster Democratic Party
- Psychotic killers
- Alliance party
- Victims
- D.U.P.
- Women’s Coalition
- Royal Ulster Constabulary
- Drug pushers
- Homeless people

- British Army
- Youth workers
- Trade Unions
- Unionist Party
- I.R.A.
- Unemployed people
- S.D.L.P.
- Political prisoners
- Church leaders
- Young people

Using a flipchart, draw the diagram of the pyramid of sectarianism with just the labels ‘Pyramid of sectarianism’; ‘Catholic’ and ‘Protestant’.
Where on this diagram would the group place the various people listed in terms of their contribution to the pyramid of sectarianism?
How much agreement/disagreement is there about where each person is placed?
Can anyone make a connection between the different levels in terms of depending on one another or disowning one another?
Where would individual members of the group place themselves on this pyramid?
Where were they in the web during the action learning exercise?
Can they see various group dynamics at work during this exercise that would apply to the way people on the pyramid diagram interrelate?
What conclusions can they come to about the way sectarianism works as a system?

The Pyramid of Holes

Objective: To help members of the group understand how the pyramid of sectarianism works

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: A pyramidal shaped container full of holes; access to water; container for the water; and a plastic fish?

Method: The challenge for the group is to get the fish at the bottom of the pyramid to the top without touching it, using only a container and also having access to water.

Notes: The point of this exercise is to see how we can contribute to the pyramid of sectarianism in an indirect way.
Questions:  How did members of the group get the fish to the top?  
How close did they get to the water? Did anyone get wet?  
What did members of the group learn about the support sectarianism needs to work?  
Does this support always need to be direct?  
In what ways do people give indirect support to sectarianism?

Discussion:  Look at the diagram of the pyramid. Discussion will focus on the idea that people only get to the top of the pyramid of sectarianism by means of support from the bottom.

Triangling the Circle:  

Objective:  To help members of the group to understand more about the separation necessary to maintain the pyramid of sectarianism

Time:  20 minutes

Materials:  A long rope; blindfolds

Method:  Everyone stands in a circle and is blindfolded. They hold the rope, which is tied at the ends to form a circle. The challenge is for the members of the group to turn that circle into a triangle, or pyramid shape
Notes: The aim of this exercise is to understand more about the process of separation needed to make the pyramid of sectarianism work.

Questions: How did the group manage with the challenge? Did any ‘leaders’ emerge within the group? What feelings did different members of the group experience?

Discussion: Look at the diagram of the pyramid. The discussion will focus on the fact that the process of getting the circle into a pyramid or triangle means separation and distance between the participants.
Leaves

Flying in Formation

Objective: To help members of the group to understand more about the support necessary to maintain the sectarian system

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: One blindfold

Method: This exercise is based on the way ducks fly in formation. They make lots of noise to reassure the lead duck that they are right behind. Also the lead duck can choose to move back and hand over to another. The members of the group form a pyramid behind the leader who is blindfolded. The others have to stay in formation behind as the leader moves about. When the leader is ready to move back, another takes the lead place and wears the blindfold.

Notes: The focus of this exercise is about who is at the apex of a pyramid of sectarianism at any one time. Looking at the diagram, this apex could occur at any point on the dividing line, within ordinary citizenry alone.

Questions: How was the ‘leader’ chosen?
Did the leader feel supported?
How long did the leader remain at the front?
Was the changeover an easy one?
What feelings did different members of the group experience?

Discussion: Discuss the idea that ‘ordinary decent people...encourage by vote, religious view and private opinion the layer above them’. Also, the person at the apex of a pyramid within ordinary citizenry can change. What people can we think of who might occupy this position - was that person ever me?
Team Pyramids

Objective: To help members of the group to understand more about the interdependent nature of sectarianism

Time: 30 minutes

Method: The members of each small group meet together and discuss how they will form themselves into a pyramid using each other’s bodies as support

Notes: The aim of this exercise is to see how the various layers of the pyramid of sectarianism are interconnected.

Questions: How much trust was there between members of the group? This activity is only possible when the members of the group can use each other’s bodies to support one another. What feelings did different members of the group experience?

Discussion: Look at the diagram of the pyramid of sectarianism. Discussion will focus on where on the diagram people can see they belong; how the different layers are connected and interrelated; and what we learn about our relationships with one another within the pyramid from the exercise.
Groupwork
Hopes and Fears

Aims
- To allow the individual members of a group to express their own hopes, fears and expectations for the work about to be undertaken
- To include everyone in the content of the programme

Time  About 30 minutes
- Hopes and fears would usually take place after the games; getting to know you and small group team building and trust building activities
- Give each person two pieces of paper, one to write their hopes for the work they will do together and one to write their fears about it. Alternatively you can use stickers which the group members can then stick onto larger posters labelled "Hopes" and "Fears"
- Assure individuals they can be as open and honest as they wish about their hopes (and especially fears) as they do not have to sign their names on these pieces of paper/stickers
- Once the hopes and fears go onto the posters and are read out, they belong to the whole group
- Encourage members of the group to talk about the hopes. Affirm the hopes. If any are unrealistic talk about this. If there are any problems being perceived in the realisation of some of them talk about possible ways of overcoming these
- Make a list of the opportunities that exist for helping group members realise their hopes
- Look at the fears. Affirm them, and the courage of the group members in being honest about their fears. Ask the members of the group if they have any ideas about how people could be put at ease and feel more supported in terms of their fears
- Write these ideas out

These lists form the basis of a contract for the small group.

Contracting
Contracting only follows icebreaker games and name games; getting to know you, and hopes and fears with participants sitting in an open circle. If the group is large, ie 20 – 35, (an average class size) it will probably be better to break into smaller groups primarily. This activity lends itself to “team teaching”. The bigger the group the bigger the space that will be needed.

Aims
- To create a co-operative atmosphere, where ground rules can be established to ensure that the climate is one of safety for all the participants – leaders/teachers and young people/students alike
- To prepare young people for responsible citizenship and democracy. Agreeing on rules by consensus, ensures ownership by the whole group, young people/students and leaders/teachers alike, of both freedom and responsibility in their relationships to one another
Leaves

• To learn skills of negotiation empathy and compromise.
• Within the school, to prepare for more informal class work and more sensitive class discussions.

Notes on contracting

Use your own words. These suggestions are only to help you see how you can make the contract reflect the group work process.

• "Now we have discussed our hopes and fears about what we hope to do together, we need to make some ground rules so that everyone feels comfortable and included in what we do."

• “What does contract mean?” Get suggestions and agree on a definition.

• Clarify the differences between negotiable and non-negotiable rules. School or club rules for example are made for the mutual safety of all the people in the school or youth club and are non-negotiable. Negotiable rules are more to do with how we are with one another during a particular session for a specific purpose eg. talking about sensitive issues in a less formal structure.

• Explain that everyone must agree to the rule before it is written down. That way everyone takes responsibility for seeing that the rule is kept, eg.
  One person speaking at a time
  No put-downs
  Only volunteer yourself
  You may pass
  It’s OK to make mistakes or change your mind
  Speak for yourself

• Confidentiality – discuss its meaning. If we feel assured that what we have said will not be repeated out of context, then we will probably be more likely to share our experiences. If a member of the group would like to share somebody’s experience or story then they should check if it’s OK. However, we cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. What individuals share is their responsibility.

• Share responsibilities. Ask if someone would be willing to write up the rules.

• Point out that the contract will be reviewed from time to time. Also that rules can be added or taken out of the contract with the mutual consent of the group.

Large and Small Group Work

The three following group work activities may be used only after the group has ‘warmed up’ and completed some group-building and contracting exercises. All of them can help to highlight some of the implications of the sectarian system. There are two large group work activities and one small (small groups of ideally 6 - 10 people can sit in a circle on floor cushions or on seats around a large table) The three activities are related and move people from the general and national level to the community or local and then to the particular and most familiar. These activities which are progressive might be carried out over three consecutive weeks following icebreaker and contracting exercises:-
Where am I? Or Three Corners Large group work

Objective: To think about where we are in terms of our religious identity and our place on the pyramid of sectarianism

Time: 30 – 60 minutes


For Three corners three labels - ‘yes’; ‘no’; and ‘don’t know’.

Method:
- Put the labels up around the room.
- If using ‘yes’; ‘no’; and ‘don’t know’ put them up on three corners of the room.
- Ask people to walk to the corner/label they feel most comfortable near
- If using three corners make a number of statements eg
  - More schools in Northern Ireland should be integrated
  - There would be peace in a United Ireland
  - All weapons need to be de-commissioned before we can have peace
  - All marching should be banned
  - There should be more mixed marriages
- Start with one group and ask if anyone would like to say why they went to that particular corner, then move on to the next until everyone has had a chance to speak
- Remind people to speak for themselves using the ‘I’ statement
- Ask people in the other corners to listen and wait for their turn to comment
- Give people an opportunity to change and go to a different corner if they wish
- Give people an opportunity to respond as time permits

Discussion: The discussion will focus on identity and how that influences where we are on the pyramid of sectarianism.

Questions: How did people feel? Were they feeling under pressure to make choices? Were they influenced by where other people went? Were they afraid that their choices might be misunderstood?

Where do I belong? Large group work

Objective: To help members of the group understand more about community; what kind of community is important to them; and how they relate to the ‘other’

Time: 30-60 minutes

Materials: Flipchart and markers
Method: Ask people to get into groups according to the following statements:

- Those who go/do not go to a place of worship regularly
- Those who play/do not play in a team sport regularly
- Those who play/do not play a musical instrument in a band/orchestra; or sing/do not sing in a choir
- Those who are concerned/not too concerned about environmental issues
- Those who belong/do not belong to ..........school/youth club
- Those who do/do not eat meat
- Those who believe/do not believe in God
- Those who belong to a Christian/Other religion
- Those who frequent/do not frequent pubs/clubs
- Those who belong to a middle class/working class community
- Those who support/do not support a football or other team
- Those who support/do not support a political party
- Those who belong to the Catholic/Protestant community
- Those who are male/female
- Those who are black/white

You can add others to this list. The idea is that the young people move to either end of the room in response to the statements and discover which group or ‘community’ is important for them. Once in their groups or ‘communities’ invite members of the group to talk about whether they consider this to be an important group/community for them or one to which they just automatically belong.

