JAMIE BRISTOW,
JUNE 2024

Examples of inner development in public policies and services

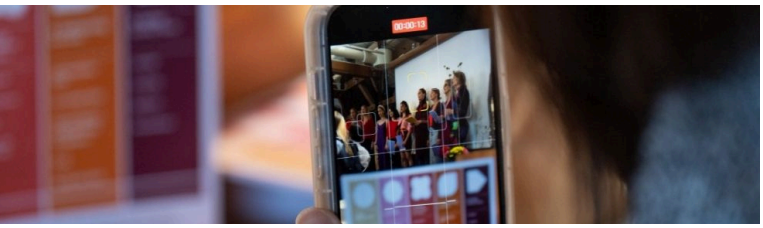
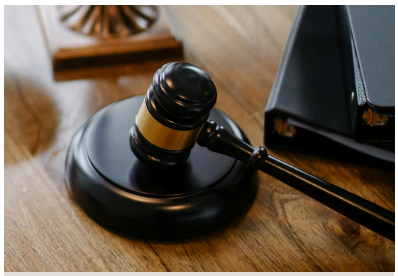


Table of Contents

1. Health Care

2. Schools & Higher Education

3. Life-long Learning



4. Criminal Justice

5. The Workplace

6. Communities

7. Gender Equality. Diversity, equity & inclusion.

8. Peace building & conflict resolution

Appendix 1 - further resources

1. Health Care

Core skills for resilience, effectiveness and safety

In addition to developing knowledge and technical skills, training for health care professionals is increasingly including aspects of inner development as a matter of policy. The mental and physical health of clinicians is a major concern for policymakers and administrators worldwide and the inner skills that underpin resilience are not just helpful to reduce burnout but are fundamental to maintain levels of empathy and compassion that are required to deliver a safe and effective service. The skills in the Inner Development Goals framework of 'self-awareness', 'openness & learning mindset', 'humility' and 'communication skills' are also thought to be important for positive doctor-patient interactions and patient safety within contexts like operating theatres. As an example, the National Health Service in England has identified care, compassion, courage and communication skills as priorities for development in a national policy.

Compassion in Healthcare

A 2019 review of research made a compelling case for 'compassionomics' - the knowledge and scientific study of the effects of compassionate health care. The paper assessed hundreds of published studies showing that compassion is a powerful intervention, beneficial for patients through improving clinical outcomes; for health care systems by supporting financial sustainability; and for health care professionals, through lowering burnout and promoting resilience and wellbeing.

Both the Canadian and American Medical Associations list compassion as one of their core virtues exemplified by the 'ethical physician', with the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) stating that "a compassionate physician recognizes suffering and vulnerability, seeks to understand the unique circumstances of each patient, attempts to alleviate the patient's suffering, and accompanies the suffering and vulnerable patient".

However, extolling the virtues of compassion only goes so far in realising it as a moment to moment reality in patient care. Training is required in the theory and practice of intentionally cultivating compassion so that it is more consistent and resilient under stressful conditions.

For example, The King's Fund, an independent charitable organisation working to improve health and care in England, works with local health authorities to provide training in 'compassionate leadership' to meet their development objectives.

