



Culture of Peace: What you can do to occupy your remit

BY [GILDA MONTENEGRO-FIX](#) August 11, 2018

Remit (noun) — The task or area of activity officially assigned to an individual or organization: “The committee was becoming caught up in issues that did not fall within its remit.”

As I facilitate conversations and trainings on cultural agility in the Rogue Valley, it has become apparent that what is really happening, what we have in our hands, is a monumental opportunity to choose what kind of world we are co-creating each day.

Recognizing bias that operates in my own mind, actively seeking to become more aware, more responsible for my words, my actions and the impact I have on others and the world, inspires me to be a cooperative component to creating peace, transparency, clear and kind communications, and to make courageous decisions to be part of the change I wish to see.

For those of us who care to make the world a better place for ALL, this is an incredibly exciting time: There is so much we can do! It is like we thought we had already achieved a level of equity and now here we are realizing that there was a veneer of civility but underneath which much pain lied unexpressed. Now we can see that pain because it is all coming up for us to deal with. The ideas of supremacy, separation, lack, disrespect, unequal human value, etc. are all here for us to see and ponder: Who am I in the face of this? What do I choose to do or not do when this happens in my environment? In what ways have I unconsciously contributed to or benefited from the status quo? And now that I know this, what will I do?

It can seem so daunting to face the necessary changes but, if not us, then who? If not now, when? It is up to us to bring about change and it happens in big and small ways. We need to educate ourselves, lift veils of ignorance, care enough to do something differently if we want new outcomes. Peace begins within, positive change can come from awareness and a decision to act in restorative ways from here on out. It is our response-ability and privilege to be all we came to be.

When we occupy our remit, we effect change in our most immediate environments: first of all, in ourselves, our thoughts, beliefs, feelings, we become responsible and empowered about our reality. We look at our circumstances and our dreams and ask ourselves what steps will move us in the right direction. We take small steps, we are compassionate with ourselves and others. How we educate our kids, how we talk with our friends, what “jokes” we laugh at, what we say and what we do when someone is treated in a demeaning, condescending or outright discriminatory way are all things that affirm our choice to be part of the solution or part of the problem.

We are part of the system that is operating and when we become conscious of it we can become supporters of it or challengers of what we don't agree with. It is so important that we occupy our remit! If we all do it, in our own level of influence, we would see positive change happening at faster and faster rates everywhere. Right now, because of our digital connections, things can change very quickly. All it takes is for most of us to decide! Is your remit yourself, your family, your job? The role you have at work, are fully occupying it? Are you able to influence your organization? Are you a leader? Can you be one, no matter what your role is? Local government? Policy maker? Federal, national level influencer?

And what is my remit? you may ask ... and that is the question! It is up for you to choose. It will likely change as you start to step into it more fully, become more empowered, because more ideas, connections and resources will come to you. More allies, more support, more ways to see things. This is the world I envision for our children — a collaborative, purposeful, creative, abundant, FUN world where we ALL get to bring in our gifts and brilliance and joy is possible,

Peace is possible, and it all begins with me.

Gilda Montenegro-Fix is a Costa Rican woman, mother and wife currently living in Ashland. She is the founder, main consultant and trainer of Cultural Agility with [Celebrate Diversity!](#) She is also a former Olympian and represented her country in the sport of whitewater kayak slalom in the games of Barcelona'92 and Atlanta'96. 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.