

**Heroic Endeavors: A Cross-Cultural Narrative Exploration of
the Life Stories of Chinese and American Peacebuilders**

A dissertation submitted

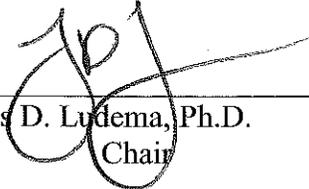
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Abstract

This study explores the life stories of eight expert peacebuilders. Four of the peacebuilders are from the People's Republic of China (China) and four are from the United States. The purpose of the study is to understand the peacebuilders' personal and cultural backgrounds and how these factors influence the ways they think about and approach peacebuilding. This cross-cultural approach facilitates an analysis of how American and Chinese culture influence the peacebuilders' perspectives towards peacebuilding. The study also explores eight distinctive emergent qualities of the expert peacebuilders, along with axial sub-themes for those qualities. The peacebuilders' life stories have been gathered through Appreciative Inquiry (AI) open-ended interviews, participant observation, and archival documentation using narrative analysis.

Dedication

To all the peacebuilders.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the following people whose help was invaluable on this journey:

To my family for their love and support. You are a blessing in my life.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

There have always been peacebuilders. Just as the history of human endeavor is filled with stories of war and conflict, so too are there stories of those who have worked to heal and bring opposing sides together (Nan, Bartoli, & Mampilly, 2011). They are mentioned in biblical scripture: “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9, KJV). They are exemplified in the lives of early religious and thought leaders such as Christ, Buddha, Confucius, and Lao Tzu. They are described in the historical accounts of societies throughout the ages with names such as Petrarch, Penn, Stowe, and Lincoln. They come from all walks of life (Gibson, 2012). They have in their numbers those who are scholars, doctors, students, activists, missionaries, artists, CEOs, and many more. They are young and they are old. They represent various faiths, ethnicities, and nationalities (Bohmelt, 2012). Some are well-known, with recent examples including Annan, Gandhi, Sadat, Rabin, Mandela, and Tutu (Prabhu, 2011). Others are less-well known or perhaps not known at all outside of their specific area of influence (Beller & Chase, 2008). However, they are all engaged in important and necessary work.

This work has great relevance for today’s global society. These are turbulent times (Schumpeter, 2013). Conflict, as well as peacebuilding, is often in the news (Rost & Grieg, 2011). With the economic downturn of 2008, the rise of the Arab Spring, difficulties with the Euro zone (Charlemagne, 2013), and ongoing tensions in areas such as Asia and the Middle East, there are few sectors or regions that are not

experiencing conflict (Banyan editorial, 2013). In the midst of these conflicts walk today's peacebuilders. They are in corporate boardrooms and political backrooms, and they are in the diplomatic limelight (Corry, 2012). They are working both visibly and behind the scenes to negotiate peaceful outcomes (Hancock, Weiss & Duerr, 2010).

However, these times are unique in history and they present special challenges for the peacebuilders (Ihsanoglu, 2011). Rapid changes in technology have brought the complexity of greater transparency ("Picture Imperfect," 2013) and diverse and far-ranging stakeholders, including insurgent, tribal, and non-nation state groups who can become rapidly informed (Frisch, 2012; Hesterman, personal communication, 2013). The increasingly global and cross-cultural nature of peacebuilding work means that the outcomes can have vast and far-reaching consequences. For example, issues of limited resources and environmental concerns mean that failure to reach successful outcomes could result in irreparable consequences (Cui, 2011). In this era of rapid change and shifting geopolitical interests, peacebuilders need to have new and evolving skill sets to match the changes in terrain (Harris, 2010). More research is needed to equip peacebuilders with the best knowledge and practices to get to the best outcomes (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2012; Hafner-Burton & Montgomery, 2012).

Purpose of the Dissertation

In this dissertation I explore the cross-cultural narratives of peacebuilders from the People's Republic of China (China) and from the United States. My purpose is to

understand the factors that inform and influence their thinking about and approaches to peacebuilding. Specifically, my research question is: “What are the life stories of peacebuilders from the United States and the People’s Republic of China (China) and how do factors such as their personal experiences and cultures inform the way they think about and approach peacebuilding?”

Lederach (1997) defines peacebuilding as “a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates and sustains the full array of processes, approaches and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships” (p. 20). According to this definition, peacebuilding can include but is not limited to the more narrowly focused activities of mediation, conflict resolution, or diplomatic negotiation. It involves a wide range of activities that both precede and follow peace, such as education, training, cultural exchanges, and other proactive strategies that promote strong, healthy relationships. Peace is not merely as a stage in time or a condition, but a dynamic social construct that requires continuous activity at every level of society to promote connection, understanding, and respect among different groups of people.

Following Lederach (1997), I define peacebuilders as “people who are involved in sustained work towards peace in a wide array of activities before, during, after, or throughout all three stages of conflict or potential conflict.” This definition includes people who work fulltime in traditional fields of peacemaking, such as mediation,

conflict resolution, and diplomatic negotiation. It also includes people who use their influence full time or part time to promote connection, understanding, and respect among different groups of people through activities such as education, training, cultural exchanges, and other proactive strategies.

In this dissertation, report on interviews with and analyze the stories of eight peacebuilders, four from China and four from the United States:

- Pin Ni, who grew up in China, is the President of Wanxiang Corporation in the United States and the Executive Director of Wanxiang Group. He is involved in peacebuilding work, which includes educational exchange between the United States and China and investment in areas such as clean energy.
- Professor Dali Yang is the founding Faculty Director of the University of Chicago Center in Beijing, promoting intellectual collaboration and research between the University of Chicago and China. He is Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago. He is also a member of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations.
- Dr. Xian-He Sun is currently chairman and professor of the Department of Computer Science at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), where he is also the director of the Scalable Computing Software laboratory. He is involved in at least one peacebuilding activity each year including within the Chicago area and internationally between the United States and China.

- X is a former Chinese diplomat who worked on projects such as the six-party nuclear talks with North Korea. He prefers to remain anonymous in this study.
- Ambassador Dennis Ross is counselor at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Prior to that he served as special assistant to President Obama and the National Security council, and he has held other senior government posts involving international peacebuilding.
- Dr. Harold H. “Hal” Saunders is currently Director of International Affairs at the Kettering Foundation. He also is the Chairman of the International Institute for Sustained Dialogue. Prior to that he served in the U.S. government for 25 years in roles such as Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs.
- Dr. William Ury who is a Distinguished Senior Fellow of the *Harvard Negotiation Project* and co-founder of the Harvard Program on Negotiation. He also spends significant time each year working internationally as a peacebuilder.
- John Paul Lederach is a scholar-practitioner who spends a great deal of time each year working internationally as a peacebuilder. He is the professor of international peacebuilding at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame and founding director and Distinguished Scholar at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University.

I explore both their personal and peacebuilding journeys within the context of their cultures. I present insights and key lessons learned from these experts in the field. I employ a cross-cultural lens to shed light on the potential similarities and differences

between American and Chinese cultures relative to peacebuilding and on how cultural factors inform peacebuilding.

This study could be of particular benefit to those engaged in cross-cultural peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Crossing cultures could include working across national boundaries; silos or functions within corporations; disciplines within educational realms; or any sectors that represent divisions within society or within interpersonal dynamics. Thus, the beneficiaries of this study need not be only those in official peacebuilding or conflict resolution roles. All who are engaged in any level or form of peacebuilding and conflict resolution in their professional or personal lives could learn key lessons from the voices of these experts.

The results of this research could help peacebuilders and others to work more productively and towards better outcomes. Arguably, peacebuilding matters. The stakes these days are high, but so too are the possible benefits that will accrue to all if peacebuilders are given the best knowledge and resources to do their work well.

Overview of the Dissertation

In Chapter 2, I provide a literature review on the topics of peacebuilding and the similarities between Chinese and American cultures. I conclude that the initial literature review found a gap in the literature regarding this type of study, particularly with reference to the cross-cultural comparison between China and the United States.

To conduct my research, I used a narrative methodology, which I describe in Chapter 3. Narrative is appropriate given my research question, because of the focus on the personal stories of the peacebuilders and because of the relatively small number of participants. As explained by Creswell (2007), “Narrative research is best for capturing the detailed stories or life experiences of a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals” (p. 55).

The specific steps I took include (1) selecting the participants based on expertise and availability, (2) conducting semi-structured interviews with the participants using an appreciative inquiry interview protocol and establishing a conversational, interactive tone with the participants where possible, (3) collecting contextual data through observation and artifacts such as published biographies and other available records of peacemaking processes, (4) analyzing the stories and narratives of each participant individually, using several methods of analysis including restorying with an emphasis on chronological ordering, (5) conducting a cross-cultural comparison between the narratives of the Chinese and American participants, and (6) inter-weaving stories and insights from my own experience of crossing cultures and peacebuilding.

In Chapter 4, I present my findings. I show that each of these peacebuilders is truly unique with their own voice and perspective, and each has their own wisdom regarding peacebuilding. Furthermore, I show certain aggregated similarities and differences across the two cultures. Some thematic factors were common to all the

peacebuilders and some factors differed according to cultural background and individual experience.

In Chapter 5, I discuss my findings, including:

- A general discussion of the life journeys and experiences of the peacebuilders and how they impact their peacebuilding
- Eight distinctive qualities of expert peacebuilders that emerged from the study along with subthemes
- A cross-cultural comparison of the Chinese and American peacebuilders and how these findings contribute to literature in the field.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I offer implications for future research, including ways to build upon the similarities and differences that emerged across cultures. Further areas for future research involve deeper exploration of key thematic factors that emerged in this study. Additionally, this study provides a foundation for future research from the eight emergent characteristics of the peacebuilders. This material could help others to become more informed and could facilitate effective peacebuilding and peacebuilding research for current and future scholars and practitioners in the field.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

In this chapter, I establish a starting point for my dissertation by reviewing the literature on peacebuilding and cultural similarities and differences between Chinese and Americans in these areas. I show that Chinese and Americans tend to approach peacebuilding similarly in their determination and persistence. They tend to approach peacebuilding differently in numerous ways: communication styles, importance of face, ethical approaches, trust and importance of guanxi, contract orientation, win-win vs. win-lose approach, reactions to tension, areas of focus, importance of harmony, and a sequential vs. holistic approach.

I conclude that as I explore the life stories of peacebuilders from China and the United States, I will discover consistent themes and that, while the similarities in approach will provide a valuable starting point for collaboration on peacebuilding, the differences in approach will require intentional strategies to bridge the divides. I also suspect that for those who have lived for extended periods of time in both China and the United States, the number of similarities and the ease of managing the differences will be greater, providing a more robust set of resources for collaborating on peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding

The literature on peacebuilding includes studies on topics such as peace (Ali, 2007; Deutsch, 1973; Dorn, 2005; Johnson & Johnson, 2002; Lederach, 2005; Morris, 1983;

Rost & Greig, 2011), negotiation (Albin, 2012; Faure, 2011; Pruitt, 1981; Wheeler, 2013; Hamlin & Darling, 2012; Wanis-St.John, 2006); negotiation education (Honeyman, Coben, & De Palo, 2009; Nelken, 2009), and peace education (Avruch, 2000; Bluehouse, 2003; Dupuy, 2008; Lederach, 2000). But to-date there is no consensus definition of the term *peacebuilding* (Barnett, Kim, O'Donnell, & Sitea, 2007), in part because historically the concept of peacebuilding was limited to post-peace settlement reconstruction and support. For example, according to the *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* (as cited in International Association for Humanitarian and Conflict Research, 2008), “peacebuilding involves a range of measures aimed at reducing the risk of lapsing, or relapsing into conflict, by strengthening national capacities for conflict management, and laying the foundations for sustainable peace” (p. 18).

However, current definitions of peacebuilding are not limited to a post-conflict focus (Biersteker, 2007). Lederach (1997) provides a broader perspective, one that I adopt for purposes of this dissertation. He defines peacebuilding as:

more than post-accord reconstruction . . . a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates and sustains the full array of processes, approaches and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships. The term thus involves a wide range of activities that both precede and follow formal peace accords. Metaphorically, peace is seen not merely as a stage in time or a condition. It is a dynamic social construct. (p. 20)

This definition of peacebuilding includes but is not limited to mediation, conflict resolution, or diplomatic negotiation. It involves a wide range of activities, such as education, training, cultural exchanges, and other strategies that promote sustainable, peaceful relationships. It also moves beyond the traditional view of peacebuilding as only post-conflict work and takes a wider view of peacebuilding as comprising work before, during, and after conflict. Peacebuilding, then, includes continuous activity at every level of society to promote connection, understanding, and respect among different groups of people.

Consistent with Lederach's (1997) work, I define peacebuilders as "people who are involved in sustained work towards peace in a wide array of activities before, during, after, or throughout all three stages of conflict or potential conflict." This definition moves beyond the areas of mediation, conflict resolution, and negotiation, and it includes all people who work toward peace in a sustained way. They can be teachers, students, executives, tradespersons, first responders, athletes, homemakers, or healthcare workers—so long as they are intentionally using their influence to promote connection, understanding, and respect among different groups of people through activities such as education, training, exchanges, and other proactive strategies.

Related Constructs

Within the literature, constructs such as *peacemaking*, *peacemaker*, *mediation*, and *mediator* typically refer to a narrower set of activities and roles than do *peacebuilding* and *peacebuilder*. These other terms do not necessarily include "the full array of

processes and approaches” needed to build sustainable, peaceful relationships (Lederach, 1997, p. 20), nor do they include people involved in all aspects of activities throughout all stages of conflict or potential conflict. For example, peacemaking refers to “working for solution and resolution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangement” (UN Charter, as cited in Nan, Bartoli, & Mampilly, 2011, p. xiv). A peacemaker is “a person who brings about peace, especially by reconciling adversaries” (Peacemaker, *Oxford Dictionary Online*). Similarly, mediation refers to “the act or process of mediating between parties, as to effect an agreement or reconciliation,” and a mediator is “the individual who intervenes in order to help the other parties settle their dispute” (Peacemaking, *FreeDictionary Online*).

While peacemaking, mediation, and other related constructs such as conflict resolution and negotiation refer to a narrower range of activities than peacebuilding, the literature that explores them can be instructive, especially as it relates to cross-cultural dynamics. In the next few sections of this chapter, I draw on these bodies of literature and on the literature on national culture to explore the similarities and difference between Chinese and American peacebuilders.

Peacebuilders

There has been research on the role of peacebuilders in the peace process (Wendt, 1994; Whitbread, 2004). Within this body of literature Hunt’s (2002) research is relevant for this dissertation study because it profiles individual peacebuilders from

different cultures and their journeys in peacebuilding. The relevance for this study lies in the fact that Hunt looks both at individuals and different cultures. The peacebuilders he researches include Aung San Suu Kyi, peacemakers from Israel and Palestine, the Dalai Lama, Thich Quang Do from Vietnam, Oscar Arias from Central America, and Ghosananda from Cambodia. However, Hunt's work differs from this study because it does not take a narrative, cross-cultural approach analyzing peacebuilders from two cultures. Thus, a key difference between this study and Hunt's work is the emphasis in this study on comparative cross-cultural factors between the People's Republic of China and the United States as opposed to Hunt's more general focus on profiles of peacemakers from a number of nationalities and cultures.

Of particular significance for this study is Flaherty's (2012) work on women peacebuilders in the Ukraine. Flaherty's work is relevant for this study because she also takes a narrative approach and highlights the voices of women peacebuilders from different parts of the Ukraine. She looks at their stories of their life experiences and their perspectives on peacebuilding in the Ukraine. While her study is similar to this study in terms of the focus on the words and narrative stories of the participants, it differs from this study in a number of ways. She goes a step further and actually brings groups of the women participants together to meet and go over their experience as participants in the study; her activities in the study represent a form of active research that also becomes in a way a type of peacebuilding. She uses female

participants while this study uses male participants. She focuses on two parts of the Ukraine while this study focuses on China and the United States, and it includes people in formal peacebuilding roles such as ambassador, diplomat, and presidential advisor.

Religion

There are many studies on religious leaders and the role of religion in peacemaking (Alger, 2002; Dekar, 1993; Keegan, 1987; Lederach, 2003; Nepstad, 2004; Sampson & Lederach 2000; Smock, et al., 2009). Shippee (2002), for example, looks at the faith-based practices and philosophies involved in dispute negotiation for Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Gopin (2002) explores religious dialogue and peacemaking. The topic area of religion has potential relevance for this study because at least one of the peacebuilders, John Paul Lederach, is a faith-based peacebuilder and it is possible that religious themes may emerge from his narrative. It is also possible that there are religious aspects to the other participants' experiences and perspectives.

Culture and Cross-Culture

There is seminal scholarship on culture that is relevant for this study. This scholarship includes research on culture and on dimensions of culture used for cross-cultural comparison by scholars such as Inkeles and Levinson (1954/1969); Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961); Geertz (1973); Hofstede (1980/2001, 1998); Hofstede & Hofstede (2005); Schein (1983, 1985/2010); Sperber (1996); Trompenaars & Hampden Turner

(1998); House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, V. (2004); Tang and Kaveos (2008); Taras, Rowney, and Steel (2009); Taras, Kirkman and Steel (2010); Tang (2011); Jahoda (2012); and Risjord (2012). *Culture's Consequences*, a key work by Hofstede (1980/2001) is particularly significant for this study. Using data gathered in two surveys from a large number of IBM employees in 72 countries, Hofstede came up with five main dimensions on which countries' cultures differed. These include: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, and long-term versus short-term orientation (pp. xix – xx). The differences in cultural profiles across these dimensions for China and the United States could have impact for this study in the ways in which culture influences both the journeys of the peacemakers and their presentations within their narratives.

Culture does not have one absolute definition in the literature. Rather there are several seminal thinkers who provide different frameworks and perspectives on culture. Schein (2010) for example, defines culture relative to a core of underlying assumptions:

The culture of a group can now be defined as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.
(p. 18)

Bond (1996) sees values as important factors in cultural differences, while “Schwartz (1994) described the basis of culture as the intentional and unintentional value

socialization to which members of a society are exposed” (Hodges & Oei, 2007, p. 906). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) take a different approach and define culture as “the way in which groups have organized themselves over the years to solve the problems and challenges presented to them” (p. 23). Their model of culture contains three concentric circles with implicit basic assumptions in the center ring, norms and values in the second ring, and explicit artifacts and products in the outer ring as shown in Figure 1:

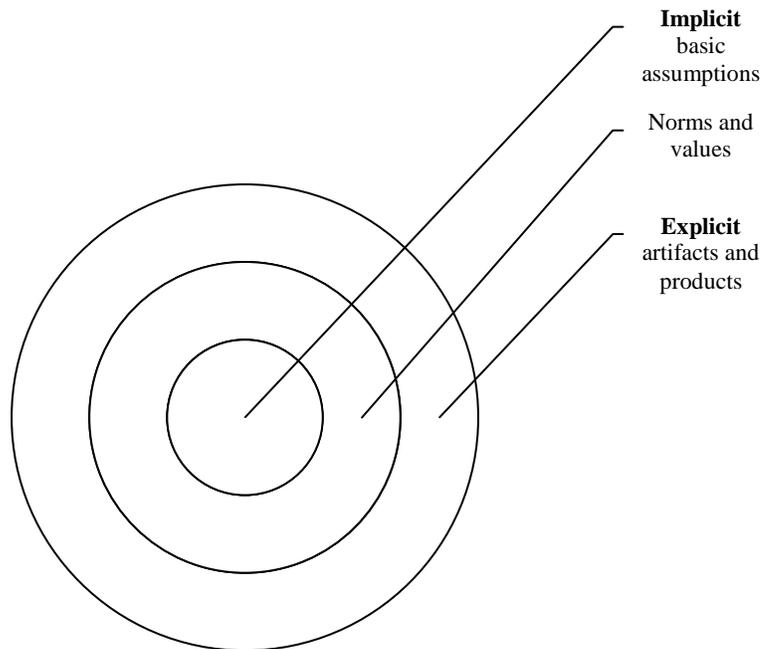


Figure 1. Model of Culture

Source: Adapted from Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998), p. 22

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's work occurred after the seminal work of Hofstede in the 1980s where he produced the five dimensions of culture that help with assessment and comparison. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) provide seven dimensions for understanding culture (pp. 8–10):

- Universalism versus particularism—“the universalist approach is roughly ‘what is good and right can be defined and always applies.’ In particularist cultures greater attention is given to the obligations of relationships and unique circumstances” (p. 8). In certain situations China can tend to be highly particularist and the United States highly universalist (pp. 35–37).
- Individualism versus communitarianism—“Do people regard themselves primarily as individuals or as part of a group?” (p. 9) The United States is highly individually oriented and China is highly group oriented (p. 52).
- Neutral versus emotional—“Should the nature of our interactions be objective and detached, or is expressing emotion acceptable?” (p. 9) The United States is more of an affective culture, where people show emotions more openly, perhaps, in a work situation than China (p. 71)
- Specific versus diffuse—“When the whole person is involved in a business relationship, there is a real and personal contact, instead of the specific relationship prescribed by a contract. In many countries a diffuse relationship is not only preferred but necessary before business can proceed” (p. 9). China is a

highly diffuse culture where relationships and connections are important in interactions, whereas the United States is far more specific (p. 90).

- Achievement versus ascription—“Achievement means you are judged according to what you have recently accomplished and on your record. Ascription means that status is attributed to you by birth, kinship, gender or age, but also by your connections (who you know) and your educational record” (p. 9). The United States has a strong achievement orientation, whereas China has more of an ascription culture (p. 108).
- Attitudes to time—“In certain cultures like the American, Swedish and Dutch, time is perceived as passing in a straight line, a sequence of disparate events. Other cultures think of time more as moving in a circle, the past and present together with future possibilities” (p. 10). The Chinese see the past, present and future as equally important and more separate than Americans. Americans see overlap between past, present, and future, with greatest emphasis on the future. Additionally, the Chinese have a long-term time orientation whereas the Americans have a short-term time orientation (pp. 130–131).
- Attitudes to the environment—“Some cultures see the major focus affecting their lives and the origins of vice and virtue as residing within the person. Here, motivations and values are derived from within. Other cultures see the world as more powerful than individuals. They see nature as something to be feared or emulated” (p. 10). Roughly a fifth of Chinese surveyed believe it is worth it to try to control nature, as opposed to about a third of Americans (p. 147).

In summary, according to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) dimensions, there tend to be cultural differences for Americans and Chinese across all the dimensions, except they are somewhat close on attitudes towards nature.

The GLOBE study (House et al., 2004) looks at 62 societies and evaluates them in terms of values and cultural practices. The study came up with nine variables or dimensions of culture: Assertiveness, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, Future Orientation, Gender Egalitarianism, Humane Orientation, Performance Orientation, Power Distance, and Uncertainty Avoidance (Javidan, Dorfman, Sully de Luque, & House, 2006). It is interesting to note that based on the GLOBE research, both China and the United States are in cultural cluster groups that value humane-oriented leadership. This humane orientation includes values such as generosity, caring, and kindness. They also have similar mid-score profiles for uncertainty avoidance.

Perhaps the most seminal work on culture *Culture's Consequences* (Hofstede, 1980) has been done by Hofstede. Hofstede (2001) defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (p. 9). It involves three tiers: a foundation of human nature that is universal or inherited; a second cultural tier that is group-specific and learned; and a third personality tier that is specific to the individual, learned, and inherited. (p. 4)

Hofstede's model of culture has values as the core component, as in Figure 2:

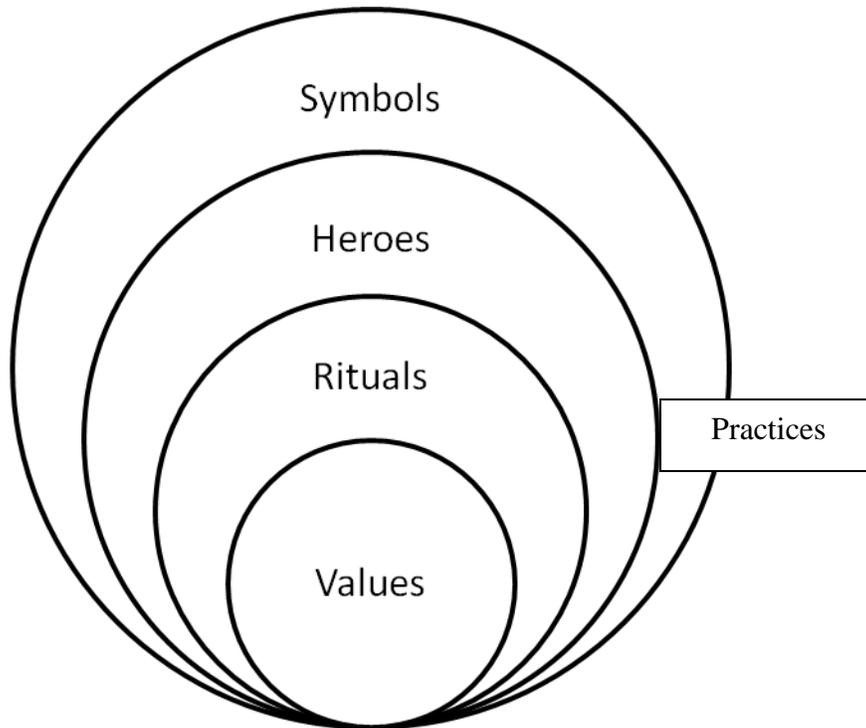


Figure 2. Culture at Different Levels of Depth

Source: Adapted from Hofstede (2001, p. 11) and found in Maraist (2012, p. 42)

Hofstede (2001) created five dimensions of culture involving comparative points for assessing cultures. They include:

- *Power distance*, which is related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality

- *Uncertainty avoidance*, which is related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future
- *Individualism versus collectivism*, which is related to the integration of individuals into primary groups
- *Masculinity versus femininity*, which is related to the division of emotional roles between men and women
- *Long-term versus short-term orientation*, which is related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present (p. 29)

Within the context of this study it is important to note that according to the research done across a variety of dimensions and frameworks, China and the United States tend to have extremely different cultural profiles. For example, according to Hofstede's Power Distance Index (PDI), China has a high score of 80, indicating a large power distance between more and less powerful members of society. The United States on the other hand has a PDI score of 40, which is at the other end of the spectrum, meaning that members of this culture have low acceptance of and expectations for unequal distribution of power (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, pp. 43–46).

According to Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) Individualism Index (IDV), the United States ranks first among nations studied, with a score of 91. China, however, ranks between 56–61 with a score of 20, indicating that China is a highly collective culture.

Thus the United States is more highly individualist than China, and China is far more collectivist (p. 79) Table 1 summarizes key differences between collectivist and individualist societies by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005):

Table 1. Key Differences between Collectivist and Individualist Societies: Language, Personality and Behavior

Collectivist	Individualist
Use of the word <i>I</i> is avoided.	Use of the word <i>I</i> is encouraged.
Interdependent self.	Independent self.
On personality tests, people score more introvert.	On personality tests, people score more extrovert.
Showing sadness is encouraged and happiness is discouraged.	Showing happiness is encouraged and, and sadness discouraged.
Slower walking speed	Faster walking speed
Consumption patterns show dependence on others	Consumption patterns show self-supporting lifestyles.
Social network is the primary source of information.	Media is the primary source of information.
A smaller share of both private and public income is spent on health care.	A larger share of both private and public income is spent on health-care.
Disabled persons are a shame on the family and should be kept out of sight.	Disabled persons should participate as much as possible in normal day-to-day activities

Source: Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), p. 97

Relative to the masculinity versus femininity dimension, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) differentiate between the two gender aspects:

A society is called masculine when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.

A society is called feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. (p. 120)

Their Masculinity Index (MAS) show how countries rank in masculinity. With a score of 66, China ranks very high, meaning it is a very masculine culture and has an overall country ranking in this category of 11–13 out of 74. The United States is close to China in this dimension with a score of 62 and an overall country rank of 19 out of 74 (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, pp. 120–121).

In the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension, China and the United States again have a close ranking. Using Hofstede's Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), the United States has a score of 46 and rank of 62 out of 74 countries, meaning it has a low UAI. China scores even lower and with a score of 30 and rank of 68–69 is separated from the United States by only five countries. Characteristics include accepting uncertainty as a normal aspect of life; an emphasis on aggression and emotions not being shown; and comfort with ambiguous situations and with unfamiliar risks (p. 176).

In the dimension of long- or short-term time orientation, using Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) Long-term Orientation Index (LTO) showing the degree to which a culture has a long-term orientation towards time, China ranks first with a score of 118, whereas the United States ranks 31st with a score of 29 (p. 211). China has a

long-term time orientation and the United States has a Short-term time orientation. In this dimension there is a big difference overall between the two countries. According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) some of the differences between short-term and long-term time orientations include:

- With Short-term orientation, efforts should produce quick results, whereas with long-term orientation there is emphasis on perseverance and sustained efforts towards slow results.
- With short-term orientation there is social pressure toward spending, whereas with long-term orientation there is emphasis on thrift and being sparing with resources.
- With short-term orientation there is a concern with stability, while with long-term orientation there is concern with personal adaptiveness.
- With short-term orientation there is concern with social and status obligations, whereas with long-term orientation there is willingness to subordinate oneself for a purpose (p. 212).
- With short-term orientation, people express a concern with possessing the Truth, whereas with long-term orientation there is a concern with respecting the demands of Virtue.
- With short-term orientation there are universal guidelines about what is good and evil, whereas with long-term orientation, what is good and evil depends upon the circumstances (p. 232).

Additionally there are key works on cross-cultural issues such as values, leadership, and competencies that inform this study, including research by Hammer (1987); Schwartz and Sagiv (1995); Smith, Wang, and Leung (1997); Den Hartog et al. (1999); Dickson, Hanges, and Lord,(2001); Dickson, Den Hartog, and Mitchelson (2003); Bird and Osland (2003); Bennett, and Bennett (2004); Deardoff (2006); Fisher (2009); Bartone, Eid, Johnsen, Laberg, and Snook, (2009); Denison (2011); and Caligiuri and Tarique (2012). Because this study involves a cross-cultural comparison, research on the differential between Chinese and American cultural mores that indicate both universal trends and as areas of variation and cultural relativism could have significance. For example, the research by Forsyth, O'Boyle Jr., and McDaniel's (2008) on ethics position theory (EPT) and cross-cultural variations in idealism and relativism finds significant cross-cultural ethical complexity in individualism and collectivism. They look at the two dimensions of idealism and relativism using a meta analysis across twenty-nine different countries. They find that:

- (a) Levels of idealism vary across regions of the world in predictable ways;
- (b) an exceptionist ethic is more common in Western countries, subjectivism and situationism in Eastern countries; and absolutism and situationism in Middle Eastern countries; and
- (c) a nation's ethic position predicted that country's location on previously documented cultural dimensions such as individualism and avoidance of uncertainty. (p. 813)

This type of research could be helpful in gaining insight into emergent themes about culture from the narratives of the participants, particularly in the sense-making process which could occur if cultural differences do emerge.

Of particular import for this study is the work of scholars who have researched cross-culture and negotiation and peacemaking. Adair et al. (2004) for example, look at cultural norms and their impact in cross-cultural negotiations. They specifically focus on communication and power strategies across six cultures including France, Russia, Hong Kong, Brazil, and the United States. They find that there are differences in how cultures use such strategies; cultures that maximize joint gains tend to be able to use direct or a combination of direct and indirect communication strategies (p. 87). Their research highlights the finding that in the relationship between culture and joint gains “understanding the other party’s cultural characteristics and strategies can help negotiators plan how to focus on information exchange and deal with unusual power strategies that they may encounter” (p. 87).

When dividing the countries relative to high versus low context information sharing, Adair et al. (2004) placed the U.S. as having the lowest context and most direct communication strategies of all five countries, with Russian, Japanese, and Hong Kong Chinese as the most likely to use indirect information sharing strategies (p. 94). Such research could be relevant if communication strategies emerge as significant in the narratives of the participants. Also significant is the work of Atran and Axelrod

(2008) on the reframing of sacred values in a way to find opportunities for negotiators to work towards peace. They describe such sacred values as “moral imperatives that seem to drive behavior independently of any concrete material goal” (p. 226). These values can differ across cultures and the researchers posit that respectful reframing of these values can provide opportunities for overcoming intractable conflict situations like that typified by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Conflict Resolution, Mediation, and Negotiation

Additionally, there has been extensive research on conflict and dispute resolution, mediation and negotiation. Gent and Shannon (2011) look at bias and third-party conflict management mechanisms. Wall and Dunne (2012) provide an overview of the mediation literature within the last 10 years. Hoffman (2011) explores mediation and shuttle diplomacy and Quackenbush and Venteicher (2008) research conflict settlements and outcomes, and duration of peace following the settlement in dyadic militarized interstate disputes. Of potential relevance for this study is the work of Sargent, Picard and Jull (2011) on rethinking conflict from an insight perspective that is relational and emphasizes reframing conflict in terms of the meaning-making of the interaction. They emphasize five basic ideas as foundational for this approach:

- Conflict is relational.
- Conflict is dynamic and adaptive.
- Conflict emerges from meaning making.
- Values are always operating within a conflict.

- Communication involves interpretation as well as intention (p. 347)

This relational approach and these ideas about conflict could be emergent as thematic factors in the narratives of the participants, particularly because the ideas are sufficiently foundational as to be found in both cultures. Additionally, reframing conflict from a meaning-making perspective is consistent with the constructivist perspective of this study.

Also of possible significance for this study is research that focuses on the mediator and the role of the mediator, due to the study emphasis on the stories of Chinese and American peacebuilders who have acted in these roles. Zariski (2010), for example, looks at the key role of mediation and intervention theory for mediators and touches upon issues such as emotions, perceptions, cognition, and communication of mediators in terms of a theoretical matrix (p. 203) Specifically, he re-examines the ways that mediators have been trained and suggests that new education on the theoretical aspects of mediation could be helpful. The issues he touches upon, for example emotions, communication, and his theories of intervention could turn out to be of key importance for the participants in this study, because peacebuilding would appear to involve aspects of all three. Goldberg (2005) explores the importance of achieving rapport between parties as a key to mediator success. In his survey of thirty mediators he found that over seventy-five percent felt that the key to their mediation success was their ability to achieve rapport with the parties involved. Key elements to

building such rapport include achieving trust and confidence with the parties, which can lead to more open communication. According to Goldberg's research, a fundamental aspect of bringing about trust is empathic listening (pp. 368–369). These elements of trust, communication, and empathic listening could very well be factors in the participants' narratives and their approaches to peacebuilding.

Crocker, Hampson and Aall (2003) examine the readiness of the mediator for a given situation based on readiness factors, which include being operationally and politically ready, being strategically and diplomatically ready, and being ready through having the right relationships and cultural fit (p. 152) They posit that much of the research has looked at the readiness of the situation for mediation, but that it is also important to examine the readiness of the mediators for a given situation. They feel the timing and fit must be right for both the situation and the mediator involved: "Just as ripeness is critical to the moving a conflict from violence to settlement, so mediator readiness—in strategic, operational, and relational terms—is critical to helping the parties craft a sustainable peace" (p. 164). These ideas could have relevance for this study because of the mediating role that several of the participants have played, and their success in such mediations.

Of potential import for this study because of the importance of *face* in collectivist Asian cultures like China, is the work of van Ginkel (2004) on the mediator as a facegiver. Within this context he describes *facegiving* as involving "the strategic

moves of one person in support of another's image or identity claims (Folger, Pooles & Stutman, 2001)" (van Ginkel, 2004, p. 476). Van Ginkel discusses the importance of face in mediation as well as issues such as the relationship of face to conflict, and the mediator as face-giver. He also touches upon the differences of face in individualistic versus collectivist societies and says that "in China, the process of mediation can be seen as a series of face-giving actions. . . . Thus in a successful Chinese mediation, the mediator starts a cycle of 'giving face' and reciprocating favors that ultimately leads to resolution (Chia and Chu, 1999)" (p. 481).

Further relevant work includes that of Yifeng, Tjosvold, and Peiguan (2007) on warm-heartedness and reward distribution in negotiations between foreign managers and employees within South China. In a study of 120 participants, these researchers found that specific qualities conveyed between managers and Chinese employees lead to successful negotiation outcomes. Specifically, they found that:

foreign managers warmheartedness compared to indifference, and mutual rewards compared to independent, comparative awards result in Chinese employees' developing cooperative relationships with their foreign managers, open-mindedly exploring the foreign managers ideas, integrating these ideas into their decision-making, and building confidence that they can work with the foreign manager in the future.
(p. 80)

These findings could also have implications for Chinese and foreign negotiators when it comes to peacebuilding.

Also potentially significant is the research by Rivers (2008) on Chinese views on negotiation tactics and the importance of relationships in negotiations. In two studies, Rivers explores Chinese views on ethically appropriate and inappropriate tactics, emphasizing the importance for those negotiating with the Chinese to be aware of their cultural view of such tactics and the importance of willingness to invest time into relationships, which are key in the success of such negotiations: “Chinese rate ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics as more appropriate when they are dealing with a stranger rather than with someone who they have a relationship” (p. 16). Fang’s (2006) research on Chinese and Western business-to-business negotiations also finds that there is a flexibility in Chinese negotiating styles. His exploration discovers that trust plays a key role in how the Chinese in his study negotiate:

Trust is the ultimate indicator of Chinese negotiating propensities and role choices...The Chinese negotiator has a capacity to negotiate both sincerely and deceptively and he/she changes coping strategies according to situation and context, all depending upon the level of trust between negotiating partners. (p. 50)

Miles (2003) describes seven principles involved in the Chinese negotiation process. He believes from his experience and review of the literature that “throughout a negotiation the Chinese negotiator typically views the process as a zero-sum game” (p. 462). Seven principles he believes he has discovered, and the sources he cites to back up these principles, include:

- Chinese negotiators should control the others’ perceptions of interests and/or needs. . . .

- Chinese negotiators should control the pace and use of time in negotiations. . . .
- Past gains are the basis for future settlements. . . .
- Friends help friends. . . .
- Winning the negotiation is paramount – the creative use of information in support of this goal is acceptable. . . .
- The superior makes decisions. . . .
- Negotiations are never finished—agreements are the beginning of ongoing negotiations. . . . (Miles, 2003, p. 457)

Although this study is 10 years old and relies upon the author's first-hand experience and a review of the literature, it still could be important for this study depending upon what emerges in the narratives of the participants.

Also of potential relevance for this study is the work of Lee, Yang, and Graham (2006), who examined the effect of tensions felt between American and Chinese in international business negotiations. They find that the tension of negotiation has different impact for each.

For the Chinese, greater levels of tension lead to an increased likelihood of an agreement, but also lead to lower levels of interpersonal attraction and in turn lower levels of trust for their American counterparts. For the Americans, tension felt decreased marginally the likelihood of an agreement, did not affect interpersonal attraction, but did have a direct negative affect on trust. (p. 623)

Peacebuilding negotiations by their nature can incorporate a great deal of tension when parties who have been enemies sit down at a table together. This study is interesting in that it points out very different reactions to tension in negotiations within the two cultures. It could have impact for the study in shedding light on how the participants feel about such negotiations both for the American and Chinese cultural groups.

Walter's (2007) work on culture and negotiation sheds light on American and Chinese negotiation practices relative to Hofstede's (1980) dimensions. She finds that the typical United States negotiator is influenced by individualism:

As individuals, U.S. negotiators tend to take independent initiative and treat negotiations as an opportunity to 'win' through effective arguing and bargaining. In addition individual cultures value specificity and clarity of communication, relying heavily on what is said and viewing silence as a negative reaction on behalf of their counterparts. (p. 40)

In terms of power distance, American negotiators are comfortable with sharing power and greater equality within the team. Walters provides a Japanese description of typical American negotiating behavior:

- American negotiators tend to be competitive in their approach to their negotiations, including coming to the table with a fall-back position but beginning with an unrealistic offer;
- American negotiators tend to be energetic, confident and persistent; they enjoy arguing their positions, and seeing things universally (i.e. they like to talk about broad applications of ideas);
- American negotiators tend to concentrate on one problem at a time (a monochromic approach to negotiating deals);

- American negotiators tend to focus on areas of disagreement, not areas of commonality or agreement; and
- American negotiators like closure and certainty rather than open-endedness and fuzziness. (p. 41)

Walters also provides eight elements of Chinese negotiating behavior which include:

- Guanxi—personal connections
- Zhongjian Ren—the use of the intermediary
- Shehui Denji—social status, involving an emphasis on more formality and less casualness
- Renji Hexi—involving interpersonal harmony between negotiators
- Zhengti Guannian—a type of holistic thinking, which is not the same as American sequential processes in negotiations
- Jiejian—thrift, which can result in a great deal of bargaining over price
- Mianzi—face or social capital
- Chiku Nailu—endurance and persistence (p. 43)

Thus Walters lays out some key differences in American and Chinese cultural perspectives on negotiation practices, perspectives that might be very useful in understanding the results of this study.

Additionally of potential helpfulness is the work of Salacuse (1998), who finds differences in cultures in negotiation styles in a survey of people from 12 countries including the United States and China. Salacuse finds that there are 10 factors which

cause differences including “a preference for a written contract in contrast to relationship-building as a negotiating goal; an integrative (win-win) as opposed to a distributive (win-lose) bargaining approach; and high rather than low tolerance for risk-taking” (p. 221) In the study there tended to be differences between the United States and China relative to all 10 factors. For example, the United States is more contract-oriented while China is more relationship-oriented in negotiations.

Furthermore, China is more indirect in communication style while the United States is more direct. The nature of the differences found by Salacuse can help add insight to the differences which may emerge as part of the cultural perspectives of the participants in their narratives.

LeBaron (2003) presents Adler’s (1997) description of the ranking of importance of characteristics and qualities for American negotiators as determined by Americans as follows, in order of importance: preparation and planning skill; thinking under pressure; judgment and intelligence; verbal expressiveness; product knowledge; perceive and exploit power; and integrity (Adler, N. 1997, p. 196 in LeBaron, 2003, p. 5).

While there are clearly differences in the literature on American and Chinese perspectives on negotiation and negotiating style, it will be interesting to see to what degree these ideas are supported by the emergent thematic factors in the participants’ narratives.

Based on this research on conflict resolution, mediation, negotiation, and culture, I conclude that there are major similarities and differences between Chinese and American peacebuilders in a number of respects.

Based on my review of the relevant research on culture, I conclude that the similarities include the fact that both cultures have a humane orientation, which could be supportive of values such as empathy and forgiveness. In addition, both cultures are close in scores on Hofstede's (1980/2001) masculinity index (MAS) as well as the uncertainty avoidance index (UAI). About a fifth of Chinese and about a third of Americans on Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) dimensions believe it is worth it to try to control nature.

The differences encompass several aspects. For example, according to Hofstede's (1980/2001) indices, the United States is highly individualist whereas China is highly collectivist. China has a high power distance (PDI), whereas the United States has a low power distance, and they differ in time orientations with the United States having a short-term orientation and China having a long-term orientation. Further differences include Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) dimensions of universalism vs. particularism, neutral vs. emotional, specific vs. diffuse, and achievement vs. ascription.

Based on my review of the literature on dispute resolution, mediation, and negotiation, I conclude that the key similarity between Chinese and Americans in terms of how they approach peacebuilding is that both cultures value persistence in negotiating. However, the differences far outnumber the similarities. A key difference is the importance of face in mediation for China (van Ginkel, 2004), where mediation involves face-giving actions. Additionally an important difference between the two cultures is their approach to the acceptance by the Chinese of ethically ambiguous negotiation tactics (Rivers, 2008), whereas the Americans value integrity (LeBaron, 2003). A further difference is the importance of trust in determining the use of ethical tactics (Fang, 2006). Also the issue of trust and how trust is generated is an important difference, particularly in that in negotiations the Chinese trust and help those who are known to them (Miles, 2003), and thus *guanxi* or connections are important in establishing trust.

A further difference is that the Chinese tend to approach negotiating as a zero-sum or win-lose game, whereas Americans, while competitive, have more of an integrative win-win approach (Salacuse, 1998). There are additional difference between the cultures in terms of the impact of tension on negotiations (Lee, Yang & Graham, 2006) and the importance of harmonious relations in negotiations, and the key difference that American negotiators focus on areas of disagreement as opposed to areas of agreement and commonality. Furthermore the Americans tend to be sequential and deal with one issue at a time whereas the Chinese are more holistic in

approach (Walters, 2007). Table 2 summarizes the similarities and differences in both culture and approach to peacebuilding:

Table 2. Summary of American and Chinese Approaches to Peacebuilding

Similarities	Differences
Culture	
Humane orientation	Power distance
Masculinity index	Individualism vs. Collectivism (and that the American negotiator is influenced by individualism)
Uncertainty avoidance	Long-term vs. Short-term orientation
Attitude towards controlling nature	Universalism vs. particularism
	Neutral vs. emotional
	Specific vs. diffuse
	Achievement vs. ascription
Approach to peacebuilding	
Persistence	Communication styles (direct vs. indirect)
	Importance of face
	Acceptance of ethically ambiguous negotiation practices by the Chinese and American emphasis on integrity
	How trust is generated, the importance of <i>guanxi</i>
	U.S. more contract oriented
	Win-win vs. Win-lose approach
	Impact of tension on negotiations
	Importance of harmonious relations in negotiations
	Focus on areas of disagreement vs. focus on areas of commonality

Similarities	Differences
	Sequential vs. holistic approach

Summary

In conclusion, in this chapter, I establish a starting point for my dissertation. I show that, based on the literature, Chinese and Americans tend to approach peacebuilding similarly in the following ways: Both have a humane orientation and both are persistent and value perseverance. Also there is the possibility that the similarities in uncertainty avoidance could influence their peacebuilding. They tend to approach peacebuilding differently in the numerous ways elaborated above. I conclude that as I explore the life stories of peacebuilders from China and the US, I will discover consistent themes and that, while the similarities in approach will provide a valuable starting point for collaboration on peacebuilding, the differences in approach will require intentional strategies to bridge the divides. I predict that there will be few similarities emergent between the two cultures, and that there will be far more differences than similarities. I also suspect that for those who have lived for extended periods of time in both China and the US, the number of similarities and the ease of managing the differences will be greater, providing a more robust set of resources for collaborating on peacebuilding.