2. Schools and Higher Education

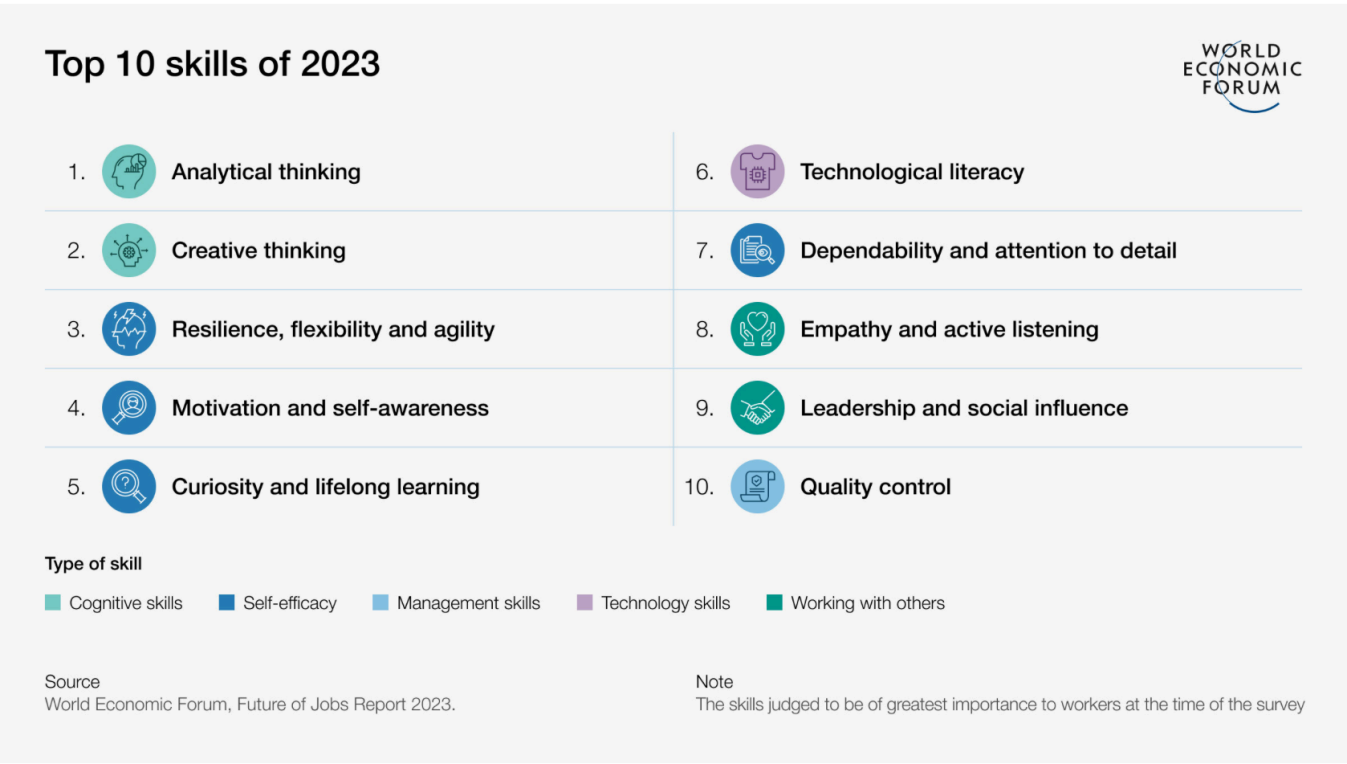
Social and Emotional Learning in Schools

Social and emotional learning curricula (SEL), which, in the language of the Inner Development Goals framework, tend to target the 'being' and 'relating' skillsets of young people to complement a more traditional emphasis on 'thinking' and 'acting' in education, are one of the most widely implemented forms of inner development in a public context. Promoting social and emotional skills are thought to support mental health, whilst reducing associated problems such as suicide, school refusal, and bullying. They are also considered to be important for personal development, social relationships, ethical behaviour and productive work.

SEL programs tend to involve structured lessons that help students develop inner skills, such as self-awareness, self-management (e.g. regulating attention, emotions and behaviour), resilience, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Until recently, social and emotional development had largely been seen as an optional 'add on', left up to individual schools to decide whether to provide. However, it is increasingly a major consideration at a policy level. Concern about mental health, demand from employers for a more holistic skillset (e.g. see 'top skills' below) and a desire to foster positive citizenship whilst addressing anti-social behaviour issues are all pushing SEL up the priority list.

WEF's 'top 10 skills' of greatest importance to employers often include inner skills that don't traditionally get prioritised in education, such as creativity, self-awareness and empathy:



Singaporean Schools and Including Moral Values and Ethical Learning

The Ministry of Education in Singapore, for instance, has a policy to integrate SEL programs into the curriculum of schools across the country. Their Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) has the goal "to inculcate values and build competencies in our students to develop them to be good individuals and useful citizens". The Singaporian curriculum builds on established SEL programmes with an emphasis on "core moral values" (respect, responsibility, integrity, care, resilience, and harmony)[2].

Singapore's addition of core moral values mirrors the development at Emory University of SEEL - Social, emotional and ethical learning. Guided by a vision of a holistic education of heart and mind, the programme takes a science-based approach to bringing the ethical development of the whole child into schools. SEE Learning provides educators with a comprehensive learning framework, age-specific curricula, facilitator certification, and professional development.

