

Ten Foundations for Practicing with Conflict (Donald Rothberg, 2023)

1. *Ground in the core teachings (1)*

- a. Dependent Origination, Dukkha, reactivity and non-reactivity: Hatred only ends with non-hatred.
- b. The Two Arrows.
- c. Cause and effect. The web of causality.
- d. The Buddha: “Anger, confusion, and dishonesty arise when things are set in pairs as opposites.”
- e. Teachings on views.

Inner foundations (2-4)

2. *Look at one’s conditioning related to conflict, particularly to be “conflict avoidant” or “conflict indulgent.”*
3. *Practice with difficult emotions, thoughts and narratives, and body states.* Using different aspects of mindfulness practice. Assessing the level of intensity. Continual work with pain (physical and emotional). Trauma work.
4. *Heart practices.* Compassion and forgiveness can play a central role.

Outer relational and social foundations (5-10)

5. *Teachings and practices about Buddha nature, bodhicitta, metta: All persons have the potential of awakening and need care, support, kindness.*
6. *A vision: Universal metta, the beloved community (Dr. King), the win-win model of conflict transformation work: Meet all genuine needs as much as possible.* Move away from the win-lose model.
7. *Ethics: Non-harming, nonviolence, and other ethical precepts. Expressed in guidelines for being with conflict, e.g., for an organization or group.*

8. *Empathy as foundational.* We can define empathy here as the innate capacity to tune receptively into a person's experience, particularly someone's emotions but also the cognitive and somatic dimensions of experience. Empathy as a practice: Tuning into emotions and needs (as distinguished from strategies, in NVC).
9. *Skillful speech practice.*
 - a. Presence.
 - b. Work with mindfulness; skillfulness with thoughts, emotions, body states in relationship to one's speaking.
 - c. Empathy.
 - d. The Buddha's guidelines.
 - (1) Being truthful.
 - (2) Helpful.
 - (3) Come out of a kind heart.
 - (4) Good timing, appropriateness.
10. *Nonviolent social action.*