

# Summer of Peace 2012

## David Newman & Abdikheir Ahmed

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Philip: Hello, everyone. This is Philip Hellmich, the Director of Peace with The Shift Network. We're continuing our journey of the Summer of Peace, and we're going to be going north to Canada.

Before we do that, I would like to just point out that James O'Dea's new book, *Cultivating Peace*, is now a number one bestseller in the politics category in Amazon. James, if you have not seen this book, I highly encourage you check it out, Deepak Chopra, the author of *Peace is the Way* that this brilliant manifesto with science, spirituality and social healing into a peace roadmap for us all.

Many of you know, James O'Dea was formally the Director of Amnesty International in Washington, D.C., and then he was the President of the Institute of Noetic Sciences. He's really a mystic at heart, so he combined the hardcore human rights political part together with the cutting-edge science consciousness part with noetic sciences together with his own deep spiritual journey. This is a book unlike any other piece in conflicts resolution book that I've seen. So I highly encourage each of you to check that out, *Cultivating Peace* by James O'Dea.

Yesterday, we had a delightful call with Amr Abdalla from University of Peace, and then also Rita Marie Johnson from the Rasur International Foundation. They talked about deep peace. It's a training and program that combines the Institute of HeartMath, mind-heart coherence technology, together with nonviolent communication, and they're teaching it to people as young as in kindergarten schools and as old as 95 years old and from multiple different cultures. So I definitely encourage you to listen to that recording if you missed it.

Now today we have a special surprise. We're going to be looking at Grassroots Peace Building in Winnipeg. We had scheduled Noelle DePape, and she had unfortunately a last minute scheduling conflict. So she's invited her colleague Abdi Ahmed to step in. Then we also have David Newman.

So let me provide a little bio background. Abdi Ahmed is the Interim Executive Director at the Immigrant and Refugee Community

Organization of Manitoba. He's based in Winnipeg. Abdi himself grew up in Somalia and then he had to live as a refugee into Kenya. He's just had an amazing life journey with lots of experience in Kenya and then onward.

Abdi recently has a Masters in International Peace and Conflict Resolutions from the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia where he studied on a Rotary Peace Fellowship. It's mentioned he spent his formative years in Kenya where he did his primary high school and then studied for Bachelors in Environmental Studies in Kenya.

He immigrates to Canada in 2003 where he joined the University of Winnipeg to study International Development Studies. While he was in Kenya, Abdi also helped form a nonprofit called Environmentalistes Sans Frontieres where they raised awareness around environmental problems facing nomadic pastoralist communities in Northern Kenya.

So Abdi has just had a life of just incredible service, and we're going to be sharing more about that today but just a really joyful personality from the brief calls I've had with Abdi.

Now, David Newman is grandfather of three, father of three, brother of two, and he's a son of a father who taught him to be humble, never make a decision out of fear, never have regrets, work hard and serve humanity during your brief time on this earth. David is a lawyer, educator, advocate and dispute resolver by profession and experience. He's been a servant leader as a volunteer in preventative health and rehabilitation, a citizen advisor to the Salvation Army, Chair of a faith group, Chair of the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, Cabinet Minister in a majority government responsible for serving the interests of Aboriginal Peoples in Manitoba, and the list goes on and on.

David also is a Rotarian, and he has been the co-chair of the Rotary International District 5550 World Peace Partners Committee. I've had the pleasure of having a few conversations with David over the last year. David is what I would call a rock of a foundation of a community which is his lifelong service and dedication to peacebuilding.

So Abdi and David, thank you so much for being with us on the Summer of Peace.

David: I'm delighted to be here, Philip.

Abdikheir: Thank you for having me here.

Philip: Yes, yes. Again, Abdi, thank you so much for your quick jumping in. Let me just throw out a question and ask many of the people in the Summer of Peace. Abdi, we'll start with you. Can you tell us just early on what inspired you to be doing the peace work that you're doing now?

Abdikheir: Well, for me I was born in Somalia during the dictatorship of President Siad Barre in the late '70s. I was displaced from my hometown at age of 11, and I have never known peace until coming to Canada.