India's National Education Policy 2020

Other countries where SEL is widespread include Japan[3] and the USA.

Whilst its implementation might still be in its early stages, perhaps the most inspiring example of national policy that lays out a more holistic vision for education, is the Government of India's National Education Policy 2020. The policy aims to transform India's education system by 2030 and "develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy". It provides a comprehensive framework for elementary to higher education, as well as vocational training and lifelong learning.
Excerpts from the policy that reference inner development can be found here, and include the following on the importance of holistic development:

---

[2] https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-3394-0_10
[3] https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1228269

4.4 The key overall thrust of curriculum and pedagogy reform across all stages will be to move the education system towards real understanding and towards learning how to learn - and away from the culture of rote learning as is largely present today. The aim of education will not only be cognitive development, but also building character and creating holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with the key 21st century skills.

And later:

9.1.2. For the purpose of developing holistic individuals, it is essential that an identified set of skills and values will be incorporated at each stage of learning, from pre-school to higher education.

3. Life-long Learning

Life-long learning refers to the continuous, voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge and skills for personal or professional reasons. It encompasses all forms of learning, including formal education (such as obtaining degrees), non-formal education (like online courses, workshops, and seminars), and informal education (learning through life experiences, reading, and conversations).

Life-long learning can enhance personal growth, improve job performance and increase employability, and in a rapidly changing and unpredictable world it is crucial for helping individuals adapt to shifts in technology and society by continuously updating and refining their inner and outer skills. Continuous learning throughout life is also associated with greater happiness and wellbeing, improved cognitive function and resilience to age-related decline.

European Council's recommendation on key competencies for life

In May 2018, the Council of the European Union adopted a 'recommendation' (an official motion voted for by member countries that is not binding but does have political weight) on lifelong learning that provides a list of key competences along with guidance and good practice examples. Alongside more traditional knowledge and 'outer' skills like linguistics, the competencies include important elements of inner development. One of the eight categories is titled "Personal, social and learning to learn competence", which includes the following skills:

Personal	**Social**	**Learning to Learn**
Self-regulation	Empathy	Growth mindset
Flexibility	Communication	Critical thinking
Wellbeing	Collaboration	Managing learning

The other seven competency categories such as literacy, technology, entrepreneurship and citizenship also frequently reference inner skills. These include:

- Critical thinking and reflection;
- Curiosity & open mindedness,
- Courage and perseverance;
- Appreciation of cultural diversity, interest in others;
- Empathy and emotional intelligence;
- Ability to work in teams;
- Skills for constructive participation in community;
- The ability to cope with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk;
- Social responsibility values and a concern for ethical issues.