Addressing Gaps in the Literature

Although there is significant research in the areas of peacebuilding and cross-culture, to date there has been little research that looks at the narratives of both Chinese and American peacebuilders through a cross-cultural lens. This study aims to address the

gap in the literature concerning a comparative, cross-cultural perspective on the journeys of Chinese and American peacebuilders and thus to make a contribution to the field through the integration of these component strands in a qualitative, narrative study.

This review of the literature in the field presents potential areas of significance and relevance for this study. Further, such literature is presented in Chapter 5, based on the specific results of the data collection and analysis.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter I present the details of narrative methodology. First, I provide an overview of my approach and my theoretical perspective, and then explain my data collection and data analysis procedures. Next, I explore my personal background and perspective and the potential areas of bias that they present. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of the potential limitations of my study.

Use of Qualitative Approach and Use of Narrative

I used a qualitative approach for this study because it provides a path for exploring the voices and stories of the peacemakers. This approach allows for the collection of data that emphasizes the richness of the participants' experiences as well as their personal perspectives and the meanings they attribute to these experiences (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A narrative approach facilitates highlighting the participants' actual words, vocabulary, style of speech, and storytelling—which reflect their individual experiences and cultures. This approach is a particularly good fit with this study because stories and personal statements can be impactful for readers and resonate with them on both cognitive and emotional levels. Often it is through stories that sense-making and the nature of human relationships can be surfaced and better understood (Boje, 1991; Quinn & Dutton, 2005). Additionally, stories can provide a bridge between cultures and help readers of all nationalities understand the Chinese and American perspectives. An example of the effective use of a narrative approach in a peacebuilding study is the previously described work of Flaherty (2012), who

looks at women peacebuilders from the Ukraine. Flaherty uses narrative as a way to give voice to the stories of women within their cultural, social, and historical context.

The specific type of narrative approach I used for this study is thematic narrative analysis as presented by Riessman (2008), wherein “content is the exclusive focus” (p. 53), as compared to other types of narrative analysis such as structural or dialogic/performance analysis. Because the emphasis on thematic analysis is about the actual words and what is said by the participants in their narratives, it is the most appropriate form of analysis compared to the other forms put forth by Riessman. Additionally, thematic analysis will allow for the emergence of thematic factors that can be used as a means of understanding the life experiences and perspectives of the participants and provide a basis for cross-cultural comparison.

Theoretical Perspective

The ontological paradigm that informs this study is the social constructivist paradigm. This paradigm emphasizes the multiple meanings of experiences constructed by the participants and the personal constructs of the researcher; the researchers constructs interact with those of the participants as the researcher interprets the data (Creswell, 2009). The social constructivist approach for this study thus has a specifically interpretivist perspective. Burrell and Morgan (1979) describe this interpretivist perspective as involving:

A concern to understand the world as it is, to understand the fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective

experience. It seeks explanation within the realm of individual consciousness and subjectivity, within the frame of reference of the participant. . . . It sees the social world as an emergent social process which is created by the individuals concerned. (p. 28)

Within this study I emphasize the individual interpretations and sensemaking of each of the eight participants relative to their understanding of their experiences and their cultures. Thus, the questions I ask seek to uncover the way they think of and frame their lives and how the social processes of their lives have developed. For example, I do not ask them about the group meaning of their cultural values but rather what their sense of their cultural values are and what they mean to them individually.

Data Collection

The overall framework for data collection is informed by Riessman's (2008) perspective on narrative methods and thematic analysis where "the primary focus is on 'what' is said, rather than 'how' or 'to whom', or 'for what purpose'." (p. 59). The units of analysis are the life stories of the participants and there is emphasis on the narratives of the participants as well as data gathered from participant observation and archival texts. Relative to Riessman's summary of thematic analysis (p. 75), the attention to contexts for this study incorporates some attention to local context with significant attention paid to societal contexts such as culture. The data are collected and presented within the overall framework of each participant's representing an individual case study. This approach allows for the individual voice of each participant to be highlighted cohesively and within his own specific cultural, societal, and historical context.

Data collection is also informed by Koven's (2012) perspective on speaker roles in personal narratives. She presents narrative interviews as relevant and valid interactional spaces for storytelling. Specifically she describes stories told within interviews as: "often quite heteroglossic, connecting participants to the here-and-now, to narrated space-time, to recognizable sociocultural types" (p. 165). Thus each participant was asked in the beginning of their interview(s) to relate representative stories where and when they felt comfortable doing so as part of their narrative.

Within this contextual framework, the primary method of data collection in this narrative study is semi-structured interviews with the participants using an appreciative inquiry protocol.

Appreciative inquiry is an approach to research using a positive lens that focuses on highlighting the factors involved when a phenomenon is at its best (Ludema, Whitney, Mohr, & Griffin, 2003). Its fundamental assumption is that for each person and organization there is an enabling set of underlying dynamics, which are often unexplored, that allow it to flourish in multiple ways. When studied, explained, and understood, these dynamics hold the potential to promote even greater flourishing, for the person, the organization, and others. Therefore, appreciative inquiry questions are unconditionally positive, focused on learning from examples, even if they are few, in which the phenomenon under study is thriving. Appreciative inquiry questions are

narrative in nature, asking interviewees to share stories about when a phenomenon was at its best and then collaborate with the researcher in identifying the enabling factors of that phenomenon. See Appendix A for my interview protocol.

Within this context it is important to note that the overall interview approach is informed by the narrative perspective described by Riessman (2008) wherein a key goal is “to generate detailed accounts rather than brief answers or general statements” (p. 23). Riessman’s presentation of a more dialogic approach to interviews characterized by the forging of “dialogic relationships and greater communication equality” (p. 26) was incorporated where possible. A conversational tone was established between myself and the participant. I did not simply ask a question and wait for a response and then move on to the next question. Instead I tried to establish a sharing of information and a sense of extended dialogue with the participants, where we often built conversations based upon their comments and stories. This allowed for digging deeper into their experiences as well as a sense of sharing and dynamic interactivity in the process. In some instances, time constraints did not allow for a more conversational tone in the interviews, but most interviews did incorporate this dialogic approach and interactions.

The narrative approach for this study thus incorporates a flexibility that facilitates the possibility of adding new interview questions as needed or changing the order of the questions. This flexibility supported the potential need to move in new directions

during an interview based upon emerging ideas in the dialogic and conversational interview approach.

A secondary method of data collection involved the following sources: my keeping a research journal during the research process; taking field notes; and observational notes and memos that are not included in my journal but that provide important context and information for the study. An example of such observation was when I was able to spend an hour on two separate occasions with the CFO/COO of the company of one of the participants. During the first conversation the CFO/COO did not know who I was, just that I was there to interview the company president. In turn, during this first conversation, I did not know the position of the person I was speaking to and thought perhaps he was the security guard because he was sitting behind the front desk when I arrived. He went out of his way to make me a cup of coffee and give me a tour of the plant. The conversation and observations on both these occasions provided excellent contextual data and also served to triangulate and support the statements of the company president during the interviews.

A tertiary method of data collection involved examination of written and archival materials such as written materials by the participants, including biographical and autobiographical material, and an examination of public documents such as company and university websites (Creswell, 2007, p. 130).

The interviews were conducted in a number of different ways, including face-to-face interviews; Skype interviews; Skype interviews with only the audio portion for part of the interview; and phone interviews. The nature of the interview was based on factors of convenience and logistical feasibility for the participants and for myself. In one instance it was also possible for me to visit specific locations that were significant for the study, as described above. In other instances I had been to places described in the interviews by the participants. Because I had been to these places prior to the interviews I had a sense of context that furthered my understanding of key elements of the narrative content.

Participant Selection

Purposeful sampling was used in this study for participant selection. This involved the selection of “individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon of the study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 125).

The preferred participants were initially three Chinese and three American peacebuilders. However, the study expanded with the availability of an additional Chinese and an additional American peacebuilder who wanted to participate. The criteria for considering a person a peacebuilder was based upon Lederach’s (1997) definition provided in Chapter 1: “People who are involved in sustained work towards peace in a wide array of activities, before, during, after, or throughout all three stages of conflict or potential conflict.” The participants were thus not limited to formal

diplomats or peacebuilders or mediators but included a wide variety of people whose goals, aims and activities were and are consistent with my definition.

The peacebuilders were selected for the study based upon a number of different methods. For the Chinese peacebuilders I began by using my network at the University of Chicago and ultimately ended up working with the support of the Chinese consulate in Chicago to identify and select peacebuilders who would participate.

For the American peacebuilders I directly contacted the offices of potential participants to ask if they would be interested in participating. I also worked with my dissertation chair to establish contact with a well-known peacebuilder. Some of the American peacebuilders were referred directly by a well-known peacebuilding expert. The participants were contacted through a variety of methods, including emails, conversations with their assistants, and brief preliminary conversations. A sample email is provided in Appendix B. It was also helpful for my dissertation chair to write a letter to the Chinese government about the study. A copy of the letter is presented in Appendix C.

I emailed all participants the interview questions prior to the interview. Generally I emailed the questions to the participants' assistants, who then forwarded them to the participants. I also emailed the informed consent documents prior to the email.

Participants signed the informed consent documents and returned them to me either through email with an electronic signature or with a hard copy in face-to-face interview(s). The one exception to this protocol was with participant X, the Chinese participant who chose to be anonymous in this study. All prior contact with X took place through the Chinese government, and it is unclear whether the questions were sent to him in advance. Additionally, his informed consent took place through a tape-recorded agreement to participate, not through a signed document.

A copy of the informed consent form for the electronic version is provided in Appendix D. The hard-copy version presented in face-to-face interview(s) is identical, with the only difference being the removal of the line requesting an emailed, electronic signature. Table 3 shows participant interview dates:

Table 3. Interview Dates

Participant	Interview Date(s)
Pin Ni	September 7, 2013 and September 30, 2013
Ambassador Dennis Ross:	September 24, 2013
Dr. Harold H. Saunders:	October 1, 2013
Dr. Dali Yang:	October 17, 2013
Dr. Xian-He Sun:	October 22, 2013
Dr. William Ury:	October 25, 2013
Dr. John Paul Lederach:	November 5, 2013
X (chose to remain anonymous)	November 9, 2013

It was not necessary for translators to be used for this study. All the Chinese participants spoke English. I also speak some Mandarin and prior to the interviews spent several months in an intensive review of Mandarin language. However, I cannot read and write Mandarin, and the one participant who felt it necessary to include written Mandarin in his narrative also provided the translation.

Recording, Transcribing, and Storing Data

Data from the interviews was collected through tape recording. I used two or three manual tape recorders for each of the interviews. For the first interview I used a digital tape recorder and two manual tape recorders. I personally transcribed all of the recordings from the interview. As it happens, the foreign phrases in Hebrew and Spanish, used in some of the interviews, were in languages that are familiar to me. These foreign words are represented in italics. Words in Mandarin Chinese are represented in Pin yin in italics. Pin yin is a form of transliterating Chinese into English.

The nature of the transcription for the study was informed by Riessman's (2008) description of this process, in which "investigators need to interrogate the decisions they make as they construct written representations of oral narrative. Transcripts contain invisible, taken for granted theories of language and the 'self'" (p. 37). Specifically, there was a surfacing of my perspective in the transcription process through journaling. I made notes on the transcripts, notes in specific documents for this process, and notes on post-its and other paper such as legal pads. This journaling

was particularly important when comparing key points and themes across the transcripts of the eight participants.

Data Analysis

The data analysis involved five parts, each entailing a series of steps. The first part was coding the participants' interview transcripts and supporting data to discover common themes. The second part was to re-story each participant's data into a narrative that was organized chronologically but also reflective of the common themes discovered in the coding process. The third part was to rank the common themes discovered in the coding process by prevalence and compare the rankings across the cases. The fourth part was to step back and identify overall patterns across the cases that served to answer my research question: "What are the life stories of peacebuilders from the United States and the People's Republic of China (China) and how do factors such as their personal experiences and cultures inform the way they think about and approach peacebuilding?" The fifth part was to link the patterns to the literature on culture and peacebuilding to provide a conceptual elaboration of my findings. These five parts to the overall analysis and the specific steps involved are described in detail below.

The overall context for data analysis for this study followed Riessman's (2008) presentation of thematic analysis in narrative methods. Riessman describes key aspects of this analytic approach in her differentiation between narrative analysis and grounded theory analysis as follows:

Analysts . . . preserve sequences, rather than thematically coding segments. In narrative inquiry we try to keep the ‘story’ intact for interpretive purposes, although determining the boundaries of stories can be difficult and highly interpretive. . . . most narrative investigators attend to time and place of narration and, by historicizing a narrative account, reject the idea of a generic explanation. . . . narrative analysis is case centered At a fundamental level the difference between narrative methods and grounded theory flows from this case-centered commitment. (p. 74)

Thus the overall analysis for this study involved an emphasis on keeping the narrative sequences and stories of the participants intact and looking for overall themes relative to the different cases within a historical or social context.

Analysis Part I: Coding

The first part of the analysis involved multiple levels of coding for salient overarching themes. Following Saldana (2009), I began by conducting descriptive, In Vivo, and structural coding. These types of coding are described below:

- Descriptive Coding summarizes in a word or short phrase—most often as a noun—the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data (p. 70)
- In Vivo Coding . . . as a code refers to a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data record (p. 74)
- Structural Coding applies a content-based or conceptual phrase representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data that relates to a specific research question used to frame the interview The similarly coded segments are then collected together for more detailed coding and analysis (p. 66)

However this approach was not sufficient; I realized I was missing key types of codes and concepts. Finally, I created a comprehensive process that worked. The process involved the following steps:

1. Descriptive coding
2. In Vivo coding
3. Structural coding
4. Simultaneous coding
5. Pattern coding
6. Theming the data

Saldana (2009) describes simultaneous coding, pattern coding, and theming the data.

He describes simultaneous coding as follows: “Simultaneous coding is the application of two or more different codes to a single qualitative datum, or the overlapped occurrence of two or more codes applied to sequential units of qualitative data”

(p. 62). Miles and Huberman (as cited in Saldana, 2009) describe pattern coding as follows:

Pattern codes are explanatory or inferential codes, ones that identify an emergent theme, configuration or explanation. They pull together a lot of material into a more meaningful and parsimonious unit of analysis. They are a sort of meta-code . . . Pattern Coding is a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs. (Saldana, p. 152)

Theming the data involves using an overall phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of data is about and what it means. Boyatzis (as cited in Saldana, 2009) describes that a theme “at a minimum describes and organizes possible observations or at the maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (Saldana, p. 139).

I coded each transcript a number of times and also wrote my own memos and journal entries as a means of sense-making while I was coding. An example of this process is illustrated by the following paragraph from the transcript of the first interview with Pin Ni:

Pin Ni: Also I remember that when I was in fifth grade we needed to go into a school event, across the street to go to another school. So each class will organize, the teacher will get all the students lined up, take your chair, because it's in like a football field, you all sit down, they organize a big event. So you all need to take a chair. But somehow our teacher the teacher in charge of our class she forgot, she didn't come that day. So other classes are leaving you know right, this is an elementary school. So each class . . . So I had to, I see the teacher didn't come went to look around and I didn't find the teacher and said "Alright guys let's all line up" so I took the class and we walked outside the school and we walked all the way. And by the time the teacher got back in the school we'd almost got there and she was scared but she was also so happy. I just got all the people lined up and said "Follow me" and I took my chair, well and fifth grade, I think, I remember that. I got two assistants, both are girls and they were very helpful and I say "Let's go, let's go." But I think the school helped me as well. The teacher gave me a lot of encouragement, "Just do it."

In the first step, descriptive coding, I used one or two words on the left side of the text to describe the main point of that sentence. For or example, in the first sentence the descriptive code was *in fifth grade*. In the second sentence it's *a school event*. I did this with each sentence of the transcripts for the participants.

The second step was In Vivo coding, also written on the left side of the text.

Examples of In Vivo codes from this passage include: *when I was in fifth grade*, *So I had to*, *"Alright guys let's all line up,"* and *"Just do it."*

The third step was structural coding. An example of structural coding for this passage, written on the right side of the text, is the phrase *he showed leadership from a young age*. An example of the fourth step, simultaneous coding, which is also written on the right side of the text, is the phrase *Just do it*, which is both In Vivo and thematic coding.

An example of the fifth step, pattern coding, in this passage also written on the right side of the text is *Leadership for Pin Ni has to do with taking the initiative*. Another example of pattern coding is ‘Leadership for Pin Ni has to do with a sense of responsibility’. An example of the sixth step, theming, the data is *Pin Ni is consistent in showing leadership that involves responsibility, initiative, and modeling the behavior*. It is important to note that the coding was iterative and the steps were not always just sequential. I would switch back and forth between all the different types of coding as ideas struck me in the process. A typical journal entry I would make about this paragraph has to do with the idea of *Just do it* and how that compares to the emergence of the idea for other participants, for example William Ury. Table 4 provides a sample of the final theming of the data for the Chinese participants. The full table of major themes for the Chinese participants and a table of major themes for the American participants can be found at the end of Chapter 4.

Table 4. Sample of Major Themes for Chinese Participants

Pin Ni	Dali Yang	Dr. Xian-He Sun	X
Responsibility	Humility	Communication	Compromise
Compromise	Building bridges	Dialogue	Harmony (<i>he baogui</i>)
Communication	Collaboration/ teamwork	Listening	Peace as the purpose
Integrity	Integrity	Integrity	void conflict
Leadership	Empathy	Responsibility	Integrity

Analysis Part II: Restorying

Within Riessman's (2008) overall framework, the second part of the data analysis

was restorying. Creswell (2007) describes restorying as

the process of reorganizing the stories into some general type of framework. This framework may consist of gathering stories, analyzing them for key elements of the story (e.g., time, place, plot, and scene), and then re-writing the stories to place them within a chronological sequence (Ollernshaw & Creswell, 2000). (p. 56)

After the data was collected and coded, I organized each participant's responses into a chronological narrative using the following organization:

1. Name and official biography of the participant
2. Life experiences that influence the participant
 - a. Chronological—childhood and early adult experiences
 - b. General life and career experiences
3. Cultural values that influence the participant
4. Emergent themes
5. Advice for peacebuilders

6. My reflections

I interwove my own perspectives and experiences on cross-cultural peacebuilding with those of the participant to establish a personal connection and enrich the analysis of the findings. The participants' chronological narratives are presented in Chapter 4.

Analysis Part III: Ranking the themes by importance

In this analysis, I ranked the major themes that came from the narratives according to their importance for both the Chinese and American participants. My criteria for importance were (1) the number of times the theme was mentioned by each participant, (2) the significance attributed to the theme by each participant, and (3) the centrality of the theme to each participant's peacebuilding efforts. Table 5 provides a sample ranking of the themes by importance. I created this table in two steps. First, I counted the number of participants that mentioned a particular theme. For example, all eight participants mentioned empathy, integrity, works hard, and skills. Next, within each group (i.e., the group of themes mentioned by all eight participants, the group of themes mentioned by only seven participants, etc.), I ranked each theme on a scale of 1–10, with 10 being the highest, based on how important it was to each participant. For example, both empathy and integrity were mentioned by all eight participants, but because of the importance of empathy in each of the narratives, it received a higher rank (63) than did integrity. The full table of the themes ranked by importance can be found at the end of Chapter 4. These rankings were used to help identify patterns across the cases and inform my discussion in Chapter 5.

Table 5. Sample Ranking of Themes by Importance

Theme	Pin	Yang	Sun	X	Ross	Saunders	Ury	Lederach
Empathy (63 total)	6	6	6	8	10	9	9	9
Integrity (60)	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	8
Works Hard (54)	7	7	8	7	7	6	7	5
Skills (54)	6	8	6	8	7	6	6	7

Analysis Part IV: Patterns across the cases

After ranking the themes by importance, I stepped back from the data to look for patterns and integrating themes across participants' narratives. In terms of their approach to peacebuilding, I identified 16 significant similarities between the Chinese and American peacebuilders and 8 major differences, many of them attributable to their cultural backgrounds. I also identifies 8 common themes that characterized their peacebuilding journeys from childhood to the present. I wrote an initial analysis of these themes, but I was not satisfied. Something felt incomplete. Each time I would pore over the narratives and themes, an image would flash into my mind. It was an image of one or the other of the participants standing outside a door waiting to enter a room. Inside the room, were two delegations of people on opposite sides of a conflict or divide. Sometimes, they were Israelis and Palestinians seeking justice and peace. Other times, they were high school students from China and the US who simply were meeting each other for the first time. In each case, what I really wanted to know was, "What is that peacemaker (Ni, Yang, Xian-He, X, Ross, Saunders, Ury, Lederach . . .)

thinking and feeling in this instant? Who is he? Where does he come from? What motivates and drives him? What gives him joy and pain, hope and despair? How has he prepared for this this specific moment?

With that image and these questions in my mind, I went back to the narratives, back to the data, and back to what I had written. I began to look for the unique qualities that characterize these eight remarkable peacebuilders. They are (1) a deep-seated passion for peace, (2) a values-based foundation and motivation, (3) commitment to a relational approach to peacebuilding, (4) the courage to take action, even in the face of seemingly impossible odds, (5) competence with the skills and tools of peacebuilding that comes from life-long learning, (6) belief in and capacity for building strong empathetic bonds among people, (7) willingness to sacrifice self to be the bridge for others, and (8) recognition that peacebuilding is a continuous process that requires the persistence to stick with it over the long haul. These qualities are explored in Chapter 5.

Analysis Part V: Conceptual elaboration

Also in Chapter 5, I draw from the literature on empathy, trust, communication, religion, and Confucianism to explain the qualities of expert peacebuilders conceptually. I draw from these strands to provide context for the findings and also potential ways to explain the findings relative to the current knowledge extant in the literature today. Thus, in some instances this use of theory is contextual, in some it is explanatory, and in some it provides a basis for further research in a specific area.

My Background and Possible Areas of Bias

Family background: I come from a Midwestern family and I grew up in the suburbs of Chicago. I am the eldest of three children. My father is a doctor and a lawyer and my mother has been a teacher and a manager. From an early age I experienced exposure to different cultural and subcultural influences and languages. I was insatiably curious about other cultures and languages and reaching out across to others. My mother has said about me “She never met a stranger,” and I think it’s true. From an early age I have felt a positive affinity and empathy with and for others. My family is a warm and closely-knit group of people. We are all different types of people but love each other very much. My sister went to Stanford and later became a child psychiatrist. My brother went to Duke, served as an officer on a fast-attack submarine, later attended Wharton and is a banker. I have worked primarily as a management consultant and professor.

Compensating and motivation: Despite strong academic and career success in some ways I feel I should have achieved more. I think partially this feeling derives from the fact that after studying at Cambridge and the University of Chicago, I was working on my doctorate at Oxford and had to leave because of getting encephalitis. I think my desire later in life to do two doctorates at once has to do with making up for that. I also feel badly that my marriage ended in divorce and I never had children. During the years of the marriage the relationship with my spouse was troubled and I experienced feelings of considerable trauma. The constant conflict was devastating

and destructive to me in every way. I think that is part of my motivation for doing a study on peace—I have worked hard to discover and create peace in my life after the divorce.

A story about motivation for the study: On a spiritual level I have felt drawn to the topic for a long time. In fact I had been thinking about doing a quantitative study on a different cross-cultural topic, but I could not get the idea of the peace study out of my mind. For two days I became convinced by others to do the alternative quantitative study and for two days I was miserable. I went for a walk in the Botanic Gardens near my home. It was the time of the year when birds were migrating and many different and unusual birds would stop at the Botanic Gardens on their migratory journeys. I walked and pondered and felt so much like delving deeply into the study of cross-cultural peace. I was regretting changing topics. I looked up and there was an amazingly beautiful white bird circling above a small lake in the gardens. I hadn't seen a bird like this before and its purity and whiteness made me think again of peace. I saw two bird watchers and asked them what kind of bird it was. They were watching it with binoculars and said they weren't sure. I watched the white bird and I knew, I just knew, I had to follow my heart. Thus this study on cross-cultural peacebuilding.

My own potential bias: I wanted to note questions I have had about any additional elements of potential bias on my part. As I have been doing this study on peace, I have had to look at the internal and external elements of peace and conflict in my own

life on multiple levels: the internal personal level, the external personal level at work, where as a consultant I have often been involved in conflict resolution; and the external level, where as a traveler in the world I have lived in many countries, spoken many languages, and dealt with cross-cultural shock, conflict, and reconciliation to become part of different external environments. All of these types of levels could have been levels that some of the peacebuilders in this study might have gone through, but I'm not sure. I can't and won't speak for them, but I wonder if there is any element of mirroring in my journey and certain aspects of some of theirs. I have been very conscious to be aware of and to surface any biasing that could result from that concept, and I have been meticulous in presenting their exact words in the correct context presented by the participant, while reducing the possibility of my bias in any such presentation.

China: I feel it's important to include the fact that I lived for nearly six years in China and these were some of the happiest years of my life to date. I love China and the Chinese people. I don't think this has unbalanced my perspective on this study—because I am also patriotic, come from a patriotic family, and love America. I think my perspective has helped me to be equally positive and appreciative as I've interacted with all the interview participants in the study.

Potential Limitations of the Study

There are a number of potential limitations of this study. One limitation is in the differing time durations and natures of the interviews. One interview, for example,

lasted for three hours and another lasted for thirty minutes. However, the overall nature of qualitative research does not require exact replication of interview conditions and times, so I hope potential limitations are minimal. In a study of this nature it is so difficult to have access to these peacebuilders that I felt it was acceptable to take whatever time in whatever circumstances the participants were willing to provide.

A second possible limitation is whether some of the important information regarding negotiations might be viewed by participants to be too classified, proprietary, or sensitive to be included in this research. Thus there could be significant omissions which might impact the credibility and added value of this study. The nature of this content could also inhibit the narrative accounts of the participants in a way that I cannot directly ascertain. For example, participants might tell part but not all of a story in such a way that I am unaware of the omission. This did not seem to be the case during the interviews. Even with participant X, who chose to be anonymous, there seemed to be a free sharing of key information. However, it was impossible for me to ascertain whether or not there were.

Credibility

There are multiple sources of credibility for this study, including triangulation through contextual and archival research, surfacing of my bias through journaling as well as openly interweaving of my story, and the use of thick description, as described by Denzin (1989) and presented in Creswell (2007) as “the narrative

‘presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships . . . [and] evokes emotionality and self-feelings. . . . The voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard’ (p. 83)” (Creswell, 2007, p. 194). For this purpose, the narrative unit of analysis is presented fully and to the greatest degree possible within the text of this study. A further source of credibility was my personal transcription of all the tape recordings; I took a thorough and painstaking approach to insure that each word was presented exactly as spoken by the participant. Additionally, member checking took place whereby each participant was provided with the opportunity to review the transcript of their interview and make any changes they deemed necessary. It is important to note that such member checking was not available to or required by participant X due to his personal circumstances. Some of the participants took advantage of the opportunity to check their transcripts and made some changes, whereas other participants did not.

Chapter 4: Results

In this section I present each of the eight cases grouped by nationality, with Chinese cases first and then American cases. Key guiding principles in presenting the cases include: using the exact words and phrasing of the participants, focusing on the content of the narrative units, and keeping the narrative units together as much as possible (Riessman, 2008).

Introduction

Apart from X, there is a big difference between the occupations and peacebuilding work of the Chinese and American peacebuilders. For three of the Chinese participants, peacebuilding is almost something extra they do, outside of their formal work role or as an extension of their role. They do it because they have a desire to build cross-cultural understanding and preclude the need for war, above and beyond their daily activities. X, as a diplomat, is more similar to the American peacebuilders in that they are all in formal peacebuilding roles.

Pin Ni

Official biography

Mr. Pin Ni is the President of Wanxiang American Corporation, a wholly owned US subsidiary of Wanxiang Group Company based in Hangzhou, China. Mr. Ni also serves as the Executive Vice President for Wanxiang Group. Mr. Ni received his Bachelor degree and MBA degree from Zhejiang University, after which he worked for a think tank and then joined Wanxiang and has been with the company ever since. He has also studied in the PhD program in the University of Kentucky's Department of Economics. More information is available about Mr. Ni at: <http://www.wanxiang.com/group.html> (personal communication, 2014)

Interview circumstances

There were two face-to-face interviews with Pin Ni, both lasting approximately an hour and a half and both taking place at the corporate offices in Elgin, Illinois. The first interview took place on Saturday, September 7, 2013, from 11:00 a.m.–12:40 p.m. The second interview took place on Monday, September 30, from 5:00–6:30 p.m. There were also two follow-up telephone calls to go over the transcripts of the interviews.

Contextual background

Pin Ni comes from Hangzhou, China and currently lives in Illinois. Pin Ni's peacebuilding efforts involve working to create better understanding between China and America through a variety of venues such as creation of educational exchange and clean energy programs. He also has worked with Illinois government to try to create bridges of understanding through trade between Illinois and China.

Childhood and young adult experiencesLeadership and respect

Respect is an important aspect of leadership for Pin Ni, and he learned this at a young age in China. It is also an important part of the cultural values which have influenced him:

So I learned at the time, we all as human beings no one is really better than the other, we're just different. . . . Leading is not about only working with the people you like it's about really working together with others who don't necessarily agree with you, because I call this is a rainbow. The rainbow is not about one color. You can be blue, you can be red, it doesn't matter, but you're not going to be the rainbow. If you want to be the rainbow, which is beautiful, and only comes out after the thunderstorm, the rainbow comes out because it has seven

different colors or even more sometimes. . . . You all have to learn to work with each other.

Leading by example

Pin Ni has always believed in leading by example and reaching out to the other side to resolve conflict through sharing power and resources.

The more you can share, the better you are. I'll give you an example, you know when I was the president of student council I asked each class, in China you know they have different classes that are fixed with 45 kids or 50 kids in each class. . . .

So I told each class representative "Go find the one who complains the most about our school in your class, a student, recommend two of them, we will gather them all together in one room" this has nothing to do with the teachers, it has nothing to do with the school or the teachers, that was just me saying "We'll get everyone together."

So I asked them, I say "You guys are all thinking we can do better, because you complain, right? Which is great," I say "If you complain that means you care, it means you have a better idea, ok. But complaining doesn't solve anything. So let's roll up our sleeves maybe we can do better." So I say "Now stop complaining, come up with ideas, what should we do for student activities or after class or whatever you have idea." I say "You present we let everybody here to evaluate, if your idea is a workable idea and everybody likes it, now you're in charge."

Now what I would do is that student council has its own budget, we get a subsidy from the school, they give you some financial budget. So I say "I will give the money to buy paper, to buy pencils, to buy whatever, you know and organize this event." And I say "You organize it and if this event has money coming, you take the money. As long as this is an event organized by the student council." So I say, "I take the credit too, but you take the credit, you will be the one in charge. And you execute it and then if you need money, if you need people, if you need other resources, up to, I will handle that." So now we turned the negative who complains a lot to the positive, if you have smart ideas, or at least you should stop complaining because if you have better ideas we flesh it out. . . . We listen, we work together, we respect, and then we share. We let you become the leader. And I was

joking with them, like with the coffee club, the money we collected we paid all the students. It never happened in China in that time, we paid all the students. There's no income tax, at that time. So we just say, "You work here, we make this work." The council doesn't need any money, we share with everybody. So the more you get the people involved, the more you let them share.

The power, the outcome, the benefit, the whatever, you know, more people are motivated and excited and they will come to join you. That's how it happens.

As president of a large company he still leads by example by making time to go and give school children tours of the solar project he has initiated:

As far as I could I will drive there and meet with them and give them a tour and show them around and they're all very happy. I just feel that this is very necessary in terms of promoting this idea to our next generations.

He still has this same philosophy today of motivating through example in everything he does including his peacebuilding: "If you believe it you should do it. . . . If I believe it everybody else will see it, so that's to me, the peacebuilder is in our daily life you know."

The importance of breaking down barriers and creating change

A key aspect of Pin Ni's life experience is his belief in the importance of and impact of change. An important literary figure who influenced him when he was a teenager was the Count of Monte Cristo, because he was able to produce positive change. Pin Ni says: "So he's so powerful you know, he can change the world. That's what I admire."

From his early days in university, Pin Ni was breaking down barriers and creating change. An example of this is a coffee club which he created based upon a Western model (note: *Zheda* is the abbreviated name used for Zhejiang University):

But also I remember when we were in the university, *Zheda*. So similar situation I opened, what we called “coffee club.” In 1982–83 that was not officially allowed but *Zheda* was very, gave us a lot of freedom. So I went to the cafeteria only for the foreign students and negotiated a deal with them and they allowed us to rent, on Saturday, Friday night, Saturday night, Sunday night, that’s three days and we organized students and sent them to like, I forgot, like the Hangzhou *fandian*, the Shangri La at that time, and we sent them there for training. They came back and I told all the students, I say “We are going to sell the ticket, we can dance,” it’s very Western style, nothing [like it] in China before. Because the movie in China from Turkey, that movie at the time called “Coffee Club,” was viewed as a politically not correct movie.

So we got the party secretary, they’re all very nice, but they had a little concern you know, but we invited the newspaper to come in. It’s 1984, I think, we invited the newspaper to come in. Today it’s nothing right, but at that time we are the boundary, we crossed, many, many red lines. And the good news is the press was positive, the party’s newspaper was positive saying, this is sort of you know, it’s a part of the reform, it’s now part of the students going forward, they bring the fresh air to the country. And then it was overwhelmed, in terms because many other schools sent their people to come and see how we were organized. This is just one event that I did.

So then I remember the party secretary of the school came one Saturday night and we have the people in the front at the door selling the tickets, and they called me, they came in and said, more like he’s the president of the university, and they said “What should we do?” and I said “Ask him to buy the ticket.” At that time it was very uncommon and I said “Ask him to buy the ticket.” And he and his wife, I said “Ask him to just go and buy the ticket like everybody else.”

So he bought the ticket and he walked in and he’s sitting at one table and we served some cake and coffee, very Western style, nothing [like

it] in China at that time. Actually, coffee is a bad word basically, it's a Capitalism poison pill, whatever you call it. So he came and then I walked up . . . and he was very happy, nobody ever ask him inside the school that he has to pay the money to get in he said. He was very happy. Now he feels that he bought that, now we're all equal you know. And I was very impressed. I was awfully impressed. And he did not give us a hard time, he, did not say...they allowed us to push the envelope. . . .

Well you do a lot of things and you can change, you can make the change happen. In the school we changed the environment and made *Zheda*, *Zheda* was pretty serious . . . not liberal but we did a lot of things to make it very liberal at this time, it's ok.

The awareness of the importance of peace was part of his early life—when members of his family were on opposite sides of the standoff between Taiwan and mainland

China:

And when I was the second year, no, at the end of first year as a freshman in the university the advisor came and said “We learned that your uncle is in Taiwan.” And I say “really?” I say “I don't know.” And I say “so what's the issue?” And he says “we think you are qualified to be a Communist Party member.” . . . But at that time for a student to become a member was very unusual. . . .

So I went back home and I asked my mom I say, “Your brother is in Taiwan?” and my mom's face kind of changed immediately and [she] said “Oh we're in trouble again” so they never told me because they're Kuomintang and they never tell me.

So then I went back to the school and I told my advisor. I say, “I really didn't know, my mom and dad purposely never told me that. So I don't know I have an uncle in Taiwan.” . . . And he said, “We did a background check and we found that you have, however you are so good so we want you to send an application.”

Pin Ni refers to this when he talks about the importance of communication and peace:

Our job is to get the message across the table right, we need to communicate, nothing could be more powerful. . . . I always believe, I say for example, that nationality means nothing at all. I use that example, me and my uncle in Taiwan. My mom and my uncle in Taiwan. They are brother and sister. Now if they're in the military they're going to kill each other, right? In a war, civil war. What does that mean to them? It means absolutely nothing, they are just human beings like us, ok. There is no difference, what is the difference?

His desire for change in his young adult life also had to do with China itself and reform and peacebuilding:

Coming to the United States was not my first choice I'll tell you the truth. When we graduated I was the leader of all the students as well. Our dream was to save the country ok, change the country, save the country. I mean as a student you always have your own dream right, if you don't like what's going on. But I graduated from 1989. You know what happened in 1989, right? So I decided not to go to Beijing... That's as a student.

Cultural values that influence Pin Ni

Pin Ni has lived in the United States for twenty years and believes in some ways he has been influenced by American culture, which is more straightforward than Chinese culture, which is more indirect and polite: "But I learn a lot of the culture here. To be straight, China is always to be polite, here is to be more straightforward."

He also sees the USA as more rule-bound and China as more flexible and creative:

I would say working style wise China is more about creating something. USA is more about let's follow the rules. Because the USA has been well established and China is all about economic reform. Reform means let's create something new, a little more creative, flexible. In China rules mean something but it does not necessarily mean everything.

However, he feels his Chinese cultural values are a key part of who he is: “It’s more in your blood and your mindset. So now every day when you come out that’s just part of you. You don’t need to forge yourself into a different shape. It’s just let it naturally come out.”

There are specific cultural values from China which have impacted his peacebuilding, including appreciation, respect, and sharing. An example he gives of these three values combined is the educational project where Wanxiang just gave a million dollars each to five schools so that each school could send students to China where they learn about China and also clean energy:

So we think sending kids to China, we pay for all the costs, is the best way for us to show our appreciation for what we have got. So that’s the appreciation. The respect is definitely, the reason we want to send the kids to China is for them to learn from each other, to understand each other, to respect each other. That’s the reason why when the kids get to China we will pick one-on-one, we call student ambassador program. We will pick the Chinese student to be teamed up with the American student one-on-one, so these two become a pair, he will take him home on the weekend, take him home, take him to see this and that, he will understand what he would like to do, you know?

So we do that to build the respect between each other so these two will understand—ok, although we are different color, different language, but we are all human beings. We may have different views, we may have different cultures, different backgrounds, but we will work together, we respect each other. So that’s what this program is about . . . and also about sharing

Plant friendship tree[s] in China, get together with student ambassador picked from the China side, now let them to start to talk to each other, understand each other, make friends with each other, now twenty years later the war will not come, right. They’re together. They’re their brothers and sisters. That’s the job we can do all the time, right? . . .

Now, if there is someone who is hitting the button saying “I am going to send the nuclear bomb there or here,” they’re going to say “You know what, that’s against my heart. I cannot do it you’re going to kill all my friends.” . . .

We have too many walls built by bureaucracy, by language barrier, by culture difference, you know whatever it is. But our job is to take them down. We can, every day we can do that, every day we can do that.

We need people to see each other, talk to each other, understand each other and respect each other. Correct? . . .

I always say this, this is what I say. “This is your skin, this is your skin too, they’re very different skins but it’s all your skin [shows top of hand and then palm of hand]. . . . In Chinese there’s *shou xin*, *shou bei*, *dou shi rou* . . . It’s all yours so top of the skin bottom of the skin they look different but it’s all yours.

Another key cultural value that influences Pin Ni’ is compromise—he feels this is one of the most important aspects of peacebuilding: “I think one of the most critical that we all can learn in the peacebuilding is how do we deal with the difference of opinions. . . . The key issue is how do we reconcile, respect, share, understand, appreciate and then compromise.”

An example of compromise from his personal approach is the recent acquisition of the A123 clean energy battery:

I can give you a story. If you can look on our website, look in the last year, google it, look at when we were looking to buy the battery company, the A123 last year, how much criticism we got last year, you know I would say from October to February, end of January. Every day we got press, I got New York Times, Washington Post, Business Week, everybody is talking about all the negative part, they call China

is stealing American technology, American tax-payer's money is going into Chinese pockets. All this kind of stuff, o.k. This is all initiated by our competitor. Who wants to get this piece of business too, it's an American company. . . .

But in the end it was very tension-filled because we got punched from left and right. But what we choose is not to fight. You don't see our voice in the newspaper at all. We were very quiet. When the deal was done, when we won, they lost, we reached out. At the end of the auction, when they announced that we won the auction. It was at 4 o'clock in the morning. I went to our competitor's room. It was in the same, it's in a law firm they gave us different rooms because you can come out and bid. I went to their room, they didn't come to me, I went to their room and I say "Now the game is over, now let's talk about how do we work together. Yeah, let's talk about how do we work together." I say "Here's my card, let's try to find a way." I say "You guys want to buy this you must have a way to contribute to the business and you can contribute from a different angle as we can contribute."

There were two competitors and I went to both of them saying "Let's sit down and talk." Now we are still in discussion. So that's the compromise. It's not about the ego. It's not about who wins, who loses. Now I say "The process is over, we don't have to kill each other. So now let's find a way to work with each other." . . .

Oh yes, compromise is the most critical one in today's world. Because we always have the conflict.

Emergent themes from Pin Ni's narrative

Just do it

A continuous theme in Pin Ni's narrative is "just do it," and this attitude showed from an early age: "But I think the school helped me as well. The teacher gave me a lot of encouragement, 'Just do it'."

We should not have a war

“And we can build the world much better. We should not have a war period, we should not. We should not. Everything can be compromised, everything can be negotiated.”

What he does comes from the heart

This is repeated throughout in his narrative when asked about his motivations in peacebuilding activities: Pin Ni: “Oh that’s just from the heart, I just believed it . . . I just believed it always . . . always.”

The importance of empathy

Pin Ni has always felt and been motivated by empathy towards others and also believes his wife has influenced him to be even more empathetic. He describes this attitude as:

My wife is that angel because she doesn’t care whether that means she is going to lose her life or not. She doesn’t think, she just jumps out to help, we call that “Cut meat from your own body to feed the tiger . . . *Ge rou, wei hu.*” . . . So she is that type.

Impact on people is rewarding

This deals with the sense of fulfillment coming not just from the abstract knowledge of doing good, but also from seeing its impact on individuals:

This summer was a kid, his parents got divorced or something. So the other kids got the summer internships and he asked me if I could help him. So I went to my connections and I talked to a few people and it was late in the summer and finally somebody said “Ok yeah we want this kid.” So he sent me an email saying “Really I appreciated it.” I don’t have to do anything, there’s no financial benefit or business benefit or anything, I just feel that he’s young, smart, good kid, deserves an opportunity and if we can do for him, if I can sort of use my connections and talk to everyone and say “Hey guys can you help

him and give him an opportunity.” So these kinds of things make me feel that I am contributing, that’s the key word. I am contributing and think that for the peace work the key is if you can contribute. It’s not about taking it’s more about giving...

The importance of passion for peacebuilding

This deals with his feeling that you are always a peacebuilder:

I would say the key factor, whether it’s successful or not, is that it has to be not just as a job. It just needs to be as part of your life. If you believe it every time, every minute, everywhere, it doesn’t have to be a big agenda, but it has to be something you believe and you’re delivering every minute, whether you’re talking to people, you’re doing something, that to me is a key issue.

The importance of responsibility, respect, passion and communication

I always believe we need to understand our responsibility, and we need to fulfill our responsibility. That’s very important, so now you know you need to do something. Then it’s how you do it. Right? First of all you need to know you need to do it and then how you do it. How you do it, you need to do it with passion, you need to do it with respect, you need to do it with good communication.

A sense of destiny—his path is picked

There is a responsibility there. You have to be self-disciplined. Sort of my path was picked, there is no other path anyway. You just need to do whatever you need to do. . . . I just say that the path is that you need to do not only for yourself but for the people around you. That’s it... So the path is picked you just need to do whatever along that path... Mine is a pretty simple color, there’s not a whole lot of, just the standard path.

That it is Not Just About the Money

Money as a resource to do good:

We are making money to in the end helping others. So if we can go to that directly, why we need, why we need try to hold back not to do that when the time is right, right? And same thing, we have some people need help, I got one employee, his wife need to go take the helicopter for some medical need, you know, he didn’t have the insurance at that time and I just say “Give me the bill” and I write the check. That’s ok. That’s what we’re here for.

The importance of building bridges and tearing down walls and barriers

That is my dream. What I would like to do is that I want between USA, China build enough communication, build enough cultural exchange, build enough sharing in terms of difference of opinion and now we will never go into the place that we have to fight with each other. Or we never go to the place that we need to kill each other.

The war should never be a subject between the USA and China. And we need to build from the ground zero. We need to have the roots going down, that's the student program at work and then when the roots go deeper the tree goes higher. So that's what I think I want to do because I understand both sides. . . .

So we need to build a bridge for people to communicate, ok. We need to build a bridge for people to be able to understand each other. . . .

