

SYLLABUS
ICAR One-Credit Module: Somatic Skills for Conflict Resolvers
September 13 – 14, 2008
9:00 am to 5:00 pm
555 Truland Building
Presented by Stephen Kotev
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INTRODUCTION

This module will focus on developing physical skills that will enable conflict resolvers to manage more effectively the physiological stresses of conflict experienced during conflict interventions.

During conflict interventions, disputants often display aggressive, hostile behavior or profound sadness that can evoke strong emotional and physiological responses not only in each other, but also in the conflict resolver. While conflict resolvers are taught verbal de-escalation skills designed to manage the emotional responses of the disputants, they are not taught how to effectively manage their own physiological responses to the stress and emotions they experience during these interventions.

Increased heart rate, excessive or shallow breathing, constriction of blood vessels and major muscle groups, and an inability to focus, are common physiological responses to stress. These responses drastically affect the performance of the conflict resolver. If the conflict resolver is unable to manage their own emotions and stress, they will be unable to effectively perform their duties. Furthermore, conflict resolvers must be able to project and model the proper non-verbal body language necessary to instill confidence in their abilities.

Conflict resolution training is focused primarily on the development of verbal skills while neglecting the effects of stress upon the conflict resolver. Conflict resolvers are told that they must be the ‘calm in the midst of the storm’ during these stressful encounters but are not taught how to effectively manage their own stress and emotions when conflict occurs. I believe this is a fundamental gap in conflict resolution training.

This module fills this fundamental gap in conflict resolution training by teaching conflict resolvers somatic/physical skills that will drastically improve their performance when faced with the stressful situations common during conflict interventions.

The majority of the module is based upon somatic exercises that originate in the Japanese martial art of Aikido and were created by Dr. Paul Linden. Dr. Linden received his Ph.D from Ohio State University in Physical Education and currently holds a 6th degree black belt in Aikido. After completing his formal education, Dr. Linden studied basic human physiological reactions to stress and the fight-or-flight response using scientific methods. Applying his experience in the martial arts to his scientific observations, he developed a series of safe, effective, and easily understood physical exercises that help ordinary

people cope with mental and physical stress. He has written multiple texts detailing these physical exercises, one of which, *Reach Out: Body Awareness Training for Peacemaking*, will be required reading for this module.

The module will begin with a basic presentation on the connection between Aikido and Conflict Resolution. The remainder of the module, students will practice the physical exercises created by Dr. Linden and eventually teach them to the larger class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS OVERVIEW

1. Attendance and participation	50%
2. Short Paper	25%
3. Class Presentations	<u>25%</u>
	100%

1. Attendance and participation: You are expected to attend each class and fully participate in class discussion, exercises, and presentations. Due to the somatic nature of the material, lack of participation greatly diminishes the effectiveness and retention of the exercises. Please notify me before the start of class if you have any recent injuries, safety concerns or if you are unable to attend class. If you are required to miss portions of the course, your grade will be adjusted for those absences. Please arrive promptly for each day of the course. 50%

2. Short Paper: After Day One, you will be asked to prepare and present to the class a short paper that illustrates your understanding of how a concept or principle presented in class relates to your personal or professional life. Papers will be at least 400 words and should not exceed 1,000 words. Papers should illustrate the student's grasp of the concepts and principles presented and how they relate to the field of conflict resolution or their personal life. 25%

3. Class presentation: Students will either individually or in small groups present one of the exercises from *Reach Out: Body Awareness Training for Peacemaking* to the larger class. Students will be graded on thoroughness and proper instruction of the exercise. (25%)

4. This is not a pass/fail module; it is graded as all others courses at ICAR are graded.

REQUIRED READING AND REQUIRED PREPARATION

Linden, Paul (2003) *Reach Out: Body Awareness Training for Peacemaking*, CCMS Publications, Columbus. This text is available in PDF format as a free download from <http://www.beinginmovement.com/pdfs/peacemaking.pdf> Please print off a copy and bring it with you to class.

