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## *Understanding Conflict in Schools*

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### CONFLICT IS NORMAL

Conflict is ordinary. That is the first thing that needs to be acknowledged. Even in the most homogeneous of schools, differences among students and teachers are always so nuanced that conflict is inevitable. In the pursuit of various agendas, people always bump into other people's agendas.

Schools are a microcosm of the rest of society. Gather together a group of adults and ask them whether they have ever experienced conflict, and you will meet with laughter. Of course they have. Everyone has. As generalizations go, this is a safe one to make.

Conflict is inevitable. It results from the interplay of differences between people. Since people differ in many ways, in their cultural backgrounds and assumptions, their personal styles, their worldviews and perspectives, and their hopes and aspirations, there will frequently be places where they rub against each other. This is as true in school communities as in other places in the social world. Schools do not need to aim for an environment in which conflict is never manifest, so much as an environment in which conflict is handled and managed effectively, so that differences are respected, competing cultural perspectives are valued, and individual students and teachers are heard and included in the conversation—all so that educational activity can proceed.

On the other hand, ask people what it is like to experience conflict, and you will hear how often conflict does not go well. People get hurt by it. It is often managed poorly. Constructive ways of moving forward are frequently not found. Rifts occur and pain is produced. Much energy is expended thinking about conflict, which could be harnessed for other purposes. Sometimes conflict generates violence, and the hurt is magnified tenfold.

Actually, handling conflict constructively is challenging. We learn how to do it in our families and schools often haphazardly. There is seldom a systematic curriculum for learning to get on with others and resolve differences. Students, therefore, do not always learn how to handle conflict. They are sometimes lectured and advised to do it better but often without being shown or given the chance to practice the specific skills of doing so.

In this book, we aim to offer a range of strategies that together amount to a comprehensive program for addressing various types of conflict in a school community. It is not sufficient to introduce a single intervention, such as a peer mediation program, and expect it to deal with everything. In the application of these strategies, we hope that both students and teachers can learn to coexist peacefully and that they can, therefore, get on with the job of teaching and learning.

From time to time, it is inevitable that there should be tension and sometimes conflict among educators, between schools and their communities, between individual students and among groups of students, between students and teachers, and between administrators and teachers. What is needed is an explicit recognition that this is all normal and that the school is prepared to handle it. Handling it involves establishing procedures for people to assert different perspectives; influence each other; listen; and reach resolutions that incorporate multiple perspectives, rather than imposing singular ones. Effective leadership does not require the ability to

always know what the best decisions are, so much as attention to the design of processes for constructively handling differences and, sometimes, outbreaks of conflict.

## **VIOLENCE IS A PROBLEM**

If conflict needs to be normalized and learning how to address it made into a priority, that does not mean that we should accept the inevitability of violence. Violence is a problem in schools.

We do not need a library full of rocket science to appreciate that children who are afraid of being hurt, or are upset and angry, are in no state of mind to learn things. Effective learning takes place in a context of emotional calmness and enjoyment, not one dominated by anxiety, anger, or fear. Nel Noddings (2002) is a leading educational thinker who has stated it clearly:

Through more than five decades of teaching and mothering, I have noticed also that children (and adults too) learn best when they are happy. (p. 2)

Noddings (2002) suggests that it is not just the occurrence of violence but also the threat of it, the fear of it, or the witnessing of it happening to others that affects the ability to learn. Just how bad a problem violence in schools is was put into perspective by a review released by United States Attorney General Eric Holder in October 2009. Announcing the publication of this review in Chicago, where concern about youth violence has become concentrated, Holder said,

The Department of Justice is releasing a new study today that measures the effects of youth violence in America, and the results are staggering. More than 60 percent of the children surveyed were exposed to violence in the past year, either directly or indirectly. Nearly half of children and adolescents were assaulted at least once, and more than one in ten were injured as a result. Nearly one-quarter were the victim of a robbery, vandalism or theft, and one in sixteen were victimized sexually. Those numbers are astonishing, and they are unacceptable. We simply cannot stand for an epidemic of violence that robs our youth of their childhood and perpetuates a cycle in which today's victims become tomorrow's criminals. (n.p.)