Discussion: Discussion will focus on what makes a ‘group’ a ‘community’. How a community is made and how that process can exclude others and contribute unintentionally to sectarianism.

Questions: Which groups did they consider ‘communities’? Do some people belong to more than one community? (Record these on the flipchart) What sorts of overlaps are there? Which communities dominate political and social life in N. Ireland? Why is this? Are people happy about this? If not is there anything they can do to change this? (Record these on the flipchart)

My Place  Small group work

Objective: To help members of the group recognize where they and the members of their family are in relation to sectarianism.

Time: 30 – 60 minutes

Materials: A container of small stones; pens and paper.
Method: Begin with an energizer and then a group divider game. Once in small groups, invite each member of the group to take some small stones, and to arrange them on the floor according to the place they perceive they are, in relation to other members of their family, when sectarian feelings arise as the result of an event within the family (e.g., mixed marriage) or community, local or national. This event can be personal or one that is documented in the newspapers or on television. Allow about 5 minutes for this and make sure everyone has finished placing the stones. Each person can have as many or as few as they wish. Invite each member of the group to share what information they feel comfortable about with the rest of the group.

Now let each member of the group take a pen and a piece of paper and complete a Y-timeline.

- On the sheet of paper draw the letter Y.
- Turn the paper sideways with the stem of the Y on the left.
- The junction of the Y represents the present.
- Let people mark the first part of the line with 4 events when sectarianism became an issue in the family that the exercise with the stones has maybe reminded them of.
- The future is represented by the two lines to the right of the junction. On one of these mark all the things which you would ideally like to happen in the future. This is your preferable line.
- On the other line mark all the things that are likely to happen if we carry on exactly as we are at the moment. This is your probable line.
- Allow another 5 minutes for this.
- Each person can now share their timelines.
Discussion: The discussion will focus on the differences between the preferable and probable lines, and how the events of the past and the sectarianism system we are all part of can influence the present or the future.

Questions: For the future to be as members of the group would like, what are the major challenges to them? Is the sectarian system a major hurdle for them? What can they do to move beyond it?

How do you feel?

These four stories were written by Joe and Cecelia.

Objectives: To help the young people to get in touch with their feelings about the ‘other side’ and to think about what is and isn’t sectarian

Time: 45 minutes

Method: Ask people to find a place for themselves in the room and to get into a comfortable position to listen to two stories. Ask them to close their eyes. The leader may want to do a relaxation exercise or play some quiet music first.
Leaves

Read aloud two of the stories, either At a Protestant and Catholic Wedding and Negotiating at the Barricades or The Boycott and Separation. Ask the young people to pay attention to their feelings, their bodies and their thoughts. In between the two stories allow people time to share in small groups in the room the feelings and thoughts that occurred to them as they listened to the story. (15 minutes). Allow the same length of time after the reading of the second story to do the same.

At a Catholic and Protestant Wedding

You are on your way to attend the wedding of your friends, John, a Protestant, and Mary, a Catholic, who are being married in the Catholic Church where Mary grew up, although she moved away to go to college some years before.

When you arrive before the wedding, there is a bit of a buzz among the other guests, and you are quickly told the story. It seems that the previous night at the wedding rehearsal, the Catholic priest who is conducting the service said something that assumed that communion would be part of the service. Mary and John hadn’t actually planned that the ceremony would involve communion, but the priest persuaded them that Mary’s mother really wanted it this way, so they consented. When the Protestant minister asked about the Protestant wedding guests taking communion, the priest said he was sorry, but that wouldn’t be possible. There was a bit of a row, but really no time to talk the issue through, so in the end Mary and John decided that communion would be included and that Protestants wouldn’t participate, although they weren’t at all happy about this.

Because this story had made the rounds of the wedding guests, when communion was offered, the Protestant guests, mostly John’s relatives, didn’t go forward. But, somehow, John’s mother, an elderly woman with a severe physical disability, hadn’t heard that Protestants were not to go to communion. She made her way very slowly and painfully to the front of the Church, but when she arrived, the priest turned her away, and she limped back to her place, the whole congregation watching her.

Negotiating at the Barricades

It is the evening of the 11 July. You are a paramedic on duty with a 999 ambulance team. You are called to attend an elderly woman with a suspected heart attack. You are not keen to go out because there are barricades everywhere and you are not sure whether you will get through and what you might meet along the way. On the way to the house you get through a barricade at the end of the road where the woman lives with relatively few problems. It is a middle-class mixed area. You are aware that some of the people at the barricade have been drinking. You take some time at the woman’s house to stabilise her before attempting to move her. The woman’s daughter travels with her in the ambulance. When you start back towards the hospital, Orange protesters at the barricade want to know who you are carrying. You explain that a woman is very ill and you must get her to the hospital. The daughter gets out to talk with them because she recognises some of them as her neighbours. The woman and her daughter are Catholics. Those on the barricades do not want to let the ambulance pass and start making comments about Fenian bastards. The daughter is distraught pleading with the protesters to let her mother through, reminding them that they have been good, friendly neighbours for years. You intervene again and say that the woman’s condition is deteriorating. Eventually and reluctantly they let you through and you get her to the hospital. The woman dies a few days later.
The Boycott

In the aftermath of Drumcree, tensions are very high. You are a radio interviewer sent to do a story on the Catholic boycott of Protestant businesses in a small town. You have interviewed a series of people about the boycott and go to talk to the local Catholic priest. You put it to him that as a person of influence within the Catholic community you would expect him to be doing something to try to stop the boycott and to encourage his parishioners to support local traders regardless of their religious beliefs. He replies that it is not his place as a priest to tell his parishioners where to shop and that in regard to his own choice of where to spend his money he chooses to support local Catholic traders because they are his parishioners and they are the ones who are contributing to the upkeep of the church.

Separation

You are doing a series of interviews about sectarianism. You are concerned to understand why some conservative Protestants judge the Catholic Church so harshly and why they refuse to worship with Catholics, so you interview a Protestant fundamentalist minister. He tells you that he believes that some of the teachings of the Catholic Church—he mentions the role of Mary, the doctrine of purgatory, and the Catholic understanding of the Eucharist, among others—are so out of line with what he understands as the Biblical standard of faith that he cannot accept that the Catholic Church is Christian. Quoting two Biblical passages—‘Touch not the unclean thing’ and ‘Come ye out from among them’—he argues that true Christians must therefore keep themselves strictly separate from Catholics. You ask, ‘How far must this separation go? Can you talk to Catholics? Can you live in the same neighbourhood? What are the limits?’ He responds, ‘I’ll give you an example. When abortion referral clinics were being introduced to Northern Ireland, our Church was vehemently opposed. The Church is against abortion, because we believe that human life, from the moment of conception, is the gift of God. For this reason, members of our Church were often involved in picketing the clinics. As often as not, we would be marching along with our signs, when along would come a Catholic priest or two, some nuns, and some ordinary Catholics, and they would join the picket against the Brooke clinics.’ ‘So that degree of cooperation wouldn’t bother you’, you ask.

‘Well, I wouldn’t want to call it cooperation,’ he responded. ‘It’s not that we planned it together, or anything like that, it’s just that we didn’t feel any need to leave simply because some Catholics joined the picket. And of course you have to realise that we were there for very different reasons from the Catholics.’ ‘How do you mean?’ you ask.

‘As Protestant fundamentalists, we were there because we understand all abortion as the destruction of God’s gift of life, as I said earlier. For their part, however, Catholics would tend to be against abortion because they are afraid abortion will reduce their numbers.’

Questions:

What feelings did different members of the group experience?
Was anyone surprised by any of their feelings?
Can anyone describe what was happening to their bodies and when?
Which of the actions/incidents would people describe as sectarian?
Were there any differences of opinion amongst the group as to which incident/action was sectarian and which was not?
Were there any opinions about the degree of sectarianism?
Did any of the feelings change as the stories progressed?
Leaves

Is there any agreement as to what defines an action/incident as sectarian? Do these stories awaken any personal experiences/stories?

Discussion: Discussion will focus around the feelings people have, and with which actions/incidents they most identify. Also some time will be given to finding a definition of what is and isn’t sectarian.

Balloon
A street theatre possibility

Objective: To challenge young people to look at how ‘the Level’ could be raised

Time: 10 minutes for the presentation

Materials: A representation of the balloon; and perhaps some props for the various characters

Characters: The official; Billy; Gladys; Alice; Joe; Peter; Wilma; Sinead; Sammy and George. The scene is set outside Stormont. A lot of people are standing around a large balloon, representing the agreement, which is having difficulty getting off the ground.

Pro-agreement

Official: Eh, ladies and gentlemen, we’re having a bit of difficulty getting our balloon off the ground this morning. I am assured that this balloon can make it. What we need right now is a bit of hot air.

Billy: Aye. You’ll get plenty of that round here.

Gladys: You politicians are never done spoutin’ hot air so you’re not.

Official: Now look, this balloon is about tolerance and understanding, peace and reconciliation. We don’t want to carry on with the same old stuff, blaming someone else for all our woes. We need fresh air, the wind of change. Speak for yourself, and no one else. I want all of you now to think of one thing, just one thing that you could do yourself to make a difference.

Silence

Official: Come on, just one thing.