This course is experiential in nature please come to class in comfortable clothing since you will be moving around and participating in multiple exercises. In addition to the course reading, please bring a towel to class.

RECOMMENDED READING

Crum, Thomas (1987) *The Magic of Conflict: Turning a Life of Work into a Work of Art*, Touchstone, New York.

Dobson, Terry (1978) *Aikido in Everyday Life: Giving In to Get Your Way*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley.

Grossman, Dave and Christensen, Loren W. (2004) *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and Peace*, PPCT Research Publications.

Grossman, Dave (1996) *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, Back Bay Books.

Linden, Paul (2006) *Teaching Children Embodied Peacemaking: Body Awareness, Self-Regulation and Conflict Resolution*, CCMS Publications, Columbus.

Remland, Martin (2004) *Nonverbal Communication in Everyday Life*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston.

Saotome, Mitsugi (1993) *Aikido and the Harmony of Nature*, Shambhala Publications, Boston.

Somatic Skills for Conflict Resolvers Agenda

Day One

9:00 to 9:30 – Introductions and Orientation

Basic overview of Aikido and Conflict Resolution

Review of several Aikido concepts and principles that relate well to Conflict Resolution practice, such as:

- Centered and Upright Posture
- Blending
- Relaxed Response to Attacks
- An Ethical Choice not to do additional harm to the Attacker

- Connection
- Irimi
- Atemi

Break/Questions and Answers

Somatic Skills

Introduction to Being In Movement – Page 1 - Reaching Out

- Why the Body – Page 1 - Reaching Out
- In a Nutshell – Page 2 - Reaching Out
- Body & Morality – Page 3 - Reaching Out
- Using This Book – Page 4 - Reaching Out
- Safety – Page 5 - Reaching Out

Exercises:

- Throwing Tissues – Page 6 - Reaching Out
- Soft Tongue/Relaxing Your Belly – Page 8 - Reaching Out
- Belly Breathing – Page 10 - Reaching Out
- Throwing Tissues II – Page 12 - Reaching Out
- Autogenic breathing – Variation from Lt. Col. Dave Grossman

Break/Questions and Answers

Continuation of Exercises

- Hatred – Page 16 - Reaching Out
- Smiling Heart – Page 17 - Reaching Out
- Don't Stand So Close To Me/Intimidator

Break/Questions and Answers

- Pelvic Rotation – Page 20 - Reaching Out
- Inguinal Sitting – Page 23 - Reaching Out
- Chest Push – Page 24 - Reaching Out
- Towel Sitting – Page 33 - Reaching Out

Break/Questions and Answers

4:30 Adjourn and Review of Homework

Day Two

9:00 Review of Previous Material

Culmination of Reaching Out Exercises

- Basic Breathing Exercise – Page 35 - Reaching Out
- Six Directions Reaching/Breathing – Page 37 - Reaching Out
- Pain Control – Page 39 - Reaching Out
- Walking The Gamut – Page 29 - Reaching Out
- Fishing

Break/Questions and Answers

Student Presentation of the following Exercises:

- Throwing Tissues – Page 6 - Reaching Out
- Soft Tongue/Relaxing Your Belly – Page 8 - Reaching Out
- Belly Breathing – Page 10 - Reaching Out
- Autogenic breathing – Variation from Lt. Col. Dave Grossman
- Throwing Tissues II – Page 12 - Reaching Out
- Hatred – Page 16 - Reaching Out
- Smiling Heart – Page 17 - Reaching Out
- Don't Stand So Close To Me/Intimidator
- Pelvic Rotation – Page 20 - Reaching Out
- Inguinal Sitting – Page 23 - Reaching Out
- Chest Push – Page 24 - Reaching Out
- Towel Sitting – Page 33 - Reaching Out
- Basic Breathing Exercise – Page 35 - Reaching Out
- Six Directions Reaching/Breathing – Page 37 - Reaching Out
- Pain Control – Page 39 - Reaching Out
- Walking The Gamut – Page 29 - Reaching Out
- Fishing

4:30 Wrap Up/Final Questions and Answers/Evaluations