The National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence (Slowikowski, 2009) found that 46.3% of children had been assaulted at least once in the previous year, including 14.9% who were assaulted with a weapon. Of these, 10% were injured in the assault. Meanwhile, 6.1% were victims of

sexual violation, 9.8% had witnessed family violence, 13% were victims of bullying within the last year, and 21.6% during their lifetimes. Other data (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 2007) suggest a higher figure for victims of bullying between the ages of 12 and 18: 32% in the previous year, of whom 4% were subject to electronic bullying (via the Internet, or text messaging).

To keep these figures in perspective, the majority of children are still not directly exposed to violence, nor does the evidence support a growing sense of alarm about a worsening situation. The American Psychological Association (APA) Zero Tolerance Task Force (2008) reported that

the evidence does not support an assumption that violence in schools is out of control. Serious and deadly violence remain a relatively small proportion of school disruptions, and the data have consistently indicated that school violence and disruption have remained stable, or even decreased somewhat, since approximately 1985. (p. 855)

For those who are exposed to violence, however, the data still point to the potential seriousness of the problem of violence in the lives of children. We say “potential” seriousness out of respect for the many young people who are resilient in the face of violence. They do not accept violence as normal or as an ordinary aspect of life. It is not automatic for exposure to violence to lead to psychological harm, but there is a clear enough risk that the traumatic effects of violence on children have to be taken seriously.

For those growing up in poverty, the situation is of heightened concern. A recent study (Kracke & Hahn, 2008) noted that 43% of low-income African American children had witnessed a murder and 56% had witnessed a stabbing, while comparable figures for upper-middle-class youth were 1% and 9%, respectively. A moment’s thought suggests that for these children, learning and performance on tests are going to be affected and that simplistic measures to “close the gaps” in learning outcomes are not going to succeed without addressing the effects of violence.

We could go a lot further in detailing the problems of violence, but that is not the purpose of this book. Spreading alarm about problems by citing statistics does not in itself change anything. It may indeed whip up fear or anger and unleash responses that are less than effective. It is more important to offer a range of practical ideas that might help address the problem. That is the aim of this book.

## **ZERO TOLERANCE DOES NOT WORK**

First, however, let us note some common solutions that have been tried. On principle, if current solutions are not working as we would wish, we should try something different. Many school leaders and administrators

have moved to get tough and take strong action against violence. Since the 1990s, a wave of schools and school districts have instituted “zero tolerance” policies for violent behavior. Originally devised for the enforcement of laws against drug trafficking, the concept of zero tolerance was adapted for use against violent behavior, especially after some high-profile school shooting incidents in the 1990s. While there is considerable variation in how such policies are interpreted, these policies usually mandate

the application of predetermined consequences, most often severe and punitive in nature, that are intended to be applied regardless of the seriousness of behavior, mitigating circumstances, or situational context. (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008, p. 852)

Most often, the predetermined consequences involve removal of the offender from the school, on the assumption that the relational climate in the school for other students will be improved and that future offenders will be deterred. The perpetrators of violent behavior are identified and zero tolerance is extended to these persons, rather than to violent behaviors. They are suspended or expelled from school. The implication is that violent practices are natural features of the personhood of some individuals and that the school community should not extend any tolerance to those individuals. We would call this an action based on an *essentialist* assumption. It assumes that violence is part of the “essence” of the personhood of the perpetrator of violence. The result often has been that those who practice violence are themselves subjected to the symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) of the school authorities and are thrown out of school.

There is one big problem with this approach: It does not work. That is, it does not work if we take as our goal the reduction of violence in schools and increasing a sense of safety for students. The American Psychological Association–commissioned task force, noted above, was formed to investigate the effects of zero tolerance policies in schools. The report by this task force (2008) argued strongly against the effectiveness and value of zero tolerance policies in schools. They concluded bluntly, “Zero tolerance has not been shown to improve school climate or school safety” (p. 860). The evidence “consistently flies in the face of . . . [the] beliefs” (p. 860) that removing disruptive students from school will improve the school experience for others. Instead, zero tolerance is actually shown to effectively *increase* disruptive behavior and dropout rates and to lead to higher rates of misbehavior among those who are suspended. Schools with higher rates of suspension also do not show higher rates of academic performance, even when socioeconomic differences are taken into account.

