



Common Bond Institute

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COMMON BOND INSTITUTE (CBI) is a US based Non-Government Organization that focuses on increasing skills and services to promote peace, exploring human consciousness and relationship dynamics, and expanding public dialogue and awareness of critical issues. Since 1990 CBI has organized and sponsored numerous international, multi-disciplinary conferences, professional training programs for local capacity building in human services and civil society, and professional exchanges. It provides needs assessment and resource development, consultation, coordination, and networking support to assist newly emerging human service and civil society organizations in developing countries.

Cultivating the fundamental elements of a consciousness of peace and local capacity building are seen as natural, effective antidotes to small group radical extremism and large group despair, as well as hardship and suffering in the human condition. To this end, enabling each society to effectively transform conflicts, satisfy core human needs within their communities, and construct effective, holistic mechanisms for self determination, self esteem, and fundamental human dignity and worth that can strengthen current and future generations is the purpose of its work. CBI's efforts, and particularly conferences, are designed to be living laboratories for creating and participating in deep, authentic multicultural community as a common ground of reference for exploring core themes, integrating formal learning, and putting principles into practice. Allowing for individuals to be fully present in these experiences both professionally and personally is key to this integration. CBI is grounded in the application of humanistic psychology's principles in its commitment to capacity building at both the grass roots and social institutional level, and providing the individual in society with practical skills and visions for transforming conflict in their daily lives. It is highly collaborative and works to form strategic alliances and partnerships with organizations and groups dedicated to nurturing relationships locally and globally in creating an authentic world culture of peace.

CBI is one of 40 worldwide humanitarian NGO's selected to be highlighted by a chapter dedicated to it in a book on "*The New Humanitarians*" by Dr. Chris Stout. It is the institutional recipient of the 2011 Charlotte and Karl Bühler Award from the American Psychological Association for outstanding and lasting contribution to humanistic psychology, and is an official partner of the Charter For Compassion and the Parliament of World Religions.

CONFERENCES: Among over 30 international conflict transformation conferences organized since 1990:

- ▶ In 1992 CBI co-founded and for 16 years has co-sponsored the **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION (ICR)** In Russia. This widely endorsed, multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural conference brings together hundreds of participants from around the world to share theory and practical skills in conflict transformation and create invaluable networking opportunities. Each year CBI promotes collaboration between participants and organizations represented. The ICR Conference was established in cooperation with HARMONY Institute, and is endorsed by a growing list of over 100 universities and organizations internationally.
- ▶ In 2004 CBI founded and has co-sponsored the **INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE ON "THE ECOLOGY OF WAR AND PEACE (EWP)"**, held in cooperation with HARMONY Institute, the Jane Goodall Institute and the International Humanistic Psychology Association. The EWP Conference has brought together youth from various regions of the world for an experience utilizing ecology and environmental consciousness as a common theme to address negative stereotypes, prejudice, and demonization and dehumanization of individuals and groups.
- ▶ In 2006 CBI founded and sponsors the **ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "ENGAGING THE OTHER:" THE POWER OF COMPASSION," (ETO)** to promote a wider public dialogue to reduce and transform fear-based belief systems, negative stereotyping, and prejudice that lead to dehumanizing and demonizing others, polarization, and hostility, and to apply results to current world relationships. Products include establishing community based dialogue groups, a collaborative network of activist change agents, published results, recorded proceedings, media-art images, linking programs with international conferences in various regions of the world to increase diversity of perspectives and build on mutual missions, a planned film documentary and "Engaging The Other" training program. The Conference is held in conjunction with an edited book in progress of the same name addressing concepts of "The Other" from a cross-cultural, multidisciplinary perspective. The basis of the book project is a chapter on The Other contributed by CBI's director to a book titled "*The Psychology of Terrorism.*"
- ▶ In 2009 CBI founded and sponsors the **ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RELIGION, CONFLICT, AND PEACE (RCP)**". The RCP Conference is an international forum promoting Inter-religious and Intra-religious dialogue to explore the challenges of Extremism, Intolerance, Polarization, Scapegoating, and Islamophobia, and the promise of Reason, Understanding, Compassion, and Cultural Harmony.