Throughout the time that I lived in the refugee camp in Kenya, I lived with conflict between refugees and local communities in Northern Kenya, my family was uprooted. I lost some members of my family. Some members of my family also we lost in touch with one another for a couple of years. My country, my home country, Somalia, has never had peace January of 1991.

So all these things that have gone on in Somalia have driven me to think about what is the role of young people in peace? What drives me is that these people especially young people can have a change in people's life for the better.

Philip: Wonderful. Thank you, Abdi. Thank you very much. This is going to be an interesting conversation because we really are going to be able to show here cross-cultural, intergenerational, and also the Rotary work being both grassroots and international.

David, my friend, can you please tell us a little bit about what inspired you to become such a solid foundation for peace in Winnipeg in Manitoba?

David: What a wonderful contrast between Abdi and myself in terms of background. I was born into freedom and privilege in Winnepeg, Manitoba, Canada and achieved the best opportunities for schooling and participated in undergraduate and graduate work and becoming a lawyer.

Since I became a lawyer, I have always had an interest in justice in the purest sense, not the legal system justice but justice in the broadest sense, healing justice. I chose at age 50 to offer myself for public service in 1995, and my friends would say, "You took the risk and you lost," because I was successful in getting elected, because my life had changed from being a person who had been a managing partner and a chair of a law firm with 31 partners to becoming a humble backbencher in a

majority government of 31 people. I chaired partnership with 31 lawyers. I was now one of the most junior in a caucus of 31 people.

I then decided that here I am, my life from this point on with humility be devoted to service. My father fought six years overseas and risked his life leading men at the level of captain and survived, but he risked his life. I was just risking my reputation and lost income by being a public official. We had the privilege of being able to review the civil justice system in Manitoba and do a report.

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I had the privilege of serving the aboriginal people in the province and all of the people of the north which really is 80% of our province. Ever since my commitment has been to addressing historic wrongs and empowering individual people who are disadvantaged and giving them a chance for justice, that inevitably led to my utilizing my rotary membership and the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, both movements, is they're not command and control structures as vehicles to advance peace through understanding inspiration to serve, abilities to respond to adversaries, and goodwill and equality.

So that's what I now do.

Philip:

Nice, nice. Thank you, David. Thank you.

Abdi, let's come back to you. I've traveled extensively across Africa, lived in West Africa for a little while, and I've always been impressed by people who respond to difficult situations with the type of deal that you have for making a difference in the world.

Can you tell us a little bit more about your journey of becoming a peace builder and how it led you to the work that you're doing now in Winnipeg so that the journey from Kenya, the peacebuilding work that you are doing there, and now the peacebuilding work a little bit about what you're doing in Winnipeg?

Abdikheir:

Sure. Thank you, Philip. First of all, I have an accent so I apologize for my accent. The other thing is that culturally I speak fast so the listeners will bear with me.

So for me, my family left when I was 11 years old in 1991. My two brothers and myself lost touch with my family. We were displaced from our family. Our family moved to the refugee camp in Kenya, and my two

brothers and myself who were helped by a good Samaritan for a while who brought us all the way to the border in Kenya and were taken care of by the Red Cross who helped us to reconnect to their family later on in the refugee camp.

The aspect of it is that when we lived in Somalia throughout my life because from the time I was I think six or seven years old conflict was going on. There were groups who were trying to overthrow the government, so all the time there was fighting. I could hear bullet noises all the time from the time back all the time that I can't remember and moving to Kenya. Then we lived in a refugee camp. Now it's called the biggest refugee camp in the world in Northern Kenya, where right now it's about over half a million people in a small compacted area.

So living in this refugee camp, it's a very desert-like environment with very meager resources. Apparently, the refugees were getting some good attention from international humanitarian organizations. The local community's environments were being used by the refugees who were receiving my support. So there was a lot of conflict between the local community and the refugees. All the women who will go out to get firewood for cooking will be raped by people. Families will be attacked at night.

So for me what was important at the time was what can we do? We have had conflict throughout our life, and even here in Kenya where we're supposed to be experiencing peace, it's not happening.

So when I went in to the university in Kenya, before going to the university, I won a scholarship to go to one of the best high schools in Kenya and on to qualifying to study for environmental studies in the university. One of the things that drove me at the time was how can we use the resources that we have around the refugee camps so that the local community and the refugee school equitably share and for the local community's ownership of these sources be recognized.