Alice: Well, there’s always, um saying sorry. I would like to say sorry for all the things I said about, you know the other side, that I know weren’t true, things that I only said to be like the rest of the gang I hang about with from our street.

Joe: That’s right you know. There always has to be one person with the courage to stick their neck out and go against the tide, but that’s risky, very, very risky. I would love it if I could feel safe saying the things I want to say and not just the things I think other people want to hear. I wish I wasn’t so afraid.
Leaves

Gladys: Well, our Sammy’s always saying when I start he can hardly hear his ears or get a word in edgeways, so I would like to listen a bit more and hopefully learn something about myself and others.

Official: This is wonderful….Just look at the balloon. It’s filling out. Keep going. Don’t stop now!

Peter: Well I would like to celebrate, seeing as we’re having a bit of a celebration here today. I would like to celebrate the fact that we’re all different. I’m glad we’re not all the same, for that would be very boring.

Wilma: That’s a good idea. I would like more of the schools to join up. Then instead of competing for equipment and resources, we could share them. I could learn Irish, and Irish history and camogie, and my friend Sinead could learn British history, Scottish dancing, and cricket.

Sinead: I agree. I’d like to take down some of the walls of fear and trust a wee bit more.

Alice: Well I’d like to celebrate the things we have in common too – Like our humour for it’s stikkinout so it is. I think the crack can be rare when we get going.

Peter: Yes, Alice is right. I like the way we can laugh at ourselves sometimes.

Gladys: I also need to accept and respect myself, warts an’ all if I’m going to do the same to others. I’m always putting myself down so I have to start with myself. I have to stop looking at others, waiting for them to start.

Sammy: And I need to have more patience and more love about me.

George: As a man of the church I would like to have more faith and less religion.

Official: That’s it. The balloon is almost full. I think it needs some concerted effort now. Wait, I have an idea that might finally get it off the ground. Do you think all of you could maybe condense those great fresh ideas of yours into one word? Then when I say one, two, three, you could maybe shout them out together really loud?

Gladys: Aye, that’s a good idea.

Peter: That sounds great

Sammy: Right you are, I’m your man.

Official: One, two, three…..


The balloon, amply filled with fresh air is launched, taking with it the hope for better things to come.
Background: The play "Balloon" is one adapted from a street theatre idea for One World Week several years ago. It might be enacted either as a piece of street theatre at a school assembly, or it could provide a lively introduction to a class debate. The ideas or "fresh air" for the balloon in the play are only suggestions. You could let the young people come up with their own ideas, giving them more ownership.

One of the things that you might like to do after the play is to have a balloon debate. Some young people have a very clear vision for our divided community and the way it could be. Their energy is an inspiration to politicians, youth and community workers, and teachers alike. How our future is being shaped today and how they can influence the process is a key part of active citizenship and this process can be an occasion for celebration and fun as well as learning.
Stereotypes

This exercise is useful for a large inter-community group looking at difference in preparation for going into small groups.

Objective: To create trust by being open with one another about each others’ stereotypes

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Flipchart and markers

Method: Tell the members of the group that we are going to draw a Protestant and a Catholic. Give them names eg. Billy and Seamus or Rosie and Sinead. Ask for volunteers from either community to come one by one to draw the head, or the body, the clothes, the props eg. flags, badges, tattoos etc. of the character of their choice. When complete ask people if they are happy about the characters. If anyone isn’t happy allow them to adjust, re-draw etc. Assure people that as they go into their groups they can leave their ‘stereotypes’ behind in the safe keeping of Billy and Seamus, or Rosie and Sinead. This helps them to meet in their groups without denying their identity, which has been brought out into the open and been generally acknowledged and accepted by both groups. This will hopefully help them to meet as individuals in their small groups.

Questions:
How did people feel?
How did they choose which character to draw?
Were there four characters? If so were there any differences apart from the obvious physical ones?
Were there any surprises?
Did they think their community was fairly perceived by the ‘other’ community?

Discussion:
Discussion will focus on the fact that we have a lot to learn about the perceptions of each other’s stereotypes by each others’ communities. We can agree or disagree with the stereotypes and nevertheless they label us. Having them drawn out can reassure those of us who need them that they can be left aside now fully acknowledged to talk about other individual aspects of our identity that make us who we are.

Variations:
This activity can also be done with single-identity groups, each group drawing their stereotypes in turn, and having an opportunity to look at each others’ preferably as one large group. The fact that they are usually very similar is reassuring of our common understanding of ourselves, and one another.
DARTBOARD EVALUATION
Course Evaluation Sheet

HEAD:
What did you learn?

GUT:
Reactions and feelings about the experience

FOOT:
What questions/issues would you like to explore further?
Storytelling
Making the Story Quilt

Objective: To get members of the group to identify the different badges or items of identity that characterize and mark the boundaries of different communities in Northern Ireland

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Either an old sheet; pieces of fabric; and fabric pens or a large sheet of paper, preferably of a flexible nature like crepe; newspaper or magazine cuttings; and pens or crayons

Method: The traditional Lone Star pattern on this story quilt is an eight-pointed star, made up of eight large triangular shapes. Each of these large shapes is in turn made up of 10 diamond shapes, each side of the diamond, 4 inches long. (see diagram 1). Altogether this star part of the collage has 80 small diamond shapes. These diamonds are made from remnants/scraps of material or newspaper/magazine cuttings, which represent themes/aspects of life that have significance for the communities that the various members of the group belong to. The shapes are machine-stitched or glued together to form each point of the star. Then the points are joined up and added to the backing cloth/paper. Finally some coloured fabric/paper is attached to the edges of the quilt representing the interfaces – red, white and blue; and green white and orange. You can sew some white curtain hooks/attack butterfly pins onto the white backing cloth/paper now onto which members of the group can attach badges of identity. (Diagram 2) You can make a collection of these in a tin. (diagram 3)
The Story Quilt
Notes: The aim of this exercise is to identify the colours, flags, sportsgounds; clubs; graffiti; and wall murals that communicate the Level in any particular area. (see diagram 2)

Questions: What themes were appearing on each of the eight points of the star? ie. Sport; murals; flags; colours etc.
What aspects of our community life best demonstrate the Level?
What badges of identity were brought in to attach to the quilt?
What feelings/comments did different members of the group experience/express?

Discussion: Discussion will focus on what sort of information the Level communicates to us in any particular location, and how that hinders contact and communication.

Background: The Lakota Native American community, members of the Great Sioux Nation value quilting as a way of reusing precious resources. They incorporate many of their traditional symbols like the star into the quilts. Over time star quilts have become central to many celebrations and are both a reminder of the past and a means of carrying Lakota traditions into the future. The symbols (on diagram 3) are central to some of our celebrations and can be pinned onto the quilt in order to remind us of our past, present, and maybe our hopes for the future.

Telling your Story using the Quilt

Objective: To give members of the group an opportunity to tell their stories about the Level or about sectarianism in their own communities.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: The story quilt and some badges of identity

Method: • Start with a warm up activity. Choose one from the games section
• Spread the badges of identity out in an area of the room and ask people to choose ones that mean something to them
• Ask people to sit in a circle around the quilt and to attach their badges of identity to whichever part of it that marks their identity. People may choose to hold that area closest to them recognizing that the other areas of identity are part of the same quilt.
• Each person in the group will take turns to tell the story of their item of identity and community or what marks the Level - ie. What you can talk about on your own or with ‘others’; what happens to mixed marriage couples; where you live and how you mark your ‘territory’ etc; what sports you support; what you do on St. Patrick’s Day; what you do on the 12th July; where you go to church if you do etc.
Leaves

- The others watching can ask questions which members of the group may answer
- Affirm each group as they finish telling their stories

Questions:  In what way did people connect with one another?
Did they connect in ways other than sectarian?  Were there any surprises?
What feelings did different members of the group experience or express?

Discussion:  Discussion will focus on how people learn about their identities; and whether they have stayed with the one they were born into.  Also under discussion may be variations within the Level and whether people think it easier to raise it or to lower it.

Weaves of Identity

Objective:  To help young people to express identity and boundaries.

Time:  30 minutes

Materials Needed:
- White cloth background
- Strips of orange, blue, red and green cloth
- Badges/items of identity – you can make a collection of these yourself or ask the young people to bring in their own

Method:  Give the young people the strips of cloth which they can pin/fasten onto a white fabric background along with various badges or items of identity, making pictures of how they see their identity as a group.

Notes:  This exercise was tried during the piloting and the photo shows two different interpretations.
Questions: What does the weave illustrate?
Did the members of the group have difficulty agreeing on the pattern?
How do people feel about it?

Discussion: Discussion will focus on whether the pattern emerging hardens the boundaries between groups or allows a movement beyond sectarianism where difference is respected.

Trips

The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, only a short distance from Belfast, provides an ideal location. Illustrating the way of life and the traditions of the people of Northern Ireland about 100 years ago, the Museum represents a common heritage of material culture and oral tradition. As well as having a 76 bed residential centre, the museum also has a large number of buildings including churches of different denominations, an orange hall, a parochial house, an RIC barracks, two schools and many different homes containing items of identity from both the Protestant and Roman Catholic community. There is also a courtroom where young people can act out a judicial court case from the 1900’s. It might be possible to have talks on Orangeism in the Orange Hall, or an explanation about Roman Catholic items of identity in the parochial house. On occasion the museum has worked with the RUC Community Affairs branch to illustrate the difficulties they face in dealing with controversial issues such as parades. The education department can also organize tours of Belfast travelling through segregated areas and visiting places of interest such as Belfast City Hall and Stormont.

For bookings at their residential centre or for day visits and further information please contact:

Madeline Kingsberry – Residential co-ordinator 9042 8428 ext 252
Joanna Wilson – EMU Education Officer 9042 8428 ext 293
Art and Craft
Art
Walls and Bridges

Objective: To help members of the group to recognize that as individuals we support the total structure or system of sectarianism.