Zero tolerance approaches may satisfy the righteous urge to act decisively and punitively, but they do not appear to teach young people to resolve conflict or to eschew violence. One example of the ridiculous responses to which a zero tolerance policy can lead occurred in an Arizona

elementary school. A 6-year-old boy one day brought a toy gun to school and pointed it at another child and talked about killing him. Rigid adherence to a zero tolerance policy meant that this boy was escorted off the school property and taken away in a police car! The official response was way over the top of what would be indicated by discretion and wisdom.

Zero tolerance policies do not even succeed at scaring young people into behaving more prosocially. As the APA report suggests, young people often do things that violate other people on the basis of immaturity or as a result of not yet having learned to think through particular consequences. To consign them to the prison pipeline (which is often what happens when students are sent off to juvenile detention) ignores the developmental dimension that should always be considered when young people offend.

## A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

What is needed is a fresh approach. While no approach can provide all the answers, in this book we are seeking to offer a fresh perspective. It is based on a particular philosophy of narrative practice, which we shall outline in more detail in Chapter 2. There have been publications that have promised much in the way of reduction of violence on the basis of a single intervention. Zero tolerance policies are often used like this, for example. They may even prove to be more effective if used in combination with a range of other approaches but, on current evidence, they are less than effective on their own. Some have advocated peer mediation programs and we have seen examples of such programs doing wonderful work but they cannot address all problems of violence on their own. In some parts of the world such as New Zealand, where both authors of this book have worked as school counselors, such counselors were originally introduced into schools expressly to reduce “juvenile delinquency” (Besley, 2002). But counseling on its own makes little impact on the overall pattern of school violence. In other instances, programs to reduce bullying have been instituted. But not all violence fits within the standard definition of bullying.

What is needed for a school to become serious about creating a climate that is free of violence and where conflict is handled constructively is to use a comprehensive range of approaches on the basis of thoughtful decision making about what is most appropriate in a particular situation. There is no magic silver bullet that will transform a school climate with one intervention. Zero tolerance is no silver bullet. Neither is peer mediation. Neither is the teaching of relationship skills. We advocate having a range of approaches, from which the most appropriate response needs to be selected for each situation.

Sometimes what is needed may be mediation, sometimes counseling. On other occasions, a restorative conference or mini-conference may be called for, and on others, referral to a “facing up to violence” group. We shall

introduce a range of these practices here and advocate for a comprehensive package approach. We shall also include targeted classroom guidance lessons aimed at reducing interactions that lead to violence. In addition, we shall outline an approach to instances of bullying that is proving very effective in circumstances where it has been tried. It is called the undercover anti-bullying team.

We are conscious of especially addressing school administrators, on the one hand, and school counselors and school psychologists on the other. Both groups need to work together for these approaches to work. School counselors and psychologists bring the professional expertise for these approaches to be carried out, and school leaders and administrators need to be involved in the decision making that implements the approach of choice in any single instance.

Before describing the range of approaches to address violence, we want to think further about some basic assumptions that will guide the work outlined in this book. We are taking a philosophical position here. Not everyone would agree with us. One of the difficulties of working against violence in schools is that assumptions are often not shared. We would only suggest that you consider trying out some of these ideas as working assumptions simply because they are different. They therefore have a chance of being fresh and not being just “more of the same that we have already tried.”

## WHAT IS VIOLENCE?

The question, “What is violence?” sounds so obvious as to be redundant, but answering it is not as simple as it sounds. Most people are fairly sure they can recognize violence when they see it, and there are many actions that nearly everyone would agree can be called violent. But there is always an interpretive element to the description of violence, and it sometimes includes an interpretation of degrees of seriousness, or includes a calculation in which some violence is considered justifiable and some not.

What teachers especially have in their minds to define violence leads to paying attention to certain practices and not others, or to certain students and not others. Therefore, it is important for a school staff to define the kinds of actions they will work to address and change.

The definition of violence that most people hold is that it involves the exercise of too much force. This interpretation focuses on an implicit calculation of the amount of aggression used. A certain degree of force is considered tolerable, or excusable in certain contexts. But an action is violent if it uses too much physical force, especially if it results in physical harm to another.

A more useful definition of violence focuses on the *process of violation*, on what gets violated. From this perspective, some actions violate people’s

rights, especially their right to act on their own behalf, to defend themselves, to express their own thoughts, and to do things for themselves and others.