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So what I did was a way that both communities could benefit and reduce the number of conflict, and they worked with a German organization at the time called GTZ and later on with CARE International in the refugee camps and brought in some ideas on how resources could be shared, how the local community could benefit from their local resources including the firewood which the refugees used. They could benefit from meat which involved providing contract to the local communities so that

they could provide firewood to the refugees and we released the number of women who were raped collecting them firewood. So that's one of the benefits.

All my life around this refugee camp, this is what drove me to reduce these conflicts between the local communities. Then I moved to Winnipeg in 2003. I settled in downtown Winnipeg and for the first couple of months, all the things I could see in the media was some kind of conflict by young people especially refugee with refugee and immigrant background and young aboriginal First Nations youth who are in conflict most of the time.

So in the media, in the television, you will see a kid who has been stabbed, a kid who has been shot. There are certain areas where African kids cannot go, certain areas where aboriginal kids cannot go. I started volunteering for the local Somali community organization trying to help with some other youth to run afterschool programs for young people to reduce the number of young people who were involved in crime. I did this for a couple of years before joining the organization that I'm working at.

What drove me was the refugees and immigrants who were coming to Manitoba was seen -- the aboriginal community who was, in most cases, poor, seen them as people who, because of the situation they were in, as people who are poor. Sometimes they will call them people who are drunk and all these, and aboriginal community has seen these newcomers as coming to take over what is theirs. There was a lot of conflicts.

So my work was to foster from kind of collaboration between young people and also provide some kind of support to young people so that they are able to look at the positive side of life, provide role models because most of the refugees who are coming to Winnipeg, the young people were falling in this kind of situation. They didn't have much role models. Older ones were involved in gang or were involved in simple jobs that did not provide for meaningful life.

It was a gloomy kind of a thing for these young people. My drive was what can we do to better the lives of the young people? What can we do so that these young people can act as the building blocks of peace within our community?

Philip: Beautiful, beautiful. Abdi, thank you. Again, I just want to acknowledge, it's just wonderful to hear responding to difficulties with "What can I do?" It's really nice. We've heard that from many of the speakers this summer.

Let me go back to David because it's interesting how these stories weave together. David, can you describe the Rotary International Network in Winnipeg and Rotary in Central Canada, their part in peacebuilding within that network?

David: Rotary International I've described as a movement and certainly as an international network. It's been around since 1905. Winnipeg, not by coincidence at all, but Winnipeg became the first club outside the United States of America in 1910. In 1910, Rotary Club of Winnipeg was the first club outside the United States. So we say it's the club that made Rotary International.

Now the network has spread throughout all countries that have enough freedom to allow them, and there's over 1,200,000 Rotarians. There's over 34,000 Rotary Clubs. There's Rotaract Clubs which were 18 to 30-year-old with over 200,000 members, 9,000 clubs; Interact Clubs, which are aged 14 to 18 which has over 300,000 members, 14,000 clubs. So the way Rotary works is by perpetuating itself as a grassroots organization, and it does that by having clubs control the organization.

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The center is really a resource to the clubs, and they want clubs to be successful. So you can have a club that has 20 people in it and have a club that has a dozen people in it. You can have a club that has hundreds of people in it. In our district and there's over 500 districts in the world, Rotary has divided that into those districts. Each district has a district governor. They're brought together once a year. In preparation to become a district governor, they spent really two years as a district governor nominee then a district governor elect then a district governor.

So they got to know each other over their three-year journey towards becoming a servant leader for one year as district governor for their district. So think about that, there's over 500 of those in the world this year who started in office July 1st 2012 and they're there for 12 months. They served under an international president whose term of office is one year, and this international president this year is from Japan, President Tanaka. His theme for the year is "Peace Through Service."

The president last year for one year was from India. His name is Banerjee, and his theme was "Reach Within to Embrace Humanity," the picture that the peace is becoming a big part of Rotary. That always has been, but never so upfront and never with such intensity and thoughtfulness.