Time: One hour

Method: This activity is ideal for a number of small groups feeding into a larger group. Each person takes a brick shape, cut from card or any other piece of appropriate material available. A good source for this is the Play Resource Centre (see bibliography). Ask each person to write/draw/paint on the brick what they think they or their school/church/family/community contribute to the pyramid of participation in sectarianism. When complete within the small groups, all groups meet as a large group to build a pyramid from their individual ‘bricks’.

Further Activity: The group may also like to write/draw/paint on another brick what they think they or their school/church/family/community contribute to the peace process. These bricks can be arranged as a bridge or a cross in relation to the wall. Some of the members of the group might also like to take strips of paper, representing the ‘cement’ and write on these what they think supports/cements and brings together the different themes represented on the bricks.

Discussion: The discussion will focus on our own personal participation in the system of sectarianism.

Questions: Were any particular themes coming up again and again? Were there any surprising themes? What feelings did different members of the group experience?
Spirals

This is a large group activity for up to about 20 individuals on dealing with difference. This activity might come at the end of a course of work as it gives an indication of how people change/journey/move on over time.

Objective: To help people to see their identity as a group depicted in the individual reflections on different parts of the spirals over time.

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Several sheets of white card stapled together in the shape of three spirals; paints; brushes; felt tips; crayons; chalks etc.

Method: Ask each member of the group to stand behind a sheet of card in one of the spirals. Invite them to take a crayon, chalk or brush and paint and give them 15 minutes to draw/paint/write something about their identity as it was in the past onto the card in front of them. They can kneel or sit as they work. Ask them to illustrate an event; a symbol, an artefact, a building; or an icon that meant something to them or write something. It might be helpful if they do this without talking to each other. After 15 minutes, ask them to move to another spiral and draw/paint/write something about their identity as it is now onto the card in front of them. After another 15 minutes, ask them to move to the third spiral and draw/paint/write something about their identity as they see it in the future onto the card in front of them. At the end ask the different members of the group to step out of the spirals and form a circle around the piece of artwork. They can ask for clarification from one another of some of the illustrations/writing. Members of the group can share as much or as little as they feel comfortable with.

Questions: Did anyone find that their pieces of work had been ‘extended’ by someone else’s very different piece – if so how did they feel?
Were there any obvious differences within the three spirals?
Were there any similarities in the third spiral about the future?
What feelings did different members of the group experience or express?
What can we learn from this exercise about dealing with difference?

Discussion: Discussion will focus on how we journey over time. We are born into different families and communities, and develop in different directions. Do any members of the group feel that they are as close now to members of the ‘other’ community as they are to their own?
Clay

The use of clay can help people to tell their stories, especially around sensitive issues like sectarianism. Like the puppets and the quilt, it can be used to tell about things you have experienced but through ‘an object’. Using clay can give the manipulator control as it can be used to form something and then can be smoothed and re-formed at will. Clay is very tactile - it can be wet and slippery; dry and crumbly; when wet it can be pounded and slapped down; when soft it can be pinched and shaped. Young people can find clay a useful tool for expressing their feelings. It can provide a good link to verbal expression, and another alternative to using lots of words.

Objective: To let people express feelings, and impressions non-verbally using clay

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Clay; modelling tools and cutters if available; card to work on/protect clothes etc.

Method: Start with a ‘warming up’ exercise with the clay both for the participants to get used to the clay, and the clay to get warmed up and become more flexible. Encourage people to close their eyes as they do this, as fingers and hands can become more sensitive to the clay and feel it better. Encourage participants to pinch, squeeze, smooth, bunch and slap the clay. Encourage the use of both hands, also knuckles and the heel of the hand as well as the fingers and palms. Now you are ready to make something.

Making tiles for a mosaic

- Give each participant a piece of stiff card cut into a square, and a piece of clay.
- Do the ‘warm-up’ exercise.
- Ask the participants to cover the square of card with a layer of the clay and then to ‘texture’ it, using their fingers or various tools if they are available.
- Depending on the object of the exercise, eg an exercise on stereotypes or a graffiti wall let people create an image on the tile.
- These can be collected and allowed to dry hard. They can then be lifted off the square of card, painted and then placed and stuck together on a board and grouted.
- The finished ‘mosaic’ can be the basis of a discussion, and/or mounted on a wall in the club or school for others to see.
Puppets

Puppetry is a wonderful dramatic art form, which can be used as a tool for expressing feelings and telling stories. Unfortunately in this part of the world, puppets are mostly associated with performances and young children. However in the context of moving beyond sectarianism, they need to be seen more as a tool through which people of all ages can express feelings, and tell stories safely and without embarrassment. Puppetry as an art form can be used with a variety of age groups of differing abilities and from a wide range of social background. It can be used to promote discussion and tell stories about sectarianism.

This section of the resource will include:

- Diagrams of how to make some puppets from junk materials
- Ideas for presentation
- The format for a puppet-making (art) workshop for young people
- The format for a puppet workshop (drama) for young people

Getting Started

- If you are not confident about making or using puppets, you could consider the use of role play or masks first

- The plays included in this section for use with puppets could be adapted and presented as pieces of drama.
Making Puppets

1. Take two rods crossed and fixed together at the neck.
2. Cut a slit in the middle of a rectangular piece of cloth and attach it to the rag at the neck.
3. Stuff a paper bag and attach it to the neck.
4. Draw the features.
5. The strands of wool together at the middle to make the hair.
6. Add other pieces: sash, scarf, etc.
Making Puppets From Waste

* Use a paper plate or a piece of sponge for the head. Draw on the eyes, nose, and mouth

* Make hair from wool and a hat from felt

* Use various sizes of cardboard tubing for the body and limbs

* Cut out hand shapes and shoes in card

* Attach all the pieces together with string and connect to two operating rods as illustrated
The Puppet making workshop - Art

RESOURCES:

- rods; cardboard tubes; and lollipop sticks
- paper bags
- old newspapers
- sticky tape and fabric glue.
- scissors
- felt tips; crayons
- card
- socks and gloves
- squares of material
- buttons
- needle and thread
- wool; hair; and fur fabric
- ribbon; and braid
- sponge
- other junk materials from eg. Play Resource Centre (see bibliography)
- puppet books - ‘Different Tracks’ an experiential handbook from Corrymeela (see bibliography) contains a chapter on the use of puppets in Community Relations work called ‘Hand in Glove’

INTRODUCTIONS AND BACKGROUND:

1. Arrange and set up the room. If you don’t already have a large table around which the students can gather, push some smaller tables or desks together to make a number of larger work surfaces around the room, around which students can sit or stand. Perhaps you could have one work area for each of the different types of puppet that you are making - string; rod; hand.

2. Play a warm-up-game. There are some in the ‘Games’ section of this chapter.

3. Introduction to the different materials available at the workshop

4. Show some completed examples of the sorts of puppets that can be made - paper bag; sock; sponge; hand; rod; string etc.

5. Talk about the purpose for which they are being made and used. Ask the students to think about a character they know that they would like to tell a story about. They can make more than one.

6. Let the group choose what materials to work with and guide them. You could have some puppet making books available and there are a number on the market - See bibliography
The Puppet workshop - Drama

A workshop using puppetry as a tool in the process of mutual understanding and conflict transformation:-

• Arrange the room, putting the chairs in a circle

• Play a game. There are some ideas to get you started in the ‘Games’ section of this resource chapter. There are also many books available with games ideas – see bibliography

• There are two possibilities for your workshop:-

  a. Present a ready made play that you have found or written yourself, and there are a number of possibilities depending on the topic you wish to bring into your discussion. Some are included in this chapter.

  b. Let the young people (and you can join them) tell each other their own stories. This is the more difficult and also more challenging:-

    • You will need to do some warm up exercises first.
    • Ask the young people/students individually to choose a puppet, and think of a conflict. Give time for them to collect their thoughts.
    • Ask them to move out and find one other person. They tell each other the story about their puppet, and see whether the two can interact.
    • Ask each couple to move out and find another couple. They exchange stories and between them choose one.
    • In small groups of four they act out the story.
    • The small groups take turns to present their plays to the whole group

• Discuss the play and issues that came up

• Feelings

• Closure. Finish with a closure game. There are some in the ‘Games’ section.

A Play for puppets - The Field

This play is based on a puppet presentation during a workshop with students and lecturers from Stranmillis and St. Mary's teacher training colleges.

Objective: To help members of the group to understand how easily a local level can be lowered and the disastrous effect that this can have on the community. There are parallels with the situation in Drumcree in this story.
Leaves

Time: 10 minutes for the presentation

Materials: Puppets, tables, curtain, prosenium, and script (if necessary) see picture

Method: Four to five operators can present this play from behind a table, or standing on a table from behind a prosenium, the front table acting as the stage.

Characters: Billy Stewart, a protestant farmer; Paddy Quinn, a neighbouring Catholic farmer; some sheep and the judge.

This play is set on a farm in County Antrim. A farmer called Billy Stewart is taking his sheep down the hill to graze on his field and as usual wants as a short cut to go through a field belonging to a neighbouring farmer called Cahal Quinn. Cahel’s son Paddy has recently inherited the farm as his father has retired and moved to the town. Paddy has decided to make a few changes.

Billy: What's this? The gate's closed, chained and padlocked? What is going on? I'll have to find out about this.

Paddy: Hello there, is there a problem?

Billy: There certainly is. I need to get my sheep to the field and this gate's locked and I can't get through.

Paddy: This field I'm standing in belongs to me and is not a thoroughfare for every Tom Dick or Harry who wants to come through.

Billy: Now, wait a wee minute. You know who you're talking to ye wee scamp. Your father and I have known each other for years and have an understanding.

Paddy: My father is not in charge here now. I am, and you're trespassing if you come through that gate.

