

Ashland at the forefront of history in advocating peace

By David Adams for the Tidings

Posted Dec 18, 2017 at 12:01 AM

By working on the eight program areas of the culture of peace, Ashland puts itself at the forefront of the most important struggle of this moment of history, the transition from the culture of war to a culture of peace.

What is culture of war and culture of peace? They are not simply war and peace.

The culture of war is a huge iceberg of which war is only the visible top.

Throughout human history there have been wars from time to time, but the culture of peace has been constant — the culture that is produced by war and war preparations and which, in turn, makes war possible, and in the long run, inevitable. Here's what the culture of war includes:

- 1) An enemy. Without an enemy there can be no war.
- 2) Hierarchical authority. If people don't follow orders, they don't go to war.
- 3) Exploitation of people. If war had never been profitable because of this (slaves, colonies, neo-colonialism, military-industrial complex), it would never have survived and spread.
- 4) Exploitation of the environment. War and war preparation are the greatest destroyers of the environment
- 5) Control of information. This has become essential in recent centuries, since people won't go to war unless they are fed propaganda to encourage it.
- 6) Male domination. From the beginning, war planning and war-making have been more or less monopolized by men.
- 7) Education that prepares people for war (education that promotes obedience, control of information, belief in the usefulness of violence, etc.)

8) Armaments, I left this to last because it is so obvious.

Throughout human history we have survived wars and the culture of war. But as Einstein famously said, “The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.”

It is not enough to be against war. To avoid catastrophe we have to change from the culture of war to a culture of peace.

Fortunately, the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace adopted for the UN International Year for the Culture of Peace in the Year 2000, provides us with guidelines. They are the eight program areas that you are wisely planning on using in Ashland:

- 1) Tolerance and solidarity instead of enemy images.
- 2) Democratic participation instead of hierarchical authority.
- 3) Human rights instead of the exploitation of individuals.
- 4) Sustainable, equitable development instead of the exploitation of the environment and peoples.
- 5) Free flow and sharing of information instead of control of information (Congratulations to the Ashland Tidings and the Ashland Culture of Peace Commission for this).
- 6) Equality of women instead of male domination.
- 7) Education for a culture of peace instead of for a culture of war.
- 8) Public safety instead of gun and other violence.

I look forward to working with the people of Ashland to bring this message to the world, hoping that we can help advance a global transition to the culture of peace. Everyone has a role to play in this great challenge, whether you are man or woman, teacher or student, worker or business-person, religious or agnostic.

— David Adams was the coordinator of the United Nations International Year for the Culture of Peace while a director at UNESCO. UNESCO was responsible for the preparation of the UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. He is a member of the City of New Haven Peace Commission and a Board Member of the Culture of Peace Commissions of Ashland. Among his books is the “History of the Culture of War,” which is available to read at <http://culture-of-peace.info>, along with “Early History of the Culture of Peace.”

— Email comments and questions to ashlandcpc@gmail.com. The ACPC website is www.ashlandcpc.org; like the commission on Facebook at www.facebook.com/AshlandCultureofPeaceCommission; follow twitter.com/AshlandPeace on Twitter. All are welcome to join the ACPC’s Talking Circle at 11 a.m. each Tuesday and Community Meeting at 4 p.m. each Wednesday, both at the ACPC office, 33 First St., Suite 1, diagonally across Lithia Way from the Ashland Post Office.



SIGN UP FOR DAILY E-MAIL

Wake up to the day’s top news, delivered to your inbox