Also, the Rotary is very instrumental through its eighth evolution as a maturing movement in the founding of the United Nations, the foundational meeting that led to the creation of UNESCO, that's the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 1948. They're influential in the passage of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights December 10th 1948, so that kind of background, that kind of network.

Why they worked so well is they worked from a club-to-club basis. So for example, in South Sudan, they do have Rotary, but Rotary is having real difficulties there for reasons you can read about in the newspapers. The educational system is broken. One of the things that we have done as a club, for example, is build a relationship with a club in Kenya so that the children who would otherwise go to school in South Sudan have their room and board and education paid to go to school in a safe and quality education neighbor of Kenya.

We have a member in our club who is from South Sudan, and he is the one that helped us connect with this. He joined our club just after South Sudan achieved independence last July. So that's the context within which they can be effective club-to-club. So we can deal with the club in Afghanistan and build a school in Afghanistan. We can deal with Afghanistan and Guatemala and build many schools in Guatemala, that kind of thing.

Philip: Beautiful. That's just interesting how -- I mean your true story is really showing a global community. What I find interesting is -- and I'll come back to you now, Abdi -- is that you're a Rotary Peace Fellow who's now bringing your gift back to Winnipeg. Abdi, can you tell us a little bit about how you became a Rotary Peace Fellow, what that fellowship meant for you, and how you're now applying those skills back to the community of Winnipeg?

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Abdikheir: Before I became a Rotary Peace Fellow, I had worked with the organization that I'm working right now, the immigrant and refugee community organization of Manitoba which I joined in 2007, September.



Previously, I had worked with -- when I volunteered to participate with the inner city youth trying to support with programs to encourage peaceful co-existence between young people using sports, using arts and all these. When I came to this organization, I brought on this because it's a big organization that works with refugees and immigrants who are near to the country, located in a predominantly aboriginal community neighborhood. Supposedly this is a huge conflict between the two communities, but my work was to foster some kind of a positive relationship between these two communities.

One of the activities that we came up with while I worked here was an initiative called the Youth Peacebuilding Project which was built along the model of what is called the Seeds of Peace, a peace organization that provides intercultural collaboration between young people from around the world, for example, Palestinian and Israeli youth, Pakistani and Indian youth in the US.

So our approach is model along this Seeds of Peace. One of the things that we came up with was the summer camp where we'll bring 20 youth from newcomer communities who are new to Canada, who are living in the inner city, who are living with poverty issues, 20 aboriginal and First Nations youth who are living in the inner city who are also having issues of conflict with these other youths, and 20 youth who we will call mainstream established youth.

They could have been what do you call Caucasian, aboriginal kids from affluent families, newcomer, kids whose parents moved here a long time ago or second generation, bringing these 60 or 70 youth together in a summer camp for seven days to dialogue about peace and to work together to create some kind of a friendship so that at the end of this seven-day camp, they go home with a kind of a pledge to go home and convert other people.

The idea was that if an aboriginal kid who was supposed to be in conflict with an African kid was going to invite an African kid to their home and introduce to their parents and say, "Oh, this is my friend," or a Caucasian kid inviting an aboriginal kid to their home and say, "This is my friend. We play together." The result was exciting. It was so good because these kids established a Facebook page which they call at the time Rainbow Nation. I think it was one of the kids who said, "We are green, yellow, blue color people. We have no color. We belong to each other."

This is one of the things that we came out with. One of the other issues that I looked at the time was most of the newcomer families, aboriginal,

and refugee and immigrant youth and their families came from traditionally very suppressive countries where police and people of the law were identified with taking away people's lives or kidnapping family members. When they come here, especially refugees, when they find police, they come up with the same kind of mentality.

You find five Africans standing together and they see a police car, they run away. Or if you find five newcomer kids who are walking together because of the social nature of, for example, African kids is you look for social belonging in numbers, so you walk together in five or six and the police have some kind of a mentality saying that, "These kids walking together are dealing drugs." The five kids who are walking together, because of the ingrained perception that they have back from their country, they see a police car, they run away.