Billy: Look son my field is just at the end of yours. It'll take me five minutes to walk to it and I'd be there and back in the length of time it's taking us to have this conversation.

Paddy: First of all, I'm not your son. Secondly the sooner you get walking up that road again and round to your field the proper way by the regular route the quicker your sheep will get to their pasture.

Billy: Now come on if I have to walk all the way round there with my sheep they won't be fit for the pasture. And have you thought about all the weight they're going to lose on the way with all this extra walking - sure they won't be worth a ha'penny at the market.
Paddy: That has nothing to do with me. Those oul sheep of yours have been rampaging down this field for years now. You never took control of them and my father was just taken advantage of. I don't want my sheep to be intimidated, and frightened twice every day by that mob. I only know this field is mine and you're not getting down it any more.

Billy: That's nonsense an' you know it. Sure our fathers and our grandfathers agreed on this route, and the sheep were happy enough. What's all this about your sheep being intimidated? They've been getting on all right. Why all the fuss now?

Paddy: Look I'm not arguing with you. Things are different now. There's nothing more to say. You're not getting' through here any more.

Billy: And you're not going to get away with re-routing me ye boy - I'll see you in court.

So Billy and Paddy brought their case to court.

Discussion: Discussion will focus on how changes in land ownership can affect/lower the level. Comparison could be made to some of the orange parades through Garvaghy Road and Lower Ormeau where a certain unspoken working level used to exist but shifting populations over the years now mean that the old level no longer exists. It can also be argued that the level sometimes hinders increased contact and co-operation and that too often it is more easily lowered than raised.

Questions: Did this story or some of the sectarian statements remind you of a story of your own or ones you have heard before? Did you identify with any of the characters in the story? Which characters did you most identify with? What feelings did different members of the group have? How might this story end if Billy and Paddy seek mediation or some form of restorative justice rather than the courts and retributive justice? Write your own ending to this play

The Ordinary Decent Citizen’s New Clothes
Or Naked Sectarianism unveiled
A puppet play for understanding sectarianism

Objective: To help people understand how difficult it can be and also how necessary it is to name and expose sectarianism.

Time: 10 minutes for the presentation

Materials: Puppets, table, curtain, and script if necessary
Method: Four to five operators can present this play from behind a table.

Characters: An ordinary citizen; Two tailors; a wife; a child; others at the peace rally.

Naked Sectarianism unveiled
This play is set in an ordinary person's home in Northern Ireland.

ODC: The trouble with Northern Ireland is that some people are so narrow-minded and just keep the whole thing going - if only they weren't so prejudiced and bigoted. Take me for instance - I reckon I haven't a sectarian bone in my entire body.

Two Tailors enter

Both Tailors: We're here to measure you up for that new suit you ordered for the peace rally next week.

ODC: Oh, yes. Sorry about the short notice. I only heard recently that I'm to receive an award for all my peace efforts and I do want to look my best for the media.

Tailor 1: Perfectly understandable. For such an important person as yourself, we are happy to make this garment entirely free of charge.

Tailor 2: Also as the material we would like to use on this occasion is very special we feel there is something we must explain to you.

ODC: I see, and what is that?

Tailor 1: Well only people who don't have a sectarian bone in their body are able to see it.

Tailor 2: As befits someone in receipt of so prestigious an award. You of course will have no difficulty seeing it. And the cloth is really quite exquisite.

ODC: As you say. I like the idea. It will be a good way of letting me know who is and who isn't sectarian. The winner of so fine an award can't be seen to be fraternizing with bigots. I will pay you what you need. Start straight away.

The tailors pretend to cut and sew.

Narrator: The two tailors went away to make the special suit. Three days later the ordinary decent citizen called to his wife.

Wife: Yes dear?
ODC: When you're in town, can you go and see how the tailors are getting along with my new suit. It should be ready by now.

Narrator: Of course the wife could see nothing, but did not want to be thought of as sectarian especially by her husband

Wife: I have it. It's wonderful dear. It will be perfect for the award ceremony. I'm sure it will attract a lot of media attention.

ODC: Perfect. I want as many people there as possible. My speech ought to cause quite a stir. I want to make it quite clear that Northern Ireland has no room any longer for bigots.

Wife: You're wonderful dear.

ODC: Somebody has to speak up!

Narrator: The Ordinary Decent Citizen looked at the suit. He couldn't see anything but did not want his wife to think he was in the least bit sectarian

ODC: It's .....lovely dear

Wife: Yes I thought so. Very....unusual. The tailors say that it is better worn next to the skin. That way you can feel it's very special texture better

ODC: Really? I hope, but of course, you're right dear

Narrator: The day of the peace rally and award ceremony arrived and the ordinary decent citizen tried on the new suit. He made a great show of putting on the suit as his wife was watching. Neither of them wanted to believe never mind admit openly that they were sectarian.

The ODC and his wife walk down the front of the stage. Others are watching.

Narrator: The word has got around that the suit is very special and can only be seen by peace-loving people who wouldn't have a sectarian bone in their body, so the people try not to stare. A little boy however points at the ordinary decent citizen and says

Boy: He's got no clothes on!

Narrator: At that the crowd responded with shock horror or nervous laughter. The man's wife pulled off her hat to make him more modest.

Wife: I'm afraid he's right dear.
Leaves

Tailors: Oh you aren’t wearing absolutely nothing.
Tailor 1: No, there’s plenty of denial there
Tailor 2: And pride
ODC: You’re right. I’ve been a fool. I suppose you could say that naked sectarianism has been revealed!

Sectarianism as a system

Discussion: Discussion will focus on the nature of sectarianism as a system (see Trunk section). How sectarianism can create the conditions that sustain it. Good intentions can have sectarian consequences.

Questions: Does this story tell you anything about some of the conditions in which sectarianism thrives?
What parts do pride and denial play in the system of sectarianism?
Did you identify with any of the characters?
Which character did you most identify with?
Where on the pyramid are all the characters in the play?
What are some of the ways in which the ordinary citizen can challenge the system and move beyond sectarianism?
The Worship Resource Section

This section offers a small collection of resources based on the findings of the research with which you can create your own worship for school assembly, church, or youth club. The intention is that they can be used alongside resources of your own. The bibliography section also contains a small list of worship resource books you might find helpful. It is hoped that as you journey in your understanding of sectarianism, you might find some 'sap' within this section to sustain and encourage you. Each resource is marked with an icon to link it with the relevant parts of the research:

- **Roots**
  - Roots – a dramatic reading
  - The Story of Robert Traill
  - Music – The Relief of Derry Symphony

- **Trunk**
  - A Liturgy for Laying down and Letting go
  - Cross Border Peace Talks - A poem
  - The Ship - A short ‘illustrated’ story
  - Prayers for peace

- **Branches**
  - The Syrophoenician Woman – a dialogue
  - The Good Samaritan – a puppet play
  - Geronimo Grub – a puppet play
  - This is the House that Jack Built – a dramatic reading

In their conclusions, Joe and Cecelia warn us that the most remarkable feature of a place beyond sectarianism will not be the absence of conflict but how conflict is handled. Spiritual renewal, changes in mental habit, and transformed patterns of relating will characterise a place beyond sectarianism. In such a place ministers and lay leaders would regularly review where they direct most of their energy. They would reconsider how they nurture their community's identity and what it means to do this. They would take seriously the fact that part of their identity is inextricably linked with the other tradition or traditions, even if only negatively. Whether people like others or not, or agree with them or not, they populate one another's landscape and therefore shape each other's identity. Moving beyond sectarianism is going to be a matter of generational change. The process envisaged throughout their book is the kind of long, slow, patiently pursued change, with an occasional spurt of growth typical of all living entities. Especially in the early stages, the steps along such a path will be mostly small and unglamorous. They will not be accessible to those who want to make an impact nor to those who are in too much of a hurry. They will require people to live long periods watching and waiting, discerning and repenting. The more spectacular spurts of growth, of resurrection and new life, will serve as beacons to strengthen people's faith and courage. Naming sectarianism in a way that can lead to change rather than to destructive reaction can be a sensitive process that demands both courage and discernment. Stepping out of familiar territory across boundaries that carry the status of communal or quasi-communal taboos is a risky business at any time, but is more so in a situation of inter-communal conflict. It is also true that in such a situation this type of risk taking is absolutely crucial. Developing a vision of reconciled community in Northern Ireland is also important for where there is no vision the people perish. (Proverbs 29 :18) To commit oneself to the journey of moving beyond sectarianism is to find oneself, no longer at ease, passing through hard places but finding it rewarding, at times even joyous.
Bible reference Matthew 1 v 1- 17

This play focuses on Tamar; Rahab; Ruth; Bathsheba; and Mary, the only women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus. It can be read as part of a worship or discussion on the attitude of God to:-
- racial or religious difference
- the characteristics in humanity that God rewards

THE FIVE WOMAN

Tamar: I am a Canaanite woman
Rahab: I am a citizen of Jericho.
Ruth: I am a Moabite woman.
Bathsheba: I am the wife of a Hittite
Mary: I am Jewish.
Tamar: I played the harlot in order to ensure Judah’s line.
Rahab: I am a harlot who helped two spies
Ruth: I am a widow loyal to my mother-in-law
Bathsheba: I was taken like a harlot by a king
Mary: I am a virgin
Tamar: I was faithful to the law of Israel and God has blessed me with twin sons.
Rahab: I was faithful to the God of Israel, the true God and have been blessed with a son.
Ruth: I was faithful to Naomi, and to the God of her people Israel and have been blessed with a son.
Bathsheba: I have been faithful to king David and God has forgiven him and blessed me with a son
Mary: I have been faithful to and found favour with God and have been blessed with a son.
Tamar: I trusted God and received justice and mercy
Rahab: I trusted God and received justice and mercy
Ruth: I trusted God and received justice and mercy
Bathsheba: I trusted God and received justice and mercy
Mary: I trust God and the fruit of my womb will bring justice and mercy love and hope into the world
Tamar: I am Tamar
Rahab: I am Rahab
Ruth: I am Ruth
Bathsheba: I am Bathsheba
Mary: I am Mary
All: All of us are related to Jesus through the ancestral line
Discussion