TRAININGS: In 1998 CBI established the **INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION** as a product of its conferences. Currently two projects are operated out of this program:

▶ **"CATASTROPHIC TRAUMA RECOVERY (CTR) TRAINING"** - Since 1998 this project has offered trauma recovery skills training to local counselors and relief workers assisting victims of violence, war, and disaster in regions of conflict, helping to create local teams of qualified trainers to expand the training pool. Intensive trainings are provided primarily to counselors in Russia, the Caucasus, Middle East, and Balkans. In addition to trainings provided in conjunction with its conferences, components of this training project being operated or being currently developed by CBI and its partners include:

[1] Providing training and professional resources to the **Gaza Community Mental Health Program** in Gaza and the **Palestinian Counseling Center** in the West Bank.

[2] Collaborating with local human service organizations in **Nablus, West Bank** in an effort to provide training and assistance toward establishing the **Bait Al Hayat / House of Life** trauma treatment center for children.

[3] **The Palestinian-Israeli Joint Trauma Recovery Training Project:** a joint training project in trauma treatment for Palestinian and Israeli therapists in order to assist victims of violence in the Middle East conflict; and to facilitate cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian mental health centers.

[4] **(CTR) Training – Iraq** (under development): Provide training, on-going clinical consultation, professional resources, and an infrastructure plan to a team of Iraqi counselors to establish and staff a **trauma treatment center in Iraq**.

Trainings are also provided immediately following the ICR Conferences in cooperation with partner training institutes, including the EMDR Humanitarian Assistance Program (EMDR-HAP). Follow up clinical consultation, networking, and learning materials are offered to trainees. The CTR model used in these trainings was developed by CBI, and is designed for assisting large populations of trauma victims in societies where the internal social service and support systems are underdeveloped or have been debilitated by catastrophe. It is included in a book by Dr. Stanley Krippner on the treatment of large civilian populations traumatized by war: *"The Psychological Impact of War Trauma on Civilian Populations."*

▶ **"CAPACITY FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRACY"** - A project to assist Al-Azhar University, Gaza, and the Arab American University in Jenin (AAUJ), West Bank, Palestine, in establishing Centers for Conflict Resolution and Human Rights, providing visiting professors and core curriculum for courses in Human Services and Civil Society, and providing professional and academic materials. The project is intended to help increase local capacity for peace, democracy, and development in Palestinian society by preparing future civil leaders and local professionals skilled in providing critically needed human services to the population.

INTEGRATED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES: In 2004 CBI initiated an experiment to collaborate in coordinating an integrated series of 5 international conferences in 3 countries sharing a focus on exploring and advancing the consciousness of peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Events in this series were programmatically linked to build on each other for an energetic flow and larger impact. As a result, outcomes have emerged and coalesced synergistically as the process has progressed, and have inspired promising new collaborative projects and partnerships, some of which CBI is directly involved in. Following the success of this model CBI has continued the process each year, inviting other international conferences to link programs to maximize the energy and products of each event and promote an expanding network of social activists and healers for greater mutual benefit. A goal is to collectively raise the level, depth, and breadth of public awareness and public dialogue on vital issues in exploring a consciousness of peace, and to foster proactive networks that create practical strategies for applying results in advancing capacity for a global culture of peace.

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS OPERATED OR UNDER DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE:

- ▶ **A Global Internet nexus**, including: • a virtual **Journal of Conflict Transformation**, • a virtual **Resource Library** with materials from CBI's many conferences and trainings, • a **Networking Database** of organizations and individuals to promote cooperation, • **topical E-dialogues** to continue dialogue and maintain contact between events, • **E-working groups** to house virtual collaborative projects, • a web-based **Clinical Consultation** service to support trainees of CBI's trauma training projects
- ▶ Assisting the establishment and development of **locally based professional schools and practical training programs** in human services to assist in forming core mentor groups in developing countries.
- ▶ **"Engaging The Other"** edited multicultural book on "The Other" in conjunction with the ETO conference
- ▶ **"Engaging The Other"** training program addressing negative stereotypes and prejudice.