So this huge conflict between newcomer youth and the police and newcomer families too, so my work was to help foster some kind of a positive relationship between the Winnipeg Police Service and the newcomer community. So I walk with the chief of police of Winnipeg where we brought in high ranking police officers and the frontline police officers and members of the leadership of the newcomer community to help to talk about how can we bridge the gap between this and overcome this perception that people are bringing and also to reduce the amount of what we call racial profiling by the police.

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So we will come up with police doing tournament for basketball tournament for young people, police coming in horseback or opening the patrol cars for young people or doing barbecue for the community. Every time we had a big -- every community that had a community celebration will invite people from the police and just to develop that kind of trust.

So when I was doing all this work then I got to know about the Rotary Peace Fellowship and also that if you apply it to this program, maybe it will help you advance your cause. When I looked at the program, so what I thought was that Rotary is a big organization. It's a big organization that has very good networks around the world but also has positive influence on many people around the world.

So I thought that a Rotary Peace Fellowship will give me the platform to have an impact on people's lives not only in Winnipeg but also around the world because the goal of the Rotary Peace Fellowship is to build future leaders who will work together to develop a world of peace and

also to think about ways to change this world. For example, right now the University of Queensland where I have been, it's running the tenth class. So every year University of Queensland takes ten Rotary Peace Fellows to study peace and conflict studies. Rotary for me, for example, there are nine other people who were in the same program with me have developed another family.

So just from the University of Queensland there are almost a hundred people who have studied peace and conflict. The idea is that all these people who have studied peace and conflict and resolving peace and creating peaceful societies around the world in the six rotary centers around the world will become so many in the future so that we have all the work around the world because we come from different parts of this world. We would network with each other to create a peaceful society and change policies, work with grassroots communities so that we have an impact from a different point of view.

Philip: Beautiful, beautiful, Abdi. It's such a wonderful story how this is all weaving together.

Let me come back to David. David, if you could tell us a little bit more about the Rotary's engagement on the grassroots level as well as the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, I know you're based at that grassroots level, and also a little bit more about the Rotary's focus on education. I know you have the Adventures in Global Citizenship course. So whichever of those aspects right now, David, could you elaborate?

David: Sure. At noon hour today I was at the Rotary Club of Winnipeg meeting and received a check for \$3,200 from the Rotary Club of Winnipeg as bursaries to fund to full scholarships, room board, tuition for the Adventures in Global Citizenship course at Global College University of Winnipeg. What this course, now in its second year, is doing is a jumpstart in a peace and human rights oriented way into one's post-high school education at a university is another post-secondary institution.

There's a balance between Grade 12 graduates and a less number of mature students who also come in. The course is very intense. It involves then forming a community and really studying together and eating together and so forth and going on offsite special educational events like into the inner city aboriginal and refugee communities.

They have to write a paper or do a film production in order to successfully be given a successful certification for having completed the course. With that also goes three credit hours towards university credits

in post-secondary institutions that recognize these specific credits. So this program has now been through a pilot year. This is its second year, and it will continue.

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One incredible story is we had a young man. We had actually a number of students from Haiti. We had many students from African countries. We had a student from Afghanistan. We had an aboriginal student. We had a First Nations student. So it's a very diverse group of people. One of those students spoke to the Rotary District Conference here who happen to have been from Haiti.

When he walked into the building where the meeting was, he saw a ShelterBox tent. ShelterBox is a Rotary-supported charity that really provides homes for up to 10 people and basic supplies when you have a crisis anywhere in the world which of course Haiti did. Rotary was there through ShelterBox. This young man saw that when he came in to speak. I could just see how emotional he was. But when he got up to speak, he said he was so grateful for what Rotary had done for him by allowing him to participate in the Adventures in Global Citizenship course.

It had really opened him up. It made him aware of how one can contribute to a better world and how people can get along with each other despite diverse backgrounds. He said, "I have to share something with you all." He said, "When I came in and saw that ShelterBox, it brought great emotion to me because my family lived in one of those ShelterBox tents for over a year." This was their home. This is what Rotary does.

So that's the Adventures in Global Citizenship piece. The Manitoba Chamber of Peace really placed so much into what Abdi is speaking about which I'm very familiar with, and that is we have inner city challenges for refugees for sure. We also have inner city challenges for aboriginal peoples. In Canada, aboriginal people are First Nations people, technically called Indians; Metis which used to be called in the old days the mixed blood people, First Nations and European; and Inuit people.

