

Exercise 8.4. – Brainstorming session on conflict and peace

Educational objectives	The students can define the concepts of conflict and peace. The students can explain which kinds of conflict can be resolved and which cannot.
Resources	Flipcharts and coloured markers.

Procedure

1. The word “CONFLICT” is written on one of the sheets.
The students receive two tasks for brainstorming.
 - a. They write down as many expressions or words referring to conflict as come to mind.
 - b. They add keywords referring to situations of conflict.
 This part is carried out in silence, without commenting.
2. When the students have run out of ideas, the word “PEACE” is written on the other sheet. Same procedure.
3. The class discuss the results.
4. A classification of the different types of conflict is developed with the teacher:
 - conflicts which *can* be resolved
 - conflicts which *cannot* be resolved.

Conflict resolution without losers (see Exercise 8.1) is very often only possible through compromise. This works, for example, when scarce resources need to be shared fairly. If the cake is small and every eater receives an equally small piece, I can accept the solution even if I stay hungry. But if a clash of values or religious beliefs is involved, compromise is hardly possible. And if a conflict is caused by ethnic or racial divisions, there is the danger of expulsion or physical extermination of the members of one party. The more rational the approach of the parties to a conflict is, the bigger the chance to resolve it by negotiation and compromise rather than by violence. Rational conflict resolution requires the parties to distinguish between the issue and the opponent and to respect the opponent’s human dignity in terms of human rights.

Extension

The students illustrate different situations of peace and conflict through drawings or articles and photos from the press.