Brenda Solomon (2006) raises this distinction. Solomon is particularly interested in what young people learn in school about violence, and she researched what was called violence in the interpretation of teachers. She found that a considerable amount of physical force used by students in school against other students is not called violent because it does not cross the threshold of “too much force.” Such interpretations mostly focus on boys’ play. When teachers made comments about how “kids” behave, they were usually talking about how boys behave. When they talked about girls, or gay or lesbian students, or racial minorities, they named these groups not as “kids” but as members of a special group. Hence their behavior got singled out. She also found that members of marginalized social groups were much more likely to have their actions interpreted as violent according to the criteria of “too much force.” A certain degree of force that did not cross the line into “too much” was always considered okay. But much lower degrees of force used by girls were likely to draw the interpretation of violence.

The alternative to the interpretation of violence as too much force is based on an interpretation of what is violated, as noted above—for example, a person’s rights or his or her ability to act. This leads to a wider appreciation of violence than does an interpretation based on the excessive use of force. It includes a focus on the social position of individuals and how that position may be used to exercise power over others. In this version of violence, the process of domination is more important than the amount of force used. Included are intimidation, threats, and emotional abuse as well as physical harm. Some of these practices are silent, barely visible, and easily overlooked by teachers. But they produce harm and sometimes impact more powerfully on victims than does physical force. Text message bullying and postings on social networking sites are examples of the kind of action that can violate another person without crossing the usual thresholds of “too much force.” Likewise, the individual (teacher or student) who walks up to and stands over a student with his nose two inches from the victim’s face and shouts at the student and intentionally elicits fear without ever touching the student might also be said to violate the personhood of the victim.

Howard Zehr (1990, 2002), in his work on restorative justice, invites us to make another shift in how we think of violence. He suggests that the focus of the law (and, by analogy, official school policy) has for too long been on the enforcement of rules and of authority and not enough on what happens to people in relationships. For Zehr, an act of aggression should be considered in terms of the harm done to a relationship. He asks us to think in more relational terms about offending behavior. The major implication of this shift in thinking lies in the response to the offense.



Rather than restoring the authority of the rules or the status of those in authority, Zehr advocates that we think more about *addressing the harm done to a relationship and setting that right*. The result might be the development of responses that produce changes in relationships in the school community, rather than instituting punishments that are actually less likely to effect behavior change.

So violence, as we are referring to it, is a practice of power that violates a relationship with another person. We should remember, though, that not all practices of power are violent. Power, in the terms articulated by Michel Foucault (2000), is the often quite ordinary property of a relation in which one person tries to influence another. To be called violent, it usually has to contain an element of an effort to dominate another against his or her will.

## ANTECEDENTS TO VIOLENCE

Violent responses in conflict situations do not happen by chance, or even as a result of individual personal qualities. In this book, we stand on the following principle (explained more fully in Chapter 2): *The person is not the problem; the problem is the problem*. This means that we might profitably look for the antecedents to violence in a relational or cultural context rather than in the psychological makeup of the central perpetrator.

One line of inquiry might be into the social and cultural norms at work in the lives of students. Such norms are often laid down as pieces of discourse that are simply assumed without question. They are the taken-for-granted assumptions on which people routinely act without having to give the matter too much thought. They can be expressed as discursive statements. Here are some examples.

If you don't fight when challenged, you must be weak.

If you are going to become a man, you have to toughen up.

If you come onto our territory, then you are asking for a fight.

In my culture, you fight first and ask questions later.

Boys who refuse to fight must be gay.

I won't start a fight but, if someone else does, I will finish it.

It is important to get in the first punch.

These discursive statements have implications for how we might address conflict situations. It is important, for example, to substitute alternative pieces of discourse for those that support violent resolutions. These alternative pieces of discourse need to have meaning for young people and not just for adults. That is, they need to be found in the cultural world in

which young people live. For example, here are some alternative discourses to those above:

A real man is respectful of women and does not use violence to dominate them.

It takes more courage sometimes not to fight.

I don't care whether you think I am gay or not. Gay people have just as much right to live in peace as you do.

I will defend myself if attacked, but I will never initiate violence.

I believe in nonviolence and respect for differences between people.

These are just examples. There will always be such alternative discourses available to young people in a language community. The challenge for school leaders is to identify alternative discourses and bring them into the light, so that young people can choose to stand upon them. They must first be elicited, made known, and supported in action.