But the root causes the Manitoba Chambers portion that I am very much involved in believes that the root causes of conflict between aboriginal peoples and refugee peoples in our core is founded on the long history really of colonialism on reserve where First Nations people are still subjected to a regime under the Indian Act and are treated differently. They have become over many generations a dependent

people. They have lost their freedom. They have lost their self-reliance. They have lost a lot of their culture and language.

So the Manitoba Chambers, seeing that it has a duty far beyond helping businesses earn a profit and that is to build an environment where every human being is enabled to fulfill the potential that they have. This then also feeds the workers and the entrepreneur community with great talent. So our focus is on 18 to 35-year-olds on Indian reserves. There are over 60 in Manitoba who are on income assistance, are the largest producers of children in Manitoba, and who suffered the greatest poverty, having the greatest risk factors.

The majority of our 15% population, less than 15% First Nations population. The majority of prisoners in our correctional institutions are aboriginal. The majority of children in care in the child protection system are aboriginal. The majority of people suffering from serious health issues that are distinguishable from the rest of the population are First Nations people. Economically and education-wise, they are on the low end. They have the lowest graduation rates in the province from high schools and the highest dropout rate.

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So with all of those risk factors, you have a huge social economic and indeed security issue. So the Manitoba Chambers and other business organizations in Winnipeg and Manitoba have identified that and it has become one of the highest priorities. But the way it's being done is consistent with the philosophy that I spoke to earlier, understanding inspiration to serve, abilities to respond to adversaries and goodwill and equality.

This has to be side by side. It has to be driven by each First Nations community that participates, and it's going to take a long time. It takes a long time to decolonialize. It takes a long time to achieve freedom and freedom from dependency. So that process is the beginning, and it is going to be a long effort, and it is a design to be a long effort with no deadlines. We intend to educate not only the business community but we intend to involve Rotary.

We intend to involve faith organizations. We intend to involve governments in investing in this huge challenge we have in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. It goes beyond Manitoba and also similar issues in Saskatchewan and Northwestern Ontario, all of which are part of District 5550 in this area which we call the heart of Canada. There's 48 clubs in

our district, and they are in the province Saskatchewan and the province of Manitoba and North Western Ontario. So this is a great challenge for our community, and it's the kind of issue which can contribute to also more peace in the inner city.

The other issue that I speak to is justice. Restorative justice is a methodology which is used by First Nations, and it's used by other indigenous peoples around the world. This is something that we are involved in through First Nations, train people and people like myself who are very much involved in trying to facilitate resolutions through what I call learning justice or restorative justice or transformative justice.

So those are the kinds of things we're doing right in the city. We have a specific program that the Rotary Club of Winnipeg called Rotary Leadership Circle. It keeps gang wannabes out of gangs. It's been going on now for 16 years. Rotary Club of Winnipeg in 1996 went to drop-in centers where the youth would go to be able to do things safely and productively.

We offered money to those drop-in centers if they would coordinate a plan, a program, plan and program, this coordinated effort responding to a challenge grant has resulted in now 17 years of 6-week programs of youth ranging in age from 10 to 14 being involved in summer active programs where they actually learn how to work for six weeks under meaningful supervision, supervisor for every ten kids from the drop-in centers. The kids that are involved become leaders in their own community. They now have to compete.

In fact, the leaders participate in the course. At the end of the day they receive a couple of hundred bucks which they have decided how they're going to spend at the end of their term, and they then have surprise shopping trip. They gathered together from time to time from these different parts of the city. It's been a phenomenal relationship building and also a character building program.

Philip:

Nice, nice. Thank you, David. I just want to say that it's such an extensive involvement of what Rotary and the Chambers and then to hear a sense of responsibility and then, Abdi, with your work on just real grassroots, it's a real beautiful blending of hearts, minds, individuals, institutions.

**[0:44:57]**

We have a little time here. I wanted to see if there's any questions from anyone listening. If you would like to ask a question, please hit \*2. If

you'd like to ask a question, just hit \*2 on the phone. If you're online, please go ahead and just type in your question or comment and then we'll go from there.