So if we can bring the transparency across the countries...build a platform for them to talk to each other...the bad part is if there's a wall...So we need to take the wall down. How do we take the wall down is let the people talk to each other more.

Reflections on my interview with Pin Ni

Datsen

Pin Ni was my first interview for this project and the one that challenged me the most personally. He is incredibly likable and personable. He reminds me of the lines from Kipling's poem *If*:

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch

He deals with top business leaders on a daily basis and yet made me, a mere researcher, feel at home and comfortable and like an equal. Whenever I sent an email to him it was answered within about 10 minutes.

So what was the challenge? It was this: We are alumni of the same university. When I speak with him I am reminded of beautiful Hangzhou. Out of that lovely city has come an incredible business person with corporate knowledge and an outstanding record of success. He is also a peacebuilder. When I speak with him I am reminded that I too lived in Hangzhou for a number of years. When I hear him tell stories about his student days I remember being a student there and also the laughing and happy faces of my own students there, and my belief that anything is possible for their bright futures.

I left a part of my heart in Hangzhou. Hearing about Hangzhou and telling stories about my time there during this interview was bittersweet. Beneath the beauty of West Lake, in the air above the lovely mountains, is hidden danger. I spent practically the first year of my time in Hangzhou in a Chinese hospital where hardly anyone spoke English and I didn't speak Chinese. Some of the ayees who took care of me along with the nurses spoke only dialect. It was a total immersion into Hangzhou life, albeit, hospital life. One of my first words I learned was *datsen* for intravenous injection (IV), because I had an IV every day and each day they did a fresh stick. The doctors and nurses and all the staff were immeasurably kind to me. They adopted me and treated me like family. I was suffering from lung disease from living in terribly polluted conditions. I started teaching from my hospital bed in order to give back to these wonderful people who were caring for me. Eventually I became a professor at

Zhejiang University located nearby. But I never really got over being sick. Chinese and American doctors recommended I must leave China. I stayed for almost five more years and made sure all my students were taken care of and then, one day I left. I felt for a long time like after I stepped on board the plane back to America and the plane took off, it never landed. Part of my heart is always in China. On the shores of West Lake, in a hospital bed, in classrooms teaching, having dinners with my students. But I can never go back—not until the air and water are cleaned up. Otherwise I could become ill again. Listening to Pin Ni talk about his next trip to Hangzhou, his life in Hangzhou, and experiences we shared there at the university was so very bittersweet. When he talked about planting friendship trees for peace in the educational exchange program in Hangzhou, I started to cry. I have always wanted to do that. It is a dream of mine. I am glad he is doing it and that beautiful city is becoming a place for exchange and knowing and understanding the other. It stole my heart.

Dali Yang

Official biography

Dali L. Yang is Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago. He is the founding Faculty Director of the University of Chicago Center in Beijing, a university-wide initiative to promote collaboration and exchange between U. Chicago scholars and students and their Chinese counterparts.

Professor Yang has previously served in a number of other academic leadership roles. He was Chairman of the Political Science Department, Director of the Center for East Asian Studies, and Director of the Committee on International Relations of the University of Chicago. He also previously served as Director of the East Asian

Institute at the National University of Singapore and founding Director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Chicago.

Professor Yang is a member of the Committee of 100, a member of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, and a member of the China Committee of the Chicago Sister Cities International Program. He is also on the Advisory Board of the Paulson Institute at the University of Chicago. He is a frequent public speaker and has been a member and contributor to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs (2006) report *The United States and the Rise of China and India*.

Professor Yang has served on the editorial boards of various journals such as *American Political Science Review*, *World Politics*, and *Journal of Contemporary China*. He has been a co-director of the University of Chicago Workshop on East Asia: Politics, Economy and Society. He is a life member of professional associations such as the American Political Science Association and the Association for Asian Studies.

An engineering graduate from Beijing Science and Technology University, Yang received his Ph.D. in political science from Princeton University. He joined the University of Chicago faculty in 1992. (www.daliyang.org)

Interview circumstances

The interview took place over the phone on October 17, 2013, from 9:10 pm to 9:49 pm. There were no breaks in the interview.

Contextual background

Dali Yang comes from the town of Zibao in Shandong Province in China, and he has spent many years living in the United States. He currently spends much of his time between Beijing and Chicago. As the Faculty Director of the University of Chicago Beijing Center, his peacebuilding activities involve working to build bridges between the top Chinese and American scholars which promote understanding and sharing of best practices in ways which will support peace and harmony and prevent conflict. He

is also involved in educational exchange work helping American students to learn more about China.

Influence of the theme of humility

It is important to note that there is an ongoing theme of humility throughout all of Dali Yang's narrative—He uses phrases such as “it's been an honor” and “someone like me” with a tone of humility. Because this is an extremely prevalent theme in his narrative, it seemed important to mention at this time so the reader will be aware of it and the tone it gave to his words.

An example of this influence is the way he describes his work representing the University: “And of course it's what certainly, a really awesome opportunity for someone like me to have the opportunity to promote this kind of engagement and collaboration.”

Childhood and young adult experiences

Dali Yang spoke little about his early life experiences other than to say he was young when he graduated college: “I was pretty young when I came to Chicago, even when I graduated from college I was 19 so I was not that old I can I assure you.”

He also appears to have gone through tough times in the period of the Cultural Revolution, which occurred in China under Mao between the years of 1966 and 1976:

Well, you do the best you can, really, for me life has been extraordinarily lucky to go from the circumstances I was in China in my youth to what I am today so anything today is really a piece of

cake compared to what I went through then. . . . I mean you can imagine what it was in China in the 1960s and 70s.

Researcher: Could you tell me . . . some of the people who when you were young, a young child growing up, who inspired you, maybe in your school days or at this time?

Dali Yang: I don't think in those terms. I just wanted to get to be not hungry.

As a student Dali Yang had an interest in diplomacy and international relations, and this interest helped him create an academic foundation that has facilitated his role as a peacebuilder promoting intellectual exchange:

Well I actually studied engineering in college but when I came to the United States in 1986 I was supposed to study English but I quickly realized that's not for me in many ways. And I had an interest in diplomacy, diplomacy was related to international relations and still is and international relations is in political science. So I decided to switch to the department of political science and that's really the story in many ways and eventually I got my doctorate and got this job at the University of Chicago.

He feels that given the opportunities he has had he wants to help others to have opportunities: "Given the opportunities I've had, I want to also help promote the kind of exchanges and collaboration."

The importance of collaboration

For Dali Yang, his narrative involves many instances where he talks about the honor and opportunities he has had to collaborate with excellent colleagues. This sense of collaboration carries over into his peacebuilding. When asked about what is the most attractive aspect of the work for him collaboration is a key element: "Really enabling collaboration since it gives me a wonderful feeling. Personally also my research

concerns China so it's a great opportunity for me to have more opportunities to interact with my counterparts as well."

Most meaningful aspects of his work

Collaboration has been very meaningful in his work as a peacebuilder in many respects. For example he has been very impressed by the willingness of both the Chinese and the Americans to collaborate in looking forward, bringing down barriers, and getting personally involved when they are needed:

I think it's really interesting because China and the US are very different in many ways in terms of the social system, in terms of the political system. But it speaks, on many occasions I was encouraged, I was moved by the great willingness on the part of my Chinese interlocutors to think about despite our differences we have to look forward to try to get things done. . . . And if we allow, we actually stop putting up barriers and all that there are also some opportunities that are created for dialogue, for better understanding and potentially also for collaboration.

Recently we had a conference in China involving a group of U. Chicago doctors and their counterparts in Beijing. The doctors were on this flight from Chicago to Beijing. And then it turned out actually there was an attempted suicide on board the plane. And one of the doctors from the University of Chicago also became the doctor to help with the person who was committing suicide actually. The flight had to make an emergency landing in Anchorage, Alaska. But it just shows I mean those are doctors who are not just actually going to a conference. Of course, when the time comes they are really willing to step forward and help others and it just speaks to the quality of my colleagues. Because not only they are eager for collaboration, they are also quite willing to help others. And that is the kind of spirit that has characterized many of the exchanges we have had so far

The importance of empathy

Well I think the key is one needs empathy, one needs a good understanding of the other side in many ways. . . . In my case in particular I want to bring people who share, who may actually be

working on the same issues but from somewhat of a different perspective.

Cultural values that influence Dali Yang

Key values involve honesty, academic virtues, speaking the truth, and staying true to

who you are in cross-cultural interactions:

. . . honesty and our academic virtues of being really speaking the truth, being open and honest in many ways, and especially when we do interactions across cultures we have to be aware that there may be different values sometimes different practices and therefore making sure that one is standing by what one is comfortable doing, that is very important certainly. So therefore, in this process it is very important to promote honest dialogue and communication, you have to be diplomatic in conveying certain messages but at the same time it is also extremely important to know what one stands for and what the University of Chicago stands for.

Virtues he aspires to:

Well I don't know where they come from, certainly there are virtues of sort of honesty, hard work, and integrity but those are some great virtues that I aspire to and but I obviously I don't always achieve them but I do the best that I can

His peacebuilding stresses the importance of Chinese, Confucian—the importance of aiming high:

Well I often remember Confucius, not the typical line, but the one that in order to achieve something middling you have to really aim high. And so it's very important to strive for one's best in order to get things done. In that sense actually it's a very useful adage to keep in mind especially in the Chinese context. . . . He [Confucius] has this saying that he exhorts us to aim high, even if your goal is only middling.

He also feels his Chinese culture has helped him because since he knows both sides, he can bridge differences: “I think about bridging differences, promoting

commonalities, but also because I can speak Chinese, I can speak English, I work with people from both sides and that is what I do. . . . I know both cultures well.”

The importance of empathy in building bridges:

So therefore my offer is trying to figure out sometimes how people find the link . . . knowing though, understanding the needs of both sides so in that sense it really helps to bridge the differences. Sometimes also because it's not simply a matter of interest. It's very often a lack of communication, or information sharing in the beginning. And once you begin to introduce the information, you begin to introduce two parties together, then they begin to say : “Wow, isn't this a great opportunity for us to get together to try to do something together.’

Emergent themes from Dali Yang's Narrative

Seeing the impact at an individual as well as abstract level

Well I think the most exciting is really to see the students enjoy the benefits of the Center in terms of their better understanding of what's happening in China. . . . And it's really a moving experience to see how they go from someone who was a little bit uneasy in going to China to one who becomes not only confident in reaching out but also acquires the fluency in language, the abilities of growing up as someone who can deal with people from different cultures and of course eventually some of them in fact become real experts in understanding and studying China. It's truly awesome, an awesome experience to see that happen

The importance of teamwork and open communication

Not only is this to do with collaboration but supports the humility theme throughout his narrative:

Well, first of all I don't do it all by myself, I have a great team. . . . In that sense it is really very much teamwork. It requires a lot of open communication but also understanding of the different interests, the different issues facing different institutions. And it requires some in-depth understanding of what the Chinese institutions are about and so on.

The importance of responsibility

“It’s great to be able to do some good, let’s put it this way.”

The importance of being a bridge builder

“I think really trying to understand both sides. . . . With everything today we really have so many opportunities to bridge differences, to promote understanding.”

Reflections on my interview with Dali Yang

University of Chicago. It is really late on a winter night so many years ago. I have walked through the sub-zero wind tunnel on my way back from Regenstein library to my apartment on campus. It is all about the mind. The level of rigor is staggering. I have always been a top student but to stay at the top here I have to work and work. It’s endless cups of coffee. Endless hours of memorization and then sense-making. Both times I went to that school I ended up with a feeling of having gone through trial by fire. It resulted in top grades. It also resulted in a feeling that no other school on the planet could be so difficult.

I think this was always a backdrop for me while I listened to and spoke with Dali Yang. He was not exaggerating. The pursuit of excellence he speaks of is true. I can understand his humility, with so many Nobel Prize winners around. But I can also understand that he is one of the best of the best. He has stepped out of a singular world of the mind to reach out to other great minds as a peacebuilder. He has created space for dialogue and conversation at the highest level. He also is involved in practical and hands-on cross-cultural projects which are making a difference in

helping society. He speaks of the courage of his colleagues—but he impressed me as having tremendous courage himself. He is, every day, creating change and the chance for the world to be better. I am so honored to have attended a school with a professor like this. He is a great example of the alchemy and excellence that can emerge through trial by fire.

Dr. Xian-He Sun

Official biography

Dr. Xian-He Sun is the chairman and a professor of the Department of Computer Science, the director of the Scalable Computing Software laboratory at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) and a guest faculty in the Mathematics and Computer Science Division at the Argonne National laboratory.

Before joining IIT, he worked at DoE Ames National Laboratory, at ICASE, NASA Langley Research Center, at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, and was an ASEE fellow at Navy Research Laboratories. Dr. Sun is an IEEE fellow and is known for his work in data access performance and memory systems. His memory-bounded speedup model (1990), also called Sun Ni's Law, is the first work revealed that memory is the performance constraint of high-end computing and presents a quantitative mathematical formulation for the trade-off between memory and computing. His recent work, Concurrent-AMAT (2013), introduces the concept of memory parallelism, and provides an analysis tool for utilizing memory parallelism in computer architecture and software design. Both of these works are considered fundamental for solving current big data problems.

His research interests include parallel and distributed processing, high-end computing, memory and I/O systems, and performance evaluation. He has close to 200 publications and 4 patents in these areas. He is an IEEE computer science Distinguished Speaker (2003–2005), a vice chair of the IEEE Technical Committee on Scalable Computing (2012–2013), serving and served on the editorial board of most of the leading professional journals in the field of parallel processing, and is

an overseas expert of Chinese Academy of Sciences and China Association for Science and Technology. He is also a board of directors of the Chinese American Association of Greater Chicago. More information about Dr. Sun can be found at his website www.cs.ii.edu/~sun/ (personal communication, 2014)

Interview circumstances

The interview took place on October 24, 2013, via the telephone from 4:00 pm to 5:15 pm with one brief pause of 5 minutes. In several places Chinese characters are used as well as Pin yin transliteration, but Dr. Sun provides the translation.

Contextual background

Dr. Sun comes from Beijing China, has spent many years in America, and currently lives in Illinois. His peacebuilding work includes educational efforts, work between China and the United States, community work, and written work.

Childhood and young adult experiences

Dr. Sun lived through a period of severe transition in China. He was born after the Korean war when people were hoping for peace and many people were named *He*, meaning peace:

Do you know my name in Chinese? *He* is *He Ping* means peace. When I was born, the Korean War had just finished and China was composed of the five principles for peaceful co-existence in 1954. In that time everyone thinks peacetime is coming so my Grandpa gives me a name of *He* meaning peace

Dr. Sun was born in a good time period to a very wealthy family:

My family in that time was doing well. We had a good life in that time standard and even considered now in today's standard. We lived with my grandparents and other uncles and aunt families in a big courtyard owned by my grandparents in the center of Beijing.

We had a big family living together. It was wonderful. When I was born my Grandpa hired a maid just for me. He did the same for my younger sister and other cousins as well, seven of us apart no more than three years. Plus others, there were more than a dozen helpers for the family. . . . We did live like that for several years until I entered primary school, then we had to move out. The government took our family property, they did pay some money but we had to move out. They also found two smaller courtyards in different locations for us. Then we moved and no longer had the big family living together anymore.

During the Cultural Revolution the circumstances for Dr. Sun's family changed drastically. The differences began for him when he was in primary school:

There were two parts of my school days, before and after the Cultural Revolution started. The first part was in primary school before the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution started when I was in primary school.

Before the Cultural Revolution I had two teachers. One teacher was young; he was from a family in that time considered Capitalist. His father had a company or something like that, so he couldn't go to university, and went to the primary school to teach us. He was really good. After school he provided some club style group study too. So we learned poems, some Chinese ancient poems and literature out of the textbooks after school, sometimes in his home.

About two or three years later, we get another teacher who is totally different. This other teacher was a military man, was a Communist guerrilla before the revolution. So he was with a totally different style. He was angry easily. When he was angry he would ask us to go out to go to the square to do parade step, hours after hours, even after school ends. I think these two totally different teachers represent the changing of the society. And after that the Cultural Revolution started

The values and experiences that influenced him at this time and later in his peacebuilding were mixed:

I had a mixed education. My family taught me a totally different value compared to the formal school education. When I was young my Grandpa and my Grandma taught me the traditional Chinese values. Then when you go to school they teach you that heroes are Communists. . . Traditional Chinese values are Confucianism, Confucius

Then Buddhism, this kind of tradition you know, comes from traditional values of Chinese writing, then you have Communist values, then my parents were educated by Western systems, so they taught me a different thing that was Capitalism values and Western values. So, I had a mixed education in values. And in school, once in while you want to be an officer, like the heroes in the movies; and other times you want to be a scientist, there is a famous slogan “knowledge is power,” but once in a while you find no hope. Once the Cultural Revolution started you become hopeless because of my family’s background. There’s no dream for a long time. During most of my teenage time I have to worry about how to survive

The Cultural Revolution was an extremely difficult period for Dr. Sun and his family and had a great deal of influence on him and on his thinking:

During my primary school year, the Cultural Revolution started. After a couple of years without school, we were back to school for the junior high. Mostly we worked through junior high. I mean labor work. Sometimes we were building air-raid shelters, sometimes we had to mix coal, you had to make the coal yourself. Also the school had factories and you had to go to the school factories to work. I worked through three of them. Some of us had to go to field training and go outside and go to the countryside. That was most of the junior high. . . .

I think my most difficult moment is after junior high. After junior high I did not get my entrance to go to high school and the reason they gave me is because my parents had a Western education, they had a university education. So the school says for the reason of equal opportunity you have to give the opportunity to other students, whose parents do not know how to read, and are illiterate. Their parents did not get education so they should have priority over you for education. That was my worst time because I really don’t know what I could do to change the situation and where I can go from there. . . .

In that time they assigned me to go to the countryside to be a peasant, but fortunately later I got a job at a warehouse, that was still in Beijing but in a suburb of Beijing, I worked there as a carry worker.

That time was my worst time, in the sense I could not continue my basic education and could not see the future. If you ask me how I continued, maybe that is due to I had other bad times during the Cultural Revolution. In the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, I also had a pretty bad time. Both my parents were sent to the countryside. The children on the street could call your name and beat you just because of your family.

Both of Dr. Sun's parents were sent to the countryside to work and he had to stay behind in Beijing:

That was a bad time, but in the beginning of the Cultural Revolution I was so young. So I still feel that my parents someday will come back and things will change. There was a hope. . . .

Well my parents were sent to the countryside. My mother was with a hospital called Beijing Union Hospital which was run by Americans before the Communists take over, so she was sent to the countryside as a member of a medical team and my father was sent to the countryside for farming, to a farm to feed pigs for three years. My mother was in the medical team for one and half years. My mother came back first and later my father came back.

Dr. Sun survived through working in a warehouse:

I didn't go to high school. I just went to work at the warehouse and spent more than six years there. The same length of time you spent in China, I was in the warehouse, until the Cultural Revolution fully ended and they established the first college entrance exam. I passed the entrance exam and was in the first group of college students after the Cultural Revolution. . . .

Right, during that time I spent most of my available time, any time which I can control to study. I know I cannot give up and have to work hard. My parents told us, "You cannot change the environment, but

you can improve yourself.” Working conditions were not good at all and my home was pretty far away from the warehouse. So usually I have to leave home by 6 a.m. in the morning and come back probably 8 p.m. in the evening, but after that I still spend two or three hours studying before I go to sleep. . . .

I think a lot of people probably had to do that. Working conditions in the warehouse were bad. We went there as a group of 20 young students, graduated from junior high. When I left after six years, one is passed away, one is totally paralyzed, and lost one leg and most of us had some injuries from the work. Including myself, I had some injuries too.

Dr. Sun was determined not to give up:

I just didn’t give up. Of course I had my family support. I was not in the countryside. I was still in Beijing, even in the suburbs I can go home. Sometimes I stayed in the warehouse, in my workplace, overnight so I could have more time to study. But I can go home every day if I want and that helped a lot. Many peers in my generation, including my sister and cousins, had tougher conditions than I had.

A key influence in his experience was Nixon’s visit to China, which gave him hope:

One really important thing happened in 1972. You know Nixon visited China. . . . His visit really had a lasting ripple effect. This was an encouragement for me because you can see that the world someday will change . . . and also that opening changed a lot of things. For instance, my father, he was seemed useless, because if he was feeding pigs he probably was not as effective as a farmer, especially in his age. But now they think he is valuable, now they found out he knows English and knows English very well. This is true for many of the intellectuals. When the nation sees the need of knowledge, even just a foreign language for communication, the nation sees the value of intellectuals, sees their value in knowledge.

I felt I could learn by myself. Even I couldn’t get into high school I still had the opportunity to learn. That is just my example. My family example is just an example but . . . Really, it’s just a reflection on the whole society’s change . . . That life experience tells me, open communication and dialogue is much better than isolate and blockade.

People need to communicate and understand each other, instead of isolate and guessing each other based on rumors. Like China, Nixon is probably strongly against Communists but, he chooses to achieve his goal through dialogues. . . . Communicate, even if you do not agree with others totally, communication and dialogues is still much better than isolation or fighting without talk.

Due to his excellence in studying, he passed the first college entrance exam but was restricted in his choice of university and subject matter because he had relatives abroad. This influenced him to want to study abroad as well:

Also, I had a hobby to stop at the university bookstore after lunch to check new books. One day, I saw a magazine published by a Chinese American organization which contains an article on how to apply to overseas universities. I spent fifty cents to purchase that, only to find out later that was the most valued and borrowed single issue of a magazine in the library. Fifty cents in that time is good money for students. I worked more than six years before university. By government regulation, I had my salary during my school, my very small salary. So I had some money to purchase books, I did follow the magazine to apply, and I got a teaching assistantship from Michigan State University and went to Michigan State

He spent many years studying in Michigan, and feels that this was due to his not being allowed to study when he was younger:

I spent many years to study at MSU. The reason is I couldn't study when I was young. So I spent many years in there, seven years in graduate school. I studied mathematics, then computer science but when I was graduating, you know what happened in 1989. . . .

Yeah, before I was thinking to go back after graduation. My parents wanted me to finish my study quickly and then go back. But just before my graduating, then Tiananmen Square.

So with the uncertainty, and my wife already found a job in US, we stayed. You can see I haven't changed my name yet. My name is

pretty difficult to pronounce for English speakers because for a long time I was thinking I would be back to China, but it became more and more difficult to go back.

Cultural values that influence Dr. Sun

Dr. Sun's experiences and values have influenced him to become a peacebuilder, as well as following his heart. Chinese traditional values have been particularly influential for him, and responsibility is a prevalent theme:

If I have done something for the community or for the society, I think it may just because I have followed my heart and followed the principle of the values that I learned with my grandparents and my parents. I think it's more the values of the traditional Chinese intellectual's values, even for western value I probably should do the same.

Several really famous words . . . for instance for the intellectual's values they always say that: 穷则独善其身, 达则兼善天下 is an ancient Chinese proverb, which can be roughly translated as: "If you are limited, cultivate yourself; if you are resourceful, help others."

先天下之忧而忧 , 后天下之乐而乐 is another ancient Chinese proverb for intellectuals, meaning "First to show concern and worry after the world is happy" by google translation. Basically as intellectuals you worry before others and you are happy after others. Basically you have to take more responsibility. . . . As an intellectual you should take the responsibility.

His work as a peacebuilder is also influenced by a desire to help take down barriers, reduce stereotypes and form bridges across the two cultures:

I just try to do my best to help and maybe because of my background, I have spent half of my life in China, half of my time in America. In that part I can understand better each side so I can help. Also I think there are some stereotypes and misconceptions which exist which may not be correct. So you help each other to communicate with each other, to learn from each other, that is what I do.

I was thinking, as a person you just do it step by step, do little things first, I never planned to be a peacebuilder, I just do what I can to help and contribute to the society and the community.

I have done many things through the years. But my goal is very conservative. My goal is to do at least one thing in community service each year. I can tell you what I did. . . . One thing I did was we established an education symposium series in Chicagoland and we invited established American professors, like Nobel award winners... and leading experts from China to come here. . . .

And another thing I did when I become the computer science department chair we held a campus-wide celebration of the Chinese New Year.

And another thing we started was a scholarship. We started a scholarship between the Chinese-American community in greater Chicago and with IIT. And the same, for this award we emphasized community service, and it is called leadership award. . . . Another thing which I started several years ago is to write at least one Chinese article per year to discuss my view and understanding of the difference between America and China, in education, sciences, system, culture and tradition. . . . So these are some examples what we have done, each year my goal is do at least one thing, and do one at a time, the key is consistence.

Throughout all his peacebuilding activities Dr. Sun is strongly influenced by both his experience and his Chinese culture and cultural values:

I think the Chinese culture influenced me a lot. I think the traditional Chinese value influenced me. I think another value is to learn from my experience, different people have their different paths. To be peacebuilder or to be a professor, you can influence others and provide your advice, but probably shouldn't tell others what to do because you do not really totally know others' situation.

The bottom-line is that the way best for you is not necessarily the best for others. You have to be a good listener to listen to others... You shouldn't tell others what to do and you shouldn't make other people

to follow your steps because you don't know others' situation, so listen, listen to them what they need and provide yourself as a good example to influence others and help others, and not just tell them what to do because your experience maybe not apply to others. . . .

That comes from my experience. Now my culture, I have three sets of values, traditional Chinese values, the influence under China's education system, and the influence of my parents and Western values. A basic Chinese traditional value just says if you don't like don't apply to others. . . .

I look on the web, 己所不欲，勿施于人 . I just look on the web now and the Chinese translation: *is have behaved, do not impose on others*. If you don't want that do not apply to others.

Researcher: Ok, I think that's what it means, that you do to other people the way you want them to do to you, I'm not sure.

Dr. Sun: Right . . . Right, correct, that is a Chinese traditional value. . . .

I have three principles for peacebuilder and culture. One, communicating and dialogue with others are much better than fighting with others. And the second is your experience may not be good for others. My third, you have to be respectful to others and don't think you're smarter than others, nor your culture is superior. This is my value. My parents tell me, if something has been there for a thousand years it must have some reason. It's also my experience from the Cultural Revolution where they destroyed everything, and that's really bad, they destroyed the root of the Chinese culture. So that is to be respectful, respect for other's culture, respect your own culture.

It is meaningful for Dr. Sun to see the impact of his work on individual students. A particularly meaningful aspect of Dr. Sun's experience as a peacebuilder, perhaps to do with his early life experiences, is the importance of education—and he works through education to create change. He feels that his professional and community peacebuilding cannot be separated in this regard:

As a peacebuilder, ok, you know as a peacebuilder some is related to my work and some is not. You have a professional life and have community works. But these two are not totally separable. To be a peacebuilder it's part of doing community work and community service. My community works are most centered in education, science and technology, and cross-culture, where I have expertise and experience and can contribute more. I am a computer science researcher and you know computer science is the most dynamic field and probably is the field which has contributed to the advance of the world more than any other discipline during the last forty years. This is particularly true for developing countries, since Internet has made information widely available, and computers and mobile devices have become extremely affordable.

This is one thing and for education. . . . Through education we do see that we have contributed to the improvement of the quality of life. Twitter, I think you know Twitter, Twitter's former CEO is our graduate. I taught him, he comes from India.

Researcher: Wow. So you say through education we do seek to change the world.

Dr. Sun: Right, this international student, he contributed to America's development and contributed to America's economy. Our education is part of this America's successful story. . . . It was very meaningful to me when the student contributes to the development of the country.

Another successful story, that was very meaningful, one of our alumni, who was a Chinese, founded a company called Linksys. Linksys now is a household brand in wireless gateway, contributing seventy to eighty percent of the American market. Twitter and Linksys, our former students through our education have changed the world. They have succeeded under the American system, under different culture than the culture they grew up, if you like to talk about peacebuilder. . .

No matter they come from a foreign country far away, or from a poor neighborhood of Chicago, our education has made their America dream become true. They have made our, as an educator, dream become true. That is how I see the relation between my profession and peacebuilder. . . . I think my professional life and community service/peacemaker cannot be separated.

Emergent themes from Dr. Sun's Narrative

Communication, respect, patience, being a good listener, and empathy

Dr. Sun: I already mentioned the three principles earlier and also we could add in many other important factors, such as patience, you have to be patient, be a good listener, and think from the other side, try to understand.

Researcher: Ok, think from the other side, do you mean like empathy?

Dr. Sun: Right, right.

Bridge-builder

The fact that he is able to understand both cultures helps him to be a bridge between the two and emphasizes the need for clear communication and cross-cultural understanding:

Since the success of any collaboration depends on many factors, understanding is only one of them. But, I have many examples to show understanding does help to overcome difficulties. . . . We had a delegation from a university of China, everyone has an administrative title, such as vice president or dean, except one with no administrative title, who even does not have Ph.D. But, you need to understand that he is the party leader and is the actual leader of the delegation.

We mentioned at IIT we held a celebration of Chinese New Year, and the students met the provost of the university. The provost was very proud to announce 'For celebrating Chinese Lunar New Year, the cafeteria makes today the Chinese food day, come and enjoy'. But that was not very impressive to the Chinese students because they still wanted to go Chinatown to have Chinese food.

What they really wanted were some ping pong tables. Ping pong tables do not cost much and do not need much space to put them. The provost was happy to provide them. That was a happy ending. This is a social example, even if you're friendly, even you think you know the other side pretty well, if you have a communication channel to talk to each other you can help each other more. Misunderstanding and misconceptions do exist...Culture is a complex matter. Overcome

crossing culture barriers is even more challenging. I have been approaching it from the view of education.

The importance of passion for peacebuilding

I think that the title of peacebuilder is not important, what's important is that you have a passion to serve, to serve for the community, to contribute, and to help others and try to make impact, and that in your heart you do not mind to be an unsung hero

Reflections on my interview with Dr. Sun

Winter

As I write this there is a code red alert in my town. Currently it is winter and the temperatures with wind chill have been about 20 below zero Fahrenheit for the last several days. Last night was the coldest night of this winter so far. About four days ago all the residents of the town got a recorded message that a 92-year-old man with dementia had wandered out into the cold. He lives near the forest preserves and has not been seen since. Coyotes and other animals live there. There has been a massive search for him. As it gets colder and colder we are all so afraid for this lost man. By the time you read this his fate will probably have been decided one way or the other.

In this world and in our lifetimes, it is so easy to get lost. I know of many lost people in China. There is a whole generation referred to as the "lost generation." They are the ones of Dr. Sun's age and time who in some ways were the most critical victims of the Cultural Revolution. At least one if not more generations of talent and potential have been lost forever as these people were denied the access to books, education, and the chance to study. Some of these people are the parents of my own students

who have been selected as some of the most gifted in China. So the enormity of lost potential of this generation has been clear to me.

Yet Dr. Sun is not lost, far from it. He created a path for himself. He did not become embittered, he did not turn to anger and hatred, and he did not accept any limits on his desire and need to learn. In fact, just the opposite took place. He spent every hour he had, physically exhausted studying when he could and he passed the entrance exam. He has followed the path of his namesakes, wisdom, and peace, and he turned the devastation he faced into an impetus and motivation to make the world better. He has written, and mentored and become a community activist and educator towards peace. He grew up in a time of struggle, and he has become a model of forgiveness and peacebuilding.

There is a saying that all who wander are not lost. As my whole town prays and worries for our lost citizen, it is inspiring to see the example of a man who emerged from a lost generation and created a path forward filled with peace which has helped many people to find themselves.

X

X is a former Chinese diplomat who took part in the six-party nuclear talks with North Korea. He lives in China, and he prefers to be anonymous in this study.

Interview circumstances

The interview took place via a phone call to China on November 9, 2013, from 6:45 p.m. CST (USA) to 7:15 p.m. CST (USA). The interview was facilitated through the help of the Chinese government via the Chinese consulate in Chicago. The interview took place under special circumstances, which meant that the interview needed to be very short in duration. I am not sure whether or not X received the questions prior to the interview.

Contextual background

This interview was very different in some ways than all the others. The time was very short and I was not sure if X had seen the questions. I was not able to go through the questions in the same way I had with the others. Unlike in the other narratives, I have kept my questions present in the text in the form of “Researcher:” to help provide overall context for his answers.

X’s views on the concept of multilateralism and peacebuilding

X feels that multi-lateral peacebuilding is preferable to unilateral:

X: When the conflicts occur, the multi-lateral efforts, to start the meeting, including the role of peacebuilder under the multi-lateral manner. So in principle I think multi-lateral arrangements as a peacebuilder is more acceptable than the peacebuilder conducted by unilateral player.

X’s choice to be a peacebuilder

X has chosen to be involved as a peacebuilder in multi-lateral efforts because he felt it was appropriate in certain specific conditions:

X: I think in some political situation, international involvement in conflicts is necessary. But international involvements should keep the

principle for building the peace for just this solution of conflicts. So in theory peacebuilder should be positive.

Researcher: For you, why did you want to do it?

X: As I said, suddenly when a conflict is in a difficult situation and some positive multi-lateral investments is needed then based on the consensus for building the peace then the peacebuilder is positive and necessary. That's why I think the concept of a peacebuilder is accept, but the reservation of the successful acceptance is the peacebuilder concept have moved to the base of the multilateral consensus . . . just as I said in principle above. In principle I think based on multi-lateral consensus the peacebuilder is a basis, it is acceptable, and should be part of it.

The importance of responsibility

X was also involved in this effort because he felt it was his responsibility as a diplomat: "Because that was my job, that was my past, I used to be a diplomat and I had to be involved in this because that was my job, that was my job that was my responsibility."

Chinese cultural influence on X's peacebuilding

X has been very influenced in this regard by key values in Chinese culture, particularly those of Confucius (*Kong zi*):

X: The core of Chinese culture, the core of Chinese tradition actually in dealing with conflicts lies in *he baogui*. *He* means peace and harmonious. *He baogui* means peace and harmony is the most valuable, the most important thing. So all solutions should be set up on purpose, set up with peace as the purpose . . . from *Kong zi* yes, it is one of the principles set up by *Kong zi* two thousand years ago, yes.

When asked how his Chinese culture influenced the way he does negotiation based on the principle of Confucius he says:

As I mentioned then the *he baogui*, says peace is the most valuable, the most important, all the conflicting parties should take a compromising manner to negotiate for a mutually accepted result so that we can avoid conflict we can reach the goal of peace, the goal of the peaceful solution on the controversy.

Emergent themes from X's narrative

The importance of compromise

A key theme for X is the importance of compromise. He says this is an essential part of what makes someone a good negotiator:

X: I think that a qualified and [successful] negotiator the compromising, the concept of compromise is the most important. And negotiator, any negotiator who sits at the table the first thing first is to keep the concept of compromise as a necessity very much or he or she will not be a qualified negotiator. And I think diplomatic skill lies in how less compromise you can make and how more compromise you can take from the other side is a skill but compromise is necessary. No matter you make a little compromise or big compromise, it's up to your skills, it's up to the situation, it's up to the base, however, no compromise means no negotiation, it means no peace, that means no peaceful solution.

Researcher: After compromise what other abilities are important?

X: Skills as I mentioned. That means in the multi-lateral negotiations or the bilateral negotiations first thing is you should be ready to make a compromise so that you can treat your compromise ...so the second element is how to make it your compromise as little as possible and make it acceptable for the other as possible so that you can reach the peaceful solution...I think in my experience that is the two elements.

He continues to emphasize the importance of compromise in his narrative as the basis of all peacebuilding and negotiation. He says:

You should keep the value of *he baogui*, and based on the value you should keep compromise, concept of compromise, you should keep compromise ready in your heart and your mind and in your negotiation plan. And secondly, based on the compromise plan you reach you

pursue your national policy goals but for an all-accepted peaceful solution. The central element is essentially the diplomatic and negotiation skills.

The importance of empathy and mutual trust

X: I think that [empathy] is the base of negotiation. All successful negotiations have a common base, a mutual understanding. So just understand your counterpart as much as possible and meanwhile let your counterpart understand yourself as much as possible. That is the base. And secondly the mutually minimum basic trust. Without the mutual trust, with mutual suspicion, no negotiation can be successful . . . the base also contains two elements: mutual understanding and reduction of mutual suspicion, for mutual trust.

Researcher: And in a good negotiation what needs to happen in a good negotiation. Are there any steps or processes that are important?

X: Well I think firstly all the participants in the negotiation should be on equal footing. And then secondly, just let all parties list all their conditions, requests, plans, and say freedom of speech in the negotiation. No matter how hard work or how difficult the conditions you have heard just let all parties freely list all the plans, all the conditions.

And then the negotiation can set up a business, streamline all the whole, whole different conditions and the plans, set them together and find a middle ground, among all differences. The most problem is try to find a middle ground, a common ground among all different plans, different proposals, just find an even little common ground. All the different parties can based on the common ground and then try to defend the common ground and reduce the differences in a gradual manner. . . . Any conflictual issue cannot be negotiated in a short time.

The importance of all these elements combined

X: I think firstly keep the value of *he baogui* as the core value, say keep the peaceful solution as the most important goal of your negotiation, that's the most important thing. And secondly take all the participants in the negotiation on equal footing. And thirdly let all different parties list different proposals, and plans, requirements, conditions and put all of the different items on the table. And then try to find common ground, common elements among the many different

items. And the common ground, no matter how little common ground you find, that is the base, that is the starting point to work the peaceful solution. The logic is to look at the common ground as a totally different proposal. For example, if you have a common ground that makes full use of the common ground as the base, you make a just effort with your counterpart try to expand the common ground gradually step by step and meanwhile try to reduce the differences by making compromises, mutual compromises.

Reflections on my interview with X

The feeling is one of waves of white smoke. I can't see clearly. A thousand miles divide us and smoke before me. I can't see him, I can't really picture him, I hear his voice. It is a strong voice. His words take my breath away, they are very strong. He is sure of himself. He has experience, he talks from front line knowledge in peacebuilding. He has been to the very edge and back. It feels like each of his words is weighted with thousands of years of wisdom. China has survived as one of the longest continuous cultures on earth, over five thousand years. I think some of the core wisdom X speaks about compromise, treating people equally and with respect, and the importance of peace may be some of the reasons for the longevity of the Chinese path. Of all the peacebuilders X probably went out of his way the most to speak with me and to participate in this study. I am forever grateful to him. *Xie xie.*

Ambassador Dennis Ross

Official biography

Ambassador Dennis Ross is counselor at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, having recently returned to the Institute after serving two years as special assistant to President Obama and National Security Council senior director for the Central Region, and a year as special advisor to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton focusing on Iran.

For more than twelve years, Ambassador Ross played a leading role in shaping U.S. involvement in the Middle East peace process and dealing directly with the parties in negotiations. A highly skilled diplomat, Ambassador Ross was U.S. point man on the peace process in both the George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations. He was instrumental in assisting Israelis and Palestinians to reach the 1995 Interim Agreement; he also successfully brokered the 1997 Hebron Accord, facilitated the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty, and intensively worked to bring Israel and Syria together.

Ross is the author of several influential books on the peace process, most recently *Myths, Illusions, and Peace: Finding a New Direction for America in the Middle East*, co-authored with Institute peace process expert David Makovsky. An earlier study, *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2004), offers comprehensive analytical and personal insight into the Middle East peace process. The New York Times praised his 2007 publication, *Statecraft, And How to Restore America's Standing in the World* (Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2007) as "important and illuminating." (personal communication, 2014)

Interview circumstances

This interview took place via telephone on Tuesday, September 24, 2013, beginning at 1:15 pm CST and taking approximately 49 minutes total.

Contextual background

Ambassador Ross grew up in California. His peacebuilding work has spanned his entire career as a government official and diplomat.

Childhood and young adult experiences

Early influences on Ross's activism

Ambassador Ross has an activist bent that was apparent as a teenager and through college and graduate school when he was influenced by growing up in California during a period of activism and political upheaval:

I think I've had interest in trying to make a difference and have an impact on policy from the time I was socialized even as a teenager, first by the civil rights movement and then also by the Vietnam War, which raised a sense for me that it was important to try to make a difference and I gravitated towards foreign policy after the Vietnam War. And I was heavily affected I think by the 1967 War, and then by the '73 War in the Middle East. which gave me an increasing sense that something needed to be done, and so I mean I had a kind of activist bent. I had a desire to try to influence what was going to be done. I felt that you could do that by going into the government and over time I was attracted to bigger questions of national security and how to resolve problems of conflict.

As a teenager Ambassador Ross was influenced by reading about civil rights:

I would say what gave me a sense of feeling of wanting to deal with real world problems, I think when I was fourteen I read one of Richard Wright's books on what it was like to grow up black in America and I just felt a powerful impulse to want to correct what was wrong. And I think that there's a relationship between that impulse and having an interest in conflict resolution

He was also influenced by the overall political climate and the work of the Kennedys:

Well, for whatever reason, I think I was very much affected by the times. I mean, it was a period of enormous turmoil. I think I was also affected by John Kennedy and Robert Kennedy. Robert Kennedy was the first political campaign I worked in. And I think I was inspired by the two of them to feel I had a responsibility to do something and public service was a kind of noble thing to do and a responsible thing to do and I think that that whole context was what influenced me.

In college, the war in Vietnam increasingly became a focal point for him and his work as a congressional intern further impacted his sense that you could and should do something about such issues:

Then I worked, I came back and worked as a congressional intern for someone who was actually a Republican but he was the congressman who represented San Francisco and he was a ranking Republican in the House Foreign Affairs Committee and he kind of took me under his

wing even though I questioned lots of his assumptions about foreign policy. . . . And so we would have lots of discussions and that I think that was also something that added to my sense that you could do something about all these questions, you should.

In graduate school the 1973 war in the Middle East was very impactful in his motivations to work towards peace:

I think that you know, I was a graduate student when the 73' War took place and it was a kind of devastating conflict, there was a threat of escalation with the Soviets as well and all this I think added to my interest and my feeling that this was a field I really wanted to pursue.

Coming full circle

Ambassador Ross's career experiences reinforced his desire to be a peacebuilder. He talks often about the strong impulse he felt, starting at a young age, to try to make a difference and improve conflict and war situations. An example is his first trip to Israel when he was twenty-one, which ultimately had strong impact on his peacebuilding:

But I happened to read, I think this was my first trip, I went on a student tour and I happened to be reading Chaim Weizmann's autobiography *Trial and Error*, and I was sort of very moved by that as I was travelling around Israel. And Israel at that time was still a developing country, and I just, you know, I felt, I felt a powerful desire to try to affect things and to from that standpoint try to help mature and at some point I think contribute to peacemaking. . . .

I think, there were a couple of moments that were striking for me. One was being in the Jordan Valley and getting a briefing by a member of the IDF about what was going on you know across the border in Jordan, this was at a time when the Palestinians had built kind of a state within a state it was literally one month before what was known as, what was called Black September . . . and that I found it sort of made me really interested in trying to figure out what could be done. But also because of the proximity because there we were looking across into the border of Jordan. We had binoculars that allowed us to

look across and I was just struck by the proximity of everything. First Israel's small to begin with but also in a sense the proximity of the nature of the conflict being so close.

And the same thing, I went down to Eilat and was looking across at Aqaba and I walked up again to kind of right to the pass beyond which you couldn't go and I was struck by the fact that look, we're, here are these two countries which are right next to each other and yet they might as well be as removed as the earth from the moon. And just felt this powerful kind of impulse to find a way to overcome this conflict, this psychological gap given what was the physical proximity.

Years later he came back full circle to the same place:

There was a point where I had already been appointed as the senior Middle East person at the NSC in 1986 and I took a trip with then Vice-President Bush to the Middle East and I said to him at the time that I thought there was a possibility of creating a statement of common principles between Egypt, Israel, and Jordan. . . .

And most of the people on the trip thought nothing could come of it but the Vice-President said "Go ahead, and try to produce it" and I did. And at the time, and here again we were down meeting in Aqaba with King Hussein of Jordan and it turned out he was prepared to accept this and I recall sort of looking over at Eilat thinking "Here I am" and this was 16 years after I had travelled to Israel for the first time. . . .

I had been down in Eilat and looked across at Aqaba and I thought "Someday I really want to do something about this" and here I was, and this was about to be finished and I was out in Aqaba looking across at Eilat and sort of thinking 16 years ago I said to myself "I want to try to do something about this" and here I was 16 years later feeling "I am doing something about it" and that just sort of supported this strong impulse on my part to want to do what I could.

Researcher: Wow, that's an amazing story. You couldn't have planned it you know, it happened, there it was at the same place

Ambassador: Right, most of these things I don't think you can plan.

During his career he came to feel more involved with the Arab-Israeli conflict. He also felt that this was less of an abstraction; it involved real people and he was able to see the impact and feel that it mattered. He feels these realizations influenced his work as a peacebuilder in two ways:

In the first Bush administration when the then Vice-President became the President and I had a senior position in the state department with James Baker I spent a lot of time in negotiations on arms control, partly with the Soviets and also initial arms reduction talks in Europe and so forth, and I felt that these were somehow abstractions.

That at the same time I would be trying to put together negotiations between the Arabs and Israelis and I recall when I would deal with both sides on that issue parallel to the arms control negotiation I would always feel this was like, this affected real people, it wasn't an abstraction, it wasn't talking about reducing a number of forces or reducing the size of a warhead or the size of a diameter of a missile. All these things really had an effect on real people and as I began to talk and spend more time with both I would feel the consequence of this at a human level.