These women were all very different. Most of them are not Jewish. Some of them have a disreputable background. All of them have in common their faithfulness to God, the law or the king of Israel. All of them are instrumental in the continued line of Judah, and are mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus. Find out more about them in:-

Genesis 38
Joshua 2 and 6 v 17 - 27
Ruth
2 Samuel 11 and 12
Matthew 1 and Luke 2

Questions:
• What does this tell us about Jesus’ roots?
• What does it tell us about the inclusiveness of God?
• What does it tell us about God’s attitude to difference?
• What does it tell us about Matthew and Luke and the attitude of the early church to ‘outsiders’?
• Would any of us be ‘ashamed’ to own any of these women amongst our ancestors? If so why.
• What do we learn about sectarianism?
Robert Traill did not have the kind of moderate, tolerant personality our modern assumptions lead us to connect with anti-sectarianism. He was a combative evangelical preacher. His attitude towards Catholicism was typical of the day, and he fought a 'war against popery in its thousand forms of wickedness.' The threatening response of overwhelmingly Catholic Schull was also typical of the day and Traill soon required police protection. Traill was ecumenical in his religious combat. As a strong Calvinist he was as contemptuous of Arminian Methodism as he was of Catholicism, deriding Methodist chapels in language drawn from the book of Revelation, as 'synagogues of Satan.' These and similar comments led to a three day public debate with the local Methodist preacher. Given Traill's religious views and his combative relationship with the local people, the famine of 1845 to 1849 was likely to provide a searching test of character. The test came from the conjunction of famine geography with the typical mental outlook of the time. The impact of the famine was geographically skewed, striking hardest at parts of Ireland that were almost completely Catholic, while the parts of Ulster where most Protestants lived suffered little. As for mental outlook, to a degree that we can hardly imagine, Irish people of that day, Protestant and Catholic alike, thought in terms of providential explanations for events in the world around them. Given these characteristics of geography and outlook, amplified by his anti-Catholicism, Traill might naturally and easily have interpreted the famine as God's providential judgement "against popery in its thousand forms of wickedness". But he did not. Instead he interpreted the famine as a shared disaster for all the people of Ireland and threw all his considerable energy and ability into war against famine in its many forms of suffering. He attempted, fruitlessly but in good faith, to design a storage pit that would keep potatoes from rotting, and he and his family were indefatigable in feeding as many people as they possibly could. But perhaps Traill's greatest contribution was his ceaseless, eloquent flow of correspondence to the press in Britain and Ireland, which did so much to make known the magnitude of the disaster and to raise relief subscriptions. It was all grossly inadequate to the scale of suffering, of course, but Traill probably did all that he could have done before he died of famine fever in the spring of 1847. Perhaps Robert Traill's story can stand as a representation of all the Irish people who have overcome the sectarianism of their society, and perhaps of their own hearts, to serve all their neighbours, without sectarian distinction.

Questions

- Does the story of Robert Traill remind you of anyone in the Bible?
- Do you know of anyone in the history of 'the troubles' who like Robert Traill did the unexpected?
- If you could wish that anyone would, like Robert Traill do the unexpected who would it be?
- How might you follow the example of Robert Traill in your life?
Music

One piece of music you might find useful in the roots section is ‘The Relief of Derry Symphony’ by Shaun Davey. It was commissioned by Derry City Council to commemorate the Tercentenary of the Siege of Derry and was recorded live in the Guildhall in May 1990 (Tara Records Ltd. Visit their website at www.taramusic.com)

The first movement builds up to a fanfare that increases in intensity to the point where the city gates are closed, contrasting periodically with moments of foreboding. The arrival outside the walls of the catholic militia of the Earl of Antrim, nicknamed the ‘Redshanks’, is represented by the pipe band which arrives towards the close of the movement at the doors of the concert hall. Listening to this music certainly arouses feelings of foreboding and fear especially as the band gets louder and louder.

Questions
• How do you feel as the pipe band comes closer and closer towards the walls of a city inside which you were shut?
• Does this music arouse any memories for you, happy or sad?
• What do you think of the fact that whereas the people in the city of Derry 300 years ago were Protestants being intimidated by a Catholic band, people in the Garvaghy road more recently are Catholics being intimidated by a Protestant band?

The second movement conveys the sounds of bombardment and siege in general, in which an estimated 15,000 people were to lose their lives. The arrival of King James is greeted with cries of ‘no surrender’ and massive artillery and musket-fire from the city walls. Thereafter follows a protracted battle sequence broken only by a period of side-drumming representing the truce to bury the dead.

Questions
• How do you feel listening to the sounds of conflict?
• Have we learnt any lessons from the past?

The third movement falls into two halves. The first features uilleann pipes and could perhaps be subtitled ‘Inside the walls of Derry’. The second half is a song ‘The White Horse’. It deals with a vision that according to eye witness accounts, appeared nightly over the city at the height of the siege, when the defenders were suffering from disease and famine, and which was said to have given much comfort. The ships from England sent to relieve the city were for many weeks visible from the city walls, but were prevented from proceeding by the boom placed across the river by the besieging forces and the unsuitability of the wind.

Questions
• What emotions does this music rouse?
• Can you draw any parallels between the frustration expressed in the song at the waiting, and the waiting we are doing at present for the ‘Agreement’ or any other just and peaceful settlement to work?
The fourth movement begins with the portrayal of a light breeze for in reality a favourable wind was the key to Derry’s relief. As the wind brings the three relieving ships upriver, the music reaches a series of climaxes corresponding with the cannonade, the successful negotiation of the boom, and the bombardment from the batteries. The sound of church bells heralds the relief of Derry as the ships arrive alongside the city quay. The saxophone leads the orchestra in a final air intended to express a city’s thanks for deliverance, and at the same time a present day hope for peace and goodwill.

Questions
• What feelings do these pieces of music arouse, for example how do you feel when the church bells ring?
• What sort of music is associated with a hope for a peaceful future? How does it contrast with the battle music?
• Which movement was your favourite?

Other suggestions for activities alongside the music
• Creative dance
• Spirals (see art/craft section of the LEAVES). Using four spirals, arranged in a cross, let people paint/draw what comes to mind during each of the movements, moving to another spiral when the music changes into another movement.
• Mime. The action in each of the movements is mimed as a narrator reads a description of what is happening/what the music is describing.
• During worship. Use the third movement. It could be used with the Liturgy for Laying down and Letting go. Give people stones to hold during the playing of the movement and invite them if they wish to lay them down at the foot of a cross.
A Liturgy for Laying down and Letting go
by Kate McIlhagga
(From ‘The Pattern of Our Days ’ (ed) Kathy Galloway Copyright ©The authors 1996 Wild Goose Publications Unit 15 Six Harmony Row Glasgow G51 3BA with permission)

This Liturgy is appropriate for situations of ending, leaving or departing. Moving to a new place; or perhaps with the ending of a relationship or with an old way of thinking, venturing into a new situation; or perhaps for a member of a community or a whole community a ‘moving-on’. Care should be taken about the location of the liturgy which should have meaning and significance for the person or persons involved.

As Columba laid down his books and the security of a monastery
SO WE LAY DOWN WHAT IS PAST AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE

As Aidan and Cuthbert let go
and travelled hopefully on
SO WE LET GO HURT AND PAIN AND TRAVEL WITH HOPE

As Hilda changed direction and relinquished cherished plans
SO WE LEAVE BEHIND FAMILIAR PATHS AND TAKE NEW STEPS INTO THE UNKNOWN

Song
Prayer of Confession
Merciful God,
For the things we have done that we regret,
   forgive us;
For the things we have failed to do that we regret,
   forgive us;
For all the times we have acted without love,
   forgive us;
For all the times we have reacted without thought,
   forgive us;
for all the times we have withdrawn care,
   forgive us;
for all the times we have failed to forgive,
   forgive us;

For hurtful words said and helpful words unsaid,
For unfinished tasks,
and unfulfilled hopes
God of all time,
   forgive us
and help us
to lay down our burden of regret.
An act of contrition

People may write what they wish to lay down on a piece of paper, distributed beforehand, and place it at the foot of a cross, or in a boat (coracle), or a rubbish bin, and where appropriate these can be carried out, launched forth or burnt.
Alternatively people could be asked to place a lit candle by a symbol of new beginnings eg. A sandal; keys; an A to Z; a book open on a fresh page.
It may also be helpful to invite people to sow seeds of hope in a central pot or sow individual ones, reminding them that we can’t sow seeds with a closed hand.

Dandelion Clock

Hope is a dark elusive child
curled in the womb
cradled in our arms.
It can be lost,
disappear,
beldon the wind like a dandelion clock

Its going
its ebbing away
leaves us
grieving
empty
hopeless.

‘But’ is a hopeful word.

But even as the gossamer
powder puff
disintegrates,
the seeds are carried
to cling to distant crevices.
As it recedes
it reseeds
to grow again.

God, giver of peace,
grow hope within and around us.
God of steadfast love,
never leave us hopeless.

A time of silence for reflection
Litany of Letting Go

I let go
window and door,
house and home,
memory and fear.
I let go the hurt of the past
and look to the hope of the future
I let go
Knowing that I will always carry
part of my past (part of you) with me
woven into the story of my life.

Help me/us Christ my/our brother,
to softly fold inside
the grief and the sadness,
to pack away the pain
and to move on
taking each day in your company
travelling each step
in your love.