Let's see here, first one. Abdi, let's keep this brief because we've got about 12 minutes here. If you could speak a little bit more about your work and in particular your involvement with aboriginal people in Manitoba.

Abdikheir:

So where our organization is based is predominantly aboriginal community neighborhood. So when we came up with a youth peacebuilding project, the first time we had myself and two of my colleagues who are Caucasian and a few newcomer kid and aboriginal kid and we were in the media. The next day what we had was a big backlash from the aboriginal community because our approach was what could be considered remnants of the colonial experience because this is what happens when you don't involve community in what is good for them.

So it was a good learning experience for us at the time, and we brought in about three different organizations that worked with the aboriginal community where we talked about what do we do, what is good for both of our communities that we can foster inter-cultural experience and also to improve **[0:46:46] [Indiscernible]** in our communities.

So the two things that came out of it was the communities working together to send the children without any fear of who was going there to the peace camp for the last five years now. At the end of August we're going to have the fifth peace camp at the end of this year outside Winnipeg about an hour-drive out of Winnipeg. We have seen a complete or clear break of the barriers between these two communities.

The other thing that we normally do is an organization called Rossbrook House which primarily works with the aboriginal community and where we have cross-cultural community celebration in spring of every year where we bring the elders of the aboriginal community, their families, the elders of the newcomer community and their families across cultural celebration.

In this way then, if you see an aboriginal family that's doing drumming, then the newcomer community from Africa will say, "Oh, we do drumming too. We're all the same." Some of these things have improved the relationship between the two communities and also reduced the amount of crime among these young people. The other thing is also working with elders and the police service to reduce the racial

stereotyping by the police towards both aboriginal families and young people and newcomers' families and young people. I can go on this for long, long but I'll just limit it to that.

Philip: Wonderful. Thank you, Abdi. Here's a question I believe ties best for you, David. "Can you tell us a little bit more about the restorative justice work and your integration of aboriginal philosophy?"

David: The concept of aboriginal justice became a methodology imported really by Royal Canadian Mounted police out of New Zealand and Australia. It also was broaden not only for criminal kind of area but also in child protection where they had what we called extended family conferencing. This happened in the mid-'90s, and I happened to be the minister responsible from '97 through October '99.

I became very, very supportive of this way of doing justice especially since when I reviewed the civil justice system with judges and lawyers and White people in 1995-'96. We had begun with a circle empty and a scale of justice separate in all our advertising to public meetings because we wanted this to be grassroots and have the public involved in reviewing their justice system which we said they own, not professionals.

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The end result on the cover of the report was a circle of people holding hands with the scale of justice in the center. The report really highly recommended alternative dispute resolution and a law that has not built and integrated into our traditional justice system. It has become a companion kind of mythology supported primarily by enlightened people in the criminal justice system.

We have organizations in Winnipeg. One of them is called Onashowewin which is really the major host body. We also have mediation services, and they do a lot of diverted individuals who, for example, have not yet been charged or have been charged and not yet sentenced. Somewhere in the spectrum, they then are diverted into a restorative justice process or otherwise called community justice.

Sometimes the result of it where you sit down with the perpetrator and the perpetrator's support group with the victims and the victim's support groups and you have dialogue and you end up with an agreement as to how the matter can be resolved, it is incredibly powerful because then it is a solution not of punishment or not of incarceration just warehouse to move them out. It is a case of trying to restore what has been damaged



as a consequence of the attempts. This can happen in the civil law world as well.

One story which I will share because it involves issues that Abdi deals with was in an elementary school. I was a pro bono legal counsel for the individual who is long-haired, glasses wearing, Aggie, aboriginal boy, and the school system refused to engage in restorative justice and a lengthy opinion from their lawyer. They are effectively saying that the teachers and administrations that is too risky because you might disclose things which could then be used against you kind of thing.

We then recommended to the Manitoba Human Rights Commission that they go ahead with the process anyway, and they did. It was again another incredibly positive experience for everybody concerned. The perpetrator in this case happened to be a Bosnian immigrant, a boy and his group in the same community. It was certainly my insight into this really animosity between the First Nations, people who I call our pre-eminent peoples because they were here first.