The arms control negotiations never created that impulse in me, never created that sense. But when I began to talk with Arabs and Israelis I had this sense that real people were affected by what I was doing and it mattered. That was the first point.

The second point is after I had become our negotiator in the Clinton administration. I took my family at one point, it was 1995 and I had three kids and we would be out and we would be touring at a certain point and there would be these places and there would be Jordanians and Palestinians come up to my kids and thank them. . . . They would come up to my kids and thank them. . . .

So that really motivated me and then there was one, I was negotiating the deal, the Hebron deal and I had at one point I had an Israeli mother and then a Palestinian mother during the same period come up to me with tears in their eyes asking me to succeed. And that really affected

me. It added to the sense that real people were affected by what I was trying to do.

And during this period I had negotiated with different sides who were the victims or their families were the victims of the violence of this conflict. So I felt all the time, this powerful human dimension of what I was doing and it was a very strong motivator.

Part of Ambassador Ross's part motivation and what gives life and meaning to his work is this realness and human dimension. He illustrates this with an example of a Shabbat dinner:

What gives life to it is knowing that these conflicts have human consequences and people pay a terrible price . . . you see the victimization. I recall another example. One night I was at a Shabbat dinner in Israel, and discussing, there were like ten people who were there, representing different families and every one of them had been affected by the conflict. Every single one of them in one way or the other had had a member of their family pay the price, either be killed or be maimed. And it's quite, you know, it's unbelievably moving to be in a situation where everybody is touched by the conflict so that's in keeping with what I was describing before.

Religious values and motivation

A strong part of Ambassador Ross's motivation in peacebuilding are his Jewish religious values and sense of Jewish identity, which contribute to his passion for and commitment to this work. When asked how his personal values have influenced his approach to peacebuilding he says:

Well, I think that it's also not just personal values but it's also I'd say spiritual. I mean you know as someone who is Jewish there is no higher, there is nothing you can do that is more meaningful than to be a *rodef shalom*, a *rodef shalom* means to be a pursuer of peace. . . . And so there is a sense that there is nothing you can do in life that is more meaningful than to be a pursuer of peace and there's also this notion that you should, that you should work to mend the world, you know

These are strong for me, these are guiding principles, guiding values, so over the years it's had a strong effect on me. It's been a source of inspiration but it's also been a source of sustenance because when you try to negotiate peace and restore conflict there are few things that you are going to do that are going to be more frustrating than that. . . .

Unless you have a deep passion for what you are doing, unless you become heavily invested with a deep belief in the importance of doing this and feeding it, you'll give up because it's too frustrating. It has to be, it has to be a kind of passionate commitment I think, for a variety of reasons I've felt that including I think the spiritual values I've mentioned.

A key aspect of this is *tikkun olam*, which in Hebrew means "mending the world": "I say to mend the world is *tikkun olam*; it literally means 'to mend the world.' And the more I was steeped in it the more I think that had an effect on my own psychology."

Impulse as motivation

The word *impulse* is a recurring motivating word throughout Ambassador Ross's narrative dealing with motivation. For example he often says he feels an "impulse" or just felt a powerful desire to change things. Some examples include:

And just felt this powerful kind of impulse to find a way to overcome this conflict, this psychological gap given what was the physical proximity. . . .

I just felt a powerful impulse to want to correct what was wrong. And I think that there's a relationship between that impulse and having an interest in conflict resolution . . . this strong impulse on my part to want to do what I could. . . .

The arms control negotiations never created that impulse in me, never created that sense. But when I began to talk with Arabs and Israelis I had this sense that real people were affected by what I was doing and it mattered.

Assassination

A key experience in Ambassador Ross's life which has impacted his peacebuilding

was the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin:

The assassination of Rabin had a huge impact on me. I had seen him three days before but I was back in the States. . . .

I worked very closely with him. I was our negotiator at the time. And when, the last meeting I had with him the last words he ever said to me were 'expect anything', but the one thing I didn't expect was that. And so that also had a powerful impact on me in terms of feeling a profound sense of loss, a sense that if anything I had a responsibility to try to build what he gave his life for.

So, I was close to him, I spent a lot of time with him, he was not a sentimental or emotional person, he was highly analytical but he was, he was a, he had this heroic streak in him and in a lot of ways I looked at him as being larger than life and when this happened it was like devastation for me personally.

But it was also something that gave me unbelievable motivation on top of everything else.

Actually at the time I'd just been out in the Middle East, I'd just come back and I was, actually it was a Saturday and I was actually taking the kids to a doctor's appointment. And at that time I had a beeper on and I was getting beeped and I was wondering why would I be getting beeped, there's nothing going on right now. I knew that there was a big peace rally that was that night in Israel, and was wondering what could I possibly be beeped on and I didn't answer that page right away until I got home and I called in to find out why I had been paged and I was told that Rabin had been shot.

Immediately I sort of went into my mode of what do we have to do and I was on the phone with the Secretary of State and the Operations Center broke in and said that he had died and so I was working through with the Secretary of State the steps we had to take, the need to go to the funeral, the need to get a lot, get many, from the Middle East to go, the Arabs to go as a way of showing something profoundly had changed because of Rabin.

And I was just you know, I switched immediately into kind of what we had to do in light of this. We had to just sustain what he was trying to do through peacemaking. And I remember as soon as I got off the phone and I then I was sort of dictating, I had brought someone on the phone and I was dictating the statement we should issue publicly of what Rabin meant and was and kind of in a sense the meaning of his life and as soon as I hung up, this was in Washington, I started to cry.

Cultural values that influence Ambassador Ross

Ambassador Ross feels that American cultural values in peacebuilding reflect a certain optimism and problem-solving perspective. Empathy is important in this but he does not feel that such empathy is cultural:

I think that there is something uniquely American about believing that you can solve problems. And I think in some respects I reflect that kind of instinctive problem-solving capability but I also think I, I think there's a kind of built-in, to be an effective mediator or negotiator you have to have a capacity for empathy, meaning you understand the importance of trying to really appreciate what effects those people you're dealing with, what are their fears why do they hold them, what are their aspirations, why do they have them, what are the pressures on them.

I think there's a saying, there's an American culture that creates a sense of being prepared to solve problems but I don't know that the American, I don't think that the culture creates empathy, and I wouldn't say this is a cultural trait I think it's more a kind of personal, psychological make-up that reflects who I am but I wouldn't, I think the cultural part of problem-solving is part of what affected me but it's not a whole explanation it's only a partial, there's clearly an optimistic element of it

Emergent themes from Ambassador Ross's narrative

The importance of empathy

As mentioned above Ambassador Ross feels empathy is key in being effective in this work. He also says that his Jewish identity contributes to his capacity for empathy as well as his focus on the Arab-Israeli conflict:

I also think some of what I guess I should add is that having a strong Jewish identity, being aware of Jewish history, being attuned to suffering probably contributes to the capacity for empathy, probably contributes to, especially as it relates to the Arab-Israeli conflict, of feeling that there's a need to solve this conflict as a way in a lot of ways of helping to fulfill what is a destiny for the Jewish people to be able to live in peace. Because you go to the prayer book and there's no, nothing that is emphasized more than trying to seek peace and so I think that, that certainly there's a relationship there.

He also feels that empathy is crucial in building bridges between cultures:

I think you build bridges based on creating a sense of trying to understand who it is you're dealing with and trying to understand why they hold the positions they do and this is where the empathy issue comes in, that there's a genuine desire to understand the roots of certain issues or problems, or the source of what accounts for differences.

The importance of reliability

Although Ambassador Ross feels empathy is crucial it is not enough, reliability, is also vital in peacebuilding:

People are not going to transform their positions because they like you. Their ability to take certain steps that they might not otherwise take comes from believing that they can count on you. That they can count on your word. That if you commit to something that's something that is completely reliable and that trying to prove yourself in terms of showing that you're prepared to do things that are difficult for you to do but because you believe in it you'll do it anyway.

Well I have lots of negotiations where that was the case. I mean I was doing negotiations with the Soviets and on some issues I would sit with, there was a guy who was the assistant to Shevardnadze who was the foreign minister at the time and he and I would work with Shevardnadze and Baker who was the minister and on some occasions he would ask me, he would tell me what was really important for them to achieve the agreement. In this particular case we were working on an arms control agreement. And I told him that it would be hard on our end to, the situation at the time was how to work out the relationship between bombers and cruise missiles and I told him there was a lot of opposition on our side to doing something in that regard but he said if we could, if I could get it done it would make a huge difference. And I said 'Well, if I can get it done, I can tell you that I'll pay a price for it in the nature of the opposition'.

But I proceeded to get it done. He understood it wasn't a simple thing for me to produce. He understood that Baker in the process paid a price. And I had been able to sell it to Baker on the grounds that this was something that really matters to them and I'd built a relationship with this guy so I knew that what he was saying wasn't a manipulation it was for real.

So when we produced this they then produced something from their side because they understood we'd done something that was hard to do for us but we had done it anyway because they had convinced us that this really mattered to them. And that is a fairly typical thing in most of my negotiations.

The importance of credibility and being a good listener

When asked what qualities are important in being a peacebuilder Ambassador Ross

says:

Oh I'd say you have to be a good listener. I'd say two things you have to be a good listener, you have to be empathetic, but you also have to be prepared to define what's important to you and be clear about that. And you have to be credible not only in doing things that are hard for you but you have to be credible in terms of standing up for the things that matter for you.

The importance of passion for and commitment to peacebuilding

I was involved in negotiating the Hebron deal in 1997 and I literally was, I did two 23-day shuttles and one week where I was working around the clock and getting one hour of sleep a day and that was it. And it was so wearing and so frustrating and it would have been really easy to say “Let’s just give up,” let’s just say “We’ve done what we can do.” But I didn’t. You know there were plenty of times during that period where I felt this was too hard and it isn’t going to happen. I would just then sort of say “Well, try one more day.”

He also comments on this when asked what lessons or advice he would have for those who wish to become peacebuilders: “I think what I was getting at before. Have a real passion for what you’re doing, because if you don’t have that passion you won’t be able to sustain what you’re doing in the face of all the frustration.”

Reflections on my interview with Ambassador Ross

A bullet on a chain in a green velvet box

It’s three in the morning and I can’t sleep. I finished the interview with Dennis Ross this past afternoon and I’ve felt haunted ever since. I didn’t have time to say anything about it during the interview but there was a strong juxtaposition of images and memories from my life when I was seventeen flowing through my mind as I listened to his words. I’d won a scholarship tour to Israel. However, I left the tour because I decided I wanted to do something more meaningful instead. I went to a working Kibbutz in the Jezreel Valley. From four in the morning I picked pears in the orchard with the other volunteers, and in the afternoon when it was too hot to work outside we studied intensive Hebrew in class. One day the teacher said she’d arranged a field trip. Her son was in the army in a tank unit at the Golan Heights, which even then was considered a very dangerous and controversial place. We travelled there and I got to

climb inside a tank and see how it felt—scary and dark. I have a snapshot in my mind of the group of us, a class picture, grouped around the tanks, with Syria, impassable and always dangerous Syria on the other side of a barbed wire fenced area. Around my neck I was wearing a necklace of a simple black chain with a bullet attached to it. The bullet was from the machine gun of the guy I had a crush on at the time. He used the gun for patrol duty at night around the Kibbutz. It was the style there for girls to wear bullets like that.

I realized tonight that this study, with its positive and appreciative focus is not just about peacebuilding. Of course, it is also about war. Until I heard Dennis Ross's moving words about the death of Rabin I had somehow not comprehended the Gnostic, good and evil aspect of this study. The peacebuilders do their work but evil is out there. I still have the bullet on the chain. It's in a green velvet box with my other special jewelry. Sometime during this study I must take it out and look at it again. As I write this Syria is still impassable and dangerous. They are being forced to hand over their chemical weapons, thousands have been slaughtered. Nothing changes as everything changes. Somewhere, there is a young girl with a necklace from the warrior she is crushing on. Somewhere in time that girl is me. Good and evil, love and death, and the work of the peacebuilders is paramount.

Harold H. “Hal” Saunders

Official biography

Harold H. “Hal” Saunders is Director of International Affairs at the Kettering Foundation and Chairman of the International Institute for Sustained Dialogue. He served in the U.S. Government for 25 years until 1981 on the National Security Staff in the White House; then in the State Department as Director of Intelligence and Research and as Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. He was a principal drafter of five Arab-Israeli agreements after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, including the Kissinger “shuttle” agreements, the Camp David accords and the Egyptian Israeli peace treaty. He helped negotiate the release of American hostages from Iran in 1980–81.

He received the President’s Award for Federal Civilian Service, the State Department’s Superior Honor Award, and the American Academy of Diplomacy’s Annenberg Award for Excellence in Diplomacy. After leaving government in 1981, he developed the Sustained Dialogue system and wrote *The Other Walls: The Arab-Israeli Peace Process in a Global Perspective* (1985, 1991), *A Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts* (1999); *Politics is about Relationship: A Blueprint for the Citizen’s Century* (2005); and *Sustained Dialogue in Conflicts: Transformation and Change* (2011). He has served as a trustee of Princeton University. He received his A. B. from Princeton and His Ph.D. in American Studies from Yale University. (personal communication, 2014)

Interview circumstances

The interview took place via Skype from 10:45 am to 1:45 pm CST on September 30, 2013. Part way through the interview, my Skype had problems so the video section had to be turned off, although Dr. Saunders’ video portion remained on.

Contextual background

Dr. Saunders grew up in Philadelphia and has spent his entire career working towards peace in both diplomatic roles and in his work in Sustained Dialogue.

Childhood and young adult experiences

Within his narrative Dr. Saunders mentions a number of key experiences which have influenced his work as a peacebuilder including his happy childhood and the importance of his grandfather.

Dr. Saunders had a very happy childhood in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and his maternal grandfather was highly influential in his life:

I was born in 1930 which of course was the height or the middle of the Depression, so I was born to two parents and I was an only child. I was born to two parents who married in 1928 and I came along two years later. So then my parents were, my father was 35 and my mother was 30 or 32 when they married so they were slightly older parents than usual. I just say that as background for giving you a picture of a fairly closely-knit, intimate family with fairly mature parents. . . .

My father was an architect and some of my early recollections were of the fact that he was out of work and so he, I remember at Christmas-time he would go around to people's homes in the more affluent parts of near-by Philadelphia and photograph or sketch people's homes as the basis for Christmas cards or notepaper and things like that. And I can remember my mother printing Christmas cards, photographic ones, and I can remember the things lined up down the hall to dry after the printing press, that's an early recollection. But that did not create a negative atmosphere for me. I think I had a very happy childhood. . . .

My grandfather was a very important factor in my growing up. He, depending on my age, and he thought a lot about what I was ready for, but we would just go and do something together, in those periods of time, everything from going to the Franklin Institute and the Academy of Natural Sciences downtown when I was a little older to going out to Philadelphia's Fairmont Park and riding on the park trolley. And anyway it was an adventure. And my mother, later on in my life would credit her father with having taught me concentration. When we would do something together, even just playing in the third floor back room which was his study in the city house where he had, he wouldn't let

me get away with skipping from one thing to another. If we started something we had to finish it.

Importance of school experience, K–12

Dr. Saunders' school experience at German Town Academy was positively influential for him, both in the relationship with the grandfatherly figure of the headmaster of the school as well as his learning teamwork through school activities:

The school I went to was a happy part of my life. . . . It dated back to 1760 and had been in continuous operation. Right in the heart of German Town in Philadelphia, German Town having been the site of one of the Revolutionary War battles with General Washington there. . . .

It had a bell in the belfry that had come over on one of the tea ships in the 1760s. Sent back to England and it came back several years later and they let it in. And the weather vane over the bell, there are bullet holes apparently put there by Hessian soldiers using the weather vane as target practice, and the original building is still there.

So there was a good bit of a sense of history involved and the headmaster was a marvelous elderly gentleman who actually retired the year we graduated eventually but he'd been there for thirty years. But he was just a wonderful grandfatherly type person, but sort of a person of great integrity and personal depth. So you ask for people who influenced me and his presence was an important factor in my life. . . .

But the other thing the school did was provided me an opportunity to learn something out of class that was immensely valuable to me later on and that was I learned teamwork . . . and most of what I have done later on in life was not so much individual as it was done with building teams and working with other people in teams and so on.

Dr. Saunders attended Princeton, and he believes that the key lessons that he learned at Princeton and that were influential for his peacebuilding work later were the concepts of inter-disciplinarity and identity:

What I gained most at Princeton, it was the opportunity to enlarge my perspective on the world. . . . I did not use the word then but I think looking back I would say that was my first introduction to the concept of identity. Later on . . . when I had to ask myself what are the components of relationship, identity was at the top of the list and I think this was the first exposure to that. . . . But perhaps the most important thing was . . . an inter-disciplinary program. . . .

And I think that that recognition that to understand a problem and deal with it you have to have a variety of perspectives, so later on in life when I was on the National Security Council Staff working for the president I never sent a memo to the president until I had talked with at least people in three or four different departments of government about that problem so that I would get different perspectives on the problem.

There is no question in my mind that I would pinpoint that inter-disciplinary education as being critical to my later work...that politics is about relationships and relationships of course is a human word. . . . What I'm interested in, and you've seen the phrase in my book, whole human beings. . . .

But to pick up your point, this way of thinking was critical in defining the concept of relationship, it was critical in defining the paradigm that spoke of the interaction of all elements of a body politic, not just studying one sector, the political or the sociological or what-have-you. But seeing everything together and this is my world view, it's laid out in that book and it would not have been possible without the interdisciplinary approach that I learned there.

Religion and faith

Religious belief has been a key component of Dr. Saunders' life experience and identity as well as his approach to and involvement in peacebuilding. There were two important documents from the Presbyterian Church which he discusses as very influential in his peacebuilding:

I grew up in a Presbyterian church. . . . The Presbyterian church periodically would write a document that it called "A Confession of" . . . The Confession of 1967 focused on the theme of reconciliation. It

was a key word, they spoke of reconciliation between human beings and God, reconciliation of human beings with each other.

That came out just about the time, I'd say it was 1965, six, or seven, but just as I was becoming active in this Presbyterian church in Virginia and so as I got more and more deeply engaged I focused on this. . . . In 1978 the Presbyterian church came out with a study guide, not a creed but a study guide and it was called: "Peacemaking the believers calling." In other words peacemaking is the work of the Christian, of the Christian life. . . .

There was a religious dimension which was reinforcing my thinking about peacemaking. . . .

But it was at a time when I was thinking about reconciliation and began to think that's probably the period of time when I first began to think of the word peacemaking.

When asked about his motivation and what in his heart motivates him to be a peacebuilder, he again mentions this idea of the peacemaker's calling:

I guess there are a lot of things but one of them certainly . . . was this notion was peacemaking, the believer's calling. I felt, as I say I don't regard myself as an excessively religious person, I don't go 'round talking about religion and I don't go 'round wearing it on my sleeve but in fact it's an important part of who I am and that notion of peacemaking as being an enactment of your religious convictions was extremely important as part of my identity. . . . When I left government the one thing I could take with me was peace process.

Additionally, when asked about how his work as a peacebuilder is informed by his Presbyterian faith, he speaks about how his involvement with his church helped him move towards conceptions of community and relationship, which later became important principles in his paradigms of Sustained Dialogue:

Well let me inject one further thing here as I began to answer that question. In about 1970 or 71' I was elected to the governing board of

my church and began in that context, became very close to the people that I was working with. Both with religious reasoning but also I began to think in terms of the importance of developing relationships with a larger group of people around me. But emphasizing there the word relationship. But in 1973, the day before the Arab-Israeli War broke out my wife died. . . .

I really learned the meaning of a Christian community. At that time people reached out and supported me. I had children who were seven and nine and I really needed help with them because I was working sometimes seven days a week and so the fact of the way people supported me gave me a sense of the meaning of community. So again the word community is another aspect of relationship in a way so that experience in '73 reinforced that and within two or three weeks after the war and after my wife's death I ended up flying with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on the beginning of his Middle Eastern peacemaking adventures.

Career experiences

There were a number of specific experiences during Dr. Saunders' career that helped influence and develop his peacebuilding approach and his paradigms on Sustained Dialogue. The 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict was very influential in his life and his evolving sense of peacebuilding:

When you read this talk I gave in Israel a few weeks ago you will see that there is an add-on to it, it's in notes to myself. . . . "I learned four lessons from the experience in the Arab-Israeli peace process and one was the power of a continuous political process to transform relationships." You'll see the word *relationship* even then. So and of course in the title of the book you were looking at relationship is key.

The lessons he learned earlier about team work became particularly important during this work:

I was a key member of a three person team that flew with Kissinger on every one of his trips dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

And I recently found, I was poking around in a desk drawer and way at the back I found a little tiny piece of paper, not much bigger than a playing card and on that paper I had written a list of all the trips that I took with Kissenger or on my own as a U.S. emissary in the area between January 1974 and September, 1975. And there were 15 trips totaling 155 days. . . .

155 days, 15 trips that year and a half, or year and nine months, whatever it was, for a total of 155 days. . . .

It was back to team work. I was a member of a three person team working with the Secretary of State to produce with Kissenger, and at that period of time there were three interim agreements between Israel and Egypt and then Israel and Syria, two with Egypt, one with Syria. . . .

So the peace process as I say I think in the dedication of the book, peace process is seared on my soul. And then ultimately in 81' the one thing I can take with me was peace process...And that's what's been the foundation of everything I've done in the thirty years I've been out of government so I cannot overemphasize the intensity of that experience. If you want to get right down to the sense of myself as a peacemaker, do you ever watch CNN? . . .

I met Wolf Blitzer when he was one of the twelve journalists who flew in the back of the airplane, Airforce Two that we used for all of our diplomatic missions in the Middle East. And Wolf Blitzer at the time was also writing for the Jerusalem Post which is the Israeli English language newspaper, very prestigious, and because of the sometimes controversial positions in the negotiations that I had to represent in my role on the team I would get a lot of flak from the Israeli right wing.

And Blitzer decided one day that I was getting a bum rap and that he would do a story about me so we had a long interview and he wrote a story. And in the course of the interview I apparently said something to the following effect: When our team was in Jerusalem we stayed in the King David Hotel and we had the same assigned rooms every time we came and my room overlooked the old city of Jerusalem and I deeply appreciate, appreciate is too casual a word, but I deeply appreciate the opportunity I have to look out at the old city of Jerusalem at all hours of the day and the night. I said I've looked at the

walls by sunrise, I've looked at the walls under the midday sun, I've looked at the walls under the setting sun, I've looked at the walls when the lights go on at midnight and so on, and so he titled the story about me "Light on the Walls."

But at the same time it was at that time, sort of the late 70's that the Presbyterian church came out with a book . . . I thought my gosh, here I am trying to make peace between parties in a long-standing conflict looking down at the city, the so-called city of peace, now being told the peacemaking . . . you can see why every part of my life became mixed together, the peacemaking, the diplomatic, the professional, the personal, the religious and remember that throughout these years I had two young children growing up at home without their mother and I think the only way I lived through that period was because my mother and father who were then in the last half of their seventies would get on the train from Philadelphia and come down and move into my bedroom so that there would be a family presence with the children while I was away in those 155 days.

He also feels that he was able to get through difficult times because he believed in the importance of the peace work:

I felt we were doing something, and I think justifiably felt that we were doing something that was incredibly important. I mean how often does a human being get a chance to work in the middle of an historic conflict and move it towards peace? We mediated six Arab-Israeli agreements in six years. There had not been one since the arms disagreements in 1949 in that area. So you could not be part of this without knowing you were part of something historic and important.

One such experience which was particularly meaningful for Dr. Saunders was at Camp David:

Well, at Camp David we were there for thirteen days, produced two documents out of that. It was intense, but maybe one story from that had to do with Jimmy Carter.

The last afternoon when the final details of the agreement were being agreed and Begin that morning had threatened to blow up the whole

thing, so Sunday, the last day, was spent trying to put things back on the tracks. And they were gradually getting back on the tracks but Carter's secretary tracked me down and asked me to come over to his cabin at Camp David and so immediately went over.

We'd gotten so you didn't knock on the door, just walked in and I walked in to this very lovely cottage at Camp David. And I came in the front door and took a couple of steps through the vestibule and then got to a point where the living room was ahead of you and there was a hallway going down to the right toward Carter's study and so I came in and I didn't know exactly where the president was and I was sort of stopped in the vestibule to look around.

And I looked down the hallway and I saw that Carter was emerging from his study with Sadat and they walked up the hall toward the front door so that Sadat could go back to his cabin. And obviously they'd been having the discussion that put the final touches on the agreement, so it was an historic moment and as I saw them coming up the hall I stepped aside into the sort of the edge of the living room to get out of their way, not intrude on their moment of parting and Carter escorted Sadat to the door, to the door for him, and Sadat walked out and one of his aides picked him up outside and escorted him back to his cabin.

And Carter slowly turned around and I was the only one there so he was face to face with me and he looked at me and he said "I think we have an agreement but I was afraid to ask." And every time I say that I choke up because when you think of this is the president of the United States, the president of Egypt, personally trying to put the finishing touches on an historic agreement, two of them, and that was Carter's response and you could just read the incredible intensity that he had just lived through trying to bring this thing to a conclusion. And the fact of the matter was we all, everybody got in helicopters and went back to the White House and signed the agreement.

But another interesting story from that moment: Carter, Begin, and Sadat were in the Blue Room in the first floor of the White House, the agreements were going to be signed in the East Room, in the social room a few minutes later. I had the signing copies in my hands and I went in to where the three leaders were to show them what the signing copies looked like so that they could see where on the page they would be signing and there were two agreements. The first one was a

framework for peace in the Middle East, which is the document that proposed peace negotiations involving all of Israel's other Arab neighbors and then the second one was a framework for peace between Egypt and Israel, which became the basis of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

And it was important to Sadat that the rest of the Arab world not be able to say "Well Sadat just got his own territory back and he walked away from the rest of us. He negotiated a unilateral agreement and just left us out." So as I showed Carter, Begin, and Sadat the two documents and where they would be signing, Carter looked at me and if you ever felt anybody look at you as if he might kill you, he looked at me and said: "The first document, the framework for peace in the Middle East, must be on the table by itself, it must be signed by everybody, and it must be removed from the table before the framework for peace between Egypt and Israel is placed on the table and signed." And he looked at me and said "President Sadat insists on it." . . . Again the emotion of the moment in things like this. So this is just all to say I guess that there are a lot of intense human moments in all of this and it's impossible to ignore that part of it. . . .

You'll understand why this experience in answer to a lot of your questions, no adjective to describe it, was it a formative experience in my life, you bet it was! I don't know exactly what words to use that are enormous enough to capture what this was in my life, it made me, it made me what I am today.

And I try to convey that, for instance when I'm talking to students . . . I want them to understand that this can be a way of life, it can be incredibly transformative, it can be history making, and it's not something, it's not some neat little method that you're learning, some series of tricks that you're learning to do if you're bringing people together who are in conflict and trying to help them form a more peaceful relationship, that's, that's a deep human response to what is often deep-rooted human conflict. And that's not, that's just not negotiating a solution to a problem.

In Sustained Dialogue we often say Sustained Dialogue differs from most other such processes in two ways. One is that it focuses first not on the problems that confront people but it focuses on the relationships that cause the problems. In deep-rooted human conflict where

identities are at issue and deep-rooted interests are at issue you can't resolve the problem until you have resolved the relational differences and so getting young people to understand the importance of relationship and to understand that dialogue is the essence of relationship. If people can't open up with each other and let each other into each other's souls you're not going to have the kind of relational transformation that is necessary in making peace.

A key part of his career experience which influenced his approach to peacemaking is his development of the Sustained Dialogue approach. A detailed description of this approach is presented in his written works including *A Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts* (1999) and *Sustained Dialogue in Conflicts: Transformation and Change* (2011). An example is his description of his involvement in the inter-Tajik Dialogue:

Well that's the reason we call what we do Sustained Dialogue is that this doesn't happen in one conversation. The reason we bring people back over and over again is to keep them talking with each other and there's a sort of progression of experience in that if you bring mortal enemies together, people who have been killing each other together around a table as we did for instance in the dialogue that we conducted with people from the civil war in Tajikistan after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, starting in 1993. If you bring together people who have been killing each other they are so angry with each other when they sit down across the table they can hardly look at each other. Then they can, when begin talking what do they do? They begin blaming each other, "You started the civil war, you did this, your group killed my father," etc., etc. So there's all the vituperations and recriminations that are expressed. They're talking, it's not very constructive except that they have to get this off their chests. So there's a period at the beginning of a sustained dialogue when people have to do what one of my Soviet colleagues once called "they have to dump their feelings."

Empathy is a key part of the Sustained Dialogue process:

Then one of the purposes when you bring people together is to get them to come to a point where they can say "Well what we really have

to talk about first is X,” and I used to think that was the real breakthrough point. But there’s a second thing that has to happen along with identifying and naming the problem they have to solve and that is that they have to learn to talk openly with each other. They have to learn to talk in a way that begins to reveal something of their own pain. And I can cite examples where somebody would tell a story about what happened to him in a conflict because of what the other side was doing to him and his group and the moment that story hit somebody on the other side, and the person, you’d get somebody on the opposite side saying “I don’t agree with you, I don’t agree with your definition of the problem, because I don’t think we were as responsible for it as you do. But if I had had your personal experience I’d probably feel the same way you do.” A statement revealing empathy, the beginning of dialogue and that’s the principle thing that has to happen before you can then move into the genuine problem-solving mode. . . .

Going back to the inter-Tajik dialogue where finally somebody after two or three day meetings where people just exchanged recriminations somebody finally said ‘That’s enough of this, what we really have to start about is how to start a negotiation between the government and the opposition’, and they agreed to that one afternoon but that night they could not go any farther. I gave them a homework assignment, write two paragraphs. One paragraph would be the key paragraph in a letter from the government to the leader of the opposition, inviting them to come to a negotiation. And the other paragraph would be the key paragraph from the opposition’s response. And I said “You have to remember that when you respond, you have to remember that the people in the government will think you are responding only because you want to do something to embarrass the government.”

So they, couldn’t write either of those paragraphs, they were so scared that they had agreed with each other on a common purpose which was to start a negotiation . . .so they couldn’t get any farther in that meeting and so they went away. And so some things happened between meetings and they came back the next meeting and they had a wonderful conversation about how to start a negotiation. So the time between meetings gave them a chance to absorb, adjust and internalize what they’d agreed to and then decided to get down to work. But that was the sort of transformative moment in that negotiation, that dialogue. . . .

I would say I guess a lot of my learning has just come absorbing what I'm experiencing in these dialogues over a period of time and that event that I just described in the Armenia-Azerbaijan dialogue was a moment when I realized that until there is a show of empathy there cannot be genuine dialogue.

Dr. Saunders discusses aspects of this dialogue again as being an example of a meaningful and influential moment in his career:

Watching people change their relationships is really the exciting pinnacle of the experience. To watch two people who have been at odds with each other and there are numerous examples, little and big in the dialogues where you see people suddenly or maybe not so suddenly, but at any rate at some point that you see two people who have been at philosophical odds with each other sitting down in a coffee break together and really having a serious conversation. Something's happened. And that happens all the time. . . .

Well a very serious one in the Armenian-Azerbaijan dialogue on the Azerbaijan side there was a former foreign minister and on the side of Nagorno Karabakh which is the little enclave which is the third party to the Armenia-Azerbaijan dispute, was an advisor to the foreign minister and they had been at odds with each other right from the go, because the fellow from Nagorno Karabakh was asking the foreign minister to recognize the independence of Nagorno Karabakh from Azerbaijan. And the foreign minister obviously couldn't give away part of his country. Clearly that was the nexus of the problem.

But then at one point my colleague and I saw the two of them sitting at a table over coffee and I don't know sometime later in that meeting the former foreign minister said "I can't give you what you want, but how about the following?" So he proposed something, he called it *interim status*. "I can't change your ultimate status but what about a different way of our relating to each other that would give you a different sense of some recognition of your identity?" So that was a very obvious point where somehow the two of them decided enough was enough and they needed to sit down and listen to each other carefully and think seriously about what the other side needed.

Cultural values that influence Dr. Saunders

When asked about his cultural and personal values and the way they inform his peacebuilding, Dr. Saunders describes himself as having “the best of middle-class values”:

Well I think, I made some notes here on my paper about that and the first thing I wrote down was that I did grow up as an only child with two slightly older than usual parents each from a, well my mother from a clearly upper-middle class background, my father from a sort of aspiring lower-middle class background, but both people of great integrity so the values that I learned at home were those of the best of middle class America. I obviously came to love my country.

When asked to describe those values in more detail Dr. Saunders says:

Be honest, be respectful, respect other people even if you don't agree with them, be kind to people, recognize that other people have feelings, demonstrate integrity in everything you do, that's been an important word in my life, and obviously some, it's I'll say some of the values of American Democracy...the quintessential American political speech in colonial times in the town meetings was “We have a problem, let's talk about it,” you know it's in a way the essence of what I later called dialogue. . . .

Dialogue is the essence of relationship, and relationship is the key, building constructive relationships is the key to Democracy. . . . Listening to each other, talking respectfully to each other and then building a relationship that enables you to solve the problems that you confront. That's what American Democracy is about . . . and that's what the flag stands for. I happen in my career when I have been in positions where I have raised my right hand and sworn to protect and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic, whomsoever, and that means something to me. I learned that at home. My father had served in the First World War, he had served his country and I was aware of that. . . . I remember one of his co-workers saying to me one time later in life that he was the best draftsman in the office. So whatever you are going to do you do it well. That's middle class.

Dr. Saunders' religious faith is also a key part of his cultural values:

There's another part of it too if you want to say where do my values come from. . . . There is something called *the reformed church tradition* . . . so I belong, that's a part of my identity. I say I am in the reformed church tradition because that shows respect for the individual and who is the key in Democracy, it's the individual citizen, it's not the government. . . .

But you ask what my values are. But they're rooted in the colonial town meetings. They're rooted in the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights.

Another key value that Dr. Saunders has experienced as typically American culturally which affects his peacebuilding is the ability to admit to being wrong, which can help create a space for dialogue to emerge:

Of the ways that a moderator in a Sustained Dialogue to encourage people to open up is for the moderator to make herself vulnerable by acknowledging something they did wrong, some idea that they had that they later discarded and acknowledge that that original idea was wrong because you learned a better way of doing things and so on, but making yourself vulnerable, and opening up that way and demonstrating it to other people.

A key value for Dr. Saunders is that of persistence and perseverance, which comes through throughout his narrative:

The secondary school that I went to has a seal. I mean it's still a thriving school and it still uses the same seal and it's a picture of a hand with a watering can and a couple of sprouts of wheat from the ground. And obviously the person with the watering can is watering the wheat. The sun is beaming down from the background on this sheaf of wheat. And the motto in the circle around the picture says: by persevering you shall see the truth. And I mentioned my mother's attributing to my grandfather teaching me concentration, so all of those things, I think back to that school motto, I have thought back to it. Not that I thought much about it when I was there but later in life I looked

back at it and think yeah, they got it right. Stick to it, hang in there, being as creative and imaginative as you can, be as helpful as you can, be as sensitive to people as you can. All that, but hang in there.

He gives an example of this during his work during the hostage crisis:

Once you get into a dialogue like that you just feel that the potential is there and the problem is to keep going long enough until somebody gives up and somebody recognizes what they can do about it. But you can't make that moment happen you just have to have some faith that if you stick at it long enough and hard enough and don't give up that it's going to happen, but maybe it won't.

But in most cases I think there have been enough examples that give me some confidence that if you hang in there long enough something will happen. Why do we talk about Sustained Dialogue—because it's sustained. And I can remember thinking on several of these occasions that 'I am going to hang in there and I'll be standing when they drop'.

And I articulated this for myself during the Iran hostage crisis. Four hundred and forty four days I didn't take a day off in that whole period. We tried numberless approaches, people made open doors for us and we walked through them. We had a practice that we called we will not leave any stone unturned if somebody opens a door for possibly moving forward toward a settlement, we'll walk through that door and see what we can do. But I just had a feeling that my gosh, I was going to be standing when they gave up. And that's what happened. . . .

When I was working for Kissinger in his first years it was extremely difficult, or on the shuttles. One of the shuttles it was the only time I asked myself if I whether I could still stay on my feet but the point was you hang in there and don't give up until something happens. You're going to be there when something happens so you can make something out of it. That's why we call it Sustained Dialogue.

Emergent themes from Dr. Saunder's Narrative

There are a number of prevalent emergent themes from Dr. Saunders' narrative. Some have already been mentioned within the narrative context but they include:

The importance of dialogue—Particularly Sustained Dialogue

Dr. Saunders says:

So I would say that a capacity to engage in and to encourage dialogue is extremely important as an attribute in peacemaking. Coupled of course with the skills that are the essence of being a good mediator. At a center point you are going to reach a moment where you may want to be able to capture the common ground that has come out of a dialogue so the capacity to conceptualize a potential agreement.

A good bit of what I did as a diplomat in these agreements was to take people aside and find what the real needs of each party were and what could be done that both parties could agree to that might meet needs on both sides. So the capacity to capture and verbalize perhaps in writing the common ground that could be found between two people who are at odds with each other

The importance of empathy

“Not only the peacemaker’s empathy for others but also the capacity to somehow elicit, create situations where people can show empathy for each other.”

Dr. Saunders also says that the key lesson he learned from the peacebuilders he most admires is: “I think the ability to put themselves in the other side’s shoes.”

The importance of individual impact

The two are inseparable in a way, if it weren’t for the people there wouldn’t have been the agreements we reached and today we’re working on 25 college campuses with young people, if it weren’t for the enthusiastic young people we wouldn’t be doing this work. So, or I have a long-standing dialogue with what were Soviet citizens, now Russian citizens and we’re very close to each other, we’re good, we’re friends as well as being professional colleagues, and so that the personal—our whole purpose is to transform relationships and that’s a very personal thing. You can’t do Sustained Dialogue without recognizing that what you’re doing is as I say to transform relationships and that’s a very human enterprise.

The importance of relationship

I gradually articulated my own paradigm. I call it the *relational paradigm*. It is rooted in the conviction that solving problems and making peace depends on transforming the relationships that cause problems—not just on negotiating practical solutions.

For what it may be worth that paradigm suggests that politics—national or international—is a cumulative, multilevel, and open-ended process of continuous interaction over time engaging significant clusters of citizens in or out of government and the relationships they form to solve public problems across permeable borders.

The importance of tearing down walls and barriers to peace

He quotes Sadat’s speech to the Knesset in November, 1977:

After he had described the issues dividing the two governments he said:

“Yet, there remains another wall. This wall constitutes a psychological barrier between us, a barrier of suspicion, a barrier of rejection, a barrier of fear, of deception, a barrier of hallucination without any action, deed or decision. A barrier of distorted and eroded interpretation of every event and statement. It is this psychological barrier which I described in official statements as constituting 70 percent of the whole problem.

Today, through my visit to you, I ask why don’t we stretch out our hands with faith and sincerity so that together we might destroy this barrier?”

Other emergent themes include the use of Sustained Dialogue to create a safe space for people to listen, communicate, and feel empathy so they can become involved in a transformative process; the need for people to change themselves—peacebuilders are the facilitators but they can’t actually change people; the importance of taking an

inter-disciplinary approach that incorporates multiple perspectives; and the importance of going out and getting involved:

If a college student came to me I'd say get involved in sustained dialogue or something comparable. Go out and do something that puts you in a position to think about what other people need and help them to achieve it in a way that will be respectful of those around them.

Reflections on my interview with Dr. Saunders

A box, a suitcase and a plane

I was sitting on a bench in the Middle East in a market square waiting for a bus. I was young. A young couple sat down next to me. The woman had long, wavy, dark hair. She smiled at me. Then they left. It seemed they left a box behind them on the bench next to me. People standing around started asking "Is this your box, is this your box?" I kept saying no. Everyone got upset and they cleared the square. A bomb squad came and removed the box. I never knew what was inside.

Ten years later, and the United States had just bombed Libya. We knew it wasn't safe to fly out of Madrid but we had to get back to school in England and we already had tickets. I was waiting in the check-in line and a man who looked perhaps Moroccan came up to me with a suitcase. He asked me if I would check in the suitcase for him. I apologized but said no, I couldn't. I said to the man ahead of me in the line "Some man just asked me to check a suitcase on for him." The man in the line was disturbed by this. "What man?" he asked, "where?" We both looked around. The man with the suitcase had disappeared.

A few years later I wanted to come home. I had just had surgery in England and was very tired. I asked my Dad to book me on a flight. But a few days before the flight I called him and said I was too tired to be able to get on a plane right now. My Dad said he'd get a ticket for a week later. When I arrived home in Chicago my Dad was waiting for me. He looked more serious than I'd ever seen him before or since. "I guess you're just meant to be here," he said. Apparently the first flight I'd been booked on was Pan Am flight 103, the Locherbie flight.

There are people who keep watch at night so we can sleep safely. Safety is precious and can be so easily lost. These men also strive for peace through multiple means such as negotiation, diplomacy, and sustained dialogue. Harold Saunders is one of these men. He personifies honor and service in his peacebuilding and his work in Sustained Dialogue which can help keep us all safe. Thank you.

Dr. William Ury

Official biography

William Ury co-founded Harvard's Program on Negotiation and is currently a Distinguished Senior Fellow of the *Harvard Negotiation Project*. He is the author of *The Power of a Positive No* (2007) and co-author (with Roger Fisher and Bruce Patton) of *Getting to Yes*, an eight-million-copy bestseller translated into over thirty languages. "No other book in the field comes close to its impact on the way practitioners, teachers, researcher, and the public approach negotiation," comments the National Institute on Dispute Resolution. Ury is also author of the award-winning *Getting Past No* and *Getting to Peace* (released in paperback under the title *The Third Side*.)

Over the last 30 years Ury has served as a negotiation adviser and mediator in conflicts ranging from corporate mergers to wildcat strikes

in a Kentucky coal mine to ethnic wars in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the former Soviet Union. With former president Jimmy Carter, he co-founded the International Negotiation Network, a non-governmental body seeking to end civil wars around the world. During the 1980s he helped the US and Soviet governments create nuclear crisis centers designed to avert an accidental nuclear war. In that capacity, he served as a consultant to the Crisis Management Center at the White House. Ury has served as a third party in helping to end a civil war in Aceh, Indonesia and helping to prevent one in Venezuela.

Ury has taught negotiation to tens of thousands of corporate executives, labor leaders, diplomats and military officers around the world. He helps organizations endeavor to reach mutually profitable agreements with customers, suppliers, unions, and joint-venture partners.

Ury is also co-founder of the *e-Parliament* which offers the 25,000 members of congress and parliament around the world an Internet-based forum in which they can tackle global problems such as climate change and energy efficiency. *Time* magazine described it as a ‘Google for global politics.’

His most recent project is the *Abraham Path Initiative*, which seeks to build bridges between cultures and faiths by opening a walking trail and cultural route in the Middle East that retraces the footsteps of Abraham and his family. . . . ABC’s Christiane Amanpour calls it “an unprecedented initiative to break down barriers and foster communication in the most divided region of the world.”

Ury is the recipient of the Whitney North Seymour Award from the American Arbitration Association and the Distinguished Service Medal from the Russian Parliament. His work has been widely featured in the media from *The New York Times* to the *Financial Times* and from CNN to the BBC. He has a popular TED talk entitled *The Walk from No to Yes*.

Trained as a social anthropologist, with a B.A. from Yale and a Ph.D. from Harvard, Ury has carried out his research on negotiation not only in the boardroom and at the bargaining table but also among the Bushmen of the Kalahari and the clan warriors of New Guinea. (personal communication, 2014)

Interview circumstances

The interview took place on October 25, 2013, from 2:00 to 3:20 pm CST.

The interview took place via Skype with the video section of Skype turned off to improve the audio quality.

Contextual background

From a young age Dr. Ury has devoted himself to the cause of peace, through international mediation, education and writing.

Childhood and young adult experiences

Growing up under shadows of war

Dr. Ury lived in the United States until the age of six:

I was born in 1953. . . . The United States had emerged from WWII and the Depression. But I would say we were in the midst of the Cold War, the Korean War was going on but it was also a time of relief and growing prosperity, and safety in the United States and a sense of kind of opening. So that was what my world was like. But at the same time I think that the scars of both the 30's and the 40's were very much hanging over and the uncertainty of the Cold War with the Soviet Union was very much, was present. With the crazy possibility that we might have a nuclear exchange.

He felt that this tension impacted him. This was particularly the case because he spent many years as a youth living in Europe where the results of war were very apparent:

And you could still see some of the, like in France, buildings were still just ruined and in other parts of Europe too. Right now if you go to Europe you can't see anything like that but in the late 50's you could still feel the weight of WWII and just the sheer humanitarian disaster that all was and WWI before that because WWII and WWI were just, were kind of like bookends, they were the same war...

We lived in Switzerland. We lived in Switzerland in the Swiss Alps. Which was safe, or seemed safe but just psychologically I think I

consider myself a child of the Cold War and in the generation just after WWII, the Holocaust, so if I think about my formation in wanting to dedicate my life to peace this historical context definitely was important.