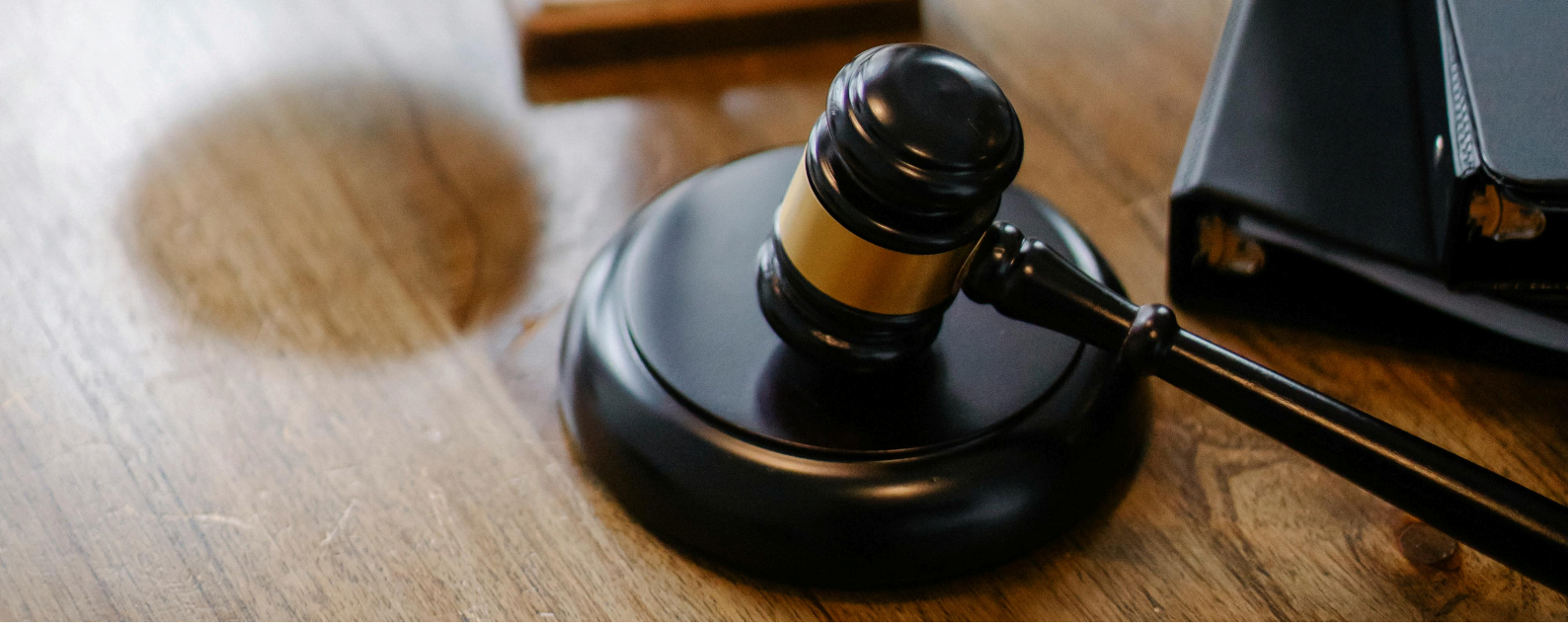
GreenComp - Integrating Life Skills With the Sustainability Agenda

Building on its earlier promotion of life-long learning in general, in 2022 the Council of the EU adopted a recommendation on the role of learning for the green transition and sustainable development. In tandem, The Commision of the EU published the European Competence Framework on Sustainability or 'GreenComp'. This framework is intended for use in education and public policy across a range of settings. It defines the four competence groups related to sustainability that should be acquired by learners of all ages:

Embodying sustainability values	**Embracing complexity in sustainability**	**Acting for sustainability**	**Envisioning sustainable futures**
Valuing sustainability	Systems thinking	Political agency	Futures literacy
Supporting fairness	Critical thinking	Collective action	Adaptability
Promoting nature	Problem framing	Individual initiative	Exploratory thinking

Examples From Other Regions

Other examples of policy reports considering such skills at a population level include UNICEF India's Comprehensive Life Skills Framework: Rights based and life cycle approach to building skills for empowerment. 'Life skills' is a broad term that includes things like digital literacy and health and hygiene education, but can also include cognitive, emotional and relational skills. The UNICEF framework features self awareness, resilience, empathy and communication and participation skills.



4. Criminal Justice

Restorative justice is a broad approach that includes various forms of inner development practices. It focuses on healing the relationships between offenders, victims, and communities through dialogue, empathy training, and mutual understanding. Restorative justice programs often include some form of psychological education and self-regulation training. Mediation sessions provide offenders with the opportunity to listen to the impact of their actions and work towards restitution and reconciliation.

Examples of programmes for offenders that feature elements of inner development work include Resolve to Stop the Violence Project (RSVP) in San Francisco, USA. RSVP is a program designed for violent male offenders, integrating victim awareness, anger management, and social responsibility training. It combines group therapy, education, and community service to foster empathy, self-reflection, and personal transformation. Studies of the RSVP program have shown significant reductions in violent reoffending rates among participants compared to control groups, highlighting the effectiveness of holistic, empathy-focused rehabilitation programs.

The Healing of the Nations, a Native American Restorative Justice in South Dakota, USA, incorporates Indigenous cultural practices, such as talking circles, sweat lodge ceremonies, and storytelling, to address conflict and harm within communities. It focuses on healing, community solidarity, and the restoration of balance. Participants and communities have reported improved relationships, reduced incidents of violence, and a strengthened sense of cultural identity and community cohesion.

