

# WOMEN, PEACE & ACTIVISM A TOOLKIT FOR YOUNG FEMINISTS TO BUILD A CULTURE OF PEACE

## FACILITATOR'S MANUAL



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#VOWToolkit

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS PEACE?

Our initial thoughts of peace define it as an absence of war and no conflict, whether it is between countries, groups of people, or between individuals. But, is peace only this, or is it more?

A group of people sitting in a room together without talking or interacting: is this peace?

Peace extends further to include the fostering of conditions that allow for personal and societal growth and well-being, such as social equality, economic freedom and political stability. So, a group of people sitting in a room together without interacting may be absent of violence, but may not necessarily represent peace.

This is because certain factors determine where a person is “placed” in society, and how much access they have to support their health and well-being. These factors are not necessarily physically violent, but considered structurally violent.

So, peace means to also remove structural violence which marginalizes some, and benefits others. Peace challenges us to reconsider our understanding of violence and to promote positive relationships, or positive peace (Galtung, 1996).

“...**peace** is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part.” (The Earth Charter, 2000, p. 4).

Being in right relationships requires identifying, inquiring into, living with, and transforming existing relationships. Relationships can be:

- Personal
- Social
- Political
- Institutional
- Ecological

Thinking of these relationships, we can see that building peace is about transforming both the CONFLICT and the CONDITIONS to allow right relationships to flourish.

The issues and problems that building peace addresses are very broad, including but not limited to poverty, social and economic inequity, political corruption, colonialism, violence, environment and resource degradation, racism, and gender discrimination.

If you're thinking, "peace is so complicated!" then you're right. But, your role as a maker and sustainer of peace does not have to be.

What does the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW) have to say about Peace?

The Mission Statement for VOW can be found on their website, at

<http://vowpeace.org/about/>. The statement reads:

To provide a means for women to exercise responsibility for the promotion of world peace and justice, through education of themselves and others to take an equal part in the democratic process of decision making; and to cooperate with women throughout the world to create the mutual respect and understanding necessary for the peaceful resolution of international conflict.

This curriculum, created through a partnership between the Voice of Women for Peace and the Girl Guides of Canada, seeks to act as a foundation of peace knowledge and practice for young girls in Canada. The activities included uncover the tools that we all have that can be used to work towards a culture of peace. Remember, peace is a process, not a destination!

## WHAT IS FEMINISM?

There is no one definition of feminism: it can mean many different things to many different people. There are, however, some basic ideas that underlie this program series, and from there you can develop your own personal understanding of what it means to be a part of feminism! Here are some things that we believe:

- Society is created and functions in a way that benefits masculinity at the cost of femininity. As feminists, we strive towards full (political, social, economic, etc) equality of masculinity and femininity, and all genders and sexes.
- Women, girls, and all other people should have access to the education, information, skill-learning, support and resources to make informed and confident choices, and pursue the life that they themselves determine is best. (This means that we support women going out into the world to do what they choose, but it also means that we respect and support women who choose to stay at home! The important thing here is the power to choose).
- Not all women are the same, or treated the same by society: for example, white women received the right to vote many years before black women, Asian

women, or Aboriginal peoples. Some women have more or less money than others, some are discriminated against based on sexuality, and so forth. Therefore, we believe it is important to acknowledge and address the particular needs of each individual, so they can succeed in their own life, rather than paint everyone with the same brush. This idea of understanding more than one kind of woman is called intersectionality.

- Men, and people of other genders, are also included in feminism. There are two reasons for this. 1. If feminism is going to succeed in the world, everyone needs to be on board with it! 2. Boys, men, and trans\* folks are also hurt by a system that values masculinity over femininity. Boys are told they shouldn't cry, they need to be good at sports (and only manly sports), and they can't like 'girly' things like cooking or the colour pink. Does this sound like real choice? We want everyone to be able to get the most out of their life, and celebrate their true selves: not the 'self' that society thinks they should be!
- We recognize that the social structures that prefer masculinity over femininity are often upheld with violence. This is why it is important to us, as feminists and peace activists, to work not only towards a feminist world, but a world of peace.