His growing up in Switzerland was one of the key experiences which impacted his peacebuilding. One of the reasons for this was that the school he attended was multi-national with children from many different cultures. When asked about life experiences which have made him a peacebuilder he says:

Spending half my early years surrounded by children from many, many different cultures. Many different nations, cultures, faiths, and so on. That definitely, in that moment I became a kind of a global citizen, a world citizen and thought about humanity and also thought about how do we . . . as human beings on this planet, how do we learn to live together and deal with our differences.

During his adolescent years the threat of the Cold War became an even more prevalent influence for Dr. Ury, and it had an impact in his choice of studying Anthropology as both an undergraduate and graduate student. Dr. Ury was interested in the practical applications of his studies and therefore entered the field of negotiation:

And then at some point very early on I wanted to apply that...I think this whole question of war and peace because I'd grown up in that particular context with those kinds of shadows over us both current shadows and past shadows. And so that's how I got into the field of negotiation was I was looking for what are the tools or the instruments for preventing war.

Roger Fisher became his mentor and highly influenced his development as a peacebuilder:

And so at that point I was going around and met a professor who became my mentor and my colleague who was Roger Fisher. And just to tell you one story about him. So I wrote up a, I had to write a research paper for what I might do my thesis on and I decided after talking with him I decided to imagine I was an anthropologist, a fly on the wall, and in a Middle-East peace negotiation that was supposed to take place any moment and as an anthropologist what would I observe, what would I see going on there and so I sent it to him. And then I was in my garret, rented room at the top of someone's house one snowy January and the phone rang around ten pm and said "This is Roger Fisher and I've read your paper and I've taken your central table there and I've sent it to the Assistant Secretary of State because I thought it might be useful to him." And it suddenly dawned on me that I could come up with an idea that might possibly be of some utility to someone in a real world situation like that, so I got hooked and Roger invited me to work with him on some of his projects and so I immediately accepted and one thing led to another.

Career experiences

After graduate school Dr. Ury developed quickly into a peacebuilder and became very active in working to prevent war:

You know this was back in the very early 1980s and Ronald Reagan was president and there was a very deep, cold, chill between the United States and the Soviet Union and there was a lot of concern again about nuclear war and nuclear weapons. And so we did a little study of, you know just trying to think where could a small group of people have some potential influence, operational influence, practical influence and quickly came to the conclusion that one sweet spot was that no matter how much the two sides could disagree the one thing they could agree on they didn't want an accidental nuclear war.

And so I studied that . . . and so we, my colleagues went down to Washington and we talked to some senators and we talked to people in the White House. And we went over to the Soviet Union and made a number of trips there to try to talk to them about these ideas. . . .

And so we took it on and wrote about it and talked to, and pretty soon I became a consultant to the White House on that particular issue. And as it turned out like maybe two and half years later when Ronald Reagan met Gorbachev for the very first time in Geneva the very first

agreement they signed was an agreement to create these nuclear risk reduction centers.

Dr. Ury's experiences as a peace builder are strongly influenced by his optimistic attitude, and his belief that you must try to prevent or end war:

Well, I, I think I believe just constitutionally I'm almost an inveterate optimist. . . . You kind of have to be in this work, because I'm kind of a, I have a penchant for so-called lost causes. And I believe in, I mean the way I see it, just even rationally is I see it as, you know if you have, if one person can take one month of their time let's say or one year of their time let's say and have a one percent chance of bringing a war to an end or preventing a war. I mean you have to, even if it's a one percent chance, you know, one year, one person a year having a one percent chance and then you multiply it by the potential benefit for all the people, it's worth taking.

He has found that there is an emotional element to peacebuilding, and being active can help to relieve anxiety associated with war:

. . . in the last year, just feeling the pain of what's going on in Syria because I've been to Syria many times on another project over the years and it feels painful. But the moment, like a year ago I decided to take an active move and start working on the Syrian conflict that anxiety got relieved.

An example of Dr. Ury's taking such action is his creation of the Abraham path in the Middle East. It also illustrates his openness to new ideas and his belief in out-of-the-box thinking when approaching a peacebuilding situation. He describes the process as follows:

I mean for example we hold the Middle East to be dangerous, and difficult, most intractable, terrible, impossible and we don't realize the burden that holding it that way is. So I have a project over in the Middle East. A kind of a wild idea project, because I'm given to wild ideas of creating, kind of an out of the box idea of creating a kind of

Appalachian trail, or if you know the Camino de Compostella in Europe, a long distance walking trail like a pilgrimage route that would go, it goes through the Middle East re-tracing the ancient journey of Abraham and his family. Which is kind of the founding origins story of that region and which reminds everyone that we all come from the same origin and celebrates the Abrahamic values of hospitality which is what he was known for and kindness to strangers.

So it would seem like a crazy idea in the middle of the Middle East but in the course of working on that over the last ten years I've had occasion to go for walks right in the middle of the West Bank, in the middle of Palestine for days on end, staying with people in their homes, people whom in this country people would imagine they're terrorists or whatever, and feeling perfectly safe and you feel well. I mean you're in the heart of, you're in the heart of, you're totally vulnerable, but you're in the heart of the problem, of the perceived problem there's a feeling of well-being that's, and safety actually, relative safety that's quite astonishing because the false fears all dissipate...

So I organized a group of twenty-five people from ten different countries, scholars, business people, civil society leaders, NGO activists. We had a priest, a rabbi and an imam for good effect. And we took a journey from the birth place of Abraham in Northern Mesopotamia all the way to the death place of Abraham. We went from womb to tomb in over two weeks. Not just walking, but we were by bus, then stopping and walking, whatever, we crossed four or five countries and showed that it could be done.

And in the course of that when we came close to the end, which is near Jerusalem, we were in Bethlehem in the birth place of Jesus and we were having a meeting. We'd been having consultations and listenings along the way to listen to people about what they thought about the possibility of there being a path like this, a cultural route of travel and tourism. And so we were in the peace palace there in the major square in Bethlehem and meeting around a round table.

We were twenty or twenty-five and there were probably twenty-five or thirty Palestinian civil society or religious or leaders, political leaders meeting with us just to exchange ideas about this thought.

And it was a kind of a tense time there was gunfire outside which we later found out it was because it was the first anniversary of the death of Yassar Arafat. And there was a lot of tension and there was the thought there were going to be riots, but anyway, it doesn't matter, there was stuff going on.

And then the questioning. You know we presented the idea for ten or fifteen minutes and then we sat and listened to the responses from our Palestinian colleagues and there was a little bit of like they were trying to ask the toughest questions they could saying: "Ok, does this have any connection with Israel? Does it have any connection with Zionism? Is it America? Is this a CIA plot? Is this. . . ." And each one trying to outdo the other you know, in some sense. And it went on for a couple of hours.

And I could feel, with the gunshots going on outside, our delegation there was, there were people with high anxiety because the questions were getting more and more pointed and distrustful and "Who are you actually? And who are you representing?"

And then of course at the end of the two hours everyone looked back and they said "Ok, so William Ury will now respond."

So again in that moment on the one hand I was feeling like wow, for this idea to succeed, it needed, it can't succeed without the participation of people. And particularly the Palestinians and I realized there was a lot of distrust. But just in terms of in that moment I needed to just relax and totally let go of the idea even though we'd put a lot of time and effort. And so I just thought to turn to them and say 'Look, I hear you, I understand the concerns and the questions and you know if I were in your shoes I might be having the same questions and the same doubts and I hear what you're saying.

And I want you to know that this is not our idea that we're trying to sell to you. This is just an idea that first of all exists in the region. We're not trying to create a path, this is an ancient historical memory here in this region that this is where Abraham and his family, you know and you go into villages and so on, and if you don't want this to happen it just won't happen. It's fine and we can wait.'

And just basically took all the edge off of it and they were saying you know “Is there going to be a Palestinian on the board?” I said “You know this could be entirely Palestinian run. It’s yours if you want it”

Believe it or not this is now seven years later, the part of the Abraham path that is most locally owned and most active is the place that people would have thought would be the last place it would be developed which is in the West Bank. But it’s owned by the villagers, they think of it as theirs. It’s not some Western organization that has some crazy peace idea and it’s theirs. And there have been hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of travelers and there’s dozens and dozens and dozens of communities that are actively involved in receiving people who walk the path. And the Palestinian path is the most active part of the path because the place where you think the least, you know would be the most difficult.

Cultural values that influence Dr. Ury

The core value for Dr. Ury is peace: “Well definitely, for me peace is the value and it’s peace both in the external sense and also in the internal sense.”

Although Dr. Ury is not faith-based relative to an institutional religion in his narrative, he does believe there is a faith element in his work, although not in the traditional sense. In a follow-up email in response to the question of faith in his work he says:

While it may not be faith-based in the more conventional sense, it is faith-based in the larger sense of a deep appreciation for the underlying unity and interconnectedness of all life as well as in the spirit of hope embodied in faith.

Additionally, it is important to note that Dr. Ury does use words like *sacred work* and *grace* when describing the peace process:

And there is, obviously there are a lot of frustrations in working on conflict and in conflict zones because you're seeing a lot of conflict and violence and all the impact of violence and the traumas that go with violence. But the ability to slowly, very patiently, like when you bring actual adversaries, sworn enemies into the same room together there's an electricity there. And when they actually start to open up it's a process. It doesn't just happen at the very end when they reach agreement, if they reach agreement. But there's a kind of a, you feel like you're doing somehow sacred work. That you are, there's a kind of, I mean I'll just give you an example, I could pick dozens of examples but just one comes to mind maybe about fifteen, twenty years ago I was working in a project.

We were facilitating conversations between Kurdish leaders and Turkish leaders at a time when there was a civil war inside Turkey between the Kurds and the Turks. And these were leaders who it could not be known that they were meeting with each other because it would put their lives in danger.

And so the first meeting was in a monastery outside of Paris, and then in special places in Switzerland. And we had a number of meetings in these confidential settings, castle, and whatever. And in one of them I remember one of the Turkish leaders was a retired admiral and very high up in the Turkish armed forces and at one point he said to us in this meeting, he said "There's one thing I want to say." He said "As a member of the Turkish armed forces I would personally like to offer my personal apology for all the thousands of deaths of innocents, of villagers, of people who have been killed or forced to move from their villages inside Turkey, the Kurdish ones. And I deeply regret it."

And there was a stillness in the room where you could hear a pin drop, kind of the silent emotion in that room. And then a Kurdish participant, one, started clapping very gently and then his colleagues joined him and pretty soon the whole room was clapping. And I'm just giving that as an example. And pretty soon the atmosphere shifted and that allowed us to do some work and have some breakthroughs in the conversations which led to practical results. But just the process of there was a kind of grace in the room. And so I would say that motivates, that gives me fuel to continue doing what I'm doing even if the odds seem very long.

Dr. Ury feels that while he is American and has American cultural values, he has also been influenced by multiple cultures, for example Swiss culture and going to a multi-cultural school. He believes that the American cultural values which have most influenced him as a peacemaker include a certain pragmatic, practical approach as well as a can-do attitude:

One is a kind of a, which may be related to the pragmatism, but it's kind of a *can do* there's a kind of *can-do* characteristic of American culture of you know, no problem is impossible. Some other cultures I know they see that characteristic of Americans as being naïve, that there's no problem too great that cannot yield to some kind of human solution of some kind. It may not be a solution in the sense of something very neatly wrapped up but I'd say that kind of 'can do' creativity, ingenuity, I mean American culture values ingenuity and creativity and new ideas. I think that's another one, new ideas. I think that's influenced me a lot because that's what I try to look for, I look for what's a new idea, how do we think outside the box as it were. And I'd say that's an American characteristic.

Emergent themes from Dr. Ury's narrative

The importance of empathy

He describes this relative to mediation:

And then I became an anthropologist and the key thing in anthropology is to put yourself in the shoes of that culture. Is to put yourself in the skin of someone in that culture and try to understand in that culture how does it feel from within. From inside that frame of reference. And that I find, perhaps turns out to be also the key fundamental base skill or competence that a mediator needs to have which is the ability to put yourself in the shoes of the parties and understand how they view things, how they feel about things, what their interests are. And so what's called empathy really, the ability to put yourself in the shoes of others, that was what I learned just viscerally by being in a multi-cultural environment and then professionally as an anthropologist and then professionally as a mediator.

He also lists empathy first when asked what qualities are important for someone to be a peacebuilder. He says:

The qualities are like I mentioned one, empathy, patience, persistence, having an optimistic frame of mind, having a positive frame of mind, which is looking at the glass half full. . . . And let's see, creativity, integrity in terms of creating that trust. Having congruence between your words, your thoughts, your thoughts, your words and your actions. Being respectful, you know, respecting others, that's enormously important. Those are some of the qualities... Being open to learn. Being open-minded and open to learn, and learn, and learn. I would say is a key characteristic of being a mediator.

The importance of building trust between parties when peacebuilding

When asked what he feels is important in a successful peacebuilding process Dr. Ury says:

Well one thing is, it may seem obvious but it's the construction of trust among people who bitterly distrust each other. And I'll give you two stories. One was just when I was talking about the Turkish, Kurdish story. One of the Turkish leaders had been a leader in his youth of a kind of group that practiced what might be called terrorism but it was called *White Wolves*. . . . The White Wolves, they were kind of like a death squad. But they were a radical, extremist group and one of his colleagues said to me he'd just as soon shoot a Kurd as talk to a Kurd, you know. And he'd never, he was here in this room and the first day some of the Kurdish leaders started talking, they mentioned a term like *Kurdistan*.

Now it was high treason in those days to even talk about, to even mention the name Kurdistan—that was like, land of the Kurds. That was like, that was treason. And he got up and said “What?” He said “I shouldn't even be in this room. That is high treason.” And he ran out of the room. “I'm not going to participate in this meeting.” It was just too painful to him, to even, he couldn't believe it, it was just between shock and horror. So I had to rush back in and try to get him back into the room. And the conversation continued.

About two days later he came in, the same guy having had like two days of dialogue where each side encouraged each side to talk from

their own experiences and what was it like to be a Kurd and a Turk in Turkey. And just talk from their own. . . . And he'd heard enough about both formally in the room and informally over the meals or in the corridors that he woke up one morning and then he came into the opening session and he said "I just want to say that if you told me two months ago that I'd be sitting here in a room in Switzerland or France, talking with a group of Kurds and hearing terms like Kurdistan I would have thought I was living in my worst nightmare." And he said "But today I have to tell you I believe that I'm living in a dream.

And then he publically thanked the Kurdish participants for opening his eyes to the fact that there was another side to this matter that he had never recognized and seen.

So I'm just saying that kind of trust building, personal trust building that would open up people's eyes, that's a key part, that allows, that kind of personal almost like transformation, then allows you, then you've got someone very different that you're working with when it comes to practically talking about steps about what are the arrangements that could be done to bring an end to the war, to construct agreements so that Kurds and Turks could live together in peace with each other. So that's just an example.

The importance of respect between parties

Dr. Ury provides another example of the importance of trust where he also comments on and illustrates the importance of respect:

Some years ago, about ten years ago I was working in the country of Venezuela. It was a time when Hugo Chavez was president and there were millions of people who believed that he should resign. There had been a coup d'etat. There were millions of people who wanted him in power. Chavistas and antichavistas, and you know when I was there in Caracas there might be a million people on the streets demanding his downfall, and resignation, and a million people supporting him. And there was some violence and tension. And the UN and the Organization of American States and the international observers were deeply concerned that this might turn even into a civil war.

And so I was asked, invited to help if I could in some way working with the UN and with President Carter who had asked me to come in and work with his teams. And anyway to make a long story short,

about six months or nine months into the process I finally received an invitation to meet. . . .

And anyway after waiting there some time in the reception room I was finally ushered in to see the president. And you know one thing that was clear to me was, my first instinct would be like I've only got about ten minutes I'd better tell him what I think, right. And then I realized that's going to be a big mistake. . . . So I sort of decided to just go in without an agenda of advising him or telling him what I thought unless he invited me of course. And just see if I could, just connect with him at some human level, you know build again, it has to do with trust of some kind.

And so we started talking, and we talked about our daughters of the same age and so on. And then he started talking about his story about how he got involved in politics because he'd been a military man. And just a story about how he'd been asked to shoot on crowds and decided that was the wrong thing. And then he decided to mount a coup d'etat and then he got thrown in prison.

And anyway there was a long line of people waiting to see him and I was thinking this was going to be a ten minute meeting and we were already an hour into the meeting by the end of his story. But at the end of his story then I still hadn't got any of my points across. Then he turns to me and says "So Ury, what do you think of this situation?" And that was an invitation so I said well, you know I was concerned about it had all the early signs of going into war. And I said "You have a tremendous opportunity here to prevent a civil war before it happens." And he said "How would you do that?" And I said "Well you know maybe you need to talk with the other side."

And at that point he said "What, talk to them? I mean they're traitors, they tried to kill me in this very room a year ago and never would I talk to them." So then I said "So you don't trust them, right?" And he said "That's right I don't trust them. I wouldn't trust any of them." So that's the issue of trust. So I said "What if, then I understand that you don't trust them. Let me just ask if you'd be interested in this, which is where you don't have to sit down with them at all, you don't have to meet with them at all. But what if we did an exercise where you appoint someone and I'll ask someone to appoint someone to meet with me. And they don't even have to meet together but just to work

with me to answer the question of what could the other side do tomorrow morning, what action or tangible action or statement could they make that would, you know it wouldn't cause you trust them but it would kind of at least cause you to take notice and say wow, maybe they are willing to turn over a new page. What would it be? What would be like a menu of like five or ten . . . you know, what would be some actions that they could take, confidence building measures. And then I would ask them the same question about you."

And he said "Oh you mean *senales*, you know, signals, signs." And he said, "Ok, I'll do that." And he turned to his right-hand man who was right there who was the Minister of the Interior and he said "You meet with him." And he said "How long are you in town for?" And I said "Only a couple of days." And he said "Fine, you meet with him and then you come back and talk to me." And about two and a half hours had gone by. And so he said "Come back and talk to me." So it was by not going in and going to tell him what to do or give him my best ideas unless I was invited of course, and then by working on that issue of trust.

And then that night, or I think it was maybe, yeah that night around 11:00 that Minister showed up. And we couldn't even be seen to be even in the same room or anything like that or even in the same building.

So I was staying, I didn't like to stay in hotels, I was staying in a little Bed and Breakfast in the middle of Caracas. It had a big garden and it was surrounded by big walls. So the Minister came there and was on my terrace around 11:00 at night and some of the heads of the opposition were down in the garden around the fountain. And for about six or seven hours through the night I just shuttled back and forth between these two with those questions and by the morning we had a list, a concrete list of what could be done to reduce the tension and distrust. And most of them had to do with respect, you know. You know it was like the president complained "They're calling me a *mono*, a monkey on national TV." Because the opposition owned the private TV channels. And so I would say "No insulting, calling the president insulting names." Or you know, or him calling them, he was calling his opponents like the four horsemen of the apocalypse. There were a lot of personal attacks that were not helping the situation. And it was things like that. And again, then one side, the president took one

action, they took one action and the situation diffused a little bit. It was not that it ended but it went down from the boiling point to simmering.

The key was respect. Respect was the absolute key, that's the most underrated, easiest concession, cheapest concession either side can make to the other. And you can imagine, because when people feel disrespected and or humiliated or shamed that's when you can very easily tip over irrationally into violence that serves no one

The importance of passion for the work

You need passion. What's going to sustain you for ten years of working on a conflict? It's passion . . . and I'm working on Syria right now as I mentioned and you know, we've got to take a ten year perspective on Syria, so it takes passion to do that. What else is going to sustain you if it's not passion?

The importance of getting involved and just doing peacebuilding

When asked what advice he would give to peacebuilders or those interested in peacebuilding he very much emphasizes going out and trying:

The advice would be don't wait. . . . Don't wait, just do it . . . Well because a lot of people we get enamored of it and we think well there's no way, and we start talking ourselves out of it, what can I do, what can one individual do. . . .

But, I'm just saying if you're interested in this take a course but just all around you there are opportunities for peacemaking. In your own family, with your friends, in other words start somewhere that's tangible and close to you and then work out to the world. That's why I'm saying, just get started. I think it was Goethe who said "Beginning has magic." So rather than just dream about it, dream about it for sure but do something. And all of us have an immediate opportunity around us because we can all of us be third-siders. You know, everywhere you look there are possibilities because conflict is everywhere

Work on ourselves

Another key lesson is to do the work on ourselves. He cites the example of Gandhi:

So this is just one example of someone who, he did his inner work, he did his outer work, he used himself as an instrument . . . tuning your own instrument, working on yourself. Knowing that you know, how

effective are you going to be as a peacebuilder if you don't work on your own self?

Be open to creative and new approaches and “wild” ideas

He also uses Gandhi as an example of this “being open to wild ideas, like his salt march as an example, ideas people thought were absolutely crazy including his colleagues.”

The importance of learning

“And I feel like I'm still learning, here I am. . . . Oh definitely I learn a lot every time.”

The importance of listening

“. . . listening, the willingness to listen and the eagerness to listen to what's not just the words but what's behind the words. To what people are doing, for listening.”

The importance of framing

The ability to come up with simple ways of re-framing the situation. The Abraham path for example is a re-frame. You know, it's ok so you have this conflict, so let's just re-frame it in terms of a story. There's this old saying that some conflicts are so difficult that only a story can heal them. And so the taking that story, the story of Abraham and framing it so ok let's walk together because when you walk side by side you have a different conversation than when you're talking face to face. So re-framing that's something I do. Or even in my books I try to come up with very simple frameworks or simple distinctions, like the distinction between positions and interests. . . . So that's what I offer. It's kind of a way of taking a complex situation and trying to see the simplicity on the other side of complexity.

Reflections on my interview with Dr. Ury

Walking between worlds

One of the things that most resonated with me was that, in answer to the question of how his culture has influenced him as a peacebuilder and influenced his

peacebuilding, Dr. Ury says: “My culture, well I guess I believe I have many cultures. . . . The thing is I had that kind of culture shock early on of growing up between cultures.”

This idea of being between for me is at the heart of this study. These peacebuilders are men who walk between. They walk between worlds, languages, cultures, and opposing sides of conflict. They become the bridges between others. I feel in my life I have also always served that role. I too have walked between worlds, cultures, languages. I was that person in high school who was friends with everyone and was able to go between the different cliques. I was the person who had a curiosity about the world and need to travel and set off with my back pack as soon as I was able. At a young age I learned different languages. I too studied Anthropology. I went to Oxford as a theologian but was drawn to, drawn to, the study of differing cultures. I have always felt as if my space is in the interstices of things. I live in the overlap in a Venn diagram of careers, friendships, nationalities, cultures. How important is this ability to walk between in peacebuilding? Three of the four Chinese peacebuilders in this study have spent half their lives in each culture and feel this helps them bridge the gap. How important is it to be someone who walks between, and for those of us who do, where do we ever really belong?

John Paul Lederach

Official biography

As a Pacifist from the Mennonite tradition, John Paul Lederach has spent much of his professional life in war zones searching for ways to help people end violence. His writing emerged primarily around the need to reflect on the difficult practice of peace when it seems remote and impossible. . . .

For more than thirty years, John Paul has dedicated himself to the study and practice of peacebuilding and conflict transformations. He currently is professor of international peacebuilding at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. He was the founding director of the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University, where he retains the title of Distinguished scholar. He spends roughly half of each year in the classroom and the other half dedicated to ongoing peace initiatives. He represents the best of the practitioner-scholar tradition. . . .

John Paul has participated as a mediator in numerous national peace processes in Central America, Africa, and Asia. He has conducted capacity-building workshops and educational programs in this field in more than twenty-five countries, the majority of the time working with local communities affected by violence. He has written eighteen books and manuals on peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and nonviolent social change, now translated in more than a dozen languages. (The Fetzer Institute website)

Interview circumstances

The interview took place via telephone on Tuesday, November 5, 2013, and lasted for 50 minutes.

Contextual background

Professor Lederach has been involved in international peacebuilding from a young age.

He is a scholar-practitioner and also teaches and writes about peacebuilding.

Childhood and young adult experiences

Early peacebuilding interest

Professor Lederach showed an interest in peacebuilding in high school and college, particularly in the practical issues of handling conflict:

Ok, well it goes back to high school when we faced the latter end of the draft period for the Vietnam War and I come from a Mennonite, Pacifist tradition. . . . And I got interested in knowing more about where that belief came from originally and so my early college years I started pursuing more of the reading and writing of people who were discussing issues about non-violence and conscientious objection. And eventually by the time I headed for degree programs I ended up getting an undergraduate degree in history and peace studies. So I've always been attracted to and interested in this field although my particular interests were always about the practical side. So while I certainly have a part of me that's interested in the philosophy and ethics a lot of it was around practical issues of how do we handle conflict better and more constructively, and reduce levels of violence and build better relationships. So probably the early attraction was from that source.

An early experience was in seventh grade and had to do with the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.:

I was in seventh grade and we were, originally I grew up in Oregon in the far Northwest. But my parents were pursuing education. And for a number of years we ended up in different parts of the United States. And one of those was a year in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Which happened to be my seventh grade year so I was probably about twelve or thirteen. And we were in the deep South in a large city which was quite different than the rural area of Oregon that I had grown up in. And it was the year that Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. And our family was very active in the Civil Rights movement. My parents refused to go to areas that were segregated that didn't have a policy of admission to African-Americans which was very prominent in those days. And we had a lot of friends in the African-American community

And I remember very distinctly the time period where the Civil Rights movement was emerging and listening to the speeches by Martin

Luther King Jr., what a huge impact those had on me. And the day that he was assassinated very significant riots broke out in our town of Winston-Salem. And our school was shut for about three days

And when we returned to school the very first period that I had in class was a social studies class. And typically the teacher started with kind of a review of contemporary issues. So she asked our class what people thought of Martin Luther King Jr. and the assassination that had just taken place. And it was the first in that class, it was a school that was not, I mean I was in a public school. And it had at that point, it had no integration that had been successfully accomplished and so most of my classmates were white.

And I was surprised because of the response of some of the classmates who I'd been with for about five or six months. I mean I of course was the new kid in a really big school so I wasn't used to it, but you know when you're new you talk about sports and other things and not big issues when you're that age. And I was surprised to hear them talk about Martin Luther King Jr. as if he had deserved the assassination

And so I stood up and made a strong statement that I thought he was one of the great leaders of our country. And that precipitated a huge kind of outrage in the middle of the class. And I got called a whole series of names that are not repeatable. And was not at all defended by the teacher who basically asked me to sit down.

It was the first time that I had realized how different our family was from the people that I was around. But you know his speeches whenever I hear them they still ring in a very deep way, they're very resonant with me and my work that I do and I think those early periods of time in my life and our family like probably were formative in a lot of ways so that's an early story I suppose

His early experience working for the Mennonite Central Committee were highly impactful in his development as a peacebuilder. He describes his first significant involvement in a negotiation as being highly influential:

Well probably one of the most influential was the first significant period of time where I was personally involved in a large-scale peace

negotiation. It was in Nicaragua in the 1980's. And my wife and my daughter, my son was not yet born, we were young and were on an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee which is a relief and development organization of the Mennonite churches. And I had a kind of portfolio they called it that was working with training and conflict related issues and peacebuilding for the whole region.

But I got deeply involved in supporting a high level peace process in Nicaragua between the Sandinista government and the armed indigenous insurgency of the east coast of Nicaragua. They had arms to fight against the government. That involves dozens and dozens of stories but it was very informative for much of my work that followed.

Part of it was about forms of accompaniment, with internal mediators. That means the conciliation team that I worked with was Nicaraguan. I was the only outside person. They were a team that was made up of people from within the conflict itself and we worked both at the community level all the way up to the highest level of national negotiation. And it helped me to formulate a whole range of things.

One I came to understand how deep and difficult these conflicts of identity really are. I have an abiding respect for the people who have to live in and live through cycles of violence and what it takes to face that on a daily basis and find a way through it. It did a lot that informed me about sort of multiple levels of peacebuilding activities, that it's not just exclusively a high level negotiation or mediation but that it also requires whole society transformation and how to create the potential for ways that people can participate in that meeting.

And of course with this conciliation theme you're moving constantly between people who are enemies and it's a world that has a lot of secrets and difficulties so you learn what it means to receive threats and challenges to your family and your life. And even though I was in a much better place than my Nicaraguan colleagues to find ways to move out of that it taught me a lot about the kind of commitment and relationships that are necessary to sustain over long periods of time.

So I tend to have a view of peacebuilding that is not very short term. I think about it in decades more than in short term projects.

Later career experiences which influence his peacebuilding show an emphasis on the long-term nature of peacebuilding, the importance of relationships, and local context.

An example of this is his work in Nepal:

Ah, well I think it's important to have, to take the time, peacebuilding takes more time than we usually allow and one of the things I work with a lot is commitment to blocks of time that are more like five or ten years than projects that are one and two years. Because it takes a certain level of coming into it, understanding and developing relationships and understanding better the context that you are working in as opposed to trying to achieve too quickly a quick pass on new training or other ways that you may do it as peacebuilding. So I tend to have a very high view of context and local culture that requires a lot of participation and relationship building. And that based on that you'll come to understand better the deeper need that people have as well as the resources they have and the particular gaps that may be helpful to try to find a way to meet and fulfill.

So an example of that is that in Nepal I'm in the eleventh year of what originally was a ten-year commitment. I've been working across a full decade.

Another key aspect of his experience is his ability to work at multiple levels in a society, so in Nepal he works across multiple sectors and also uses Sustained Dialogue, which involves repeated meetings and chances for conversation and exchange of ideas: "I mean in Nepal I'm also working at the highest political level and so that's the world of political parties . . . and you know it's Sustained Dialogue that we work with."

A recent key experience in Nepal illustrates what is meaningful and impactful for Professor Lederach in his peacebuilding work and how that influences his overall perspective:

I was in Nepal as you know just last week. And on Monday morning, or Tuesday morning at four o'clock in Nepal, we had a Skype conversation back to my class that was meeting Monday evening back here at Notre Dame. And I had with me in that Skype conversation, three of the people that I work with in this natural resource conflict program that I described to you earlier

And one of those was a young woman whose name was Parbati. And she is from the Dalit community which is the caste of untouchables. And I asked her to tell the class her personal life story.

And in a nutshell her life story was you know that she got into an obligated marriage at the age of thirteen. She had her first child at age fourteen. Her husband died ten weeks after the child was born so she became a widow which is extremely devastating in Nepal. Her father died six months later. She had a day job that made fifty cents a day and she was the sole support to her child as a baby, her sister and her mother.

She came at that time and place of almost committing suicide and taking the whole family with her. And somehow in that context, a person suggested to her that she would participate in one of the forest-user group trainings. And so she went to the first training and she said she was so afraid "I couldn't even speak my own name. I didn't say a single word in the first two trainings."

And out of that came a process by which she also gained access to a community mediation initiatives that we were working with across the country and eventually came into the natural resource conflict transformation initiative we have supported over the years. And now about eight years later she is probably one of the best community mediators that I have ever worked with in Nepal.

And she is not much more than ninety pounds and stands about at my waist. She is a tiny person. Yet she can wade in to a large-scale

community conflict, an open meeting as a woman and as a woman who comes from the lowest caste in the entire Nepal population and command the respect and attention of hundreds of people in the context of a major community conflict.

And by the time she was finished, she was telling the story of course . . . in Nepali, the translator who was translating the story broke down twice crying because it was so hard to convey the kind of extraordinary difficulties that this woman had come through. And when you're finished listening to this and realize you are with an extraordinary human being and in some small ways you have been a part of her journey, you say to yourself, maybe ten years of work was worth the things that have emerged and been gifted with this one person. . . .

Well certainly it's been very meaningful to be a part of . . . there is nothing quite as close to the moment when you feel like maybe all that work that had so much difficulty to it was worth it. I mean those are moments that are hard to a, that are hard to explain but they're really extraordinary.

Cultural values that influence Professor Lederach

Professor Lederach feels that in some ways he has been influenced by Midwestern and rural American values as well as the strong family and religious values he grew up with. When asked about how his culture influences his peacebuilding he says:

Well the culture is a harder one to speak to. I grew up in middle America, rural America for the most part. Forty miles outside of Portland in rural Oregon and then my high school years and college years would have been in central Kansas. And it's not always easy to separate the mix of culture and your small community and family.

But typically there's an interestingly positive side to that and an interestingly challenging side to it. So the positive side if I was to express it culturally is that quite often in small communities people know each other's business. And that translates in the best about us into a real care and a real commitment to community. People care about each other and take care of each other.

It can also translate into some forms of a xenophobic element that is that you are cautious about or fearful of the outsider or the other. And you know quite often those values can be present in terms of sort of in-group and out-group which you may experience when you're in tight-knit communities.

I think I was fortunate in that I had a cultural context that was mitigated by the religious values that I think were a part of my upbringing. So our family never carried a strong sense of mostly caring only about those who were like us. We always had a very open family.

My mother grew up on the Mexican Texas border and spoke Spanish fluently as a child and we always had, in Oregon we were always having the migrant Mexican families into our home. Which was unusual for the culture around us, they would have had more of a stand-offish approach to them.

So I am not sure whether I could posit the values that influenced the peacebuilding probably were less of the common cultural component in many small towns, in small town rural America than I have around what I have been doing. Because I have branched out widely from those small towns to really being exposed to all across the world. I do think that the small town community created a real sense of safety and security. And that safety and security was also true of my family. And I think that some of that sense of security translated into you know a sense of self-worth and a capacity to engage others without feeling threatened. It didn't for me ever turn into a sense that somehow people who were different were a threat to my way of life or my understandings, in fact the opposite, it was a continued area of interesting ways to understand the complex and very diverse world that we live in.

But I don't know that that was what I would posit as a cultural influence because some of my colleagues and friends that I grew up with probably would have a much more narrow, and maybe potentially conservative view that would translate in other directions than that. I don't know if that answers what you're after or not.

The first time he noticed how different his family values were occurred as described previously at the time of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Another early occasion when he saw how his family values differed was in rural Oregon:

Well yeah, so when we were in Oregon one of them that comes to mind very vividly is was that we had a small school that I went to, a very rural school had eight grades and we didn't have a one room school house but it was small, and throughout the year we would have periods in that part of Oregon where migrant workers were coming to harvest the berries or fruit or nuts or other things and then their kids would come to our school for brief periods of time. And typically those were, they were kids that were kind of in some ways a bit on the outside of our community.

But my mom because she grew up in Texas we would often have these families into our house or go and visit them and so for me at least there's a subculture of that whole process was one in which there was more of a reaching out and an acceptance of people who were not from our community. Although I don't know if that would have been true for the rest of the mainstream of people there.

These family values have influenced him positively as a peacebuilder:

Well I think what I said earlier would probably be the main one, that I maintain a sense of interest and curiosity about people rather than a sense of judgment or fear or threat from difference. And I think that's been helpful for ways that I've been able to work in very, very diverse settings and cultures and with very different kinds of people.

The importance of religion and faith in Professor Lederach's peacebuilding
 Professor Lederach is a faith-driven peacebuilder and has been influenced by Mennonite as well as Quaker teachings. When asked how his personal values influence his peacebuilding he says:

The personal values and how they've influenced peacebuilding? Well I think the personal values have always been the ones that are probably commonsensical but they often get manipulated or transformed when you are in the middle of a deep conflict. They are commitment to

friendship and loyalty, to truthfulness, to seeking to understand rather than to try to project onto something your particular view of truth, the values that seek to find what we would say in my tradition, God in the other. So even with people that you don't understand or maybe wish you harm I've always maintained a value base that you're across the conversation from another human being and they've had a lot of experiences that you have not had and that some of the anger or suspicion or projection that you may be feeling is probably coming from a place that you need to find ways to touch and understand and not judge. And those have served me well in the areas that I work. Especially in conflict and especially in ways of conciliation and mediation. And those are fairly prominent in what I do.

Yeah, probably we would find it expressed in a variety of ways but one of the distinguishing marks of the Anabaptists which is the root 16th century movement from which the Mennonites came, was a view that life is precious and that it's a gift from God, and that it requires a complete and ultimate [faith] and it takes the form specifically of seeking to love even the enemies who you may have so. So our understanding about Jesus' life and way of being in the world and his teaching were about the fundamentals of love your God with all your heart and soul and love your neighbor as yourself. And that is taken all the way to a love for the enemy. The phrase to "see that of God in another" or to "see the divine in another" was probably an influence that came from the fact that I also was mentored and had very significant formative relationships with the Quaker tradition...And they have a very concrete way of looking at the notion that there's a divine spark in every human being and you seek to find that embodied in the other. So both of those traditions have influenced me and my value base significantly.

Emergent themes from Professor Lederach's narrative

When asked what qualities are important for someone to be a peacebuilder, Professor

Lederach stressed themes from his narrative including: the importance of patience

and listening and being able to deal with ambiguity and complexity, and humility:

A capacity for patience and listening well, a commitment to relationships, being able to handle a great deal of ambiguity...And I do think a lot of those things can be learned. I think some people have a more natural inclination. People who don't like the anxiety that may

come from situations that are complex and messy, they want quick answers, they're not likely to be able to stay with it very long. That probably can be learned. I think it takes a great deal of humility because what you're doing is providing space for people to come to their own understanding and conclusions and rise to their own best self and understanding. So you're often creating a space for others rather than a space for you.

The importance of empathy

This is a key theme for Professor Lederach and he differentiates empathy from sympathy:

Yes, I think empathy is very key. There are some complexities to empathy because if it's empathy that focuses towards sympathy for others it can create a form of arrogance. But I think the empathy that's rooted in a deep sense of compassion about the well-being of other people is the kind of empathy that's really key. Being able to put yourself in a place where, you know as I was emphasizing earlier, both humility and patience and listening, those are actually the underpinnings of empathy. Empathy is kind of an expression of those deeper roots I think. Because it requires you to be in a place where you're alongside and looking at the world from the eyes and the experience of others. And the way that you do that across relationships requires patience and requires the skill of listening. And I think those are the underpinning streams that feed into empathy.

The importance of a passion for and commitment to the work

You don't last very long if you're not passionate about it. There's a lot of burn-out in our field. I think that burn-out comes from in part from losing track of yourself but I do think that one of the things that helps mitigate burn-out is that you remain passionate about the kind of commitment and activity that you're involved in.

The importance of being able to deal with complexity

Dr. Lederach emphasized the importance of being able to deal with complexity, with peacebuilding both technically and as an art and bringing the whole self to the process. When asked what advice Professor Lederach would have for people who are peacebuilders or who would like to be peacebuilders he says:

This work is wonderful but it's going to take time so be patient with yourself and others. There will be a great deal of complexity so understand that complexity can feel overwhelming and that that's normal so find ways to develop a capacity to watch for, notice and listen for things that seem to touch more of the essence of complexity which is often you know ways that you're capable of attending to many different things but being able to move towards those things and make a difference in understanding what's happening in other people's lives.

I think there are a lot of technical sides to this field that you can develop and they're well worth developing. From the ability to do conflict analysis and mapping and reading and understanding dynamics, and working with the approaches of how to build and construct dialogue and facilitate mediation kinds of processes. But those technical sides in some regards are the superficial tools. I don't want to use the word superficial to diminish their importance but I am just saying that they are a top layer of something that's much deeper.

And that much deeper part I think if I was going to give lessons is really about understanding yourself and being true to a sense of wholeness that you have. Because fragmented people are rarely helpful to fragmentation in other people. So how to be a whole person bringing your whole self to what's there.

There's a side of this that's very much about something that's more proximate to art than it is to technique. . . . And that tends to require something of you that is putting forward the best of who you are and bringing your whole heart, soul, and mind and not just a portion of who you are.

And I think this is particularly true in peacebuilding because conflict, especially violent conflict cuts to the very core of what it means to be a human being and a human community. And so people are struggling to put back together the essence of their lives and so you have to be and have ways of being with that and with them that are contributive to the healing process and not just exclusively finding sort of quick fixes and things that decide quick fixes.

Reflections on my Interview with Professor Lederach

Movement—the wind

The interview with Professor Lederach took place while he was walking. I was in Chicago and he was in South Bend speaking on his cell phone as we talked and he walked. It was allegorical for me. Right before our interview was supposed to take place a month before, he suddenly had to go to Nepal for several weeks. Speaking with Professor Lederach was like touching the wind. There was a sense of humility on his part, although I felt nervous to be interviewing such a great peacebuilder. There was a sense of kindness from him, as well as efficiency and movement—a sense that he would go where he was needed and that with passionate commitment he would work for sustainable peace. He spoke in normal words but I felt a little overwhelmed knowing I was speaking with someone who has devoted his life to a higher calling. It was like touching the wind—or, for an instant, the wings of a dove.

Summary of Major Themes from the Cases

Major themes for Chinese participants

Common factors for the Chinese participants included: compromise, responsibility, humility, the importance of peace, communication, integrity, empathy, building bridges between cultures, Confucian values, works hard and perseverance. These factors, even when common to more than one participant, often manifested somewhat differently across the individual participants in terms of their sense of its meaning and priority. For Dali Yang for example, humility was most important and he showed this by attributing accomplishments to his team or university. Humility was also important

to Pin Ni and he showed it by using sentences modifying his accomplishments such as “I don’t want to sound like I’m bragging.”

For X, compromise was number one, and was constantly stressed throughout his narrative relative to a peacebuilding scenario. Compromise was also extremely important to Pin Ni but was stressed less often than with X. The sense of responsibility that was important to all the Chinese participants came across as collective which is not surprising given Hofstede’s (1980/2001) cultural profile of China as highly collective. For example, Pin Ni stressed the responsibility he has to all his employees and even their families. The emphasis on communication manifested similarly for the Chinese participants in that the emphasis was on open communication, listening, and the prevention of misunderstanding. This is an interesting finding in that it goes against the common Chinese practice of indirect communication as described in the literature.

The issue of integrity was never directly defined by either the Chinese or the American participants, but all stressed its importance. For the Chinese participants, there was a slight sense that integrity meant living and acting in accordance with the right values. This was consistent with the emphasis that was also placed on Confucian values. Pin Ni was the only one who did not directly say he was influenced by Confucian values, and he maintained that in a follow-up question. However, the values which emerged as important for him show a consistence with Confucian

ideology. Presumably these came from their prevalence in the Chinese culture overall. *Works hard* was often associated with having to work hard from childhood for the Chinese participants whereas this was not the case with the American participants overall.

Factors in order of priority: The four factors all Chinese participants had in common in order of priority are empathy, integrity, responsibility, works hard, and skill sets. The definition of skill sets differed, mostly depending upon the occupation of the participant. For example, for Pin Ni who is in business and for X who is a diplomat, negotiation skills are important, whereas for Dr. Sun, who is an educator, educational skills are important. A summary of the major themes for the Chinese participants can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Major Themes for Chinese Participants

Pin Ni	Dali Yang	Dr. Xian-He Sun	X
Responsibility	Humility	Communication	Compromise
Compromise	Building bridges	Dialogue	Peace and harmony are most valuable
Communication	Collaboration/ teamwork	Listening	Peace as the purpose
Integrity	Integrity	Integrity	Try to reach goal of peace (and avoid conflict)
Leadership	Empathy	Responsibility	Integrity

Pin Ni	Dali Yang	Dr. Xian-He Sun	X
Leadership by example	Excellence	Perseverance	Confucian values
We should not have a war	Confucian values	Works hard	Empathy
Importance of peace	Responsibility	Passion	Mutual trust
Importance of change	Open communication	Experience	Finding common ground
Building bridges	Honesty	The heart	Fairness
Breaking down barriers	Staying true to who you are in cross-cultural interactions	Confucian values (also values from other traditions)	Putting all issues on the table
Excellence	Works hard	“Do unto others”	Skills
Works hard	Integrity	Breaking down barriers	Long time frame
Humility	Skills	Reducing stereotypes	Works hard
Passion	Meaningfulness of individual impact	Building bridges	Responsibility
Perseverance	Sense of destiny (possibly)	Cross-cultural understanding	Patriotism
The heart		Respect	Peacebuilding should be part of multilateral effort
Empathy		Patience	

Pin Ni	Dali Yang	Dr. Xian-He Sun	X
Meaningfulness of individual impact		Empathy	
Respect		Humility	
Appreciation/ sharing		Being an example to others	
Mutual trust/ understanding		Skills	
Sense of destiny		Meaningfulness of individual impact	
Collaboration/ importance of teamwork		Your experience might not be best way for others	
Skills			
Fairness			
Long time frame			
'Just do it' attitude			
Money as a resource for peace-building			

Major themes for American participants

Common themes include religious faith and values, empathy, integrity, dialogue, passion for and commitment to the work, persistence and perseverance, trust, works hard, skills, and the meaningfulness of seeing the human, individual aspect of peacebuilding. There were some differences in these themes by participant. For

example, for Dr. Ury, religious faith and values were not linked to a specific institutionalized religion. As with the Chinese, the skill sets differed depending upon occupation. For Ambassador Ross for example, negotiation skills were stressed and for Dr. Ury mediation skills were stressed.