‘Mindful leaders’ in Kenyan prison system

A training programme within the Kenyan high-security prison estate provides inmates with an opportunity to learn capabilities like self-awareness, perspective-skills and empathy. Inmates are empowered to teach others by becoming ‘mindful leaders’, giving them the opportunity to form a new identity focused on learning and growth. The programme uses a unique combination of mindfulness training and social identity processes (which are rooted in creating a common sense of ‘us’). According to an impact evaluation report, it’s now catching on at other institutions across Kenya from the capital Nairobi to Kitale, a town in the Rift Valley. The programme has even spawned a ‘mindful rapper’ whose lyrics include praise for being “awake, aware and attentive”.

5. The Workplace

It is perhaps in the workplaces of government departments, public services and state institutions that most inner development in public life has taken place so far. Training initiatives for career advancement and team effectiveness are commonplace but have tended to be fragmented and poorly integrated with other workplace practices and culture. Whilst capacities such as critical thinking, communication skills, mobilisation skills and perseverance have long been the subject of leadership training and team away days, leaders are also increasingly expected to demonstrate qualities like authenticity, self-awareness, emotional intelligence and empathic listening, although many are still uncomfortable with these ‘new’ expectations[4].

[4] Global Leadership Development Study. (2023). Harvard Business Publishing. Retrieved April 10, 2024, from https://www.harvardbusiness.org/insight/2023-global-leadershipdevelopment-study-ready-for-anything/

The inseparability of inner skills

Psychology and behavioural science now show us that these 'old' and 'new' competencies are in fact inseparable. Far from being rational agents, human thought and sense-making is highly influenced by emotions, values and evolved 'cognitive shortcuts' that often go awry. As such, self-awareness and emotional intelligence are increasingly understood not just as 'soft skills' for being nice and managing people, but as foundational capacities for effective decision-making.

For instance, one innovative programme in Wales designed to help civil servants develop better critical thinking, complexity awareness and long-term orientation combines self-awareness practices with 'behavioural insights', which is the science of how human beings make predictably irrational and biassed decisions. Developing a better understanding of how our minds work in this way, not just theoretically but also through introspective awareness, supports decision-making whilst also helping leaders to better understand the psychological and cultural dimensions of the complex systems they are working with.

Investing in the public sector workforce

Training and consultancy organisations such as Apolitical.co and Demos Helsinki include inner qualities and skills in their capacity building of public servants from around the globe. Whether countries have their own learning or programmes or outsource the development of their teams, public sector organisations are beginning to invest in learning & development in similar ways to the private sector, which has long recognised the value of inner qualities for leadership and collaboration. In some cases this has manifested in explicit policy. Several governments are exploring using the Inner Development Goals Framework to shape capacity building programmes for public servants. In the Netherlands a government unit responsible for learning and development has started using the IDGs to structure a cross-departmental training initiative. In Wales, all public servants, as well as those working in the civil society sector, have access to online training in inner qualities such as emotional intelligence, mindfulness and trust.

6. Communities

Community trust and connectedness for health, peace and prosperity

Even prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, policymakers in many Western nations were becoming concerned about a "loneliness crisis", particularly impacting younger generations. Beyond feelings of isolation, this manifests in anxieties about societal acceptance, success, and peer validation. These emotions transcend individual experiences, extending to entire communities grappling with notions of acceptance, recognition and value.

The detrimental health effects of disconnection from society are profound, affecting mental and physical well-being. Loneliness correlates strongly with anxiety, depression, reduced life expectancy and cardiovascular issues. Loneliness also fosters self-centeredness, altering civic engagement. This self-focus exacerbates loneliness, creating a cyclical effect. The resulting disconnection fosters populism, extremism and susceptibility to conspiracies, making it easier for autocratic forces to come into power.

Connectedness or belonging is also related to the quality of trust in a community. Neighbourhoods that have low levels of mutual trust tend to have poor social cohesion and connectedness. Low social trust also has a detrimental impact on economic growth, political stability, crime, corruption, public health and quality of life.

Interventions to impact social connectedness and trust are possible on both collective and individual levels. Although these are relational qualities, they are underpinned by individual skills and capabilities. There is evidence that psychological interventions that target emotional and social skills are very effective. One example is the 'Exploring What Matters' course, which has been conducted in 26 countries worldwide. The curriculum improves pro-sociality through increasing compassion and social trust, whilst bolstering wellbeing and mental health.