*"I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat."*

Rebecca West

*"Feminism is the radical notion that women are human beings."*

Cheris Kramarae

*"A feminist is anyone who recognizes the equality and full humanity of women and men."*

Gloria Steinem

*"I am too intelligent, too demanding, and too resourceful for anyone to be able to take charge of me entirely. No one knows me or loves me completely. I have only myself."*

Simone de Beauvoir

*"I will not have my life narrowed down. I will not bow down to somebody else's whim or to someone else's ignorance."*

bell hooks

*"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."*

Audre Lorde

## OUR VALUES

Coming into this project, we have some underlying values that shape how we view peace and peaceful processes. Here are some of our values that informed the way this curriculum was created:

- **A feminist understanding of the world.** This means that we see that women, girls, and femininity are undervalued in society. This leads to physical and sexual violence (such as domestic violence, street harassment, sexual assault, etc) as well as structural violence such as limited access to resources or a lack of socially-supported choices (how many female prime ministers or presidents do we have as role-models?). This knowledge is a major concept in informing all of our work.
- **Respect.** To have transformative conversations, a space built on mutual respect and love is necessary. This does not mean a romantic love, but a deep caring for one another that drives us to be the best we can be. bell hooks shares with us a definition of love written by Scott Peck, which defines love as “the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth,” (hooks, 2000, p. 4). We are here to grow together, and to revel in the growth of each other. Conversations around peace and violence, and all the innumerable sub-conversations that will come up, are not easy: that is why this is important to remember.

## OUR GOALS

- Introduce a variety of tactics to participants, including, but not limited to, art, theatre, writing, and critical thinking skills;
- Encourage active thought and discussion regarding a variety of topics related to peace;
- Identify the locations of oppression in our everyday lives. bell hooks teaches, “Being oppressed means the absence of choices,” (1984, p. 5); and
- Appreciate diversity: in women, in tactics.

## CULTURE OF PEACE EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

This curriculum follows a culture of peace educational framework as outlined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Peace Education model (<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/peace/frame.htm>). This means that participants will be exposed to learning activities which are meant to transform and enhance participant's **knowledge** (e.g. local and global women's rights issues), **skills** (e.g. communication, critical thinking and cooperation) and **attitudes** (e.g. non-violence and social responsibility). Knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to each of the modules are outlined in the overview of activities.

## TOOLKIT RESOURCES

This project is composed of three booklets:

1. **The Facilitator's Manual** (this booklet): This is the most thorough and details of all the booklets, with the full instructions and the most information regarding each session.
2. **The Modules**: This is composed of a brief outline of each module and description of the activities and material lists. It is intended to offer easy browsing to help groups decide which sessions and activities are the most appealing (to them) and can perhaps act as a reference dictionary of principal terms and a light-handed guide for use during activities.
3. **The Workbook**: The final booklet, composed of handouts, is full of all the hand-outs participants need to complete the examples and activities. It is intended that the contents of the handouts book will be photocopied and distributed to participants when appropriate.

There are also two documents for Module 6 and Module 7:

Module 6: VOW\_TriviaM6 (Powerpoint)

Module 7: VOW\_1325ScriptM7 (PDF)

# HELPFUL SKILLS

Writings on nonviolence and peace education acknowledge the importance of well-rounded, holistic, and experiential approaches to learning and action. Jack Ross talks about nonviolence as involving the “whole person”, saying that there is recognition that we have knowledge in our muscles and our bodies, in our feelings and our souls.” (Ross, 1992, p. 80). Thus, a diverse range of activities allows creativity and inventiveness to flow and inspire a deeper engagement with the programming.

## DISCUSSIONS: FACILITATION AND LISTENING

**Explorative-style Communication:** In facilitating discussions, we engage in explorative-style communication. In this style, the use of open-ended questions can help guide the conversation and gently seek information, while clarifying and sharing perspectives and knowledge without judgment (Miller, 1997, p. 23).

**Summarizing:** Summarizing means repeating what you just heard another person say, in your own words. This permits clarification and an opportunity to reinforce the speaker that they’ve been listened to. Here’s how summarizing might look: **Repeat** (in your own words) what the speaker said without adding to it or making inferences, **watch** the speaker’s non-verbal/verbal responses to see if your understanding is accurate, and **ask** for confirmation. This will allow the speaker to clarify any points that were originally misunderstood, and feel confident that they are well-understood (Miller, p. 94).