Another antecedent to violence is the defining of belonging and identity in relation to the control of territory. We can think of territory quite literally as physical space—that is, as neighborhoods, streets, or areas of a classroom and a schoolyard. Or in more abstract terms, territory can be the space taken up, or not allowed to be taken up, in a conversation.

Understanding how conflict emerges among young people in a school often means understanding the dynamics of community territories. "This is our space. Stay out of it!" Students often want to say this about neighborhoods, corners of the schoolyard, or seats in a classroom. Contests over territory lead to actions being perceived as threats to territorial belonging.

We can understand these territorial dynamics in terms of identity narratives. Identity is always formed in relation to others, in conversation with those who matter to us. And it is formed in relation to narratives that move through time but which are also anchored in space. Everyone develops personal identity through some sense of belonging to a reference group, or to a membership club (White, 2007).

It is tempting to resort to ethological explanations of human conflict and to refer to animal species for which territorial struggle occurs daily. Human territorial struggles are just like cat fights, we could say. Human beings are, of course, similar to other animals in this regard. But they are also different in key respects. Human beings have the ability to define territory in more abstract terms than cats. Our territories are therefore infinitely more flexible and negotiable than those of other animal species. We can thus do what philosopher Gilles Deleuze (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002) proposes and *deterritorialize* and then *reterritorialize*. This possibility provides a focus for *conflict resolution* work. We can invite people into conversations in which contested territories are redefined in more flexible terms and renegotiated.

Other antecedents to violence lie in the processes of social dominance and power. These processes are always going to happen in some form in human communities. Michel Foucault (2000) showed how social dominance is a by-product of ongoing struggles over power relations. In the modern world, this often stops short of outright violent coercion and utilizes the more sophisticated technologies of “normalizing judgment” and the location of persons on some kind of normal curve. Striving to be normal is now critically important for the life chances of any person. The problem is that any definition of normality automatically creates a group that is assigned to the margins and required to take up a marginal identity. Such people are excluded from some aspects of modern life. The internal experience of such processes of marginalization is one of *alienation*.

Take a look at the words of Cho Seung-Hui (such as in the Wikipedia entry for him, which includes his rationale in his own words), who shot and killed 32 students in tragic circumstances at Virginia Tech in April 2007, and you will find multiple expressions of “alienation” from his peers. The same is frequently true of other mass murderers who are often described as “loners.” That is, they are alienated, or estranged, from others and have lost the sense of connection that might otherwise bring about some empathy for the suffering they are causing people.

At much lower levels of seriousness, many young people find themselves alienated from learning opportunities by experiencing repeated failure in school. Or they are so often in trouble that they have learned to “switch off” to the concerns of authorities and are thus alienated from the official purpose of schooling.

Alienation is thus a common experience of school that plays a role in the production of conflict. It results from processes of social exclusion or marginalization. If we take it seriously, there are implications for conflict resolution. Processes of conflict resolution should seek to knit people back into the social fabric. They should work to be inclusive rather than exclusive, even of those who make this hard. They should be relational rather than focused on the individual as a site of pathology.

Finally, in this list of antecedents to conflict, stereotyping deserves mention. The word *stereotype* commonly refers to a conventional but simplistic idea founded on a distorted assumption about a person or a group. It is based on prejudice or dominant discourse rather than accurate data, and it is often resistant to challenge by countervailing information. The danger of stereotypes is that they are often standardized into the popular lexicon and, as a result of constant repetition, become widely believed. Stereotypes develop around racial or ethnic groups, around gender or sexual orientation, around membership of a neighborhood or social class, or around others’ religious beliefs. They are primarily a form of lazy thinking.

They can be negative or positive, but it is usually the negative stereotypes that are problematic. Problems develop when people are unfairly

typecast by the application of a stereotype such that possibilities for living become limited. Because they are well-known by both the members of the stereotyped group and by those who do the stereotyping, quick reactions are readily available. Repetition of stereotypes often serves as a flash point for the expression of conflicts that have been brewing for some time. Stereotyping thus can contribute to a default to violence.

Analyzing the contribution made by stereotyping to conflict within a school can lead to specific forms of conflict resolution. Deliberate efforts can be made to address the falsehoods implicit in common stereotypes, for example, through lessons that invite students to think more carefully.