A key enabling factor of connectedness and trust is self-acceptance, feeling comfortable in our own skin. This can be supported through intervention like Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and through self-compassion practices. According to the Building a larger us report by Alex Evans,

> "Self-compassion is often what's missing when people are coping with shame wounds... These are rooted in feelings of smallness, embarrassment, humiliation, worthlessness, or the sense that we're unacceptable in society's eyes...
>
> Whatever the cause, these kinds of shame wounds can live on inside us, often for our whole lives, with far-reaching effects on us as individuals... But shame wounds also have powerful social effects. In particular, they're often accompanied by a "self-protective rage" that can ultimately find a way out in the form of scapegoating someone else for a discomfort that actually starts within us.
>
> ...the work of building belonging inside ourselves, of feeling comfortable in our own skins, is crucial. And this is work that we can do something about, practise and get better at"

Beyond the individual enablers of social connection, it can be hugely powerful to do inner work collectively. Alcoholics Anonymous, for instance, has been transformational for millions – thanks to its network of small groups that put connectedness and peer support at the centre of their change process.

Examples of government-sponsored initiatives that aim to improve social connectedness and trust include the National Citizenship Service in the UK, a voluntary programme for 16 & 17 year olds that builds "social cohesion", "social engagement" and "connection skills", along with other character strengths.

7. Gender equality. Diversity, equity and inclusion.

In addition to structural reforms, gender equality programmes often include education that highlights the cultural biases that hinder equality, while also addressing underlying psychological barriers such as stereotypes and self-esteem issues & developing supportive capacities such as critical thinking, perspective skills and empathy.

Country focus: Norway

Norway places a strong emphasis on education and awareness programmes aimed at challenging gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality from an early age. These programs often include components designed to cultivate empathy, critical thinking, and self-awareness among students, encouraging them to question traditional gender roles and norms. Norway has also implemented leadership development programmes targeted at public servants and professionals in various sectors in order to promote gender-balanced leadership. These programs often include training sessions or workshops focused on enhancing communication skills, empathy, and inclusive leadership practices.

Gender equality training may not be working, inner development could help

A recent systemic review of research has identified that much of what is traditionally emphasised in gender equality training, such as a focus on women and awareness raising of existing inequalities, may not be working. However amongst the 11 suggestions for what is more effective were:

- Eliciting positive emotions in interventions garners positive outcomes.
- Empathy is a viable strategy in the context of multifaceted campaigns.
- All genders need to participate in re-socialisation of gender norms.
- Dialogue is a key to success.

The paper suggests that supporting men and boys with a more psychologically informed approach may be key:

"...research has shown men and boys feel hostility, resentment, fear and jealousy when social norms are challenged, and attempts at addressing gender inequality threatens men's sense of entitlement, and boys expect to be the centre of attention.

Often, they fear being perceived as weak or feminine in front of their peers if they stand up for women's rights, and they see respect for women as a "zero-sum" game where respecting women means disrespecting men."

In addition to empathy, this speaks to the importance of supporting participants in gender equality training (particularly men and boys) to develop an openness and learning mindset, self-awareness, humility, courage and the communication skills that will support cross-gender dialogue.

This research also highlighted that the attitude of bureaucrats at the 'microlevel' (individual psychology) was considered to be an important factor in implementing gender equality initiatives at the 'macrolevel' (society). This also hints at the importance of developing the inner capacities of public servants who are working on gender equity mainstreaming

Closing the gender gap

Elsewhere, it has also been proposed that policies aimed at closing the gender gap should encourage education and leadership development for women and girls that prioritises '21st century skills', such as problem solving, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.

"Studies show students who have this type of social and emotional learning tend to enjoy long-term benefits such as higher rates of employment and educational fulfilment...

Critical thinking and problem-solving top the skills list employees think will grow in prominence in the next five years, according to the World Economic Forum. As women are severely underrepresented in the strategy-making

level, critical thinking can be one of the best cognitive skills for women to develop. The ability to think from different perspectives can help women become more successful as professional leaders and entrepreneurs."

Another study has pointed to the effectiveness of supporting relationships between genders at work in order to reduce bias, particularly relationships with female leaders.