It is interesting to note that when looking at the entire tables and the number and types of thematic factors for both the Chinese and the Americans, there are less common factors and more individualism within the group of American participants as a whole. For example the key factors for Professor Lederach —such as family values, bringing your whole self to the process, and comfort with ambiguity—are not really touched upon by the other Americans. Similarly, activism is a key thematic factor for Ambassador Ross but not in the top ranking for the other Americans. For Dr. Ury, creativity and optimism are highly important, but those themes don't rank in the top for the other three. There is more uniformity with the Chinese participants as opposed to American individualism exhibited by the American participants. This could be a result of the collective nature of Chinese society versus the more individualistic nature of American society as defined by the literature. The major themes for the American participants can be found in Table 7.

Table 7. Major Themes for American Participants

Ambassador Ross	Dr. Saunders	Dr. Ury	Professor Lederach
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Ambassador Ross	Dr. Saunders	Dr. Ury	Professor Lederach
Religious faith and values	Religious faith and values	Peace is the core value	Religious faith and values
Empathy	Sustained Dialogue/ Communication /Listening	We should not have a war or should work to end war	Family values
Activism	Peace Process	New ideas	We should not have a war or should work to end war
Meaningfulness of individual impact	Perseverance/ persistence	Optimism	Integrity
Integrity	Integrity	Integrity	Bringing whole self to the process
Listening	Empathy	Empathy	Empathy
Dialogue	Looking at whole person and whole nature of the conflict	Respect	High tolerance for ambiguity
Perseverance/ persistence	Teamwork/ collaboration	Trust/creating trust including mutual trust	Transcending cycle of violence
Passion	Inter-disciplinary approach	Social entrepreneurship	Humility—providing space for others, not for you
Trust/creating trust including mutual trust	Works hard	Open to learn	Passion
Reliability	Respect	Listening	Patience

Ambassador Ross	Dr. Saunders	Dr. Ury	Professor Lederach
Credibility—being clear in what matters to you and willing to stand up for it	Trust/creating trust including mutual trust	Dialogue	Relationships
Works hard	Patriotism	Passion	Dialogue (Sustained Dialogue)
Skills	Excellence	Works hard	Constructive social change
American cultural values in peacebuilding reflect optimism and problem-solving perspective	Passion	Skills	Working with multiple levels of society and local context
Responsibility	Tearing down walls and barriers	Need to work on ourselves as individuals	Skills
Impulse to do good	Relationship (transforming relationships)	Long time frame	Long time frame
Building bridges	Identity	Meaningfulness of individual impact	Truthfulness
	Community	Faith aspect	Standing up for what you believe in
	Honesty	Patience	Trust/creating trust including mutual trust
	Kindness	Persistence/perseverance	Able to deal with

Ambassador Ross	Dr. Saunders	Dr. Ury	Professor Lederach
			complexity
	Skills	'Just do it' attitude	Meaningfulness of individual impact
	Power of continuous political process to transform relationships	Global citizenship	Persistence/perseverance
	Seeing human dimension of conflict	American cultural values include pragmatic, practical and 'can do' attitude	Works hard
	Dealing with multiple levels of society		
	Meaningfulness of individual impact		
	Ability to admit to being wrong, which can help create a space for dialogue to emerge		
	Just-do-it attitude		
	Long time frame		

Ranking of themes by importance for all eight participants

In Table 8, I provide a ranking of the major themes that came from the narratives, according to their importance for both the Chinese and American participants. The criteria for ranking importance were (1) the number of times the theme was mentioned by each participant, (2) the significance attributed to the theme by each participant, and (3) the centrality of the theme to each participant's peacebuilding efforts. I created this table in two steps. First, I counted the number of participants that mentioned a particular theme. For example, all eight participants mentioned empathy, integrity, works hard, and skills. Next, within each group (i.e., the group of themes mentioned by all eight participants, the group of themes mentioned by only seven participants, etc.), I ranked each theme on a scale of 1–10, with 10 being the highest, based on how important it was to each participant. For example, both empathy and integrity were mentioned by all eight participants, but because of the importance of empathy in each of the narratives, it received a higher rank (63) than did integrity (60). These rankings were used to help identify patterns across the cases and inform my discussion in Chapter 5.

Table 8. Ranking of Themes by Importance

Theme	Pin	Yang	Sun	X	Ross	Saunders	Ury	Lederach
Mentioned by all 8								
Empathy (63)	6	6	6	8	10	9	9	9

Theme	Pin	Yang	Sun	X	Ross	Saunders	Ury	Lederach
Integrity (60)	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	8
Works Hard (54)	7	7	8	7	7	6	7	5
Skills (54)	6	8	6	8	7	6	6	7
Mentioned by 7								
Communication (54)	8	7	9	0	8	10	6	6
Human impact (39)	4	5	2	0	9	3	7	9
Mentioned by 6								
Passion (38)	5	0	8	0	7	5	6	7
Perseverance (35)	5	0	8	0	8	9	3	2
Trust (31)	3	0	0	3	7	6	8	4
Patience (31)	1	0	4	6	0	3	8	9
Mentioned by 5								
Responsibility (31)	9	7	7	4	4	0	0	0
Mentioned by 4								
Peace (31)	7	0	0	8	0	8	8	0
Humility (27)	6	10	4	0	0	0	0	7
Building bridges (26)	7	10	5	0	4	0	0	0

Chapter 5: Discussion

Standing on the Threshold

The research question I set out to answer was: “What are the life stories of peacebuilders from the United States and the People’s Republic of China (China) and how do factors such as their personal experiences and cultures inform the way they think about and approach peacebuilding?” After analyzing my data, I stepped back to look for patterns and integrating themes across participant’s narratives. In terms of their approach to peacebuilding, I identified 16 significant similarities between the Chinese and American peacebuilders and eight major differences, many of them attributable to their cultural backgrounds. I also identified eight common themes that characterized their peacebuilding journeys from childhood to the present. I wrote up an initial analysis of these themes, but I was not satisfied. Throughout this process there was a recurring liminal image, peripheral and on the edges of things, or appearing deep in the night leaving me restless and sleepless. A singular question would arise and I always felt regret that I didn’t have the answer.

The image was of a peacebuilder standing outside the door to a room. He was reaching out his hand to open the door, almost standing on the threshold of the door, knowing that inside the room there were enemies sitting across the table, not speaking, not looking at each other, yet waiting for him to enter the room and somehow begin the alchemy of peacebuilding. Repeatedly throughout the study this image would flash through my mind, accompanied by a driving question I had had

within myself before and during the study: What I really wanted to know was, “As he reaches out his hand to open the door and enter the room, what is the peacebuilder (Pin Ni, Dali Yang, Sun, X, Ross, Saunders, Ury, Lederach...) thinking and feeling in that instant?” Other questions included: Who is he? Where does he come from? What motivates and drives him? What gives him joy and pain, hope and despair? How has he prepared for this specific moment?

With that image and these questions in my mind, I went back to the narratives, back to the data, back to archival sources, back to my observations, and back to what I had written and began to look for the unique qualities that characterize these eight peacebuilders. I discovered eight. In an axial manner, there are sub-themes or categories that also emerged around these eight characteristics.

What was particularly unanticipated given the significant differences in the cultural dimensions between the People’s Republic of China and the United States of America presented in Chapter 2 was that there were no systematic differences in these eight characteristics tied to nationality. Given the cross-cultural nature of this study, I had thought that there would be strong differences and few commonalities, in keeping with the work of those such as Hofstede (1980/2001), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) and the findings of the GLOBE study, wherein the cultures of these two countries tend to categorize predominantly relative to differences as opposed to similarities. In terms of the eight characteristics, any

cultural differences are most evident in the sub-themes. However, while there are some aspects of the sub-themes of the characteristics that manifest differently perhaps due to culture, overall for the eight characteristics and the sub-themes, any manifestations of differences are based primarily upon the unique perspectives and life experiences of each of the eight peacebuilders. Thus while there are some manifestations of cultural difference, there are not systematic cultural differences for these eight characteristics—which appear to cut across national and cultural boundaries.

The characteristics are present in some form for all of the peacebuilders, while the sub-themes in differing forms might only manifest for a certain percentage. The sub-themes are aspects of the characteristic that differ in terms of their relationship to the characteristic. For example, they can be causal, in some sense having influenced the development of the characteristic. They can also be expressive of the characteristic, providing examples of how the characteristics play out in the lives and experiences of the peacebuilders. They can be both causal and expressive or perhaps manifest in other manners for the peacebuilders. The details of these sub-themes will be discussed with examples in this chapter.

It is important to note that these eight overall characteristics are different from the individual emergent factors for each peacebuilder, or even from the factors that all eight hold in common. These characteristics in a sense are an amalgamation of the

entire impact and impressions that these peacebuilders made on me, from their manner, their words, archival content of their writing, and additional observation and journaling I conducted. Thus these characteristics in a sense are the aggregated contribution of this study. The characteristics are:

- A deep-seated passion for peace
- A values-based foundation and motivation
- A commitment to a relational approach to peacebuilding
- The courage to take action
- Life-long learning in the skills and art of peacebuilding
- A capacity for building strong empathetic bonds among people
- A willingness to build a bridge or be a bridge for others
- The persistence to continue working over long time periods

These characteristics also seem to have iterative aspects, where they overlap and inform each other—thus, passion for peace reinforces the persistence needed over time, which in turn refuels the passion. In this chapter, I explore these qualities of expert peacebuilders.

While these are common characteristics, each participant in this study comes from a different background and has been influenced by differing aspects of culture and experience. Some have come from Beijing, Hangzhou, or Shandong Province. Some have come with memories of conflict and having shaken the dust of the Cultural

Revolution from their feet as they journey. Others have come from the activist California of the sixties, Philadelphia, rural parts of Oregon, and a multi-cultural setting in Switzerland. While there may be similarities and differences between them, no two are completely alike or for that matter, completely different. They are tied together by a common cause, which is that of peacebuilding. Some have chosen it as a career, and for some it is work they do in conjunction with a different career such as business or teaching. For each participant, the journey has been unique.

A Deep-Seated Passion for Peace

The idea of passion has many connotations. For example, it can be associated with devotion to something, or to an emotion such as love or anger. In terms of emotion the word *passion* has a strong level of depth such that it can imply a deep and almost burning intensity. The flame of passion can be brief and extinguished quickly or it can endure, building and/or maintaining itself over time. This second form of lasting passion can often be found in dedication to something above and beyond oneself, such as a religious belief, ideology, or a political cause. While there are thus many aspects to passion, within the context described, passion in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online, is defined as: “A strong feeling of enthusiasm or excitement for something or about doing something . . . intense, driving or overmastering feeling or conviction.”

Within this study, the passion for all the peacebuilders is one of a deep and abiding nature with the flame burning steadily over time for the cause of peace.

Dr. Sun describes this in terms of being an unsung hero:

I think that the title of peacebuilder is not important, what's important is that you have a passion to serve, to serve for the community, to contribute, and to help others and try to make impact, and that in your heart you do not mind to be an unsung hero.

Professor Lederach talks about the need for passion for peacebuilders to prevent burnout:

You don't last very long if you're not passionate about it. There's a lot of burn-out in our field. I think that burn-out comes from in part from losing track of yourself but I do think that one of the things that helps mitigate burn-out is that you remain passionate about the kind of commitment and activity that you're involved in.

Pin Ni talks about how it is a constant element in his life:

I would say the key factor, whether it's successful or not, is that it has to be not just as a job. It just needs to be as part of your life. If you believe it every time, every minute, everywhere, it doesn't have to be a big agenda, but it has to be something you believe and you're delivering every minute, whether you're talking to people, you're doing something, that to me is a key issue

Dr. Ury speaks about passion and how it can sustain the peacebuilder through long-time commitments to peacebuilding, which require persistence and dedication: "You need passion. What's going to sustain you for ten years of working on a conflict? It's passion."

Subthemes for a deep-seated passion for peace

The sub-themes for the characteristic of a deep-seated passion for peace include social awareness, works hard, and differences in motivation. These sub-themes show

both elements of causality as well as manifestation of this deep-seated passion in the lives of the peacebuilders. These sub-themes show that in some instances the passion comes from different sources and experiences and manifests differently in terms of motivation, but the characteristic of the passion itself is present for all the peacebuilders and is an important element in their peacebuilding.

Social awareness

A component aspect of passion in this study is that a number of the participants were aware at an early age of social issues and strongly felt the need for reform and for working towards social change. This could have helped to cause them ultimately to become peacebuilders and also could have contributed to their passion for peacebuilding. Both Pin Ni and Ambassador Ross, when asked who most influenced them when they were young, cited writings that were to do with social justice. For Pin Ni it was the character of the count in Alexandre Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844), because he had the power to create change: "So he's so powerful you know, he can change the world. That's what I admire." For Ambassador Ross it was the work of Robert Wright, who raised Ross's awareness of the plight of minorities in America. Dr. Sun and presumably Dali Yang suffered in their youth from the Cultural Revolution, raising their awareness of the importance of peace. For example, Dr. Sun describes what he learned as a youth from Nixon's visit to China:

His visit really had a lasting ripple effect. This was an encouragement for me because you can see that the world someday will change...I felt I could learn by myself. Even I couldn't get into high school I still had the opportunity to learn. That is just my example. My family example is just an example but . . . really, it's just a reflection on the whole

society's change. . . . That life experience tells me, open communication and dialogue is much better than isolate and blockade...people need to communicate and understand each other, instead of isolate and guessing each other based on rumors... Communicate, even if you do not agree with others totally, communication and dialogues is still much better than isolation or fighting without talk.

Professor Lederach stood up in class in seventh grade, in a potentially hostile classroom and spoke up defending Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. His high school and college experiences as well as his early experience working for the Mennonite Central Committee were also highly impactful in his development as a peacebuilder.

Dr. Ury grew up primarily in Switzerland and felt that the tensions of the previous World Wars and the then ongoing Cold War influenced him. He was aware from a young age of the devastation which can be caused by war. He also felt that growing up in and going to school in Switzerland exposed him to people of many cultures and nationalities and helped him become a global citizen from childhood. He thought about how people can learn to live together and deal with their differences:

I became a kind of a global citizen, a world citizen and thought about humanity and also thought about how do we, I mean I think the question was implanted there, of how do we as human beings on this planet, how do we learn to live together and deal with our differences.

During his adolescent years the threat of the Cold War became an even more prevalent influence for Dr. Ury, and had an impact in his choice of studying Anthropology as both an undergraduate and graduate student. Dr. Ury was interested

in the practical applications of his studies and therefore he entered the field of negotiation.

Ambassador Ross has had an activist bent from his teenage years and was influenced by growing up in Berkley, California during a period of the great political activism. He was further influenced by the work of the Kennedys, specifically in feeling that public service was a noble and responsible thing to do. In college, the war in Vietnam increasingly became a focal point for him and he became more of a critical thinker.

This was a time of activism, a time of upheaval here, in college it was much more focused on Vietnam but, I was aware in the mid-60s. I grew up in the San Francisco area and there were sit-ins...there was a free speech movement at Berkeley. These things were part of also what was socializing me and then Vietnam became a focal point.

His work as a congressional intern further impacted his sense that you could and should do something about such issues. In graduate school, the 1973 war in the Middle East was very impactful in his motivations to work towards peace and he felt this was a field he really wanted to pursue. So, his early activism, or activist inclinations, experience, and education exposed him to issues that motivated him to want to do something. Additionally, his early experience in Israel influenced him—through reading and experience. He talks often about the strong impulse he felt, starting at a young age, to try to make a difference and improve conflict and war situations. Ambassador Ross's career experiences also reinforced his desire to be a peacebuilder.

Works hard

An additional sub-theme for the characteristic of deep-seated passion for peace is that of *works hard*. This also was the third common emergent thematic factor across all eight participants. There was a difference in the way this sub-theme manifested across the two cultures. Dr. Saunders spoke about working hard from college age. However, for the other Americans the emphasis on working hard was more in their adult lives and careers as peacebuilders. For example, Ambassador Ross speaks about long days and hours spent on shuttle trips to the Middle East, and Dr. Ury speaks about multiple trips to different countries. However, for the Chinese, the emphasis on working hard begins more clearly with their childhood years. Examples include Pin Ni's description of his hard work in school:

I would say if you want to get a good grade you got to study hard. If you want to get a result you got to take responsibility. I remember when we were, when I was the president of the student council in high school and we have a few *he ban* . . . ? You know, the board, on the outside of the wall and we need to draw and make announcement, draw a color, draw a flower, every week we need to change. So at that time we study five and a half days, Saturday afternoon you have a day off. I never got a day off because I always have to do that with a bunch of others. If I expected them to do it I've got to be there to help them. I'm not the one really can draw a good picture but I got a few students with me, they do it and I tell them what I think you know, so you have to sacrifice. If you want to be the leader you have to sacrifice. I'm here, basically Saturday. My wife is always kidding me that the only time I have time to talk with her is on the way back home every night. I leave here about nine thirty and I get here a little before eight every day. So then I get home then get on the email again, so, it's just a very simple life but you obviously need to give up a lot of things. But that's ok you know.

Also, Dr. Sun's describes his hard work as a boy during the Cultural Revolution:

Right, during that time I spent most of my available time, any time which I can control to study. I know I cannot give up and have to work hard. My parents told us, 'You cannot change the environment, but you can improve yourself'. Working conditions were not good at all and my home was pretty far away from the warehouse. So usually I have to leave home by 6a.m. in the morning and come back probably 8p.m. in the evening, but after that I still spend two or three hours studying before I go to sleep.

For the Chinese participants there seemed to be a sense of unrelenting hard work, which continues to this day. For example, Pin Ni's busy schedule involves his still working over 12 hours a day. For Dali Yang there seems to be intense pressure to work hard and to be excellent and to achieve the highest level. Dr. Sun shows commitment to a large number of community and writing projects which are outside his normal work hours as part of his endeavors towards peace. Thus, for the Chinese the hard work they describe is a constant factor in their lives.

For the Americans there is an equal sense of dedication and extremely hard work. Professor Lederach for example is constantly traveling and working to build peace, as is Dr. Ury. Each of the Americans is working very hard. The key difference is that they seem to be working hard by choice. For the Chinese there is more of a sense that they must work hard, and they have always had to work hard. In part this might be part of their sense of responsibility to the collective. In part it might be a result of the more difficult conditions they faced when growing up in China, particularly during the period of the Cultural Revolution.

The feeling of the narratives between the Chinese and the Americans differed significantly in this regard. I think this is reflective of what I believe is a key major difference between the Chinese and the Americans, which I will discuss shortly and which has to do with overall motivation.

Differences in understanding of *works hard*

While both groups of participants work hard at peacebuilding there is a difference as discussed previously in the way this manifests. The Americans seem driven to work hard for peace, but there is more of an element of choice. The Chinese seem driven to work hard in everything and that it has been this way for them since their childhoods' in China.

Within this context it is interesting to revisit the work by The Chinese Culture Connection (1987), who conducted the Chinese Values Survey (CVS), which explored the “indigenous themes and concerns of Chinese culture” (p. 145). The CVS found that the data could be grouped into four clusters: Integration, Confucian work dynamism, Human-heartedness; and Moral discipline. Correlations were found for three of the four CVS clusters with all of Hofstede’s (1980/2001) dimensions, which at the time consisted of power distance, individualism and collectivism, masculinity and femininity and uncertainty avoidance. However there was no correlation found with the cluster of Confucian work dynamism, which are heavily Confucian (p. 158). This cluster consists of ordering relationships, thrift, persistence, having a sense of

shame, reciprocation, personal steadiness, protecting your “face,” and respect for tradition (p. 159).

These findings also support the findings of the dissertation study, where the factor of *works hard* came up more highly ranked in the Chinese prevalence table than it did in the American table. As discussed above, this was very apparent in the interviews.

Among the Chinese there was a strong emphasis on their having to work hard from a very young age—as demonstrated in the narratives of Pin, Sun and Yang. However, while *works hard* was prevalent from college age for Saunders, it did not have the same overall prevalence of Confucian work dynamism from childhood as it did with the Chinese. For both the Chinese and the Americans the thematic of working hard overall tied to dedication, perseverance, and not giving up. This was more prevalent for the Americans in adulthood—for example for Ross and Saunders enduring endless days of shuttles and negotiations. For Ury and Lederach the process of going back for repeated sustained dialogues. However for the Chinese the need for perseverance seemed to begin much earlier, probably because Pin Ni, Dr. Sun, Dali Yang and possibly X, all grew up during the period of the Cultural Revolution. Some insights from the literature that might explain these findings include those presented on Confucianism later in this chapter.

Differences in motivation for peacebuilding related to *works hard*

Perhaps the greatest difference between the two groups and the one related to *works hard* (which attests to the difficulty of life in China in the sixties and seventies) is in

the motivation and type of peacebuilding work which the participants do. Three of the four Chinese (Pin Ni, Dali Yang, and Dr. Sun) focus on prevention of conflict, while X focuses on prevention, resolution, and sustainable post-conflict peace. For the Americans however, the focus for all four is on the three steps of prevention, resolution, and sustainable post-conflict peace put forth in the definition used in this study. The question is why. It is not only that the official roles are different. If they so desired, Pin Ni, Dali Yang, and Dr. Sun could find ways to work on other stages of the peace process.

I postulate that the difference is in their motivation. While Pin Ni does discuss many positive and happy times he had growing up, all three grew up in harsh times in China and were directly or indirectly impacted by a number of conflicts, including the aftermath of the War with the Japanese, the Civil War in China, the Cultural Revolution, and other general difficulties in living in China during the turbulent period of the sixties and seventies. Also, for Pin Ni and for Dr. Sun, going to and staying in the United States was not necessarily a first choice. Pin Ni states this:

Coming to the United States was not my first choice, I'll tell you the truth I have told a lot of people, that if I do go back to China I will only work for the government. I am not going to work for Wanxiang. It's not about the money, there's nothing about the money, it's about the dream, that's it

Dr. Sun speaks about wanting to go back to China, but that it became increasingly difficult to do so after Tiananmen Square in 1989. Thus, I would argue that while they had positive aspects to growing up in China, all three have been impacted by

conflict during their early lives in China and still live with the after-effects of conflict in matters such as where they reside. I believe that since they come from a place of conflict and for some from suffering, the most important thing for them is to prevent such conflict and suffering before it starts. Thus, their strong interest in peacebuilding work, which corresponds to the first stage of the definition of preventing conflict. Therefore, it is not merely that these three do peacebuilding work with a different emphasis than the Americans—it is that they do it to prevent the type of conflict they have experienced. For Pin Ni for example, if there were to be a war, his family would be divided, and as he puts it his mother would be against her brother.

For the Americans, the sense was very different. They did not grow up under similar conditions or have the same type of formative experiences. The impression they gave was not one of coming from suffering and working to prevent suffering. Rather, they gave an impression of coming from social awareness and working towards the positive goal of peace. Ambassador Ross describes it as an impulse: “I just felt a powerful impulse to want to correct what was wrong. And I think that there’s a relationship between that impulse and having an interest in conflict resolution.”

There are signs of it in the young J. P. Lederach when he stood up and spoke in seventh grade. Dr. Saunders devoted his life to peace process as did Dr. Ury. But the feeling is different from that of the Chinese. For the Americans, it is not just a sense of prevention but of movement towards a positive outcome in each stage of

peacebuilding. The Chinese work above and beyond their official roles or extend their official roles to work towards peace. The Americans have chosen official roles that are inherently involved in peace.

Values-Based Foundation and Motivation

Having a values-based foundation and motivation for some form of action can manifest in a number of ways. For example, the values that provide an underlying basis and motivation can be viewed as positive, neutral, or negative. The degree of their influence can also vary. People can be strongly influenced by their values in some situations and not strongly influenced in others. They can act in ways consistent with their underlying values and in ways inconsistent with those values. Some believe values are absolute and some believe they are situational. Additionally, the nature of what are seen as values and values-based behavior can vary by individual, by group, and by culture.

Within this study there was a strong emergence of a values-based foundation that influenced the actions and contributed to the motivations of all eight peacebuilders. Each of them seemed to view these values as positive and consistent with correct behavior within their cultures.

Subthemes for values-based foundation and motivation

There is a difference between the previous discussion of overall motivation towards peacebuilding based upon passion, and the motivation that derives from a values-foundation. For these peacebuilders, sub-themes for this characteristic help provide

motivation towards peacebuilding. Sub-themes include that there was a sense of calling and/or destiny, cultural values, religion, and Confucianism. These sub-themes emerged as providing a platform for the passionate actions and devotion that the peacebuilders showed in their peacebuilding. Thus, they are motivated by a passion for peace and by their own underlying values—values that define peace as highly desirable.

A sense of calling and destiny

For several of the participants, peacebuilding seems to entail a sense of destiny or almost a religious calling. This is true for Pin Ni, who speaks about this work as his path, his destiny: “Sort of my path was picked, there is no other path anyway. You just need to do whatever you need to do.”

Ambassador Ross talks about a strong religious element in his work. There is also an implied sense of destiny when he says that things cannot always be planned when talking about the Aqaba experience. For Dr. Saunders, the Presbyterian document *The Peacemaker’s Calling* was one of the most influential in his career choice and approach to peacebuilding, and Dr. Ury has felt from a very young age that peace is the primary value for him and that he would work towards peace:

Well definitely, for me peace is the value and it’s peace both in the external sense and also in the internal sense. . . . I would say you know peace to me in some ways is the ultimate human value. . . . Ultimately peace may well be the deepest desire of human beings, whether we fully realize it or not. By peace, I mean a sense of contentment and harmony with the people we care about.

Cultural values

For all these peacebuilders, there is a strong sense that their cultural values are a crucial influence in their peacebuilding, although there are cultural differences in certain respects between the Chinese and American peacebuilders.

Pin Ni feels fundamentally that his Chinese cultural values are an inherent part of who he is. The two key cultural values for Pin Ni, values that most strongly influence his peacebuilding and that he thinks are priorities, are responsibility and compromise. There are also specific cultural values from China which have impacted his peacebuilding, including appreciation, respect, and sharing.

For Dali Yang, values which have influenced him include:

. . . honesty and our academic virtues of being really speaking the truth, being open and honest in many ways, and especially when we do interactions across cultures we have to be aware that there may be different values sometimes different practices and therefore making sure that one is standing by what one is comfortable doing, that is very important certainly. So therefore, in this process it is very important to promote honest dialogue and communication, you have to be diplomatic in conveying certain messages but at the same time it is also extremely important to know what one stands for and what the University of Chicago stands for.

He also aspires to the virtues of honesty, hard work, and integrity.

Dr. Sun lived through a period of severe transition in China, from pre-Cultural Revolution, the Cultural Revolution and post-Cultural revolution. All these periods influenced him experientially and ultimately in his approach to peacebuilding.

Dr. Sun was born in a good time period to a very wealthy family. During the Cultural Revolution the circumstances for Dr. Sun's family changed drastically. The differences began for him when he was in primary school when he experienced different teaching styles, one from a teacher from the traditional Chinese value system and one from a fighter in the Communist revolution. Thus, the values and experiences that influenced him at this time and later in his peacebuilding were mixed. He had the influence of Communism and the Cultural Revolution as well as the influence of traditional Chinese values taught to him by his grandparents and the modern Western values taught to him by his parents.

His experiences and values have influenced him to become a peacebuilder, as well as to follow his heart—which has also influenced him in this direction. Chinese traditional values have been particularly influential for him, and responsibility is a prevalent theme in this regard. A key value is that as an intellectual you should take responsibility. Another key value is the importance of communication.

He has been influenced by Confucian and Buddhist values traditional values. From his experience he believes strongly in the Chinese saying that if you don't like something, don't do it to others.

From his Chinese culture, he has three principles that he follows in his peacebuilding: communication and dialogue are better than fighting; your experience might not be helpful for others—they need to figure out what will work best for them; and that you have to be respectful of others and of their culture.

Dr. Ury feels that while he is American and has American cultural values, he has also been influenced by multiple cultures, for example Swiss culture and a multi-cultural school. He believes that the American cultural values that have most influenced him as a peacemaker include a certain pragmatic, practical approach as well as a can-do attitude, which can involve creativity, ingenuity and new ideas.

Ambassador Ross has a similar perspective on American values that have influenced him: “I think that there is something uniquely American about believing that you can solve problems. . . . I think there’s a saying, there’s an American culture that creates a sense of being prepared to solve problems...there’s clearly an optimistic element of it.”

A key motivating experience Ambassador Ross was the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin with whom he’d worked closely.

Professor Lederach feels that in some ways he has been influenced by Midwestern and rural American values as well as the strong family and religious values with which he grew up. However, he believes that he differs in many ways from the people surrounding him in the small towns where he grew up because of the strength of his family and religious values that were different. Thus he has been particularly influenced by his family and religious values.

The first time he noticed how different his family values were occurred at the time of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Another early occasion when he saw how his family values differed was in rural Oregon. These family values have influenced him positively as a peacebuilder.

For Dr. Saunders, he feels that the values that influenced him were middle-class American values: “The values that I learned at home were those of the best of middle class America. I obviously came to love my country.”

When asked to describe those values in more detail Dr. Saunders says:

Be honest, be respectful, respect other people even if you don't agree with them, be kind to people, recognize that other people have feelings, demonstrate integrity in everything you do, that's been an important word in my life, and obviously some, it's I'll say some of the values of American Democracy . . . the quintessential American political speech in colonial times in the town meetings was 'We have a problem, let's talk about it', you know it's in a way the essence of what I later called dialogue.

It is interesting to note that while there are differences in the cultural values, there are also cross-cultural similarities. For example, both Dr. Sun and Dr. Saunders emphasize the importance of communication as part of their traditional cultural values. This is an interesting finding in that it shows values that might be viewed as typically traditionally “Chinese” or “American” can in fact be the same values, perhaps expressed differently in differing cultural traditions. This sheds new light on the culture literature. While scholars have worked to show dimensions of culture along which there can be cross-cultural comparisons, there may very likely be far more commonalities underlying supposed differences in cultures than would be apparent through application of dimensions such as Hofstede’s (1980/2001) dimensions of culture. Perhaps this study shows that applying such dimensions in some sense is reductionist relative to the individual. Additionally cross-cultural studies such as this one can contribute depth and understanding of cross-cultural issues at the micro level as opposed to the aggregated macro level of the large cultural studies.

Religion

The sub-theme of religion was also the primary emergent thematic factor for the American participants. Religion has played an important part in their peacebuilding in a number of different ways. For example, a strong part of Ambassador Ross’s motivation in peacebuilding is his Jewish religious values and sense of Jewish identity, which contribute to his passion for and commitment to this work:

Well, I think that it's also not just personal values but it's also I'd say spiritual. I mean you know as someone who is Jewish there is no higher, there is nothing you can do that is more meaningful than to be a *rodef shalom*, a *rodef shalom* means to be a pursuer of peace. . . . And so there is a sense that there is nothing you can do in life that is more meaningful than to be a pursuer of peace and there's also this notion that you should, that you should work to mend the world, you know

These are strong for me, these are guiding principles, guiding values, so over the years it's had a strong effect on me. It's been a source of inspiration but it's also been a source of sustenance because when you try to negotiate peace and restore conflict there are few things that you are going to do that are going to be more frustrating than that.

Religious belief and faith have been key components of Dr. Saunders' life experience and identity as well as his approach to and involvement in peacebuilding. There were two important documents from the Presbyterian Church that he discusses as very influential in his peacebuilding, particularly the second one, which emphasized the idea of the peacemaker's calling. Additionally, when asked about how his work as a peacebuilder is informed by his Presbyterian faith, he speaks about how his involvement with his church helped him move towards conceptions of community and relationship which later became important principles in his paradigms of sustained dialogue. Dr. Saunders is also highly motivated by his belief in the importance of the work itself.

Although Dr. Ury is not faith-based relative to an institutional religion in his narrative, he does believe there is a faith element in his work, although not in the

traditional sense. In a follow-up email in response to the question of faith in his work

he says:

While it may not be faith-based in the more conventional sense, it is faith-based in the larger sense of a deep appreciation for the underlying unity and interconnectedness of all life as well as in the spirit of hope embodied in faith.

The importance of religion and faith in Professor Lederach's peacebuilding: Professor

Lederach is a faith-driven peacebuilder, and he has been strongly influenced by

Mennonite as well as Quaker teachings. Other personal values that influence him

include:

They are commitment to friendship and loyalty, to truthfulness, to seeking to understand rather than to try to project onto something your particular view of truth, the values that seek to find what we would say in my tradition, God in the other. So even with people that you don't understand or maybe wish you harm I've always maintained a value base that you're across the conversation from another human being and they've had a lot of experiences that you have not had and that some of the anger or suspicion or projection that you may be feeling is probably coming from a place that you need to find ways to touch and understand and not judge. And those have served me well in the areas that I work. Especially in conflict and especially in ways of conciliation and mediation. And those are fairly prominent in what I do.

Differences in understanding of religion and values

This was a key difference between the American and Chinese participants. While

three of the four Chinese stated they were influenced by Confucianism, this is not a

religion and historically has functioned as a guiding philosophy—not a belief system.

For the Americans however, institutional religious values were the number one factor

in their peacebuilding for three out of the four, with non-institutionalized spirituality

being a factor for the fourth, Dr. Ury. The role of religion (in this case Judaism, Presbyterianism, and the Mennonite faith) was paramount to the peacebuilding motivations, experiences, and perspectives of the American peacebuilders. This is one of the biggest differences between the Chinese and American participants. There is a sense for the Americans that they are not only doing noble work, they are doing holy work. Ambassador Ross refers to this role as a *rodef shalom*. Dr. Saunders talks about how he is highly motivated by the Presbyterian creed of the Peacemaker's Calling. Professor Lederach speaks about being a faith-based peacemaker who had strong Mennonite and some Quaker influences in his development.

I found it curious that religion was the number one aggregated factor of priority for the Americans and tried to investigate the extent to which statistically American peacebuilders are religious. However, I could not find any such statistics.

A search of the literature did reveal that there is currently a growing area of scholarship on the positive role religion can play in peacebuilding (Powers, 2010), covering the actions of individuals as well as organizations and religious institutions. There are examples of religion and peacebuilding which covers multiple perspectives and faiths, such as: Catholic, Jewish, Islam, Evangelical, Indigenous African religion, Quaker, Mennonite, Eastern Orthodox Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Daoism, Baha'i, and religious leaders in the military (Matyok, Flaherty, Tusso, Senehi, & Byrne, 2014). According to the Tannenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding

(Little, 2007), there are “at least four types of general peacemaking that apply to the work of religious peacemakers as well: enforcement, peacekeeping, institution-and-capacity building and agreement-making” (p. 442). However, religion in peacemaking is a complicated matter (Nepstad, 2004). Harpviken and Roislien (2008), for example, feel there are both potential benefits and challenges to religion’s involvement relative to three aspects: “its normative aspect, its relationship to identity, and its organizational function” (p. 351).

One of the reasons for the involvement of religion and faith-based peacebuilding derives from the growth of practical theology which is “theological reflections on practices, or about the theological movements in a larger praxis that includes both action and reflection” (Schreiter, 2011, p. 29). There is also the issue of interreligious peacebuilding including interreligious dialogue, which can be of crucial importance to the peacebuilding process and which occurs between members of different faiths and values: “As interreligious peacebuilding shows . . . actions can be undertaken jointly even when values may not be entirely shared. This is important especially when dealing with situations of conflict, where overcoming harmful division is central on the agenda” (p. 31).

In continued research I tried to learn to what degree having all the American peacebuilders in the study highly influenced by religion is representative of peacebuilders in general. In a conversation, Professor Gerard Powers (personal

communication, 2014) from the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at Notre Dame commented that “there are a significant number of faith-based peacebuilders,” but that it is not possible to even approximate the number or percentage. This difficulty derives from definitions of peacebuilding, the involvement of NGOs, and the involvement of so many religious and non-religious organizations.

I also spoke with Mr. David Smock (personal communication, 2014), Director of the Religion and Peacebuilding program at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). He feels there is not conclusive data on this topic and, although the number of peacebuilders I deal with is small, he found the result surprising. He says he deals with many peacebuilders who are not motivated by faith. Specifically he states: “It’s an interesting idea. The sample is too small to generalize. There isn’t other data to corroborate what you’ve discovered. But it’s suggestive enough to warrant further testing.”

Thus, at the present time there does not seem to be conclusive data on this topic; however, within the study it is certainly interesting that four of the four Americans are strongly faith-based and three of the four Chinese are strongly influenced by Confucian philosophy (although Dr. Sun has also been influenced by other values such as traditional Chinese values). Dr. Sun, Dali Yan, and X had clear Confucian influences. I asked Pin Ni in a follow-up question whether he felt any direct Confucian influence and he said he didn’t when he was growing up because of the

Cultural Revolution. However, Pin Ni's stated values do conform to Confucian values and he had potentially been indirectly influenced due to its pervasiveness in Chinese culture. The importance of religion and faith-based peacebuilding for the Western participants in the study in conjunction with my conversation with Professor Powers and Mr. Smock indicates that this is an area where this study has contributed to the field through raising the question, and it is also an area that warrants further exploration and research.

Confucianism

Confucianism has been a highly influential element in the peacebuilding of a number of the Chinese participants. For example, X has been very influenced in his peacebuilding by key values in Chinese culture, particularly those of Confucius

(*Kong zi*):

The core of Chinese culture, the core of Chinese tradition actually in dealing with conflicts lies in *he baogui*. *He* means peace and harmonious. *He baogui* means peace and harmony is the most valuable, the most important thing. So all solutions should be set up on purpose, set up with peace as the purpose. . . .

As I mentioned then the *he baogui*, says peace is the most valuable, the most important, all the conflicting parties should take a compromising manner to negotiate for a mutually accepted result so that we can avoid conflict we can reach the goal of peace, the goal of the peaceful solution on the controversy.

Similarly, Dali Yang refers to the strong influence of Confucius upon his work, particularly in the importance of aiming high:

Well I often remember Confucius, not the typical line, but the one that in order to achieve something middling you have to really aim high.

And so it's very important to strive for one's best in order to get things done.

Additional information from the literature about Confucianism may help to explain the differences between American religious values and Chinese Confucianism. Confucius (551–479 B.C.), the great Chinese scholar, sage, teacher, and philosopher, has had a profound influence on Chinese thought and behavior for thousands of years. Confucianism was attacked in China during the time of the Cultural Revolution however, “the fundamental principles underlying it remained strong” (Zhang & Harwood, 2002). In addition, China has adopted an open-door policy to join the global economies much later comparing with other East Asian societies . . . hence has maintained more indigenous values.” (Zhang, Lin, Nonaka, & Beorn, 2005, pp. 4–5). Recently there has been a resurgence of interest in Confucius in China and a revival of interest in multiple aspects of Confucian's sayings, practices, attending Confucian temples, and even amusement parks (Osno, 2013). The use of the word *temple* should not be misleading. Confucianism is not a religion. According to Ma and Zhiyong (2004), for example, “definitely, Confucianism is not a religion like Christianity or Buddhism but its influence in the whole Chinese culture is not less than that of Christianity in the West or Buddhism in the East” (p. 1). Hong (2004) describes Confucianism in this regard: “Confucius and Confucianists in dynastic China offered explanations about the world of man, but they did it with purely moral ideas rather than with singularly theological ones” (p. 6).

Potentially based on earlier work in the *ru* tradition (Yao, 2000, p. 21) Confucius created a humanistic system of ideas or a philosophical approach, presented in his *Analects*, which have been used by all levels of Chinese society as a way to govern, order society, structure interactions, and outline the nature of relationships and duties people have to one another. As such it is an all pervasive, cohesive philosophical approach with some fundamental key principles.

The main concern of Confucius was with humans and with the fundamental principles of humanity. Confucius believed that these principles were the root of social relationships, the foundation of the stability, peace and prosperity of the state, the family and individuals. He developed his ethics around two central theses: that goodness can be taught and learned, and that society can only be in harmony and at peace under the guidance of wisdom. He further developed a system of concepts to expound the central theses. Of these concepts four became the underlying ideas of the Confucian tradition, namely the way, (*dao*), ritual/property, (*li*), humaneness (*ren*), and virtue (*de*), and later became the backbone of the ideological structure of a Confucian state. (Yao, 2000, p. 26)

Within this overall context, a first principle is that the nature of man is good. A second idea is the importance of peace and harmony at all levels of society and with nature.

The whole structure of Confucian aesthetics begins with the concept of harmony between the Yin and the Yang blended . . . each two individual things put together should strive for lasting harmony. . . . The harmony of all things and all individuals with nature or with their surrounding environment is a natural out-reach of these harmonies. . . . Now a look on the stability or peace side . . . thanks to the very Confucian appeal to unity, stability's half-brother, Confucianism has proved conducive to keeping an intact China, the land and the people. (Hong, 2004, pp. 15–17)

Thus peace and harmony are fundamental values that reflect the key aspects of Confucianism include seeking “harmonious relations with others, which are the precondition of social integration and stability, individuals should respect and follow tradition and social hierarchy (rules, status, and authorities)” (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987, as cited in Zhang et al., 2005, p. 4).

Within this context there are four fundamental aspects of Confucian teaching: “the hierarchical relationship, the family system, ‘Jen’ (benevolence), and the emphasis on education” (Chen & Chung, 1993). Basically, people have a sense of duty or responsibility to act a certain way within the overall hierarchical social and family structures. Citizens and emperors each have duties to one another, just as fathers and sons have duties within the family. These four key principles apply to nuanced aspects of Chinese life as it is influenced by Confucianism. Additional aspects of Confucianism that are similarly manifested include humanism, faithfulness, and propriety (Flowerdew, 1998). In fact the fundamental Confucian principles can be found in many aspects and values of Chinese life. The Chinese Culture Connection (1987) in their Chinese Values Survey (CVS) specifically found four value clusters as follows:

- I. Integration: tolerance of other; harmony with others; solidarity with others; non-competitiveness; trustworthiness, contentedness; being conservative; a close, intimate friend, filial piety, patriotism, chastity in women
- II. Confucian work dynamism: ordering relationships; thrift; persistence; having a sense of shame; reciprocation; personal steadiness; protecting your face; respect for tradition

- III. Human-heartedness: kindness; patience; courtesy, sense of righteousness; patriotism;
- IV. Moral Discipline: moderation; keeping oneself disinterested and pure; having few desires; adaptability; prudence (p. 150)

However, it is important to note that Confucius' students and descendants added to the Confucian principles—Mencius, for example, added the idea of the Golden Mean, claiming that “the ‘golden mean’ between extremes is the essence of Confucian orthodoxy” (Hong, 2004, p. 37).

Commitment to a Relational Approach to Peacebuilding

The Merriam-Webster dictionary online defines *relationship* as “the way in which two or more people, groups, countries, etc., talk to, behave toward, and deal with each other . . . the way in which two or more people or things are connected.” A relational approach to peacebuilding entails the idea that there is a goal of establishing a relationship or connection between the parties involved.

Within this study, a commitment to a relational approach to peacebuilding involves the fundamental idea that it is important that there is a positive relationship between the peacebuilder and the participants and that an ultimate goal of the process is a sustainable and workable relationship between the participants themselves. There is also a sense that *relational* refers to a reaching out to the “Other,” and that the relationship in peacebuilding involves overcoming barriers between a sense of self and sameness and otherness and difference. This is important because this type of

approach can lead to truly sustainable peacebuilding solutions based upon positive and enduring relationships as opposed to quick fixes between opposing parties.

Many of the participants talked about the idea that peace is really all about relationships of respect and understanding and that the work of peacebuilding needs to begin with a focus on building healthy, sustainable relationships among people. Dr. Saunders provides a representative statement about the importance of commitment to relationship in peacebuilding: “I gradually articulated my own paradigm. I call it the ‘relational paradigm.’ It is rooted in the conviction that solving problems and making peace depends on transforming the relationships that cause problems—not just on negotiating practical solutions.”

Sub-themes for commitment to a relational approach to peacebuilding

The sub-themes for the characteristic of a relational approach to peacebuilding include elements that can help comprise a positive and sustainable relationship. These elements include responsibility, integrity, trust, compromise, honesty, and communication. There are some differences in the way that a few of these sub-themes manifest across cultures, but overall there are a number of areas of strong similarities in the sub-themes cross-culturally.

Responsibility

Responsibility is a factor common to five participants, but is not evenly distributed between the Chinese and the Americans. It is common to all four Chinese but only to Ambassador Ross amongst the Americans. The factor of responsibility for the

Chinese is interesting. In each interview it came across as a collective responsibility to the group. An example is Pin Ni's thinking about his responsibility for all the workers in his company, and also his strong sense of leadership in which responsibility involves modeling the desired behavior. When speaking about responsibility and peacebuilding he says:

Responsibility is always the most critical point in peacebuilding because obviously everybody will contribute and should contribute, but responsibility, understanding who we are and what are we supposed to do, especially you are at a place where you have more resources and that will help to make the world different. So definitely understanding your responsibility is always the critical piece.