It showed the degree of misunderstanding that we have in this very complex multi-cultural community which is now been around for about 30 years in terms of our public policy. We're really maturing, but I think we're a microcosm for the world with potential **[0:53:47] [Audio glitch]** how you get along.

Philip: Beautiful. Thank you, David. We only have a couple of minutes. Let's keep this very brief because I would like to have another voice in here. If you called in from Santa Monica, can you please give go ahead and say your name? Yes, go ahead.

Participant: Yes. Hi, Philip. This is Andrew in Los Angeles.

Philip: Go ahead, Andrew.

Participant: I am thrilled to hear who wants to comment on the Occupy Movement and any work that the Rotary Club does as a large network within the other networks of networks, if you know what I mean, such as the Occupy Movement or the YMCA, et cetera, et cetera. Thank you both for your work.

Philip: Thank you, Andrew. David, can you do this one in just one minute about Rotary and Occupy?

David: We're part of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights which is not yet built, but we have a memorandum of understanding with them. We've partnered all four universities in the city of Winnipeg. Frankly, we're partner of faith groups. We got a peace concert coming up. We have the major Jewish synagogue, our major Francophone Roman Catholic Cathedral. We have the Protestant Church.

**[0:55:10]**

We partner with any organization that is respectful of our goals and welcome used means that are consistent and respectful of human beings and respectful of appropriate processes. Ends do not justify means. Means must justify ends. So people much practice in that kind of way for us to partner with them.

Philip: Wonderful. Thank you, David. Well, gentlemen, I want to say this has been quite an adventure. I love we have gone from weaving together the world from Somali, Abdi, with your story together with Winnipeg being an example of the last 30 years of multicultural integration through Rotary and its global reach and grassroots reach at the same time. I wanted to see if you have just one minute, Abdi, any closing remarks for yourself?

Abdikheir: What I want to say is there's a lot of potential in young people in this world. Every day in our media, in our TVs, and in the newspapers, what we see is the negative side of society. There are a lot of people with huge potential who are involved in good work in this world. I would like for us to recognize the work of all these people. I believe that with all the people who are involved with all the positive things in this world that create peace in the world, we are headed for a very peaceful world.

I am very optimistic. We see all these things in the media. But what I believe is that there's a lot of good work that's not being covered in the media that's happening, and a lot of young people are involved in it.

Philip: Wonderful. Thank you, Abdi. Thank you. David, yourself?

David: We are really focused on integrating those purposes, understanding inspiration to serve abilities to respond to adversaries. Good will and equality within every organization, whether it's faith groups, whether it's businesses, whether it's charitable organizations, whether it's non-government organizations, whether it's government, that's what we are doing.

We are holding on the 21st, for example, a celebration of The International Day of Peace. It's going to be a music event, but it's more than that. It will be promoting peace, justice, and human rights to have people in the heart of Canada plant for seeds with peace, justice, and human rights and to inspire more understanding and acts of kindness for the next 365 days following. That's the kind of thing we do.

Philip: Beautiful. Beautiful. I am just so delighted. Anyway, I am very moved by both of you, your level of commitment, your optimism, you're steady with the course, how you are, again, an example of a global community coming together for a positive future. I just want to thank both of you for your life's commitment and for being with us here on the Summer of Peace. So thank you for who you are and what you are doing and being with us. Thank you, Abdi, and thank you, David.

David: Thanks for making all of these possible, Shift Network. Thank you.

Abdikheir: Thank you. Thank you, Philip.

Philip: Yes. For anyone who has ever doubted that there's a wave of peace arising around the world, I think this session will pretty much do it. So again, I am just in awe of this telesummit in the range of people we are hearing from and to hear that there's so many different ways that peace is emerging around the world.

We will continue tomorrow with Dot Maver who is the founder of the National Peace Academy, founder of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures of Peace, the executive director of The River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding, and she is also leading the way on Push4Peace. So that will be with Dot Maver tomorrow at 12:00 Pacific Time. So wherever you are in the world, we hope you'll join us. I hope you have the rest of the peaceful morning, afternoon, evening, or night wherever you are in the world.

So thank you, everyone, for being with us. Okay. Bye-bye.

**[0:59:56] End of Audio**