Cross Border Peace Talks by Kathy Galloway
(From 'Pushing the Boat out' (ed) Kathy Galloway Copyright ©The authors 1995 Wild Goose Publications Unit 15 Six Harmony Row Glasgow G51 3BA with permission)

There is a place
beyond the borders
where love grows
and where peace is not the frozen silence
drifting across no man’s land from two heavily-defended
entrenchments,
but the stumbling, stammering attempts of long-closed throats
to find words to span the distance;
neither is it a simple formula
that reduces everything to labels,
but an intricate and complex web of feeling and relationship
which spans a wider range than you’d ever thought possible.

The place is not to be found on the map
of government discussions
or political posturing.
It does not exist within the borders
of Catholic or Protestant,
Irish or British,
males or females,
old or young,
It lies beyond,
and is drawn with different points of reference.

To finish

Pilgrim God, our shoes are filled with stones,
our feet are blistered and bleeding,
our faces are stained with tears.

As we stumble and fall,
may we know your presence
in the bleeding and the tears
and in the healing and the laughter
of our pilgrimage.
To get to that place
You have to go
(or be pushed out)
beyond the borders,
to where it is lonely, fearful, threatening,
unknown.
Only after you have wandered for a long time
in the dark,
do you begin to bump into others,
also branded,
exiled,
border-crossers,
and find you walk on common ground.

It is not an easy place to be,
this place beyond the borders.
It is where you learn that there is more pain in love
than in hate,
more courage in forbearance than in vengeance,
more remembering needed in forgetting,
and always new borders to cross.
But it is a good place to be.

Prayers for Peace

The Prayer of St Francis of Assisi

In this prayer which is attributed to St Francis, we offer ourselves to be used by God in creating
the harmony and restoring the wholeness in life which God intends. It has become a common
prayer for all those engaged in peace and reconciliation work.

Lord, make us instruments of your peace;
Where there is hatred let us sow love
Where there is injury pardon
Where there is doubt faith
Where there is despair hope
Where there is darkness light
Where there is sadness joy

O divine Master, grant that we may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and in dying that we are born to eternal life. AMEN.
Prayer for peace

The prayer for peace began to circulate in 1981 in England. Its source is not clearly known and it has no ties with any one denomination or faith. It has been adopted by those from different faiths and leaders of many communities. In July of 1981 its worldwide circulation was launched by Mother Teresa at a gathering in London immediately after her visit to Summerfest at Corrymeela. It was used extensively prior to the United Nations Special session on Disarmament in 1982 and its use has continued since then in countries around the world.

Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth
Lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust
Lead me from hate to love, from war to peace
Let peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.

The following short story called ‘The Ship’ concentrates on the journey involved in Moving Beyond Sectarianism. It is told accompanied by a paper origami ‘ship’ and instructions are included for making a very simple version of this

The Ship

Once upon a time a courageous little ship from that famous shipping line the MB5 set out upon the turbulent waters of sectarianism. Storms were a regular feature of this unpredictable sea. The ship was carried off and thrown against the rocks of disdain and distrust, and became dismantled at the front. (tear off the front end of the ship).

Now some strong currents bore the little ship away to those frustrating islands of benign apartheid, where she came apart at the hind (tear off the rear end of the ship).

Now you might think this was the end of this little ship’s trials but you won’t have reckoned on the depressing clouds of resignation and conflict weariness that hover near these islands between which there is so little contact. The top of the ship was totally enveloped in the cloud. (tear off the top).

How was the little ship to deal with this situation, surrounded and buffeted on all sides by the enemies rejection, reduction, fear, apartheid, arrogance, ignorance and superstition?

No longer a ship, and filled with the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation it offered the only thing it had left, (unwrap the remains of the ship) remembering the words of the One it followed “from him who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt” (Luke 6; 29) (present the shirt)
To Make the Ship

1. Fold a piece of A4 paper in half

2. Fold in half again
3. Fold the ends over to meet at the centre

4. Fold the long ends up either side of the ‘sail’

5. After the front rear and top of the ship are torn away during the telling of the story....

7. Unfold it to reveal the ‘shirt’
Benign Apartheid

Some of the reasons to desire ‘benign apartheid’ might be disdain, distaste, or just a lack of interest in the other community; and people finding themselves fully and happily occupied with life in their own church community their vision extending no further. This story from the Gospels is in a format inspired by the Wild Goose Publication, ‘Off the record conversations – Jesus and Peter’ (see bibliography). It illustrates these aspects of being human and may challenge us to think again just as Jesus did.

The Syrophoenician woman
Mark 7 v 24-30 and Matthew 15 v 21-28

Peter: Jesus

Jesus: Yes, Peter

Peter: Jesus, that woman had a nerve didn’t she? Screaming after us for you to help her out with her wee girl – typical Canaanite. We wanted to send her away for there’s nothing you can do for the likes of her. And she was making a right scene.

Jesus: Yes, I tried ignoring her but it didn’t work did it?

Peter: Jesus she’s a Canaanite. She’s not one of us. You should have sent her away like we said, crying after us like that.

Jesus: Can you remember what I did say Peter?

Peter: Yes, you said quite rightly that you were sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Jesus you have to focus on your mission here. You can’t be helping every Tom Dick and Harry or you’ll never get round your own people.

Jesus: You would have to admit though Peter that woman had endurance and faith, kneeling down at my feet and asking me again to help her.

Peter: You didn’t think that when you referred to her and her sort as ‘dogs’ did you?
Jesus: To think that I nearly gave that troubled woman the brush off. She reminded me of a truth that in any order of things everyone has a place even the 'dogs'.

Peter: Jesus are you telling me that that woman taught you something? Is that why you healed her daughter? Did you not resent even a wee bit being taught a 'truth' by a 'dog'?

Jesus: Peter, would there have been any point in the word becoming flesh if there was nothing to learn from that experience? I heard the word of truth from the unexpected. I recognized the light of faith in an unexpected quarter. I listened, I heard, I looked and I saw. Life is a journey Peter and all of us who 'journey' must be prepared to learn from those we might least expect to learn from.

Peter: So are you saying that 'outsiders' are part of God's plan for the peace of the whole world? Do we have to cross borders and be prepared to learn from those of a different tradition? Are you encouraging the search for unexpected grace?

Jesus: You're a quick learner Peter.

Objective: To challenge the young people to think about a time when they blocked their own learning through an attitude of benign apartheid - disdain for people from the other community or a preoccupation with the life of their own.

Time: One hour for presentation and discussion

Materials: Puppets and presentation materials - table, curtain etc

Method: Let some members of the group act out the Gospel story using puppets or street theatre style drama.

Questions: How did people feel about the characters in this Gospel story? What does this story communicate about the nature of Jesus’ ministry? Do any of the young people recognise the attitudes expressed in this story about people from another community? What can we learn from this story about benign apartheid and its connection with sectarianism?

Discussion: Discussion will focus on the ways that ‘benign apartheid’ can block learning and understanding. Are we like Jesus willing to learn lessons of life wherever they come from?
Telling stories through Parables

Bible reference 2 Samuel 12; 1-15

Nathan the prophet has some difficult things to communicate to his king the rich and powerful David. Rather than risk the consequences of David’s anger and defensiveness at being told he has done wrong, he decides to appeal to David’s love of justice. He tells a parable, a story about another situation with obvious parallels to David’s. David listens objectively. His defenses are down. After all, this story is not about him but some other rogue. David is quick to condemn the man, which prepares him for the justice God wishes to mete out to him. He admits that he has sinned, accepts the Lord’s judgement and enters into a time of fasting and prayer. He has heard what Nathan needed to communicate.

Jesus frequently spoke in parables because he understood how difficult it is for people to actually hear what is being communicated. Each of us will have experienced times when something we said was misinterpreted or misunderstood by the hearer. And also times when what we heard was not what the speaker said.

What happens when I hear a parable or a story about someone or something else? I can like David hear the lesson of the story without taking it personally. I don’t have to use up my energy on:-
  • being defensive about what I think is being said
  • trying to win my point
  • convincing the other when they tell me that I am wrong

I listen to the other with the whole of my being.

Any process of transformation may involve us asking difficult questions, telling painful stories and listening to things that are hard, even hurtful to hear. This is when parables can be very helpful. Telling your story through a different character, you can learn a great deal from the reaction of the audience also having the safety of ‘anonymity’ – it’s not my story, it’s….. Puppets can have the same effect. (see puppet section)

The puppet script for ‘The Good Samaritan’ retells the story within the context of Northern Ireland, and can be presented as either the good Protestant or Catholic. This contextualisation keeps the parable as relevant for us today as it was when Jesus shared it with the lawyer. It can be linked with the section on dealing with difference. The script is easily adapted for local situations, and the conversation between the two donkeys can bring out some of your ‘dreams’ for your local community.

The puppet script ‘Geronimo Grub’ is good for getting people ready to look at the issue of conflict transformation, and some of the consequences for those getting involved.

The Good Samaritan

This play is based on the parable of the Good Samaritan – Luke 10; 25 – 37

It is in a rural setting along the border between counties Donegal and Londonderry and can be presented as either the good ‘Protestant’ or ‘Catholic’.
The Good Samaritan

Characters: William (Billy/Liam) a farmer; his wife Annie; a priest/minister; an elder/lay member; a stranger; a pub owner; and his donkeys.

Narrator: In response to a question from a lawyer about who his neighbour was Jesus told a story about a good Samaritan. A similar story could be told today in Ireland about a man who was going from Coshquin to Newtowncunningham.

Annie: Here love, will you be all right? It’s very dark and I hate you having to cross the border especially the way things have been recently and that road’s wild dangerous. Could you not wait ‘til the morning?