**Speak for Ourselves:** It is important in dialogue to speak for ourselves, and not assume that our truths are true for others, as well. This means speaking in 1st person (‘I,’ ‘me,’ ‘my,’ ‘mine’) rather than making statements about ‘us,’ ‘them,’ or no one in particular (‘some people’) (Miller, p. 60). Speaking in 1st person allows individuals to own their beliefs, without imposing their views on others. In resolving conflict, ‘I statements’ are a popular formula for communicating: “When (such and such happened), I felt \_\_\_\_.” Modeling and reminding others to speak for oneself can preemptively reduce tensions and misunderstandings that may lead to conflict.

**Non-Judgment:** This is important due to the fact that many of these topics already have stigma and shame attached to them, and they are topics we are told we cannot or should not talk about. So, in order to start having these conversations, safety and acceptance must be emphasized and modeled by the leader and the group. Though we want to create an environment where it feels safe to talk about tough topics, maintaining safety might also mean allowing participants to pass or return to the topic later.



## CRITICALLY ENGAGING WITH THE MEDIA

Media is a powerful influence in all of our lives. On average, youth 8-18 spend 7 hours and 38 minutes per day in front of a screen (iTHINK, 2011, p. 10). Also, the average North American encounters approximately 3,000 advertising messages per day. (iTHINK, p. 10). Even if caregiver work hard to limit what kind of media youth have access to, some of these messages are pervasive and inescapable (commercials, billboards, food packaging, magazines in the dentist's waiting room, etc.).

Because a goal of advertising is to convince us of the value of a product, there are often many different associations made between products and what it means to be cool, or attractive, or empowered. This brings a whole new meaning to the idea of peer pressure. In this new media age, how do individuals – and youth in particular – learn to filter and understand media messages? Now is the time to start helping youth identify and analyze media messaging with a critical eye.

How is critical thinking done? Here are some thoughts on what critical thinking means:

- “The essence of critical thinking centers not on answering questions but on questioning answers.”
- “Remember that prominence does not equate to importance.”
- “Look out for exceptions. There is a popular saying that: "It's the exception that proves the rule." In fact, in scientific terms, it is the exception that disproves the rule.”
- “Always look for evidence.”
- “Always consider alternative explanations.”
- “Just because the facts can be explained by one particular scenario doesn't mean that another scenario isn't possible and maybe even more likely.”
- “For one to critically think, one must always question a certain scenario or piece of information. What are the sources? Are the sources biased, or reliable? Is there an alternative explanation?” (Roger Darlington, quoted in iTHINK, p. 11).

Critically engaging with media means asking questions, and thinking about how the media influences each of us on a personal level. When it comes to questioning advertising, some simple questions that youth should be encouraged to always be asking is, “What is being sold?” “Why should people buy it, according to the ad?” “What assumptions are made about my personality, identity, ethnicity, likes and dislikes and why I should buy the product?” “Is this ad telling me to act in a certain way to be cooler, sexier, \_\_\_?” “What kind of people are in this ad? Do they look like me? What kind of people are missing?”

## LEADING THEATRE EXERCISES

The goal of theatre exercises in this program is to inspire increased participation by creating a comfortable space, and to allow imaging and experiencing. bell hooks discusses at length the importance of the body in learning environments, as reconnecting the mind/body split is essential to wholly recognize ourselves and each other, and is thus foundational for respect and understanding: the basis of a learning community (hooks, 1994).

Theatre exercises get people comfortable to receive and explore information, and talk and express themselves. Theatre activities allow for play, free of judgment. You can't fail at these games. Risk-taking becomes safer, allowing a willingness to engage with topics that perhaps would otherwise feel too risky or intimidating. This is obviously desirable for these modules, which address some topics that can be difficult to grasp, or digest.

Though these activities need to be explained with clarity and acted out within a structure, the more chaotic the better! This is not to say it should be a senseless free for all, but that goofiness and noise can be helpful when it comes to creating a judgment-free space where participants feel free to engage and try new things. It can take a while for participants to reach this level with an exercise, but it will likely happen so don't be discouraged if it takes a few rounds! Try to wait to see this level of comfort and engagement before moving on to the next exercise (Volkas, 2013). Theatre, as well as other artistic pursuits present in the program, allow for imaging and experiencing.