Spotlight: Equimundo
Boys need to talk more about feelings and fight inequality, report says | Children | The Guardian

See Appendix 1 for more links relating to inner development and gender equity.

8. Peace building & conflict resolution

Peacebuilding programmes aim to address the root causes of conflict and promote sustainable peace by engaging communities, fostering dialogue, and implementing initiatives that contribute to reconciliation and social cohesion.

In addition to addressing material and structural conditions, such as underlying grievances, inequalities, power imbalances, and decision-making processes, some initiatives also target the psycho-social determinants of reconciliation and social cohesion. Approaches include education and awareness campaigns, and initiatives that bring "adversarial groups in contact with one another in an emotional climate conducive to intergroup dialogue, active listening, cognitive and affective empathy, cooperation, and constructive interactions that build the relationship, promote an inclusive sense of social identity, and inculcate nonviolent values"[5].

[5] Christie, D. J., & Montiel, C. J. (2013). Contributions of psychology to war and peace. The American Psychologist, 68(7), 502–513.

However, the "psychosocial dimension of peacebuilding has traditionally been on the margins of mainstream peacebuilding practice, reduced to an addendum to peacebuilding operations and overshadowed by economic, political, security, or justice components… The international peacebuilding community is increasingly recognising the necessity to work holistically and address the cognitive and emotional levels of people in conflict.[6]"

However, there are some examples of interventions that do just that. For instance, the 'Taking steps toward peace' program developed to prevent violence in the Basque Country has been shown to support participants to develop empathy, anger management, and concepts associated with peace[7].

"Some techniques for inducing empathy include writing essays from the first-person perspective of the target person (e.g., Brooks, 2008; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000), participating in intergroup encounters (Malhotra & Liyanage, 2005), or listening to radio broadcasts (Paluck, 2009).

A large-scale field study in Rwanda thus compared the impact of a radio soap opera on the daily struggles of two communities representing the Hutus and Tutsis to the impact of a health-promoting broadcast (Paluck, 2009). Empathy for other Rwandans, as measured by the degree to which participants reported "imagining the thoughts and feelings of other Rwandans," as well as attitudes in favor of reconciliation, such as intermarriage and trauma healing, increased significantly in participants who listened to the soap opera as compared to participants in the active control group who listened to the health-promoting broadcast (Paluck, 2009). Another study tested the impact of a 4-day peace workshop promoting intergroup contact between different ethnic communities in Sri Lanka (Malhotra & Liyanage, 2005). One year after the workshop, Sinhalese and Tamil participants who had been part of the peace workshop reported feeling more empathic concern toward members of the other group and provided higher donations to a charity for children of the other group than did control participants who did not attend a peace workshop (Malhotra & Liyanage, 2005)[8].

Although initiatives like those referenced commonly aim to develop certain inner qualities in groups, it may be less common for approaches to engage participants as active agents in their own inner development. That is, where participants know that they are intentionally practising or cultivating qualities like empathy, compassion, listening skills or nonviolent values. Early evidence does suggest that this may be a helpful approach.

---

[6] Hertog, K. (2019). Towards Integrated Peacebuilding: Comprehensively Integrating Psychosocial Factors in Peacebuilding Trainings & Programmes for Increased Impact. Journal of Peacebuilding & Development, 14(3), 333–339.

[7] Garaigordobil, M. (2012). Evaluation of a program to prevent political violence in the Basque conflict: effects on the capacity of empathy, anger management and the definition of peace. Gaceta Sanitaria / S.E.S.P.A.S, 26(3), 211–216.

[8] Christie, D. J., & Montiel, C. J. (2013). Contributions of psychology to war and peace. The American Psychologist, 68(7), 502–513.

"In the context of intergroup relations in an intractable conflict, a mindfulness intervention of 8 weeks was shown to increase support for political compromise in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict compared with the support for political compromise in a wait list control group (Alkoby et al., 2017)."

Conversely, peace education has been shown to increase empathy skills in high-school adolescents[9].