William: I’ll be fine Annie. Sure I’ll be there and back before you know

Annie: I just hope the car doesn’t break down – And don’t be stopping to talk to anybody - we have to be careful - whatever you say, say nothin’

William: Yes dear...goodbye

Annie: I know you. Just get back here as quick as you can

Narrator: About half way into his journey, the man stopped to pick up two people who were hitch hiking. They beat him up, took his car and all the money he was carrying and left him by the side of the road half dead. Now by chance a minister/priest was passing. He was returning from a presbytery/diocesan meeting where they had been talking about the problems of paramilitary violence, drugs, joy riding, and punishment beatings.

Priest: I don’t know what this country’s coming to. What sort of peace is this? That guy’s probably dead already ...ah, there’s probably not much I can do for him. He might even be one of the hoods waiting to take the car off me. I’ll report it to the police when I get home...but they would only want me to make a statement.... and what are they going to do about it anyway? I don’t even know if he’s one of ours. Maybe somebody else will see to it.

Narrator: He went home, complained about the lawlessness in society, the uselessness of the politicians and the peace process and went to his bed. Likewise an elder/lay member was passing. She had been to the same meeting.

Elder/Lay Member: Now what do I do? I’ll stop the car and see is he moving? Wait, what am I doing? That guy could be anybody. I’m taking no chances. It’s far too dark. Better safe than sorry. I don’t want to get involved - what if he’s a paramilitary? Let them shoot each other, that’s what I say. I can come back in the morning sure, if he’s still here.
Seamus/Sammy was not that regular in his attendance at mass/church. He was a young man doing some seasonal employment for the local farmers, and staying at a pub/hostel. He was walking home after working late when he heard the groans.

What’s the matter with you? Och, God help you, look at the state o’ you. I’ll have to get you to the pub. Can you walk?

Seamus/Sammy cleaned up Billy’s/Liam’s wounds, and finding that he wasn’t able to walk too well, set him down while he ran on to the pub and fetched one of the pub owner’s donkeys. He set the wounded man on the beast and brought him to the pub.

Are you still up Mickey? I’ve a man here – He’s wild badly beaten up. Can I bring him in?

Well that was a different load from the usual turf

It certainly was. Poor man, he was badly beaten up. Life seems to be so complicated for some people. Can they not just live together like the rest of us?

They have a lot to learn from us beasts about living simply. Their religion doesn’t seem to do them a great deal of good does it?

Yes. I’m glad I’m not one of them

Seamus/Sammy comforted the man, rang his wife to reassure her he was alright, and paid for a night’s lodging. Jesus asks ‘Which of these three do you think proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?’ When the reply from the lawyer was ‘The one who showed mercy on him’, Jesus answered ‘Go and do likewise’.

Questions

• In terms of being a neighbour, how did the sectarian system militate against it in this story?

• Which emotion was creating the biggest barrier? Which emotion was lacking?

• Did you identify with any of the characters? If so which one? Have you ever been in a similar situation?

• Where would the various characters in this story fit in the pyramid of sectarianism?

• The donkeys are echoing a sentiment about simple living, where love is bigger than religion, expressed by many outside the churches. What do you think the churches could do to communicate the Gospel more clearly especially parables like the Good Samaritan?
Geronimo Grub

A puppet play based on "Geronimo Grub" in "Village Tales" recreated from Mrs Gatty’s "Parables from Nature" first published in 1855. The aim of the story is to focus on how it is sometimes necessary for us to move out of an environment which is restricting our growth; to let some part of us ‘die’ in order to allow God to make all things new.

Below the surface of a pond lived a dragonfly nymph called Geronimo, and his sister Gladys.

**Geronimo:** Gladys, do you ever wonder where Fergus Frog goes to?

**Gladys:** What do you mean?

**Geronimo:** Well you know he swims up to the top of the pond and then disappears from sight until – plop, there he is again when we least expect him.

**Gladys:** And? Who cares where Fergus goes? I mind my own business and leave others to mind theirs.

**Geronimo:** But do you not wonder if there might be another world beyond this pond?

**Gladys:** Geronimo – why don’t you ask Fergus?

So Geronimo went to ask Fergus.

**Geronimo:** If you please sir, there is something I would like to ask you. Can you please tell me if there is another world beyond this pond?

**Fergus:** What world do you mean little grub?

**Geronimo:** This world of ours – the one we’re in.

**Fergus:** This little pond I suppose you mean. Well I’ll tell you. It’s a lot less restricted than this one. There’s a freshness and openness about it. There’s room to move, to express yourself don’t you know.

**Geronimo:** Whao.

**Fergus:** I’ll tell you what if you’re so eager to find out what lies above, I’ll give you a ride up on my back and you can see for yourself.

Geronimo climbed up onto Fergus’s back, but the moment they reached the surface, he reeled back into the pond, as if he had been hit by an invisible wall, gasping for breath.

**Geronimo:** There is nothing beyond this pond. Why did you tell me all those stories?
Sap

**Fergus:** I told you those "stories" as you call them because they are true. I don’t know why you couldn’t come with me to see for yourself just now. I suppose you weren’t ready. You only know this little pond and can’t believe there is anything beyond it?

**Geronimo:** But I want to believe.

**Fergus:** You know maybe it wasn’t time for you but I saw a grub like you once climbing up one of those water plant stalks until he was right out of the water. I thought he’d gone to sleep or something, but a bit later I saw his skin crack open and out he came as one of those flying insects. They’re beautiful – Dragonflies you call them.

**Geronimo:** What? Go on Fergus. I’m sorry but that I can’t believe that!

Geronimo couldn’t believe it, but as spring days grew warmer, he began to feel some extraordinary force urging him upwards, upwards. He began to climb slowly up a stem towards the surface of the pond.

**Gladys:** Where are you going Geronimo?

**Geronimo:** I have to go Gladys

**Gladys:** Please don’t leave us – remember what happened the last time you tried to leave the pond.

**Geronimo:** It’s different this time. I’m ready. I must go.

**Gladys:** Promise you’ll come back and tell us what lies beyond?

And then he was gone. Gladys waited patiently but Geronimo never came back.

**Gladys:** He has forgotten us.

Gladys was sad, but everything had happened to Geronimo just as Fergus had said. He was a beautiful dragonfly now.

**Geronimo:** I can soar into the sky. My world is so much fuller – so many possibilities for growth.

The surface of the pond was as much a wall to him as it was to Gladys, so he hovered over the pond waiting for her.

**Gladys:** I have to leave this pond. It’s so restricting. I need to expand my horizons. Geronimo was right

**Geronimo:** Hello Gladys. Isn’t this grand?
Gladys: Geronimo, it’s you. How wonderful. Why didn’t we do this ages ago?

Geronimo: Because we weren’t ready ages ago. Come on let’s just enjoy it.

This story can be read and mimed by some puppets made from socks. There are some questions that could be asked afterwards in group discussion to focus on the process of transformation. Change can be a difficult process for us.

Questions

- What does the story tell us about identity in the transformation process – What do we learn? (Both Geronimo and Gladys kept their identity as dragonflies albeit in a different form.)

- What do we learn about timing? Is there a right time to change; to let go; or to move on? Eg. When conditions are at their best. What does the story tell us about change? Is it easy?

- Does change involve risks? Name them. (eg. There’s no turning back)

- Jesus encourages his followers to journey, to leave their old life, saying ‘whoever loses his life for my sake will find it’ (Matt. 10 v 39). What do you think leaving the old, or losing your life in order to find it means? Does the story help your understanding of this?

- In putting down new roots, what are the bits inside you that you may need to open out or let go?
This is the House that Jack built

Two groups stand in formation apart. An individual from each of the groups puts up a notice (on a wall) at the centre of their gathering – One group has ‘Saint Mary’s’ and the other ‘The Gospel Hall’.

Together: This is the house that Jack built

Another individual from one or other side puts up a wall. This could be a display board with religious ‘items of identity’ characteristic of each church pinned on the appropriate side.

Together: These are the walls around the house that Jack built

The groups individually on either side of the ‘wall’ form a circle facing each other and hold hands up in the middle to form a ‘spire’

Together: This is the roof above the walls around the house that Jack built.

An individual from each group puts a ‘closed door’ beside the ‘wall’. This could be a piece of painted cardboard with ‘feet’ to make it stand up.

Together: This is the door under the roof above the walls around the house that Jack built

An individual from each group puts a table by the door.

Together: This is the table beside the door under the roof above the walls around the house that Jack built

Another individual from each group puts a book on top of the table, one is a missal the other an authorised version of the Bible

Together: These is the book upon the table beside the door under the roof above the walls around the house that Jack built

An individual from each group takes their own book and stands in front of their own group with their backs to each other

Together: This is the leader in front of the people holding the book upon the table beside the door under the roof above the walls around the house that Jack built

Each member of each group adopts a position of prayer. One individual can pray ‘For all in authority and especially for Elizabeth our Queen’, the other, ‘For all the Saints’

Together: These are the prayers in the hearts of the people behind the leader holding the book upon the table beside the door under the roof above the walls around the house that Jack built
The leader holds up a notice. It might be ‘Support St. Mary’s - £10,000 needed for the new organ.’ or ‘Funds needed to build a new Gospel Hall.’

**Together:** This is the notice in the hands of the leader in front of the people holding the book upon the table beside the door under the roof above the walls.....

Interrupting the continuing chant, an individual from each group, who can’t stand the oppressive, exclusive atmosphere any longer runs from their own group towards the other opening their own doors. Facing each other they say

**Together:** Enough.

**First Individual:** Jesus says, ‘I do not pray for these only but also for those who believe in me through their word that they may all be one ....even as we are one’
(John 17; 20-21)

**Second Individual:** Jesus says, ‘I will make it known that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them’ (John 17; 26)

**Together:** We are the Church that God builds

**Prayer**

‘Christ be with me, Christ within me
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.’

From St Patrick’s Breastplate

‘Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain’ Psalm 127; 1