Imagining “involves imagining and then depicting the totality of situations that constitute common concerns. It intentionally excludes analysis, reasoning, discussion,” (Ross, 1992, p. 81).

This works to engender creativity! Experiencing allows participants to play out what might happen: “its outcome is to make mistakes when they do not count, and learning from them and appreciating successes.” Experiencing happens during role-playing and simulation type games, such as those seen in this program.

### **Background to Forum Theatre**

Forum theatre is a particular style of theatre often associated with revolutionary movements in Central America. In its most famous form, it is known as Theatre of the Oppressed, but it falls under many names all over the world (there is a Playback Theatre group in Winnipeg that could be considered a type of forum theatre!). Overall, the goal of forum theatre is to empower the bystander:

In traditional theatre, the audience is expected to be silent and observant, which is a similar type of behavior we might see by passers-by if someone was to get cat-called at on the road, or have rude and intimidating things said to them on the bus, for example. To repeat a

quote regularly used by activists, “Silence is violence.” Forum theatre, on the other hand, encourages participation of designated actors and audience members to create a scene that everyone has contributed to and finds acceptable as a liberating interaction.

Creating a theatrical space where all present have the option to enter the scene and change it as they wish enables anyone to “...enter into a dialogue with the actors, to interrupt the action, to ask for explanations without waiting politely for the end of the play...” and encourages people to “...ask questions, to dialogue, to participate,” (Boal, 2008, p. 120). Have you ever thought to yourself after talking to someone, “If only I could go back and change what I said?!” Forum theatre lets you try it out, and explore what might have happened if you could have said or done something different. Also, this means that it can be helpful practice for having a better response the next time something like that happens. Wouldn't that be nice??

## LEADING VISUAL ART

Why use art in the classroom? Because it is an accessible resource, and it enhances engagement with and understanding of a concept: it offers variety in learning techniques, it sparks creativity and authentic/unique engagement with subject matter, and offers another way of communicating. This is especially true when it comes to communicating about tough topics (Keddie, 2010, pp. 1-2).

In art, there is no ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect.’ You can't fail at art. That being said, when an art project has a goal, it might take some explaining on the behalf of the artist to convey the intended message to viewers, which is fine! It's an opportunity to learn about the perception and communication styles of peers! However, this can be a challenge in a world where learning environments are usually observed and graded to gauge ‘success’ (Keddie, p. 2). It is important to emphasize that there are no wrong answers, and participation guarantees success. To increase the likelihood of engagement, providing a variety of mediums and tools is helpful, so everyone has the choice involved in doing something they really want to do.

# KEY TOPICS FOR ACTIVISM

What is activism? Activism is an action-based way of engaging in the world. It is the things that we do and say (that reflect our beliefs) that work towards transforming the world we live in. There are several spheres that activism can work within:

- Calling for solutions to contemporary problems, especially through oppositional political stances.
- Creating alternatives to mainstream systems, by constructing and presenting new modes of social behavior, resources, community spaces, etc.
- Working towards the fundamental change of society and social institutions (Permanent Culture Now, 2013).

**Why be an activist?** We think the bigger question is why NOT be an activist?! Activism is about integrating your beliefs into your everyday life. Gandhi said,

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

This is what we’re talking about! This can happen on your own, when your words and actions reflect your beliefs, or with other people who have similar belief systems when you come together for actions.

Gene Sharp outlines 198 methods of nonviolent resistance that can be used as activist tactics and effective ways to make change in your communities. See Appendix A for this list.

## THE POWER OF NARRATIVE

It is important to recover and tell lost stories because the reality of whose stories are told (and whose are ignored) both reflect and contribute to power imbalances in society. Those individuals most present in mainstream history and knowledge indicate positions of social dominance and privilege, and reveal dominant narratives of what it means to live “normally” in the world. In this respect, mainstream history and Western culture have created a constructed reality that understands the experiences of white men as standard and as guidelines for what it means to be human. Thus, becoming acquainted with some rad women that have been overlooked by mainstream history is “...part of the larger effort to undermine this partial construction and to create a more inclusive, more fully human conception of social reality. This process of reconstruction challenges what has been defined and taught as our common intellectual and cultural heritage,” (Personal Narratives Group, 1989, p. 3). If history and culture are constructed, this means that we have the power to reconstruct them, so let’s get to it!