Similarly Dr. Sun shows this sense of collective responsibility in his community work, as does Dali Yang with his emphasis on excellence as part of his responsibility towards the University of Chicago community. This is in keeping with the literature in that the Chinese culturally are characterized as highly collective. Collective societies show strong identification with the group. When describing such collectivism, Hofstede (1980/2001) says:

The relationship between the individual and the collectivity in human society is not only a matter of ways of living together, it is intimately linked with societal norms (in the sense of value systems of major groups of the population. . . . The central element in our mental programming in this case is the self-concept. "The tradition-directed person... hardly thinks of himself as an individual." . . . the Chinese tradition has no equivalent for the Western concept of "personality": a separate entity distinct from society and culture. The Chinese word for man (*ren*) includes the person's intimate societal and cultural environment which makes that person's existence meaningful. (p. 210)

Integrity

Integrity is not only a sub-theme for a commitment to a relational approach to peacebuilding, but it is also the second common thematic factor for the participants. This was a fairly generalized term throughout the narratives. The factor of integrity for all the participants in the interviews seemed to be a necessary component of identity. They all view peacebuilding as a noble calling and thus having integrity within that process seemed part of the definition of being a peacebuilder. Ambassador Ross refers to such nobility when talking about the influence of the Kennedys on his going into public service: “I had a responsibility to do something and public service was a kind of noble thing to do and a responsible thing to do and I think that that whole context was what influenced me.” Integrity is in the list given by Dr. Ury when asked what qualities are necessary to be a peacebuilder: “. . . creativity, integrity in terms of creating that trust. Having congruence between your words, your thoughts, your thoughts, your words and your actions.”

Trust

As with integrity, trust is a sub-theme and also an important emergent thematic factor common to six participants across cultures. An interesting finding is that within this study trust creation differed by individual. Pin Ni for example emphasized transparency, Ambassador Ross emphasized credibility and reliability, Dr. Ury talked about congruence between words and actions, and Dr. Saunders and Professor Lederach spoke about it primarily through a Sustained Dialogue lens where time and space would be created over time for trust to develop after there was empathetic

understanding of the “Other.” X felt that mutual trust was the basis for all negotiation:

“Without the mutual trust, with mutual suspicion, no negotiation can be successful.”

There does not seem to be a consensus among the participants about trust creation apart from using communication skills such as listening, transparency, and dialogue to help create it. There are stereotypes about trust creation in the two cultures. For example, trust creation in China can have to do with relationships. You are trusted through your *guanxi*, or connections with another commonly known third party. Trust creations in the United States can be more individual, where it’s not about relationships; the individual must prove him or herself to be trustworthy. To some degree these stereotypes hold true for the viewpoints of the peacebuilders. For Ambassador Ross it’s about proving that you as an individual are reliable and believable. He says, “And you have to be credible not only in doing things that are hard for you but you have to be credible in terms of standing up for the things that matter for you.”

The same is true for Dr. Saunders and Dr. Ury, who tell stories about how they demonstrated their individual trustworthiness at Camp David and when in Venezuela.

The Chinese never talk about individual trustworthiness. Instead they talk about trust collectively. For example Pin Ni talks about the transparency of the way Wanxiang does business:

One is we call “If you give me a drop of water I can bring you back the spring of the fountain.” *Di shui zhi en yong tren shan bao. Di shui*—the drop of the water, *zhi en*—the favor of the drop of the water, *yong-* come out, *tren-*spring. I need to bring the spring back, the spring of the fountain to give back to. . . . So it’s just about if you help me I should not forget. We’re humans, we’re not just machines, it’s not about the calculations it’s about helping each other. You help me and I should help you. And there’s no lawyer, no contract, it’s just about loyalty to each other.

We have a good reputation. People know it doesn’t matter what’s in the contract. It matters that if they helped us we’re going to help them. Even you look at Wanxiang’s logo, the logo is like two hands joined together, and that makes the globe. That’s the culture, right? So we need to work together.

This sense of trust is consistent with the literature on culture, particularly the dimensions of specific vs. diffuse as posited by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998). In a diffuse culture like China: “The whole person is involved in a business relationship there is real and personal contact, instead of the specific relationship prescribed by a contract. In many countries a diffuse relationship is not only preferred, but necessary before business can proceed” (p. 9).

X talks about creating trust in a multilateral collaborative effort between parties.

Similarly Dali Yang consistently emphasized the importance of collaboration and teamwork.

A surprising finding is that while there seems to be more of a collective aspect to the Chinese narratives regarding trust than for the American, there is no more of a *guanxi*

or relationship aspect for the Chinese than for the Americans. Rather, in the narratives, it was the Americans who spoke about specific relationships where they had created *guanxi*-type trust. So while there is more collectivism which could be anticipated with the Chinese given the Hofstede (1980/2001) and other culture literature, there is not an emphasis on *guanxi* for the Chinese participants as much as for the American participants. For example, Dr. Ury created trust with Chavez, Dr. Saunders created enough trust for Sustained Dialogue between enemies, and Professor Lederach used relationships with all levels of society to create trust.

In this respect the findings differed from what could be anticipated from the scholarship in the field discussed in Chapter 2, where the Chinese profile as highly collectivist and the Americans profile as highly individualistic. Thus, while trust creation appears to be complicated and to be consistent with Hofstede's (1980/2001) individualism and collectivism criteria, it is inconsistent in terms of what could be expected of the Americans and Chinese based on Hofstede, Trompenaars, and Hampden-Turner (1998), and the GLOBE study. Within this study it does not go according to stereotypical *guanxi*, relationship-oriented trust creation for the Chinese. This could be because the *guanxi* aspect was assumed by the Chinese and thus was not overtly mentioned. Rather, there appears more to be a slight *guanxi* element with the Americans in their narratives. There clearly needs to be more study of how trust and mutual trust are created in each of the roles that these participants play. Their specific roles as negotiator, mediator, facilitator, teacher, etc. could be determining

how they need to create and sustain trust more than their cultures or their overall peacebuilder roles. Insight into how trust is generally created in China and the United States as well as further insight into how specific roles and peacebuilders in general create trust could help facilitate greater trust-building between Chinese and American peacebuilders in the future.

There is work in the literature which could help to explain some of the aspects of trust in this study. In their seminal work on trust, Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) describe three factors of ability, benevolence, and integrity, which are important to trust and comprise the trustworthiness of the trustee. *Ability* refers to skills and competencies, *benevolence* is the degree to which the trustor believes the trustee wishes to do good to the trustor, and *integrity* is the belief on the part of the trustor that the trustee adheres to a set of principles acceptable to the trustor (pp. 717–719). The authors find that these three factors may be separable and “may vary independently of the others” (p. 720).

McKnight, Cummings, and Chervany (1998) describe a paradox of initial trusting behavior where people trust right away without a long time of gathering evidence as to the trustworthiness of the other party. They develop a model of such initial trust formation based upon disposition to trust, institution-based trust, and cognitive processes. Within this model, “‘disposition to trust’ refers to a tendency to be willing

to depend on others. 'Institution-based trust' means that one believes impersonal structures support one's likelihood for success in a given situation" (p. 474).

Lewicki, Tomlinson, and Gillespie (2006), on the other hand, look at the development of trust over time within interpersonal relationships. They describe different approaches to such trust, including behavioral and three psychological approaches: expectations, intentions affect, and dispositions. The behavioral approach involves choice behavior where trust begins at zero with no prior information available. Trust grows over time as cooperation is extended or reciprocated. These psychological approaches can be unidimensional, two-dimensional or transformational. For the psychological approaches the trust can begin at zero or higher levels and grow over time with increased evidence as to the trustworthiness of the other party (p. 994).

Lewicki, McAllister, and Bies (1998) deal with the complexity of simultaneous trust and distrust and the ambivalence that can be inherent in situations such as those that generate the need for collaboration but also cause both trust and distrust. Das and Teng (1998) explore the issue of trust within strategic alliances and argue that trust and control are parallels which can increase confidence in the partner in such alliances. They look at four techniques for trust building in alliances: risk taking, equity preservation, communication, and interfirm adaptation. They also examine three control mechanisms in strategic alliances, which include goal setting, structural specifications and organizational culture blending (p. 508).

The issue of risk and trust formation is discussed by Johansen, Selart, and Gronhaug (2013), who look specifically at initial trust. They seek to understand how initial trust and trust itself are impacted by the question of risk. This study is particularly important for a situation such as peacebuilding, where there can be perceived levels of high risk in trusting someone who has traditionally been viewed as an enemy. Integrity is a key issue in trusting. The authors posit three dimensions of risk: “outcome uncertainty or the variability of outcomes; lack of knowledge of the distribution of potential outcomes; and the uncontrollability of the outcome potential” (Sitkin & Pablo, 1992, p. 10, as cited in Johansen et al., 2013, p. 1186).

These results are interesting given the high premium placed on integrity by all eight participants in this dissertation study. For Johansen et al. (2013), the integrity is that of the person being trusted or the trustee. Perhaps the discrepancy is that in the narratives of the peacebuilders they are referring to the importance of their own integrity or integrity overall in the peacebuilding process, not just the integrity of the other.

Differences in understanding compromise

One of the most surprising findings of this study is that compromise is of key importance for the Chinese in peacebuilding; however, it was not mentioned or emphasized in the spoken narratives of the Americans. Pin and X directly discussed compromise as highly significant. For example, Pin Ni states:

I think one of the most critical that we all can learn in the peacebuilding is how do we deal with the difference of opinions. That's the most critical one. Because I always say this, as long as we have two human beings, it doesn't matter, if it's a husband wife, father son, brother sister, Chinese American, it doesn't matter we are going to have different views. That's very common. If we want to see everybody view the things need to be all together and identical, we don't have this world.

The world is about difference of opinion. But the key issue is how do we reconcile, respect, share, understand, appreciate and then compromise. If we have that mindset the world will be very peaceful. Sometimes the world is not peaceful because we all believe we are right. We all want to stick to our own positions, then that's how wars start. So then if we all understand each other we can compromise, then I think the peace work will be much easier

X says:

I think that a qualified and [successful] negotiator the compromising, the concept of compromise is the most important. And negotiator, any negotiator who sits at the table the first thing first is to keep the concept of compromise as a necessity very much or he or she will not be a qualified negotiator. And I think diplomatic skill lies in how less compromise you can make and how more compromise you can take from the other side is a skill but compromise is necessary. No matter you make a little compromise or big compromise, it's up to your skills, it's up to the situation, it's up to the base, however, no compromise means no negotiation, it means no peace, that means no peaceful solution.

Additionally there was an implicit feeling of the need for compromise, which was almost a sub-theme for both Dali Yang and Dr. Sun. They never addressed it directly in the same way as Pin Ni and X, but they did talk about times in their lives when compromise was needed, for example with Dr. Sun during the Cultural Revolution and with Dr. Yang when he switched majors to follow his interest in diplomacy. I am raising this factor as an important issue when it was explicitly not prevalent for all

four Chinese participants because of the vehemence of tone and great emphasis which Pin Ni and X placed on compromise as one of the most important if not *the* most important factors in peacebuilding. Compromise by emphasis and tone is thus fundamental to the Chinese narrative overall, yet it is not mentioned and does not occur as a narrative theme or sub-theme for the American group. This is not to say they would not value it in some fashion or it does not occur archivally, but it was not explicitly emphasized or put forth in a sub-thematic way as it was for the Chinese. I believe this is a key difference and is probably a cultural difference. It could come from Confucianism, with its emphasis upon harmony. It could be influenced by the highly collective nature of Chinese society. However, I was so struck by the strong emphasis placed on compromise by the Chinese and the absence of this in the Americans' narratives that I felt it merited comment. There are clearly implications for this difference if peacebuilding efforts were to occur at some point between the Chinese and Americans. The strong difference in outlook regarding peacebuilding could have impact on such efforts. If the Chinese enter efforts with the assumption that compromise is important but this is not understood in the same way by the Americans, there could be key misunderstandings. I am stating this as one of the important findings of this research.

Differences in understanding honesty

There is also an emphasis on honesty and truthfulness by the Americans, although it ranks much lower than compromise does for the Chinese. However, it is important to mention that of the Chinese Dali Yang stressed honesty as an important value. It is

interesting to speculate that honesty might be a key component of trust creation for the Americans but other elements might be key components of trust-building or communication or various factors for the Chinese. The flexibility referred to by Pin Ni where China is about reform and America is about rules speaks to this:

I would say working style wise China is more about creating something. USA is more about let's follow the rules. Because the USA has been well established and China is all about economic reform. Reform means let's create something new, a little more creative, flexible. In China rules mean something but it does not necessarily mean everything

Yet, the underlying understanding he has of the cultural difference in the perceptions of Chinese flexibility regarding absolute rules is paramount. Chinese actions which they consider virtuous may be considered not honest or not virtuous by the Americans. Americans appear to have more absolute standards of moral behavior while Chinese culture emphasizes a more situational and flexible approach. This is consistent with the cultural literature in terms of Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) dimension of universalism vs. particularism in which "the universalist approach is roughly: 'What is good and right can be defined and always applies.' In particularist cultures far greater attention is given to the obligations of relationships and unique circumstances" (p. 8). Therefore, I would posit that it is important in peacebuilding that a common definition of what is considered trustworthy behavior be put forward upfront at the beginning of the process to avoid any misunderstandings. The fact that the thematic factors which appear as common for the participants might have some nuanced differences in meaning both individually,

culturally, and in terms of the components that create these factors, particularly relative to honesty and what its implications are in trusting behavior as it applies to peacebuilding is another key finding for this research.

Communication and dialogue

Relative to the emergent thematic factors, the importance of communication and dialogue is a common factor across seven participants. In this case I have combined them into a common category because in the narratives the participants seemed to be talking about aspects of a common factor. An unanticipated finding in the study is that for the Chinese clear communication is most important, because in general the literature characterizes Chinese communication as indirect (as discussed in a following section). For Pin Ni clear communication involved an emphasis on transparency, for Dali Yang that the communication itself was open and could help to form bridges and bring people together through letting them see what they had in common and could learn from one another. It was very important for Dali Yang to clarify or prevent misunderstanding between scholars who might not know they had interests in common. For Dr. Sun, open communication was very important in preventing misunderstanding. Dr. Sun, and Dali Yang, like the Americans, also include dialogue as an important element in communication. I had very limited time to speak with X, and although the importance of communication in the six-party nuclear talks was clearly implied, I did not feel I could add it as a separate factor for X because it did not manifest to the same degree as it did for the other participants.

For the Americans, communication as dialogue is very important. For Dr. Saunders, Dr. Ury, and Professor Lederach there was an emphasis on Sustained Dialogue. For Ambassador Ross there was a strong emphasis on the listening aspect of communication, as there was for Dr. Ury and Dr. Sun. Listening is an emphasized element in communication across both cultures. Ambassador Ross says, “Oh I’d say you have to be a good listener.” Dr. Sun says, “The bottom-line is that the way best for you is not necessarily the best for others. You have to be a good listener to listen to others.” Dr. Ury comments on “listening, the willingness to listen and the eagerness to listen to what’s not just the words but what’s behind the words. To what people are doing, for listening.”

Differences in understanding on communication

Within their narratives the Chinese emphasize open communication. The only one who does not directly talk about it is X, for whom it can be inferred when he says that all parties should be treated as equals, all items for discussion should be placed on the table and discussed. I think that a possible reason they emphasize open and clear communication is that their normal communication style is characterized as indirect. Thus, perhaps the Chinese in this study are advocating that in peacebuilding it is necessary to step outside of the normal indirectness to make sure that the meanings are clear. For the Americans, as supported by the literature, the open communication style is a cultural characteristic and thus it seems to be assumed by the participants that this is the way they will communicate. I am postulating this because instead of emphasizing it in their narratives the Americans emphasize dialogue—particularly

Sustained Dialogue, which takes place over time. The Chinese also believe that peace talks must take place over time, but there is not the mention of a sustained dialogue, rather clarity of communication. Pin Ni says:

A lot of things come from misunderstanding, come from miscommunication, come from misjudgment, so when we bring them together we just need to take down the walls. We have too many walls built by bureaucracy, by language barrier, by culture difference, you know whatever it is. But our job is to take them down. We can, every day we can do that, every day we can do that.

We need people to see each other, talk to each other, understand each other and respect each other. Correct?

He also says:

I believe people are good as long as you allow people to talk, right. Sometimes we just don't communicate enough. So we need to build a bridge for people to communicate, ok. We need to build a bridge for people to be able to understand each other.

Dali Yang says:

It's very often a lack of communication, or information sharing in the beginning. And once you begin to introduce the information, you begin to introduce two parties together, then they begin to say "Wow, isn't this a great opportunity for us to get together to try to do something together."

He also says that "it requires a lot of open communication." As a further example,

Dr. Sun says, "People need to communicate and understand each other, instead of isolate and guessing each other based on rumors."

Why is clarity so important for the Chinese? This question is not easily answered by the additional literature or by statements by the participants. It could be a subject for future research, which could be helpful. For example, do Chinese peacebuilders tend to switch into direct communication style during certain points in the process? What is it about dialogue that makes it so important for the Americans? Is it that the Americans with their direct communication style assume clarity and they are more concerned with connecting and reaching out to the “Other” through dialogue (M. Schwarz, personal communication, 2014)? Learning more about these factors could lead to improved communication protocols and practices during Chinese and American peacebuilding ventures.

There has been a great deal of research indicating that people from different cultures have different communication styles (Park, Levine, Weber, Lee, Terra, Botero, Bessarabova, Guan, Shearman, & Wilson, 2012). An analysis by Merkin, Taras and Steel (2014), for example, of cultural values including individualism, masculinity, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance on communication patterns found that among a number of consistent correlations, individualism is positively related to direct communication and high power distance is positively related to indirect communication (p. 1). Consistent with the literature Chinese and American cultures have different communication styles. A key element of difference is that the Chinese style is indirect and often high context and the American style is direct and low context. There have been a number of studies on Chinese communication style and

the way it has been influenced by Confucian values, (Fang & Faure, 2011). A key factor in the indirect Chinese communication style is the idea of the Other-oriented self, influenced by Confucianism where “the self is relational in Chinese culture. That is, the self is defined by the surrounding relationships” (Gao, 1998, p. 164). Within this context Gao posits five major speaking practices for the Chinese: *Han xu* or implicit communication; *ting hua*, or listening-centeredness; *ke qi* or politeness; *zi ji ren*, or a focus on insiders; and *mian zi* or face-directed communication strategies (p. 163).

Gao (1998) also says that a key element of communication for the Chinese is the use of multiple meaning and depths of meanings: “All emphasize the inadequacy of spoken words in constructed meanings. Hence, the ability to surmise and decipher hidden meanings is highly desirable in Chinese culture” (p. 169). Additionally, communication in Chinese culture in conflict management is highly related to *face*, meaning the sense of respect and self-respect.

Chinese cherish and nurture the belief that conflict should be approached with self-control and self-restraint. . . . Overall most Chinese endorse avoidance and other indirect approaches to conflict situations . . . concern for self-face often leads to a confrontational style of conflict management, while concern for other-face leads to a nonconfrontational style such as avoiding, obliging, and compromising. (p. 180)

This supports the emphasis on clarity in communication and avoiding misunderstanding on the part of the Chinese participants in the study. If they generally speak with implicit meanings but are in a peacebuilding effort that they

think is of paramount importance, it makes sense that they might step outside of their traditional style to more explicit, clear, direct speech to avoid misunderstanding. It is also important to note that three of the four Chinese participants have lived for a number of years in America and understand and can utilize the differences in communication styles. For example, Pin saying that America is more direct and China is more polite, but he has learned from this. Now, while he is always polite, he can also be more direct when he needs to be. This literature also supports aspects of the emphasis found in the study that the Chinese participants put on compromise in peacebuilding.

American communication style by contrast is direct. Direct communication can be described as congruence between the sentence meaning and the speaker's meaning.

As stated by Hara and Kim (2004):

A sentence uttered in context has both sentence meaning and a speaker's meaning. The former, which is a direct and literal meaning, refers to the sense and reference of speech derived from words and syntactic rules. In contrast, the latter refers to what the speaker intends for his or her purpose in a particular setting.

There are many times when speaker meaning is different from speaker meaning, in which case speaker meaning is indirect. (p. 4)

If the meaning between the sentence and the speaker's meaning are the same, it could be said that this is direct communication.

According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), in individualist cultures like America “speaking one’s mind is a characteristic of an honest person . . . low context communication prevails” (p. 92). This clearly differs from the Chinese indirect communication style: “Clearly asserting one’s own views, however, is an important communication skill in the US while not stating clearly what one has in mind is a sign of strength, maturity and social competence in Asian culture” (Miyahara, 2000; Park et al., p. 180). It is important to note that since “the main characteristic of individualism as a cultural dimension focused on the relationship between self and other” (Park et al., p. 181), there might be some correlation between reaching out to the other by the highly individualistic Americans in their stressing dialogue as the key means of communication for peacebuilding. Also, several of the Americans emphasize that listening is an important part of communication (Ross, Saunders, Ury) to the extent that listening was a separate thematic factor for them. This is interesting, because in order to have dialogue both sides need to be able to listen and hear what the other side is saying. Additionally, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) show more dialogue and less violence in domestic politics (p. 67) in small power distance countries like the US. This all makes sense in supporting the findings that dialogue, particularly Sustained Dialogue, is the key thematic factor for communication for the Americans. The directness of their style is additionally supported by the American theme factors of truth and honesty.

It was interesting to note that according to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) the use of the word *I* is encouraged in highly individualistic cultures like America and discouraged in collectivist cultures such as China. Throughout the narratives this seemed to happen consistently. A good example is Dali Yang, who used the pronoun *we* consistently throughout his narrative and always was referring to his team or his school when attributing credit for achievement. There was much less use of the term *I* than with the narratives of the Americans. Thus what emerged from the narratives in this instance was consistent with Hofstede and Hofstede's data.

Courage to Take Action

There are many famous quotes about courage (Courage, in *The Quote Garden*). Mark Twain is attributed with saying: "Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear—not absence of fear. Except a creature be part coward it is not a compliment to say it is brave." Similarly, Dan Rather said: "Courage is being afraid but going on anyhow." And attributed to Edward Vernon Rickenbacker is the quote: "Courage is doing what you're afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you're scared."

Within the literature, courage is similarly defined as different from fearlessness:

"Courage is unique from fearlessness in that the courageous individual completes the same act as the fearless individual, despite experiencing fear" (Norton & Weiss, 2009, pp. 212–213.). Goud (2005) defines "true courage as a subjective experience where an actor perceives risk, experiences fear, and overcomes those fears to act" (as cited in Hannah, Sweeney & Lester, 2007, p. 129). A common element to these

definitions is that courage contains an element of knowing about and feeling fear and yet taking action despite the fear. This is certainly characteristic of those who work as peacebuilders. By the very definition of their work presented earlier, they are involved in aspects of conflictual situations which often have to do with war and armed conflict. They not only try to prevent such conflict but also work with adversaries and in situations where tensions are high and there is great possibility for personal danger.

This is true for the peacebuilders in this study. They have all chosen to take a path where they are exposed to conflict. For Pin Ni, Dr. Sun and Dali Yang, their work is focused on prevention of conflict but even so, they run risks in working between two countries that have not always been on friendly terms. In trying to bring people together through intellectual, educational, and student exchange they are potentially risking a great deal—particularly if efforts fall through and their work creates greater potential for conflict. For X and the Americans who are or have been in practitioner or diplomatic roles before, during, and after conflicts such as those related to war, the dangers they face and the courage they muster to take action are even more clear. For all the peacebuilders in the study there are elements of courage required for their work.

Sub-themes for courage

The sub-themes for courage include both physical and emotional courage. This refers to the idea that for all of the peacebuilders they have faced peacebuilding situations

that require both types of courage. Physical courage refers to being in situations where there could be a physical danger to themselves as a direct result of their peacebuilding work, or physical dangers that have increased their motivation towards peacebuilding, such as those faced by Dr. Sun during the Cultural Revolution when he was working in the warehouse. Emotional courage involves the idea that peacebuilding requires the peacebuilder to be able to face the emotional difficulties involved in peacebuilding. These include not only facing the trauma and horrors resulting from war, but also the courage shown by participants such as Pin Ni, who goes above and beyond his daily work requirements, to strive towards the high-level goal of overcoming barriers and tearing down walls to peace, when such efforts can involve resistance to change and other emotionally difficult situations.

Physical courage

The physical courage of the peacebuilders is best exemplified by a quote from Professor Lederach referring to his early work with the Mennonite Central Committee in Nicaragua:

But I got deeply involved in supporting a high level peace process in Nicaragua between the Sandinista government and the armed indigenous insurgency of the east coast of Nicaragua. They had arms to fight against the government. . . .

I came to understand how deep and difficult these conflicts of identity really are. I have an abiding respect for the people who have to live in and live through cycles of violence and what it takes to face that on a daily basis and find a way through it. . . .

And of course with this conciliation theme you're moving constantly between people who are enemies and it's a world that has a lot of

secrets and difficulties so you learn what it means to receive threats and challenges to your family and your life.

Dr. Ury also describes a potentially physically dangerous situation:

And it was a kind of a tense time there was gunfire outside which we later found out it was because it was the first anniversary of the death of Yassar Arafat. And there was a lot of tension and there was the thought there were going to be riots, but anyway, it doesn't matter, there was stuff going on.

Emotional courage

The emotional courage required of peacebuilders involves a number of aspects, including facing the physical and emotional devastation inflicted by conflict. This can entail not only observing horrifying scenes and their aftermath, but also dealing with people who are in terrible emotional pain and suffering from many forms of trauma—including psychological trauma. Exposure to such suffering can have emotional impact on the peacebuilder, and being willing to face this risk requires courage at a deep emotional level. Dr. Ury describes such emotional pain relative to Syria: “In the last year, just feeling the pain of what’s going on in Syria because I’ve been to Syria many times on another project over the years and it feels painful.”

Apart from the differing focus on aspects of peacebuilding, there does not seem to be any difference between the courage shown by the Chinese and by the Americans. Dr. Sun, for example, displayed heroic courage in the acts of persistence and determination that allowed him to survive the Cultural Revolution despite often having feelings of hopelessness. X undoubtedly displayed courage in taking part in

the six party nuclear talks with North Korea, in which the stakes were high and the challenges were great. Thus the courage involved in peacebuilding does not seem to differ relative to culture or cultural values. This is a surprising finding relative to the literature, in that like with responsibility, there could be a collective aspect to the courage shown by the Chinese. For example, their courage could have a group identification element as part of what has been described in the literature as a collective identification of self (Hofstede, 1980/2001). However, this does not seem to be the case. Both the Chinese and the American participants' courage seems to be a part of their individual sense of identity and for both groups it involves working towards a high level of world peace, which is not directly related to a collective sense of identity.

A review of the literature on courage suggests that there could well be a link for the peacebuilders between their sense of identity and their courage in their peacebuilding work. For example, in the research of Koerner (2014) on workplace courage and identity, she found that “courageous acts are an important form of identity work” (p. 85). She identifies four types of courage-based identity work. These four types are: endurance, reaction, opposition, and creation. A key finding of her study is that “self- and social identity are crucial constructs in the process of a courageous act. . . . The findings suggest that courageous acts tie individuals to their identities” (pp. 86–87).

Further exploration on the nature of courage and how it is involved in peacebuilding could be helpful to those who are currently peacebuilders or those who wish to become peacebuilders. For example, is such courage inherent, or is it learned? Does practicing courage through peacebuilding help peacebuilders to become more courageous as they go from one situation to another? Exploration of these and related questions could benefit the scholarship on courage as well as that on peacebuilding.

Life-Long Learning in the Skills and Art of Peacebuilding

Like any profession, peacebuilding requires specific skill sets to accomplish goals. For peacebuilders the skill sets can vary and they presumably can vary according to culture, individual personality, and situation. However, there are some basic skills needed in various peacebuilding activities that include technical abilities such as mediation, negotiation, and communication. Yet, there is more to peacebuilding than an amalgam of techniques. It also requires a high level of sophistication in dealing with people, conflict, and often crossing cultures. At its highest level, peacebuilding becomes an activity that combines both technique and a certain sense of art. To attain this level of sophistication and artistic application of technique seems inherently to involve a constant and life-long learning from experience and from the experience of others.

For the peacebuilders in this study such life-long learning is characteristic and can be summed up by Dr. Ury who says: “And I feel like I’m still learning. . . . Oh definitely I learn a lot every time.” The actual nature of peacebuilding as being more than

technique but actually involving a level of art is summed up well by Professor

Lederach who says:

I think there are a lot of technical sides to this field that you can develop and they're well worth developing. From the ability to do conflict analysis and mapping and reading and understanding dynamics, and working with the approaches of how to build and construct dialogue and facilitate mediation kinds of processes. But those technical sides in some regards are the superficial tools. I don't want to use the word superficial to diminish their importance but I am just saying that they are a top layer of something that's much deeper.

And that much deeper part I think if I was going to give lessons is really about understanding yourself and being true to a sense of wholeness that you have. Because fragmented people are rarely helpful to fragmentation in other people. So how to be a whole person bringing your whole self to what's there.

There's a side of this that's very much about something that's more proximate to art than it is to technique so you can have a very clear technical understandings of the palette of colors that you may use for painting. But that's not going to assure that you are going to get a painting that is actually at a level that is going to qualify as quality art. And that tends to require something of you that is putting forward the best of who you are and bringing your whole heart, soul, and mind and not just a portion of who you are.

Subthemes for life-long learning in the skills and art of peacebuilding

The sub-themes for this characteristic involve both the nature of the learning and the specific content of the learning. They include both iterative development in learning and learning different specific skill sets depending upon what is needed by the role of the peacebuilder and the situation of the peacebuilding process.

Iterative development

The idea of iterative development in the learning process refers to the fact that the peacebuilders learn from their experiences and studies, and this learning informs how

they peacebuild, which in turn further informs their learning. This is the case for all of the peacebuilders in the study, because the experiences they accrued along their journeys have continued to influence their peacebuilding actions. For example, in Professor Lederach's formative years, the strong family values of equality and justice as well as his religious upbringing helped put him on a path towards peacebuilding. His early peacebuilding years helped him to develop the sophistication to deal with all levels of society while also stressing the importance of local context. As he had multiple developmental experiences, his path and outlook towards peace also developed. Additionally he began to see peacebuilding as an art, not just a series of techniques, and part of that art involved the personal development whereby the peacebuilder could deal with complexity and ambiguity, and bring the best of themselves as a whole person to the process.

The same is true of Dr. Ury. From a young age growing up under the shadows of war he felt a strong commitment to peace, which influenced his choice of university studies. A graduate writing assignment that was given high-level attention helped him to realize that anyone, even a small group of young people, can make a difference in peacebuilding. His actions have involved a sense of global citizenship and social entrepreneurship. He values out-of-the-box thinking and creativity. Thus began a journey which included the Soviet Union, South America, and the Middle East as well as other countries and regions. In each situation he has moved from shadows of war to creatively trying to reduce or prevent conflict, utilizing respect, trust, and

empathy. He says that he is still learning; his experiences are still shaping his approach and perspective.

Dr. Sun's journey began in a rich man's house in Communist Beijing, where there were separate maid servants for each of the children. He went from there to experiencing the horrors of the Cultural Revolution first hand, including having to educate himself for the college entrance exam. His junior high school experience involved six years of grueling factory work and he was denied entrance to high school because of his family background. He created his own opportunities. He studied in every spare hour of time towards the college entrance exam. When it felt impossible to hope, he persevered. During his graduate studies he felt he spent a long time on learning because he had not had the opportunities to do so when young, so he highly valued learning and opportunities to learn. When he finally got the chance to work in education in the United States, he has chosen a path whereby he helps others on the path of learning and his subject matter can help to bring the world together because educating people in computer science globally can provide a way to work towards peace. Thus the value he puts on educational efforts is high, partially because he himself was deprived of the chance to study. Instead of bitterness he has chosen to work positively with a new project in the community or between China and the United States each year which is aimed at creating peace. The same perseverance he showed as a youth towards learning is now involved in his own continued learning, in his helping others to learn, and in his dedication to peace.

For Dali Yang, his intellectual ability and excellence as a student at a young age allowed him to leave China and the rough period of the sixties to seventies to flourish as a graduate student in America. His intellectual ability, hard work, and aiming for excellence has allowed him the experience of rising high in academia. He now works as a peacebuilder through bringing people from both cultures together at the intellectual level, for purposes of collaboration and mutual understanding.

I am sure there are many more parallels between the learning of the peacebuilder and the work itself, but I wanted to illustrate the discussion point with examples that emerged from the narratives of the participants. Peacebuilding seems to be the type of endeavor where the peacebuilder and the process iteratively shape each other.

An interesting aspect of this iteration that emerged in this study is a sense of mirroring. There are a number of ways in which there is a mirroring aspect to the peacebuilders' own experience and the peacebuilding experience, which seem to reinforce one another. An example of this is a transformative element in peacebuilding.

A transformative element in peacebuilding: The life experiences of the peacebuilders influenced their approaches to peacebuilding and actual peacebuilding experiences, which became transformative for them. As mentioned previously, for each of the

peacebuilders the paths toward peace have been different and involved their own personal meaning-making, resulting in different approaches and perspectives. For all of them their peacebuilding work has influenced them, brought them lessons of wisdom, and changed their lives. For example, Pin Ni has been able to use the money and resources he generates through business to work towards creating a peaceful world and avoiding war. This in turn is transformative for him and motivates him to work harder towards creating greater reform and change, which will avoid conflict or resolve it peacefully. Similarly, Dr. Saunders believes that his work on peace process has been a key transformational element in the direction of his career and life. After his governmental work he has dedicated great effort to educating people about Sustained Dialogue and the need for a holistic approach towards conflict resolution. Dr. Ury has spent his life working towards peace and he believes he is still learning more with each peacebuilding experience. Professor Lederach spoke about his deep feelings of gratitude and gratification because of his ability to touch just one life, the woman in Nepal, although in fact throughout his work he has touched many, many lives. Thus, it is not just the conflictual or potentially conflictual situations which are changed through peacebuilding; the peacebuilders can also be transformed by the process.

The issue of learning appears to transcend any sense of cultural difference. Learning and education are valued in both cultures, although there can be different types of learning environments across the two. For example, according to Hofstede and

Hofstede (2005), in high power distance cultures such as China, the characteristics of learning environments can be summarized in this way: “Students give teachers respect, even outside of class. . . . Teachers should take all initiative in class. . . . Teachers are gurus who transfer personal wisdom. . . . Quality of learning depends on excellence of teacher” (p. 57). However, in low power distance cultures such as the United States the characteristics of learning environments include the following: “Students treat teachers as equals. . . . Teachers expect initiative from students in class. . . . Teachers are experts who transfer impersonal truths. . . . Quality of learning depends on two-way communication and excellence of students” (p. 57). Thus while the formal educational process experienced by the participants from the two cultures was presumably very different, their attitudes towards learning itself and learning in peacebuilding appear very similar. An example of this is the work of Pin Ni who is dedicated to educational exchange for all ages as a way to tear down barriers to peace.

Differences in skills depending upon roles

At the technical level, peacebuilders need a number of specific skills in their arsenals. However, there are different skill sets which are particularly required depending on the actual peacebuilding activity. Thus, for Pin Ni, Ambassador Ross, and X, negotiation skills are very important. For Dr. Sun and for Dali Yang, educational skills and cross-cultural skills are paramount. For Professor Lederach and Dr. Saunders there are a number of important skills including educational and communication skills. For Dr. Ury, mediation skills are important in his ongoing role as an international mediator. This does not imply that these are the only skills needed

by each of the aforementioned—rather that their roles influence which skills are salient in a particular peacebuilding activity. The key point is that technical skills are necessary and acknowledgement of this is apparent in the fact that importance of skill sets was a common thematic factor for all eight peacebuilders.

An unanticipated result is that while there are some consistencies with the cultural literature on conflict resolution, negotiation and mediation and overall approaches to peacebuilding presented in Chapter 2, there are also some inconsistencies. For example, as presented in Table 2, there is an expectation that culturally there will be an emphasis on harmonious relations in negotiations for the Chinese and this seems to be the case. An example: X says that peace and harmony are of great importance. He also describes a correct negotiation process, which incorporates fairness. Such fairness in approach would be supportive of harmonious relations. In addition he emphasizes the importance of giving everyone involved a chance to have their issues on the table and to be heard. This is consistent with the culturally Chinese importance placed upon face. His presentation of peace negotiations also supports the Chinese cultural emphasis on finding areas of commonality.

However, the American descriptions of their process also indicate an emphasis on commonality as opposed to disagreement. For example, Dr. Saunders and others use sustained dialogue, which allows for the creation of empathy and understanding of the common experiences of the self and “Other.” This American emphasis goes

against the literature, which emphasizes that Americans in negotiation focus primarily on areas of disagreement.

While there is consistency with the literature in that the Chinese do not seem as contract oriented, as illustrated by Pin Ni's statements about the trustworthiness of Wanxiang and that it's not about the contract, there is an additional area of significant difference with the literature. According to the literature, Americans are more sequential in negotiations and Chinese are more holistic. However, this is not what has emerged from this study. Both groups of cultural participants seem to emphasize the holistic approach. For example, Professor Lederach emphasizes bringing the whole person to the process and dealing with whole aspects of society. Dr. Ury emphasizes doing work on the self in preparation for mediation and Dr. Saunders writes extensively about taking a holistic approach to peacebuilding, which involves the whole person and the whole of society.

Thus, while there are findings from this study about the skills involved in peacebuilding which are consistent with the literature, there are also findings that do not support the literature and suggest that there may be more areas of commonality across both cultural groups than anticipated.

Building Strong Empathetic Bonds among People

Empathetic bonds among people involve an understanding of the other person's perspective. In a sense it is standing in the other person's shoes or looking at a

situation through their eyes. Building strong empathetic bonds among people means facilitating a process whereby the creation of such understanding can occur. It would seem to require not only a level of personal empathy and bonds between the facilitator and those with whom he is working, but also the ability to help in creating such bonds between others individually and as groups. Since empathy requires an ability to understand the feelings of others, this can be a difficult task in conflict situations, which by definition often have very differing feelings on either side.

The participants in this study see empathy and empathic understanding as crucial in the pursuit of peace. It was the number one thematic factor which emerged across all eight participants. The overall tone of the empathy from the participants is well summarized by Dr. Sun, who uses the example of the Golden Rule. Dr. Ury describes this relative to mediation:

And that I find, perhaps turns out to be also the key fundamental base skill or competence that a mediator needs to have which is the ability to put yourself in the shoes of the parties and understand how they view things, how they feel about things, what their interests are. And so what's called empathy really, the ability to put yourself in the shoes of others, that was what I learned just viscerally by being in a multi-cultural environment and then professionally as an anthropologist and then professionally as a mediator.

X describes the importance of empathy in negotiation:

I think that [empathy] is the base of negotiation. All successful negotiations have a common base, a mutual understanding. So just understand your counterpart as much as possible and meanwhile let your counterpart understand yourself as much as possible. That is the base. And secondly the mutually minimum basic trust.

Sub-themes for building strong empathetic bonds among people

The sub-themes for the characteristic of building strong empathetic bonds among people include several different aspects. One aspect described by participants is that of human impact, which involves the meaningfulness of seeing the impact of their peacebuilding work at the individual level. This could mean seeing the flourishing of students they have taught or have been able to involve in educational exchange. It also could mean seeing the individual impact of peacebuilding work by personally experiencing meetings or speaking with victims of both sides of a conflict. It could mean the satisfaction of seeing an individual do well in their life because of a participant's efforts to help.

Personal empathy refers to building individual empathy, whereas collective empathy refers to building empathy at the group level. Cross-cultural empathy adds the nuance of building empathy across groups who come not only from different sides of a conflict but also from different cultures.

Human impact

Human impact was a strong emergent thematic factor in the narratives of the participants, as well as being a sub-theme for this characteristic of building empathy. In the category of seven common thematic factors across cultures, a consistent result is the meaningfulness to the participants of seeing the human, personal impact of their work on individuals. This did not rank highly in individual categories but did rank

across seven of the participants. I did not have the time in the interview to ask X about this issue, so I am not sure if he would have answered in the positive or not.

This is an important finding because an implication of the prevalence of this factor is that it could be helpful in peace processes. If those involved, particularly the peacebuilders, could have a chance to tour the regions or areas concerned and meet with individuals who have been impacted by war and violence, there could be a greater sense of personal meaning and even greater effort expended. This could also be extrapolated so that if the teams representing conflicting parties could see the suffering and common humanity of the “Other” first hand through visiting opposing sides of conflict areas or meeting those who have been impacted, it might facilitate greater movement towards empathy and resolution.

The impact of influence on individuals and the human element are very important for Ambassador Ross. He tells a number of stories about how this human dimension at the micro rather than just the macro level is influential and meaningful for him.

After I had become our negotiator in the Clinton administration. I took my family at one point, it was 1995 and I had three kids and we would be out and we would be touring at a certain point and there would be these places and there would be Jordanians and Palestinians come up to my kids and thank them. . . . They would come up to my kids and thank them. . . .

So that really motivated me and then there was one, I was negotiating the deal, the Hebron deal and I had at one point I had an Israeli mother and then a Palestinian mother during the same period come up to me with tears in their eyes asking me to succeed. And that really affected

me. It added to the sense that real people were affected by what I was trying to do.

And during this period I had negotiated with different sides who were the victims or their families were the victims of the violence of this conflict. So I felt all the time, this powerful human dimension of what I was doing and it was a very strong motivator. . . .

What gives life to it is knowing that these conflicts have human consequences and people pay a terrible price. . . . you see the victimization. I recall another example. One night I was at a Shabbat dinner in Israel, and discussing, there were like ten people who were there, representing different families and every one of them had been affected by the conflict. Every single one of them in one way or the other had had a member of their family pay the price, either be killed or be maimed. And it's quite, you know, it's unbelievably moving to be in a situation where everybody is touched by the conflict so that's in keeping with what I was describing before.

Pin Ni describes this meaningfulness of individual impact with the story of a boy whose parents had recently divorced:

This summer was a kid, his parents got divorced or something. So the other kids got the summer internships and he asked me if I could help him. So I went to my connections and I talked to a few people and it was late in the summer and finally somebody said 'Ok yeah we want this kid'. So he sent me an email saying 'Really I appreciated it'. I don't have to do anything, there's no financial benefit or business benefit or anything, I just feel that he's young, smart, good kid, deserves an opportunity and if we can do for him, if I can sort of use my connections and talk to everyone and say 'Hey guys can you help him and give him an opportunity'. So these kinds of things make me feel that I am contributing, that's the key word. I am contributing and think that for the peace work the key is if you can contribute. It's not about taking it's more about giving.

The impact of the individual experience is meaningful for Professor Lederach, as well as the impact at the societal level.

And when you're finished listening to this and realize you are with an extraordinary human being and in some small ways you have been a part of her journey, you say to yourself, maybe ten years of work was worth the things that have emerged and been gifted with this one person.

Alpargu, Sahin, and Yazici (2009) discuss the importance of teaching historical empathy as a means of educating towards peace, because it can help to develop a different perspective towards the other, so historical education becomes peace education.

There has been some work on cross-cultural empathy and peace in several fields of study, not only within education. Within the field of psychology specifically, when talking about preventing war and working towards peace, Leidner, Tropp, and Lickel (2013) say finding that empathy and people's ability to empathize with outgroup members can be helpful in reducing conflict:

Empathy and perspective taking can be can often be enhanced by making salient people's identification with a common ingroup that includes people on all sides of a conflict (e.g. humans or Rwandans) rather than their usual identification with a less inclusive ingroup (e.g., Hutu or Tutsi) (see Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Gonzalez, Manzi, & Noor, 2011). Indeed, when people think about shared human experiences with members of other groups, they become more able to relate to their suffering (Vollhardt, 2012), less likely to respond negatively to other groups in response to threat, and more willing to entertain the prospect of peacemaking (Motyl et al., 2011). (In Leidner et al., 2013, p. 520)

Rasoal, Eklund, and Hansen (2011) do a review of the literature on ethnocultural empathy and find a number of obstacles to empathy, obstacles that people might feel

for those from another culture but that they do not experience with those from their own culture. These obstacles include:

- General lack of knowledge about cultures other than one's own.
- General lack of practical experience of being in cultures other than one's own.
- Lack of knowledge specific to the other's culture.
- Lack of practical experience specific to the other's culture.
- Lack of ability to perceive similarities and differences between the other's culture and one's own. (p. 9)

They also posit perception of similarity, specifically in terms of prior similar experience, as a way to overcome such obstacles and facilitate greater cross-cultural empathy. They state:

We reason that understanding similarities between other cultures and experiences in one's own culture makes empathic understanding possible. At a general, universal level, experiences in two different cultures are similar to each other. For example, fear of an earthquake in Japan and fear of flooding in Bangladesh at a general universal level are both the experience of fear . . . since people are similar to each other and have similar experiences it is possible to feel what another person feels if one imagines how it would be to be in the other's situation. (pp. 9–10)

However, within the context of the narratives of this dissertation study and the voices of the participants, the study in the literature which most resonated with what was said is highlighted by the words of Gobodo-Madikizela (2008), who writes about a case study from South Africa and its Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC), and also writes about *Ubuntu* or values of shared common humanity (p. 181). Gobodo-

Madikezela defines empathy as “the capacity to feel with and to participate in shared reflective engagement with the other’s inner life” (p. 177), and says:

When the conditions for the emergence of forgiveness are created, they serve to re-animate the empathic sensibilities damaged by violence both between individuals and within communities. The process of restoring the human capacity for empathy and the intrinsic sense of human possibilities that are destroyed by violence requires a working through of trauma which in essence is the reparation of the brokenness brought about by the traumatic experience in the lives of victims...“Trauma needs to be spoken in all its horror and violation to a listener or an audience...The relationship between trauma and testimony has emerged as a major area of study in the scholarship on trauma, particularly trauma in the aftermath of gross human rights violations. (pp. 173–175)

Gobodo-Madikezela believes that the process of “witnessing and bearing witness about trauma creates the possibility for the restoration of these empathetic bonds with others, even those who are our former enemies” (p. 178) and feels that this moment of the empathetic bond’s establishment can help us to understand the way to forgiveness.