## PREPARATION FOR DEMOCRACY

If the arguments for addressing conflict sound like a poor recipe for schooling students to live in a dictatorship, then this is deliberate. In a democratic society, students should be prepared to become citizens of a democratic social world. A democracy is not just a society where elections take place to choose leaders; it is one where people can have a say in the shaping of their own lives. Having a say does not mean complete sovereignty for each individual. No person is that much of an island. It can mean participation in relations of power so that no one is subject to outright domination, without rights, or devoid of a voice that can be heard by others.

We are also not advocating that schools should be restructured to make them more like democracies. School administrators and teachers are charged with a leadership role in which they need to make decisions and be accountable for those decisions. We do not want to overturn this situation. But there are many things about their lives in school in which students can have a say. Not to invite them to do so risks fostering alienated citizens who will later engage in socially destructive crime. Modern democratic societies require their citizens to be literate, to be able to manipulate numbers, to understand the scientific method, and to develop an appreciation of their social and historical context. Meeting these requirements is the task of curriculum design, and no one would dispute them. Schools are, however, also places where children should learn how to get along with others, how to regulate their personal desires and preferences in relation to the common good, and how to handle differences with others in an inclusive way.

Children do not automatically know how to participate in social interactions of these kinds. They have to learn the skills involved. Schools, therefore, have to *scaffold* (in Vygotsky's [1986] terms) the development of the attitudes and practices that will sustain democracy. These lessons have been called the implicit hidden curriculum of schooling (McLaren, 2005), but we are recommending that they be made explicit. Julia Gillard (2010),

the first woman elected prime minister of Australia, in her prior role as Minister of Education, spelled out explicitly the significance for education of dealing with conflict and violence.

[T]o reach our highest expectations, we need to understand one simple proposition: happier and safer schools are better schools; and happier and safer students are more successful students.

The benefits of increased student wellbeing are well known. It has a direct impact on academic achievement through greater levels of engagement with schooling, better classroom behaviour and a greater sense of classroom ethos and togetherness. The higher the level of a student's wellbeing, the higher their retention levels and year-12 results tend to be and this has very positive effects on economic goals like productivity, social inclusion and the building of social capital.

So improving wellbeing and eliminating bullying aren't side issues, they are major educational goals for the nation. (p. 2)

Democracy in this sense is always, to some degree, out of reach, always a promise of a future that we are reaching toward. But it is no less an important idea because of that. It involves always staying in conversation with people, rather than shutting down conversation in favor of *monological thinking*. By contrast, *dialogical thinking* is endlessly creative, always producing new forms of difference through remaining open to multiple perspectives.

## SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have laid out some of the working assumptions of the book. These include the idea that conflict is normal. It results from the expression of differences between people. But violence does not have to be normalized. It needs to be addressed in ways that effectively stop it and deal with any harm that has already been done.

We have also explained why punitive zero tolerance policies do not work. Empirical evidence suggests that they fail to reduce levels of violence in schools. So what is to be done? Our argument throughout this book will be for the implementation of a comprehensive range of practices in a matrix that can be chosen from to address different kinds of situations.

We have also discussed some of the background discourses that affect how we think about conflict and violence. Too often, people's working definitions focus on "too much force" rather than on the violation of a person's rights. The latter emphasis makes creating learning situations in schools where conflict is addressed constructively a basic lesson in citizenship for a democratic society.

In this chapter, we have briefly mentioned the narrative perspective that will permeate this book. In Chapter 2, we shall spell this perspective out in more detail.

### **QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION**

1. In a school, what actions constitute violence that cannot be accepted as normal?
2. Can you identify instances of violence in which someone's rights were violated despite "too much force" not being present?
3. How are boys and girls responded to differently with regard to violence?
4. What is your personal style of responding to conflict? How did you learn that?
5. When have you surprised yourself with how well you handled conflict? How do you account for these instances?
6. What forms of difference do you personally find most challenging to work with?

### **QUESTIONS FOR RESEARCH**

1. How might we measure the success of a comprehensive approach to conflict resolution?
2. How might it be compared with a zero tolerance approach?
3. What are the most powerful and the most common antecedents to violence?
4. How do school leaders and counselors think about their role in relation to addressing conflict in schools? Do they relate it to preparing students to live in a democratic society?