## CULTURE JAMMING

What is culture jamming? The Centre for Communication and Civic Engagement (CCCE) describes culture jamming as

“an intriguing form of political communication that has emerged in response to the commercial isolation of public life,” (2013, para. 3).

Usually, this means that culture jammers take note of the widespread commercialization of public space, and alter it to gain attention and turn a message on its head. This could mean making satirical versions of common advertisements and putting them in public space, writing topical messages in sidewalk chalk on the sidewalk or outside specific buildings, political street art performances, etc. It is a form of mass communication (and activism) that uses already-existing ideas, messages, symbols and spaces to get across an idea. Some forms of culture jamming, like graffiti, are illegal, but others are not.

Why culture jam? Culture jamming is a fun, creative and artistic way to use existing artistic mediums to communicate a point. Another beautiful thing about culture jamming is that it is a community affair – because it takes place in public spaces, others can add to and alter existing messages to continue a public conversation (think of comments written in bathroom stalls that people add to and extrapolate from, but with an activist message!). What a great way to build strong communities, talk about important issues, and remind ourselves that we have a right to public spaces that are often overrun by advertisements.

## INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN CANADA: A HISTORY

There is a long history of physical and structural violence against indigenous women (First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities) in Canada which is one of Canada’s biggest challenge to achieve peace.

During colonization, patriarchal European settlers enforced a social system that relegated women to an inferior status in society, where all of their rights were derived through their husbands (AJIC, para. 10). Canada’s Indian Act codifies the rights of Aboriginal peoples, and though it has been amended, Aboriginal peoples face continual cultural and legal oppression in its wake. For example, in Canada, Aboriginal women gained the right to vote later than white women and only recently regained the right to own property (AJIC, para. 11).

- Now, Aboriginal women still face a disproportional amount of violence. The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) makes the following observations:
- Amnesty International (2004) reports that Aboriginal women aged 25-44 are five times more likely than other Canadian women of the same age to die of violence.
- More than 500 Aboriginal women and girls have gone missing or been murdered over the last 30 years. Systemic racist and discriminatory factors on the part of Canada play a role in violence against Aboriginal women and girls (NWAC).
- In 2003 Aboriginal people were three times more likely to be victims of spousal violence than were those who are non-Aboriginal. In addition, 54% of Aboriginal women reported experiencing severe and potentially life threatening violence compared to 37% of non-Aboriginal women. These percentages remained unchanged since 1999; however, for non-Aboriginal women, the percentage who experienced the most serious forms of violence declined from 43% in 1999 to 37% in 2004 (Statistics Canada, 2006).
- 24% of Aboriginal women, compared with 18% of Aboriginal men, said that they had suffered violence from a current or previous spouse or common-law partner in the five-year period up to 2004 (Statistics Canada, 2005).
- Up to 75% of survivors of sexual assaults in Aboriginal communities are young women under 18 years old. 50% of those are under 14 years old, and almost 25% are younger than 7 years old (METRAC, 2001).
- Eighty-two percent of all federally sentenced women report having been physically and/or sexually abused. This percentage rose to 90% for Aboriginal women (CAEFS, 2006).

It is for these reasons that we make a special effort to raise awareness of violence against Aboriginal women as distinct from general gender based violence – because Aboriginal women face a disproportionate amount of violence in Canada. These human rights violations are gaining international attention; in 2013 the United Nations did a special inquiry into the missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada (The Canadian Press, 2013).

## SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The United Nations' Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines gender-based violence as

“any act ‘that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life,’” (UNFPA, 2013, p. 4).

The Anti.Violence.Project expands this idea to include a recognition that what defines someone as a woman/man, boy/girl is based on socially-ascribed gender norms. Because of this, those who do not ascribe to these norms such as Two-Spirit, transgender, transsexual gender-queer, or a-gender folks can also face gender-based violence (AVP, 2012).

Because gender is a cultural construct, gender-based violence can look different everywhere. This is why it is important to understand the cultural implications and consequences of various acts of physical and structural violence before doing anything else. It is not possible to outline all the different ways this might look here, but we have tried to do so in the program modules.