A point that is somewhat ironic is that forgiveness did not come up in the spoken narratives of the participants as a major theme. There was implicit forgiveness in the words of Dr. Sun who was able to go past the trauma and victimization he suffered during the Cultural Revolution. However, there was no explicit tie-in between peacebuilding and forgiveness or empathy and forgiveness within the narratives. Yet the process described by Gobodo-Madikezela (2008) is similar to some of what is discussed by the participants in the process of sustained dialogue.

I propose that empathy takes the place of initial trust in peacebuilding. That in the trust literature we have seen that initial trust and potentially all trust can be associated with risk. Perhaps it is in the story-telling and relating of trauma when the victim and victimizer become humanized again, as is illustrated by the stories about Sustained Dialogue in the narratives. Perhaps it is at this point that empathy steps in and dialogue can begin. After a period of sustained dialogue, perhaps there can begin to be actions and words that can cause types of trust formation. However, I would argue that it is empathy, rather than trust, which allows for the coming together in dialogue that eventually leads to peacebuilding.

Collective empathy

Many of the participants are skilled at and committed to both personal and collective empathy. There has been some research on collective empathy. Pedersen (2008) for example, looks at relationship-centered empathy, with more of a non-Western approach:

Most of the research on empathy predicates the shared understanding of emotions, thoughts and actions of one person by another. In Western cultures this is typically done by focusing exclusively on the individual while in traditional non-western cultures empathy more typically involves an inclusive perspective focusing on the individual and significant others in the societal context. (p. 143)

Blader and Rothman (2014) explore empathy in groups and issues of justice and fairness. Muller, Pfarrer, and Little (2014) look at a theory of collective empathy in corporate decisions in corporate philanthropy. They find that decisions to be

philanthropic are not based on purely rational reasons, and there are also affective or emotional considerations involved. They find that employees' collective empathy is a source of affect, being a part of the decision to be philanthropic, and provides a model of "how and when feelings of empathy are *aroused* among employees in response to the needs of others outside the organization, how and when they *converge* and become collective, and how and when they *infuse* executives' corporate philanthropy decisions" (p. 6). In their model, there are three stages: Arousal, Convergence, and Infusion. The collective aspect takes place during the second stage, Convergence, which is interpersonal as compared to individual, and which involves aspects such as group identification emotion norms, and communication channels (p. 6).

Muller et al. find that there can thus be a convergence which is collective empathy: "Research . . . suggests that interactions between individual organizations members experiencing feelings of empathy can lead to convergence of members' empathic states through both implicit sharing processes" (Barsade, Kelly, & Barsade; & Smith et al., as cited in Muller et al., 2014, p. 8).

Cross-cultural empathy

While there has thus been a great deal of current research on empathy there has been far less so on cross-cultural empathy (Hollan & Throop, as cited in Hollan, 2012a, p. 70). There are some studies, however, which do look at cross-cultural aspects of empathy. Nelson and Baumgarte (2004) find less empathy with those who are culturally different. Yet, Nelson (2009), in a study involving two experiments

conducted with U.S. college students to assess whether affective states had any influence on cross-cultural empathy, finds that positive emotions and affect promoted “greater perspective taking and feelings of compassion and sympathy for the dissimilar target” (p. 53). She says she feels these findings support Frederickson’s broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions whereby having positive emotions helps to promote greater social resources: “As would be predicted by her theory, positive affect lead to greater cognitive flexibility and an open-minded approach to new and unfamiliar information (i.e., a ‘broadening’ tendency) manifest as greater cross-cultural perspective taking” (p. 61).

Hollan (2012a) feels that it is important to look at the cultural context of empathy, because empathetic processes are embedded within social and cultural realms. Hollan thus takes an anthropological approach to empathy and finds what he believes to be some potentially universal aspects of empathy. Engelen and Rottger-Rossler (2012) commenting on Hollan’s work say:

Intercultural findings on empathy reveal that the blend of feelingly perspective taking and cognitive perspective taking is one of the constant features of empathy, whereas the differentiation into ‘me’ and “other” seems to be less distinct in empathic-like responses in many non-Western societies. (p. 7)

However, Hollan (2012b) points out that empathy can have negative tones as well as positive.

From an ethnographic perspective one of the most sobering observations about empathy is how often people around the world

seem to fear or anticipate its misuse and abuse. This certainly does challenge the conception of empathy as necessarily a neutral perception or understanding, and suggests that it is important to study the ways in which societies both encourage and discourage its expression. Although we often think of empathy as a feeling that enables people to build bridges among themselves, we must remember that one person's bridge is another person's boundary. Flows of empathy may facilitate in-group cohesiveness and identity, but at the same time clearly demarcate boundaries between in-group and out-group and reinforce social hierarchies of various kinds. (p. 83)

This type of finding supports the work of the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, who looked at situations such as Nazi Germany and found that people's behavior in the aggregate such as in crowds and mobs can be far worse than what an individual would do on their own. Thus, this type of exploration into empathy could have usefulness for scholars studying positive, neutral, and negative moral behavior and could have implications for helping to promote positive empathy in peacebuilding.

Breithaupt (2012) puts forth a three-person model of empathy based on the assumption that empathy is not an automatic function but rather a reaction to a social or situational context which occurs as needed. Having to take sides in conflictual situations can be the type of situation that could trigger an empathetic response, as part of reducing the ambiguity that can be inherent in social conflict. Empathy in this context can help make it easier to take one side or the other, such that "individual and cultural differences are due to the control functions of blocking and channeling empathy" (Engelen & Rottger-Rossler, 2012, p. 7).

Neumann, Boyle, and Chan (2013) find that there can be different empathy responses in individuals depending upon whether they are being empathic towards in-group or out-group members, and that these groupings have to do with ethnicity. “The results suggest that ethnicity-related biases in empathy are present, are limited to negative contexts, and are not merely a manifestation of a more general cognitive or affective bias” (p. 8).

Cassels, Chan, Chung, and Birch (2010) review work on affective empathic responses in preschool children in Eastern and Western cultures and posit a difference between the two, wherein children from East Asian countries show more personal distress yet less empathy-related helping behavior than those children from Western countries. They feel that “despite these initial findings with children, many questions remain about the role of culture and cultural identity in empathetic responding” (p. 312). They focus their exploration on cultural differences in older children and young adults, particularly those who identify as bicultural. They found that bicultural young adults of East Asian descent raised in Canada were similar to the native East Asians in both indications of empathetic distress and concern in the study. They conclude that “heritage plays a critical role in empathetic responding” (p. 319).

This research is relevant to this dissertation study, because although three of the four Chinese participants (Pin, Sun, and Yang) have spent considerable years in the United States, their cultural orientation and influences in their narratives are still heavily

Chinese. While questions I had about whether time spent in the United States would water down or diffuse the “Chinese” cultural quality of their responses were answered for me in the negative, through interacting with them and hearing their narratives, this research also supports that even for bicultural young Canadians, the Asian influence and heritage is strongest in their empathetic responses. There is additional support for this view in the research of Soto and Levenson (2009) on how culture influences communication of emotions. They found that there was some support for the cultural advantage model “in physiological linkage for Chinese Americans and participants” (p. 882).

The prevalence of empathy as the number one emergent thematic factor and as part of a key characteristic of the eight peacebuilders is consistent with the cultural literature. The GLOBE study has both the People’s Republic of China and the United States as grouped together relative to humane orientation, which includes aspects that could be very supportive of empathy. The prevalence of empathy across both cultural groups of participants is consistent with what could be expected from the cultural literature.

Willingness to Build a Bridge or be a Bridge for Others

How can conflict be overcome? How can two, three or more parties with very differing views and potentially traumatic experiences find a way to reach common ground? If you picture such parties sitting on the opposite sides of a negotiating table, or behind high walls in a war zone, the space between them can be overwhelming. Somehow there needs to be a way to bridge that space. Building a bridge involves

creating a pathway which touches both sides and allows for a way for both sides to walk that pathway and find a meeting place.

A key role of peacebuilders during all stages of peacebuilding can be that of bridge building or in some cases actually personally becoming the bridge through which the conflicting sides can overcome their differences.

For the peacebuilders in this study, there is focus on both bridge building and becoming the bridge. For example, Pin Ni feels that as a bridge builder he can understand both cultures and has experience in dealing with conflict: “So we need to build a bridge for people to communicate, ok. We need to build a bridge for people to be able to understand each other.” Dali Yang says, “I think about bridging differences, promoting commonalities, but also because, I can speak Chinese, I can speak English, I work with people from both sides and that is what I do.”

Dr. Sun, like Pin Ni and Yang, emphasizes the fact that his knowing both cultures helps him to promote bridge-building and collaboration as well as his working as the bridge through his biculturalism. He gives some examples of this bicultural knowledge:

Since the success of any collaboration depends on many factors, understanding is only one of them. But, I have many examples to show understanding does help to overcome difficulties. For instance, a US contactor complains her China counterpart for lack of respondents; but

October 1 is the national day of China, and China has a weeklong vacation for national day.

A China contractor likes to build a personal trust first, and to get an agreement in oral before write it down. The America lawyer, the one we had, tries to avoid misunderstanding, insists writing everything down formally and send by email. He enjoyed the beauty and perfection of his writing, but in a language even I cannot understand.

Ambassador Ross also emphasizes that knowing the other side is important in bridge-building:

You build bridges not on the basis of culture but you build bridges on the basis of understanding what the nature of the conflict is and where it comes from and why it exists and why certain views are held the way they are and how history affects that and what it takes to try to change images and transform positions and I don't think in the end it's cultural that is the deciding factor.

I think you build bridges based on creating a sense of trying to understand who it is you're dealing with and trying to understand why they hold the positions they do and this is where the empathy issue comes in, that there's a genuine desire to understand the roots of certain issues or problems, or the source of what accounts for differences.

Sub-themes for willingness to build a bridge or be a bridge for others

The sub-themes for the characteristic of willingness to build a bridge and becoming a bridge for others involve several component aspects. Building a bridge means literally creating the circumstances and opportunities for both sides to come together. This could involve for example, creating an educational exchange program, or creating an opportunity for opposing sides in a conflict to meet in a neutral area and have facilitated peacebuilding dialogue. Becoming a bridge involves the peacebuilder actually themselves being the bridge between two sides. An example of this idea of

becoming the bridge is that in the United Nations there are translating services. Building a bridge in this context would be constructing the technology whereby the translation could occur. Becoming the bridge would be the role taken by the actual simultaneous translator who uses their self and their knowledge of language, culture, and nuanced meanings to provide translations to both parties through the technology which has been created. Becoming the bridge can involve a holistic element in that it can involve the peacebuilder bringing their whole selves to the process so that they allow the peacebuilding work to happen through them, just as the translator does at the United Nations. It can also involve a transformative aspect for the peacebuilder as they are positively impacted by their involvement in this process.

Building bridges and becoming bridges

A key question raised by this study is the extent to which the peacebuilders are building bridges or whether they in fact become the bridges themselves through providing an avenue for both sides to meet in the middle. In a Venn diagram, this could be illustrated by the inner overlapping circle where the peacebuilder provides or facilitates the space that Dr. Saunders refers to where conflicting factors can transcend their differences and experience transformation. Figure 3 provides an example.

Enemy

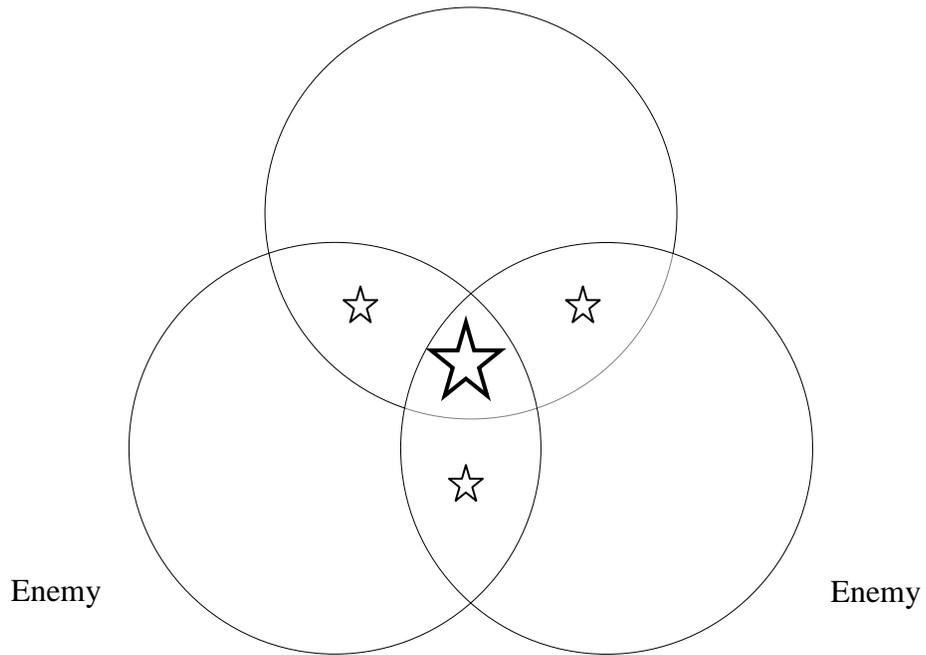


Figure 3. The Overlapping Circle of Peacebuilding

Symbols in the figure have the following meaning:

 = peacebuilder as bridge, creating space for others to come together through him/her

 = peacebuilder building bridges but not actually becoming a bridge

Holistic aspect

Professor Lederach speaks about the importance of bringing the whole self and the best of the self to the process. Dr. Ury makes a similar reference when he speaks about Gandhi doing the personal work on himself, and that this is something peacebuilders need to do. Dr. Saunders and Professor Lederach also stress the need to deal with the whole society to resolve conflicts, and that it is essential to deal with multiple levels of stakeholders.

Transformative element

As discussed previously, the life experiences of the peacebuilders influence their approaches to peacebuilding and actual peacebuilding experiences, which became transformative for them. For each of the peacebuilders, the paths toward peace have been different and involved their own personal meaning-making, resulting in different approaches and perspectives. For all of them, peacebuilding work has influenced them, brought them lessons of wisdom, and changed their lives.

A question raised by this study is to what extent and when do peacebuilders stop becoming bridge-builders and become the actual bridge through which participants can walk on their way to peace, perhaps meeting the “Other” in the middle? It would seem that there needs to be an element of understanding of both sides for this to happen, so that the peacebuilder who becomes the bridge is touching both sides. It would seem that there needs to be both a holistic element where the peacebuilder brings all of and the best of himself to the process as the facilitator for others to

achieve peace. It would seem that there would be a transformative element for all concerned, including the peacebuilder, when they in fact become the bridge.

However, these are questions which arise from the study, not definitive answers. This difference between bridge-building and becoming the bridge is an issue that merits further research and that could potentially provide greater understanding into the actual peacebuilding process.

There is not any specific cultural aspect corresponding to either bridge-building or becoming the bridge. Professor Lederach provides a good example of being the bridge himself. However, the Chinese also use their whole selves and their knowledge of both cultures to become bridges. Pin Ni, Dr. Sun, and Dali Yang all speak about how the fact that they have lived for many years in the United States as well as in China has helped them in building bridges across cultures as well as using their biculturalism and personal knowledge and experience to provide bridging in a way that appears to correspond to what has been discussed here as becoming the bridge. Within the literature there is no specific cultural characteristic or comparative dimension that would seem to impact the willingness to build bridges or become a bridge. This is an area that is emergent in this study and that could provide a basis for future research into cross-culturalism and bridging differences.

Persistence to Continue Working over Long Time Periods

This characteristic involves two key aspects—persistence and also persistence which occurs over long time periods. *Persistence* is defined in the Merriam-Webster online

dictionary as “the quality that allows someone to continue doing something or trying to do something even though it is difficult or opposed by other people.” As with many difficult endeavors, peacebuilding appears to be the type of activity where there are no quick fixes or necessarily easy solutions. Persistence is needed not only for immediate situations but over time periods which are extended. Deep-rooted conflicts often take many years for a sustainable and viable solution to emerge.

Peacebuilding is a tough path. All of the participants except for X spoke about the difficulty of this work and the need to have persistence in order to do it. They have worked hard and long hours to prevent, resolve and continue resolving conflict on a number of fronts. A common attitude is exemplified by Dr. Sun’s saying that you need to be willing to be an unsung hero. That the work itself is the reward and you must be dedicated to it for its own sake, although it can be very difficult and demanding. Dr. Saunders also described this persistence when he emphasized that he would not give up and would be the last one standing at the end of the day.

Once you get into a dialogue like that you just feel that the potential is there and the problem is to keep going long enough until somebody gives up and somebody recognizes what they can do about it. But you can’t make that moment happen you just have to have some faith that if you stick at it long enough and hard enough and don’t give up that it’s going to happen, but maybe it won’t.

But in most cases I think there have been enough examples that give me some confidence that if you hang in there long enough something will happen. Why do we talk about Sustained Dialogue – because it’s sustained. And I can remember thinking on several of these occasions that “I am going to hang in there and I’ll be standing when they drop.”

And I articulated this for myself during the Iran hostage crisis. Four hundred and forty four days I didn't take a day off in that whole period. We tried numberless approaches, people made open doors for us and we walked through them. We had a practice that we called we will not leave any stone unturned if somebody opens a door for possibly moving forward toward a settlement, we'll walk through that door and see what we can do. But I just had a feeling that my gosh, I was going to be standing when they gave up. And that's what happened. . . .

One of the shuttles it was the only time I asked myself if I whether I could still stay on my feet but the point was you hang in there and don't give up until something happens. You're going to be there when something happens so you can make something out of it. That's why we call it Sustained Dialogue.

For Professor Lederach, career experiences that influence his peacebuilding show an emphasis on the long-term nature of peacebuilding, the importance of relationships, and local context. An example of this is his work in Nepal.

Although Pin Ni and Dr. Ury advocate just-do-it (just go out and get started) peacebuilding, in fact it seems to be a long journey where one becomes a peacebuilder along the way. Dr. Ury says that he is still learning, and Professor Lederach refers to it as more of an art than an amalgamation of techniques that can be easily learned. Similarly the peacebuilding process, according to the participants, takes a very long time. Professor Lederach and Dr. Ury for example, think about it in 10 year increments. Professor Lederach says, "So I tend to have a view of peacebuilding that is not very short term. I think about it in decades more than in

short term projects.” X says, “Any conflictual issue cannot be negotiated in a short time.”

The fact that the participants from both cultural groups use persistence in their approach to peacebuilding is not surprising given the cultural literature presented in Chapter 2. In the summary presented on page 39 for example, persistence is the only cultural factor that both cultures have in common in their approach to peacebuilding. What is surprising and unanticipated relative to the literature is that both the Chinese and the Americans take a long-term perspective towards peacebuilding. This goes against the current cultural theory in which in the cultural dimension of time, there is a difference in short-term and long-term views towards time between the two cultures. This is summarized by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998, p. 131). They find American culture is sequential in dealing with time processes and Asian and more collective (communitarian) cultures as more synchronic, dealing with multiple issues at once. They state:

The American view of the future is that the individual can direct it by personal achievement and inner-directed effort. . . . Yet because the individual achiever cannot do very much about the distant future—there are simply too many events that occur— the USA’s idea of the future is short term—something controllable from the present. . . . Cultures which think synchronically about time are more we-oriented (communitarian) and usually more particularist in valuing people known to be special. . . . Sequential cultures where human resources are seen as a variation on physical plant, equipment and cash are more likely to have we-them relationships or to quote Martin Buber, I-it. (p. 135)

The findings of the study clearly are in contradiction to the cultural literature. The Americans in this study stress the long-term nature of their commitments to peacebuilding and do not have a short-term or sequential approach. They are similar to the Chinese in their long-term approach. Additionally, the Americans stress bringing the whole self to the process and relating to the “Other” as equal and important and are in no way transactional. Their approach corresponds to Martin Buber’s I-Thou, not I-it relationship. Thus in terms of findings about time in this study there is clearly a contradiction with the literature which is surprising. It is unclear why this contradiction exists. The cultural literature is well-established, but perhaps the nature of peacebuilding itself causes the Americans to overcome their native cultural frameworks.

Summary Analysis

This study has resulted in findings which both support and are supported by the culture and cross-cultural literature. For example, harmonious relationships in peacebuilding and the importance of face are predicted by the literature to be important to the Chinese, and this has turned out to be the case. The same is true for persistence, which is predicted to be important to both cultures and the findings support this. However, in a number of key areas such as communication, time orientation, the nature of relationships, integrity, the meaningfulness of individual human impact, and other areas described in this chapter, the findings challenge the literature and the expectations of cultural manifestation. Perhaps this study indicates that with the rapid changes in technology, globalization and greater transparency

across cultures, there could be cultural changes occurring which might warrant the development of new cultural dimensions.

Additionally it is important to note that the eight characteristics cross all cultural boundaries, as do the findings of a number of common emergent thematic factors including empathy, integrity, works hard, and skill sets. A fundamental finding of this study is thus that for peacebuilders there are not systematic national or cultural differences in key areas. A fundamental question raised by this study is why this is the case. What is it about the peacebuilders that allows them to transcend cultural boundaries? There are several possible areas of speculation that might address this question. One is that this is a relatively small group of peacebuilders, and thus the participants present differences that might be expected when faced with cultural dimensions in the literature based upon large aggregated sample sizes where there will always be outliers. However, I wonder if there is something about peacebuilding itself that leads to an ability to step outside of cultural parameters and deal effectively in spaces between cultures. Perhaps those people who are drawn to peacebuilding have a greater inherent cultural flexibility. Perhaps it is the nature of the work itself which over time allows the peacebuilders to become multi-cultural in a way that suggests new defining cultural dimensions. Perhaps a combination of inherent ability to cross boundaries and the life-long and transformative learning that takes place in peacebuilding allow such adaptations to occur. While these are suggestions, further

cross-cultural studies of peacebuilders could help to clarify and perhaps resolve the major cultural questions raised by this study.

An additional point for comment is the previously mentioned iterative nature of the eight characteristics. Passion for peacebuilding, for example, supports the necessary persistence, which in turn can support passion. Similarly, having a values-based foundation and motivation can support courage. Passion can also support courage, which in turn could support persistence and willingness to build a bridge or be a bridge for others. I would argue that the data supports the idea that while each of these eight characteristics is unique, they are also interrelated in the way that they support and facilitate each other. This is also true of the sub-themes, which while most prevalent for certain characteristics and presented for those characteristics, could also be said to apply to other characteristics as well. Thus there is a holistic aspect to the eight characteristics, which is in keeping with the holistic nature of the peacebuilders themselves and their approaches to peacebuilding.

Key Contributions to the Field

There are several ways in which this study makes a contribution to the scholarship in the field. The first is in providing the narratives and highlighting the words and stories of these eight unique peacebuilders from the People's Republic of China and from the United States. The study provides a platform for further understanding into their perspectives, meaning-making and approach to peace. To date I have not found

any similar such study in the literature, particularly one that involves Chinese and American peacebuilders who are all working at high levels in their respective fields.

Additional contributions include the emergence of the eight distinctive qualities of these peacebuilders. These characteristics provide insight into characteristics of eight peacebuilders from two very different cultures and thus provide a foundation for further research into the nature of the characteristics of peacebuilders in general and across cultures.

Further contributions include both similarities and differences cross-culturally.

Examples of similarities include:

- The importance of empathy in peacebuilding. This empathy seems to have the same meaning as *standing in the others' shoes* for both groups.
- The need for integrity and skills, the presence of a value system—either religious or Confucian—that is consistent with the peacebuilders' feeling they have integrity.
- The importance of the specific role, i.e., negotiator, mediator, teacher, etc., and how this influences aspects of trust creation and whether role supersedes culture in this respect or possibly others as well— if there are times when culture has a secondary rather than primary influence.
- The differences in emphases on communication and what is important in peacebuilding.

- That Americans and Chinese can have many things in common such as a passion for the work, a belief in the need to resolve issues gradually in peacebuilding, a just-do-it attitude, and a strong ability for perseverance in the process.
- The finding that they feel the human, individual impact of their peacebuilding work rewarding and meaningful (which is surprising since one might assume the collective aspect would be more important to the Chinese).

Examples of findings of key differences across cultures include:

- The Chinese emphasis on humility and compromise.
- The American emphasis on honesty and truthfulness.
- Differences in communication styles in terms of greater emphasis on transparency for the Chinese and on dialogue for the Americans.

Also there is a finding that several participants feel that mutual education of students starting at a young age with exposure between Chinese and American cultures and nations will facilitate greater hopes for peacebuilding between these two nations in the future. They are involved in such work and their perspectives will hopefully encourage others to learn from them and also to get involved.

A key area of contribution is the discovery through the narratives of differing cultural motivations. Three of the Chinese peacebuilders seem motivated most strongly by a desire to prevent war. They have all experienced some form of suffering or exposure

to conflict in their lives in China and their peacebuilding heavily emphasizes the need to prevent conflict. X is somewhat different in that for him “peace is the purpose.” In this way he is more similar to the American peacebuilders, for whom the motivation seems not so much the prevention of war and conflict but the movement towards peace and peaceful resolution of already existing conflict. One group comes from actual early experiences of conflict and is heavily driven to prevent conflict. The other group, while also working to prevent conflict, additionally focuses on peace as the purpose and peaceful resolution of conflict as the goal.

This is not a definitive study. It is a window into the lives and narratives of eight peacebuilders, heroic people who have worked throughout their lives to make the world better. There is much more to be learned from such people and their stories. It is hoped that others will follow up on this beginning and continue contributions to this field.

Reflection: Interstices

Does one have to have undergone some sense of suffering and conflict to become a peacebuilder? Does the difficulty of my marriage, spending a year in a Chinese hospital bed, working to help during SARS, and other such experiences better equip me to be a peacebuilder? It would seem not—Rather it would equip me to be a certain kind of peacebuilder, one who like the three Chinese focuses more on conflict prevention rather than creation of peaceful resolution of conflict. With each conflict I prevent or resolve do I find healing within myself? Is that also the case for other

similar peacebuilders? I don't know about others but just the act of going on this journey of discovery with the participants has helped me to resolve many things. I feel like a far different person than I was when I started this study. I have travelled the interstices, the spaces within myself that needed to be faced and resolved. It has been the most difficult study I have ever done, and maybe it's because I needed to grow in order to complete it.

Chapter 6: Implications for Future Research

Areas of Future Research

There are a number of areas of potential future research which have been raised by this study. They include:

A further exploration of the relationship between empathy and peacebuilding

This exploration could address a number of questions including:

- Neurochemistry and factors such as empathy and trust and how future findings on the neurological and biological bases of these affective states will have an impact on the work of peacebuilders? Will they find, for example, that it is possible to chemically create states of greater empathy or trusting, which will facilitate the work of peacebuilders? For example, how can the initial findings on empathy and its relation to neurology further be explored to promote peace?
- Research into the relationship between technology and empathy: In this age of the digital natives and social media, what will be the implications for the increased use of technology for interactions amongst people and both affective and cognitive empathy, and how will this impact peacebuilding? Will people become more or less empathetic when dealing with others specifically when resolving conflict situations? Will there be more use of technology in place of face-to-face meetings with partners in remote locals for example, and will this reduce empathy which seems so necessary? Will such technology allow for greater transparency

- and access to information and thus provide greater guarantees in the peacebuilding process, and greater speed in building relationships?
- How are peacebuilders able to facilitate not only individual but also collective and group empathy? What constitutes this capacity and how have they developed it?

An extension of the study to focus on why empathy matters so much in peacebuilding and its relationship to trust

Some potential research questions could include:

Why does empathy matter so much? What relationship is there in the empathy-trust equation that can lead to more effective peacebuilding? What do trust and trust inducing behavior look like for both sides relative to the presence of empathy?

A deeper exploration of the connection between religion and peacebuilding for both Western and Eastern practitioners

How can the role of religion become a force for good in these times of often religiously promoted violence and conflict? Is there a growing prevalence of religious values and religious motivation in American and other peacebuilders?

What is the relationship if any between the purpose Confucianism serves for Chinese and religious values serve for Americans in their peacebuilding?

Further exploration of how we might increase our cross-cultural understanding to facilitate peacebuilding

Pin Ni, Dr. Sun, and Dali Yang strongly advocate educational exchanges and opportunities for people to learn more about each other within the context of their different cultures. How can we facilitate these types of exchanges? What makes them successful? Who does it well and why?

A deeper exploration of the use of direct and indirect communication in peacebuilding

As indicated in this study, direct communication was emphasized by the Chinese and dialogue was emphasized by the Americans (as well as by Dr. Sun). Additionally, the Chinese emphasis on direct communication in peacebuilding goes against the cultural literature in the field. It would be helpful to explore further the nature of communication in peacebuilding both within and across cultures in order to facilitate better and more effective communication overall in peacebuilding endeavors.

Further research on Sustained Dialogue and peacebuilding

It might be helpful to learn about ways in which Sustained Dialogue could be used effectively in cross-cultural peacebuilding situations such as those involving cross-cultural peacebuilding between the USA and Asia.

A reversal study

A reversal study could be helpful, where the researcher role is taken by someone who is a native of mainland China and who has lived for some time in the United States. It could be very interesting to see if there are substantially different results when the researcher is Chinese instead of American.

An extension of the study relative to variables such as gender, age, background, and roles of the participants

Additionally there is potential relevance in studying gender and peacebuilding. The participants in this study were all male of approximately fifty years of age and older. It might be helpful to study females and their narratives in peacebuilding as well as expanding the age range of the peacebuilders to include younger peacebuilders.

Additionally, it could be helpful to do a study where the Chinese peacebuilders have not lived in America for any period of time and are in similar peacebuilding roles to the Americans. Such a study could highlight the cultural differences and similarities more strongly and could also mitigate for the different roles of the peacebuilders.

An examination of what the peacebuilders mean when they talk about integrity

All eight peacebuilders feel it is an important component of peacebuilding but what does it actually mean to peacebuilders within the context of their role? Does it mean the same thing culturally for both the Chinese and the American peacebuilders and what are areas in which this sense of integrity is linked to their sense of identity and the way they approach peacebuilding?

An examination of the role of forgiveness in peacebuilding

It was surprising to me that forgiveness did not emerge as a key theme in the spoken narratives of the peacebuilders, although it was implicit in the narrative of Dr. Sun. Perhaps the peacebuilders do not themselves need to experience forgiveness but rather are the facilitators of forgiveness for others. Perhaps in order to facilitate forgiveness as part of reconciliation they needed to have themselves experienced it at some point in their own lives. Further research into forgiveness and its personal relevance for peacebuilders and for their work could add to both the forgiveness and peacebuilding literature.

The application of Kegan's constructive development theory

Influenced by Piaget and the idea of changes in how meaning making occurs across stages, Kegan put forth the idea of constructive development theory. As described by Eriksen (2006): "His model proposes notions of changing meaning-making or evolving consciousness that extend Piagetian-style stages of development into adulthood" (p. 290). A fundamental aspect of this is subject-object differentiation, and within this context Kegan (1980) puts forth this idea: "*Human being is meaning making. For the human, what evolving amounts to is the evolving systems of meaning*" (p. 374). He posits a model of constructive development that involves six stages (0–5) of consciousness in development, with the highest stage (5) being the inter-individual stage relative to self and other (p. 377). It would be interesting to apply such a model to people who are peacebuilders, with the assumption that they are all highly developed in their interactions with the "Other" and should potentially correspond to stage 5 according to Kegan's work. This type of application could link this research to other fields such as psychology, and it could also provide deeper insight into the nature of meaning making and relationship to the "Other" for peacebuilders.

The nature of courage in peacebuilding

The peacebuilders in this study demonstrated both physical and emotional courage, and their courage seemed to be independent of specific cultural influences or mores. It could be helpful to current peacebuilders and those who wish to become peacebuilders to have additional knowledge on the nature of courage in

peacebuilding. Sample areas of research include whether the courage is inherent or learned; whether it grows through repeated actions; how situations of failure impact peacebuilders and how they gain the courage to continue the work; how the peacebuilders themselves think about and feel regarding the courage involved in their work; whether physical and emotional courage are linked and if so how; and whether there are in fact cultural differences in perceptions and actions relative to courage.

Communication styles

As indicated in this study, direct communication was emphasized by the Chinese and dialogue was emphasized by the Americans (as well as by Dr. Sun). Additionally the Chinese emphasis on direct communication in peacebuilding goes against the cultural literature in the field. It would be helpful to explore further the nature of communication in peacebuilding both within and across cultures in order to facilitate better and more effective communication overall in peacebuilding endeavors.

Trust creation

Within this study it emerged that trust creation in peacebuilding did not necessarily conform to the descriptive aspects of individualism and collectivism as put forth in the culture literature of Hofstede (1980/2001) and others. The Americans seemed to demonstrate more *guanxi*-like behavior in trust creation than did the Chinese in this study. This merits further research about American and Chinese culture and trust in peacebuilding. Additional questions might include: What are ways rapidly to establish initial trust in peacebuilding? While participants such as Dr. Saunders, Dr. Ury, and Prof. Lederach all advocate Sustained Dialogue, and the Chinese,

(particularly X) acknowledge that peacebuilding takes a long time, is there a way to improve or increase trust that will reduce the length of time necessary? Further research on how trust is created in peacebuilding both within and across cultures could be beneficial.

Building bridges or becoming the bridge

There emerged in this study a sense that peacebuilders can not only build bridges, but they can themselves become bridges in the peacebuilding process. Further exploration of this idea and what is involved in both building and becoming could help to inform the peacebuilding literature.

The art of peacebuilding

Professor Lederach mentions that peacebuilding has an element to it which goes beyond the technical skills to the level of an art. It would be interesting and helpful to understand further the artistic side of peacebuilding and the nuances and experiential knowledge that informs its development and use.

Flourishing

All eight of these peacebuilders are flourishing in their work and their peacebuilding. It would be interesting to see to what extent flourishing individuals in other fields do or do not have similar outstanding characteristics. There is much room in the literature for such research. When consulted about such research, Professor Kim Cameron, an expert on the scholarship of positivity and flourishing from the University of Michigan said: “This is a very interesting and unique list of eight attributes. I don’t know that it’s been duplicated anywhere else. There are other

attributes of people who are flourishing but this list is unique” (Cameron, personal communication, 2013). He mentioned the work of Gretchen Spreitzer, who looks at major criteria of flourishing as a sense of growth and development as well as positive energy. He also cited a major study he is involved in where attributes include factors such as: purpose, physical well-being, relationships and safety. He was encouraging of ways in which further research and extension of the research such as that in this study could add to the literature on flourishing.

Before you open the door

These eight characteristics which emerged with their sub-categories are not definitive.

There could be different salient characteristics across and within different cultures and with differing participants. It seems important to extend this research and our understanding of the characteristics of peacebuilders. What studies can we do where we learn about the types of people who are attracted to peacebuilding? Would Myers-Briggs type studies, or Big Five personality studies be helpful? Would it be helpful to do such personality studies across cultures and learn about who becomes a peacebuilder in different cultures and why? I am wondering for example, whether there were there so many similarities between the participants from two such different cultures because of the nature of the work—that a certain type of person is attracted to this work. This study provides an initial platform for further research that could provide insights into whether there are unique characteristics for large numbers of peacebuilders, what these characteristics look like, and how knowledge of such characteristics could lead to ever more effective peacebuilding. It would also be

helpful to look at the eight emergent characteristics relative to other sectors and professions such as business, medicine, and law. Do highly effective actors in these sectors also exhibit aspects of these eight characteristics or do other characteristics emerge? Before they open the door to go into major and definitive meetings within their fields and sectors who are they, what are they thinking about and how did their life experiences lead them to that moment?

Final Reflection

I am sitting in a small room of maybe seventy square feet. It is the room where I have written two doctoral dissertations. There is one wall lined with books, a small table with my computer on it, and stacks upon stacks of additional books, files, and papers. There is one window looking out on my street, and through the bushes I can see cars driving slowly through the snow. By the time you are reading this in its final form, there will have been editing, more editing, and probably multiple revisions. But I hope that out of this small room the words I have recorded from these extraordinary peacebuilders will reach out across time and space and make a difference, even in a small way.

I am reminded of a time in my twenties when I spent some months staying in a convent in the south of France. I became friends with one of the nuns who was probably in her seventies or eighties. She showed me where in the convent they had hid the Jewish children from the Nazis. She spoke about her work helping in Rome during the Second World War when there were bombings. She told me amazing

stories of times she had seen and things she had done. It was paradoxical to me. I asked her, “Sister, you live in a room in a convent. On Fridays, no one is allowed to speak. At seven at night the ancient, medieval doors of the convent close and the world is shut out. Yet you have flown high and far in the world. You have done amazing things and helped people. How do these two cloistered and non-cloistered worlds co-exist?” She looked at me and smiled. “My child”, she said, “It is these four walls which allow me to fly.”

I hope the words written in this small room over the past months can fly too, and add their light to the work for peace.

Appendix A: Sample Interview Questions

As described in this document, the interview questions are informed by both narrative protocols and an AI perspective. The questions loosely follow the types of thematic frameworks that can be involved in restorying, which is part of the analytic process for narrative studies and which include chronological sequencing; epiphanies or turning points; and personal, social, and historical contexts (Creswell, 2007, pp. 56–57). Thus, the positive and appreciatively worded AI questions will be grouped in categories that correspond to these thematic constructions.

However, it is important to note that the methodological approach for this study incorporates an overall flexibility whereby new questions may be added and the order of the questions may be changed based upon the emerging data and the emerging research design. Thus I provide three different protocols where there are potential adaptations depending upon the time the participant has available for the interview.

The questions below are sample general questions but on occasion these were changed or the order was changed in response to the data from and the interactions with the participants during the data collection process.

Sample General Questions

Standard interview protocol

What was the world like when you were born? What are some of your memories of your happiest childhood times?

Could you tell me about your school days? What did you enjoy about them? Who were some people you admired from this time, or people who influenced you and why?

What have been some important moments in your life experience? Could you tell me some stories about those times? How have they affected your career and your peacebuilding?

How did you keep going through tough times?

How have you come to be a peacebuilder? What attracted you to this work?

How have your life experiences influenced you on this path?

How have your personal values influenced your peacebuilding?

How do you think your culture has influenced you as a peacebuilder, and influenced your peacebuilding?

What are the key factors which give life and vitality to your peacebuilding? What is most meaningful to you about your work?

What do you believe is important in a successful peacebuilding process? What are some stories about when this has worked well?

What qualities do you believe are important for someone to be a peacebuilder? Can these be learned and how?

Who do you admire as a peacebuilder and why? What have you learned from them?

What lessons or advice would you have for people who are peacebuilders or would like to be peacebuilders?

What characteristics would you like to be known for and why, where do these come from?

Adaptation of the protocol

Depending upon the time available for the interview, the protocol was adapted for the individual participants. For example, if a participant had more time available there was greater depth to the interview process and the nature of the follow-up questions. If a participant had limited time for the interview, the protocol was shortened. An important element in shortening or adapting the protocol was to give the peacebuilders ample time to tell their stories. Therefore with shorter time availability fewer questions were asked.

An example of a slightly shortened protocol:

What have been some important moments in your life experience? Could you tell me some stories about those times? How have they affected your career and your peacebuilding?

How have you come to be a peacebuilder? What attracted you to this work?

How have your personal values influenced your peacebuilding?

How do you think your culture has influenced you as a peacebuilder, and influenced your peacebuilding?

What are the key factors which give life and vitality to your peacebuilding? What is most meaningful to you about your work?

What qualities do you believe are important for someone to be a peacebuilder? Can these be learned and how?

Who do you admire as a peacebuilder and why? What have you learned from them?

What lessons or advice would you have for people who are peacebuilders or would like to be peacebuilders?

What characteristics would you like to be known for and why, where do these come from?

An example of a greatly shortened protocol

How have you come to be a peacebuilder? What attracted you to this work?

What have been some important moments in your life experience which you feel have impacted your peacebuilding?

What are the key factors which give life and vitality to your peacebuilding?

How have your personal values influenced your peacebuilding?

How do you think your culture has influenced you as a peacebuilder, and influenced your peacebuilding?

What qualities are important in being a peacebuilder? Who do you admire as a peacebuilder and why?

What lessons or advice would you have for those who wish to become peacebuilders?

Appendix B: Email to Participants

A sample of an email to potential participants is as follows:

Dear ____:

My name is Carolyn Maraist and I am currently a doctoral student pursuing a second doctorate in Values-Driven Leadership at Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois. The subject of my second doctorate is cross-cultural peacebuilding. The title of my dissertation is: A Cross-Cultural Narrative Exploration of the Life Stories of Chinese and American Peacebuilders.

I am writing because I would like to invite you to participate in this research based upon your demonstrated expertise and excellence as a peacebuilder. Your participation would ideally involve at least two or three days of face-to-face interviews. These interviews would be conducted at your convenience and could take place either through one long three day session or a series of shorter sessions. The general interview questions will be provided to you in advance for your review. If you are amenable your participation might also include answering a limited number of follow-up questions for purposes of clarification if necessary. The research has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Benedictine University and the bona fides of the project and the research will be provided for your review.

The timeline for the research involves conducting the interviews between the months of June, July, August, and September of 2013.

This research will add to the body of knowledge about peacebuilding and could potentially contribute to the creation of improved practices in this field, ultimately helping with achieving more positive and sustainable outcomes towards peace. Of specific benefit from this research will be the cross-cultural knowledge gained as well as the wisdom from experts in both the United States of America and the People's Republic of China.

I am available to answer any questions you might have about this research and can provide supporting documentation as mentioned above.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Maraist
Ed.D, MBA

Appendix C: Letter from Jim Ludema

July 23, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of Carolyn Maraist's request to conduct interviews as part of her doctoral dissertation. Carolyn is a Ph.D. student in the Center for Values-driven Leadership at Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois. I am a co-founder of the Center and also the Director of the Center. I am the Dissertation Chair for Carolyn's doctoral study.

Carolyn's work in the Center has consistently been to the highest standard. I can attest that her research for this study will be conducted according to top academic protocols and will maintain excellence in integrity and scholarship.

I strongly believe that this study is an important research project, providing the opportunity for greater understanding of culture, wisdom and peacebuilding. If you have any questions about her study or about Benedictine University please do not hesitate to contact me. If I can provide any additional supporting materials about the study I will be happy to do so.

Thank you in advance for any help which you can provide her in her doctoral research.

Sincerely,

James D. Ludema Ph.D.
Co-Founder and Director, Center for Values-Driven Leadership
Director, Ph.D./D.B.A. Program in Values-Driven Leadership
College of Business, Benedictine University
630-829-6229, www.cvdl.org
Twitter: [@ValuesDriven](https://twitter.com/ValuesDriven)
Facebook: [Center for Values-driven Leadership](https://www.facebook.com/CenterforValuesDrivenLeadership)

Appendix D: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form for Participants in Peacemaking Study

Informed Consent Form for Participants

To: Potential participants in the peacemaking study on the date of: _____

From: Carolyn Maraist

Subject: Informed Consent for Participation in Peacebuilding Study for Maraist
Dissertation Research

Date: _____

Dear: _____

My name is Carolyn Maraist. I am currently pursuing a second doctorate as a PhD student at Benedictine University. My second dissertation will explore peacebuilding. This research has potential significance in providing key wisdom and lessons from expert peacebuilders to help others to work successfully in this important arena.

This is a request for informed consent for your participation in this study. Your participation will ideally include approximately two to three days of face-to-face interviews. Additionally there is the possibility that you will be asked to answer a limited number of follow-up questions for clarification if necessary.

Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation at any time up to the date of the scheduled interview. You may ask for removal of or change to the data content after the interview at any time up to the end of September, 2013.

The interviews will be tape recorded and where possible will be transcribed by the researcher. It might also be necessary for the interviews to be translated and transcribed by foreign language translators. It is important to note that there will be identifying information provided from this research. Your name will be present in the research and direct quotations from the narrative will be provided from your narrative citing your name. The research will be used specifically for the purpose of the dissertation and could also be used for other publications such as articles or a book.

Data from the study will be stored on a computer disc and transmitted to a Benedictine university faculty member for secure and ultimate disposal after a period of seven years. Dr. Jim Ludema is the Benedictine University faculty member who will secure and ultimately dispose of the information. His information is at the end of this form.

I hereby consent to participate in this research under the conditions listed above. My consent is formally indicated by my signature below.

I would be grateful if you would sign this form on the line provided below to show that you have read and agree with the contents. Please return it by email to me at carolynmaraist@yahoo.com. An electronic signature is acceptable.

Your signature or electronic signature above

(If you have problems with the electronic signature please call me at: 224-622-3390)

This study is being conducted in order to provide data for a published dissertation study as well as additional publications such as articles. The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Benedictine University. The Chair of Benedictine University's Institutional Review Board is Dr. Alandra Weller-Clarke. She can be reached at (630) 829 – 6295 and her email address is aclarke@ben.edu. The faculty person who will be responsible for disposal of the information from this research is Dr. Jim Ludema. He can be reached at (630) 829-6225 for further questions or concerns about the project/research.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Maraist,
Ed.D, MB

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