Those working in peace-building would also benefit from training that integrates psychosocial health and personal resilience & stress management. Some professional training for those working in the area include inner development including "active listening, compassion and empathy, holding multiple realities, patience & endurance, balancing simplicity and complexity, facilitation, tranquility, discernment, and integrity.[10]"

Key publication: The 12 Habits of the Reconciler - Rose Castle Foundation
12 Habits of the Reconciler:

1. Hospitality
2. Curiosity
3. Generosity
4. Empathy
5. Vulnerability
6. Humility
7. Lament
8. Forgiveness
9. Gratitude
10. Hope
11. Stewardship
12. Creativity

---

[9] ERIC - EJ987855 - Empathy for Interpersonal Peace: Effects of Peace Education on Empathy Skills, Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 2012

[10] Hertog, K. (2019). Towards Integrated Peacebuilding: Comprehensively Integrating Psychosocial Factors in Peacebuilding Trainings & Programmes for Increased Impact. Journal of Peacebuilding & Development, 14(3), 333–339.

Appendix 1 - further resources

Resources linking inner development and gender equity

- Building Empathy into Your Gender Equality Training — Gild Collective
- How 21st century skills in secondary school can bridge the gender gap | LSE Business Review
- Supporting Soft Skills in Hard Times: Gender Inequalities in Social and Emotional Skills are Holding Adolescent Girls Back | Young Lives
- Promoting Gender Equality: A Systematic Review of Interventions (springer.com)
- Empathy, inclusivity key to achieving gender equality – Monash Lens
- When Men Who Dislike Feminists Feel Proud: Can Self-Affirmation and Perspective-Taking Increase Men's Empathy Toward Feminists?
- The Role of Affective Empathy in Eliminating Discrimination Against Women: a Conceptual Proposition
- We-Men | Improving Emotional Intelligence and Gender Equality Training (we-men.org) (European Commission funded research)
    - "Evidence suggests that adult education on gender equality and emotional intelligence can help redress the problem of gender inequity in Europe. The WeMen project sees emotional intelligence training as a gateway to breaking male resistance to gender training, improving learner engagement and results, and upskilling adult teachers and adult learners in a critical soft skill. "
- Promoting gender equity in very young adolescents: targeting a window of opportunity for social emotional learning and identity development | BMC Public Health | Full Text (biomedcentral.com)
    - These findings provide evidence that social emotional learning interventions targeting VYAs can improve social emotional mindsets and skills and gender equity outcomes.
- Girls' education | UNICEF
    - Gender-equitable education systems empower girls and boys and promote the development of life skills – like self-management, communication, negotiation and critical thinking – that young people need to succeed. They close skills gaps that perpetuate pay gaps, and build prosperity for entire countries.

- (PDF) The Effect of a Gender Course on the Gender Attitudes, Critical Thinking Dispositions, and Media Literacy Skills of University Students (researchgate.net)
- Breaking barriers: Navigating gender equality through life skills training in India - Opinion News | The Financial Express
- Gender Equality through Life Skills Education (University of Lucknow)
    - Development of Life Skills such as Self Awareness, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Decision Making, Problem Solving and Effective Communication, Negotiation skills, Planning ability, Organising ability and so on, can have far reaching effects in this direction. Life Skills Education can open up new avenues for women for dealing with all aspects of their life in a progressive manner thus lessening the man woman divide
- Gender-responsive life skills-based education: advocacy brief; (UNESCO)
    - The term “life skills” refers in particular to psycho-social skills; i.e., skills that can be learned and practised, such as self-awareness, problem-solving, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills.
    - Life skills education can serve as an indirect tool for gender empowerment through community-based approaches.
- Empowering Young Men: The Crucial Role of Life Skills Education in Combating Gender-Based Violence - Global Communities
- Smashing the Patriarchy with SEL (salzburgglobal.org)

Resources on inner development and peace-building

- Hertog, K. (2019). Towards Integrated Peacebuilding: Comprehensively Integrating Psychosocial Factors in Peacebuilding Trainings and Programmes for Increased Impact. Journal of Peacebuilding & Development, 14(3), 333–339.
- Is It Possible to Create a More Peaceful Society Through the Teaching and Learning of Compassion?
- Brett, R., English, R., Féron, É., & Rosoux, V. (2024). Embodied reconciliation: a new research agenda. Peacebuilding, 12(1), 102–119.
- Addressing psychosocial trauma in post-conflict peacebuilding: Emotions in narrative and arts-based approaches