From a feminist perspective, we see gender-based violence in the Western world as a result of patriarchy. We recognize aspects of gender-based violence, rigid gender norms and a devaluation of femininity exist in most structural aspects of society (such as unequal job pay for women as compared to men, or a lack of gender-neutral bathrooms in a building for folks who do not fit into the categories of ‘women’ or ‘man’, for example). Approaching topics with a feminist lens allows us to identify these points of oppression with the goal of transforming them towards a more peaceful world.

## THE UNITED NATIONS: AN OVERVIEW

Module 7 focusses on the United Nations and global policy that deals with gender-based violence in warfare. If you already know some of the background to the United Nations and Security Council Resolution 1325, that's awesome! If not, here is some information to help you facilitate the dialogue that will happen during this module. Don't be intimidated by the amount of information or the seriousness of this module compared to the other ones...it might be tough to think and talk about, but it is an essential piece to understanding how women interact with issues of war and peace around the world!

### What is U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325?

UNSCR 1325 is a landmark international legal framework that addresses the impact of war on women, as well as the role women should (and do) play in sustainable peace.

You can find extra information about the SCR here:

[http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/BasicWPSDocs/annotated\\_1325.pdf](http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/BasicWPSDocs/annotated_1325.pdf)

### Why did the U.N. Security Council pass Resolution 1325?

The Security Council (a group of countries elected to be a part of the council) acknowledged that in recent warfare, more and more civilians (people who are not soldiers) are targets of violence, and women continue to be excluded from participation in peace processes. (United States Institute of Peace, 2014).

### Why do women need to be critical actors in peace building?

The experiences of men and women in war are different. Like in any other field, women offer important perspectives on conflict and provide unique strategies toward peacebuilding that focus on relationship-building and increasing the inclusiveness, transparency, and sustainability of peace processes (United States Institute of Peace, 2014).

### Why involve men in discussions about women in conflict zones?

Men are often not included in discussions about the use of violence against women during war and conflict. Peacebuilding requires an awareness of how people of all genders can come together to contribute to sustainable peace and security (United States Institute of Peace, 2014). Without this, it would be like trying to build something only using half of the tools in your toolbox. It doesn't make any logical sense, and it simply isn't as effective as using all the tools you can.



# THE MODULES

This is a detailed instruction manual for each of the 8 modules created for this project. In this Facilitator's Manual, there are also modules to use for introductions and conclusions to help participants wrap their heads around the concepts and how they relate to the rest of life. The activities in each of the modules are diverse and creative, drawing on many skills. They also seek to draw on diverse examples, but by no means represent the experiences of ALL women or people impacted by feminism, sexism, peace, etc.

Each module has:

- Background Information (introduction to the module, objectives and materials)
- Overview of Activities (introduction activities, main activity, sample debrief questions)
- Resources (for participants to further their learning)

Modules are designed for participants age 13+, however they can be abridged, or selected specifically to suit the interests of your group! Think of these as 'a la carte', in that you can design your own program with what is presented!

## ACCESSING RESOURCES

Some of the resources are found online, often on Youtube or other websites. Hopefully the URL addresses to access these resources don't change, but if they do, try your best to find the information using your Google-prowess, or try to find other resources that seem to be aligned with the examples or activity.

The Overview of Activities has resources provided for you to explore further into the module as a facilitator, or with participants. The Workbook also has videos and specific links to follow to deepen knowledge on the examples.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

One of the biggest features of these modules is the experiential aspects, in which participants are learning through creating. We highly encourage participants to take photos of their projects and their teams, and post it on our Facebook page

**<https://www.facebook.com/groups/toolkitforyoungfeministsVOW/>**

and tag photos and status updates with the hashtag **#VOWToolkit**. This way participants to share their ideas and connect with other participants to see what they are up to!

# INTRODUCTION & CONCLUSION

## INTRODUCTION MODULE

### **Introduction to Peace (10 minutes)**

In a circle, discuss the question “What is Peace?” Peace can look like the absence of violence (negative peace), or things that enhance the overall well-being of people, like education for everyone (positive peace).

### **Violence Spectrum (30 minutes)**

Identify one end of the room as indicating the strong agreement, and the opposite end as indicating strong disagreement. Read out the following statements, while asking “Is this violence,” and allowing participants to stand anywhere in the room to represent their agreement or disagreement:

- A school shooting
- The 9/11 bombings
- Call of Duty video games
- Threatening to hurt someone if they don't do as you say
- Hearing someone threaten to hurt someone, but pretending that you don't hear and walking away
- Not being allowed to go to school because of your race or gender
- Going to school without a lunch because your family can only afford one meal a day
- Being told you're not allowed to play on the sports teams at school because you're a girl
- Being cat-called on the street while walking to school

After reading out all the examples above, ask if anyone wants to put forward their own examples. Once everyone has gotten a chance to do so, come back together in a circle and debrief. Here are some examples of questions you could ask, or go along with whatever topics the participants seem to be most interested in discussing:

- Were any of the examples really obvious? Which ones? Which ones were harder to figure out the answer to, and why?
- Did anything surprise you while you were doing this activity? Did it make you think of anything in a new way?

- If we, as a society, considered more things to be violent (like poverty, instead of just obvious fighting), do you think we'd respond to them differently?

### **Map of the City (30-40 minutes)**

As a group or in several small groups depending on how many participants there are (no more than 7 people in one group), draw a basic map of the city you live in. It doesn't need to be geographically accurate, just make sure it has some of the important parts of the city for whoever is drawing it (for example, schools, the mall, your neighborhoods, etc.). This should take 5-10 minutes.

Then, using symbols, words, and colors, draw on the map and indicate which parts of the city the participants feel are "peaceful" or "violent," or maybe in between. Allow plenty of freedom for participants to express any associations they wish. This should take about 10 minutes.

Once everyone is happy with how their map looks, come back together as a group and explain the maps:

- Which places did you choose to include, and why? How did you all agree?
- Why did certain people make some places peaceful, or not? Did you all agree? What were the differing reasons?
- Did any of the choices your peers made surprise you?
- Would you go back and add or change anything if you could?
- Are there places in Canada that feel more or less peaceful? What about in the world?

### **Choose your modules**

As a group or individually, look through the overview of activities and choose which modules are appealing to your group! You can do as many or as few as you like; the order they are in is what is recommended. You can also select specific activities in each module, and can skip others to suit your interests!

### **Wrap Up**

Remember: Peace starts within each of us. This means that respect, listening to each other, and supporting each other are crucial first steps to understanding and living peace. If we can't do this with each other, how can we expect anyone else to do it, especially with strangers on the other side of the world?!

## CONCLUSIVE MODULE

Now that these modules are complete, what's next? Moving forward in the face of global issues can seem like an impossible task, but there are little things we can do to help every day.

### **Journaling (15 minutes)**

Instead of doing an example this week, notice what kind of internal experience you are having.

Take 10 minutes to write individually, reflecting on the modules you've completed in this program. Write anything you want: your favorite activities, the most shocking thing you learned, an idea that you had that you want to do in the future...ANYTHING! The goal is to keep writing for the whole 10 minutes. (This means that even if you feel like you have nothing to say, keep writing, "I have nothing to say. I have nothing to say.")

Come back together as a group afterwards and have each person read aloud a part of what they wrote.

### **Moving Forward (20 minutes)**

As a group, discuss what might be some things folks want to do to implement what they've learned about women and peace into their lives at home. This could be something small in a person's own life, like making art or talking to other girls and women in the community to build relationships and hear each other's stories, or maybe it could be part of a bigger process at school or as a Girl Guides Group! Think about what is important to each of you, and what is important to your community. The answers to these questions differ for everyone, especially between cities and countries. It is important to identify specific interests and goals, so you know how to go about accomplishing them!

### **Self-Care (10 minutes)**

Often, activists and people deeply concerned with social issues suffer from burnout (feeling tired and hopeless regarding the work that you used to be passionate about). To avoid this, we need to make sure we're taking care of ourselves.

In partners, discuss for 5 minutes what each person likes to do to relax after a tough day. These could be things like eating a favourite food, taking a bath, hanging out with a certain person, etc. Afterwards, come back together and share with the rest of the group some ideas that could help keep you, your friends, and your community feeling healthy and energized! After all, if we can't take care of ourselves, how can we take care of each other?

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