A NARRATIVE AND CULTURAL PEACEBUILDING ACTIVATION

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INTRODUCTION

We are at a critical crossroads in history. The US is facing its own challenges for the 2020 elections that have been rife with hate speech, political intervening by state & non state actors & electoral violence. According to Pankaj Mishra, Indian essayist & writer, “Lynch mobs and mass shooters thrive in a climate where many people think only in terms of friends & foes & where sectarian loyalty or nativist hatred override civic bonds.” Thus, what remains critical now is to decide who we are to be together as a society & how we show up in the face of this violence, fear & uncertainty.

As we prepare for a divisive & potentially violent election, change-makers, community leaders & policy makers have stepped up to do their part - to ensure a fair election process, to counter hate speech & to prevent violence in the aftermath of the results.

As peacebuilders, we firmly believe that the individuals & communities that make up a society have what it takes to create positive & sustainable change. This is where narrative & stories come into play. We know that stories are vital to self actualization & how we relate to & engage, with each other.

We believe peacebuilding is uniquely positioned to create containers, or brave & safe spaces, where narrative change can take place, where communities can regain their agency & sense of power & where deep cultural transformation is taking place.

Our approach seeks to implement & mainstream an awareness raising framework that supports activists & change-makers with the content, tools & resources to counterbalance the divisive narratives of our current political discourse & election process, so they can lead in re-framing and reshaping these stories through a peacebuilding lens.

“Sometimes reality is too complex. Stories give it form.” – Jean Luc Godard
INGREDIENTS FOR JOY

Since 2017, I have been facilitating what originally we called "Creative Trauma Healing Open Spaces" but that was a long title & we went with Peace Activations. These facilitated events were suspended moments of deep creativity, meeting migrants and refugees in the midst of their own suspended identities. It was in these liminal spaces that we created.

Our first Peace Activation was in Tijuana in April 2017. 500 Honduran migrant refugees had walked more than 2500 miles & were reaching the border to ask for asylum. We knew that the US would not easily accept these vulnerable asylum seekers & that their fight for freedom from fear was just beginning. And so we 'smuggled' flowers & plants over the border, working with a Realmente Comunidad crew that cultivates community & the guerrilla garden of native plants on the US/Mexico Border Wall, we offered our Honduran friends the opportunity to plant a flower in the Garden, as a symbol of their resilience & new opportunity. Three days later, we came to the border to bring art, music & joy. This time we painted pollinators on canvases that were placed at the garden near the flowers they planted.

Our hope was to bring ingredients for joy in a space that was harsh & violent. These ingredients were art, storytelling, street theatre, participatory video, cultural production, karaoke & things co-created in the moment. Quickly, we saw that this was taking up political space for peace. We saw that naturally in these political spaces power goes to the most powerful & in many ways these are violent spaces.

Since that first rainy April day, our group of Peace Activators have joined separated families in McAllen & Brownsville, Texas as they were reunited & released from ICE custody, the migrant caravan from El Salvador as they traveled through in Mexico, Tijuana, Baja, MX, detention centers & Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington, DC & to many more spaces.

Working with more than 5,000 people as we lead Peace Activations, we have learned a lot about community, creativity and our intangible human needs. This guidebook holds some of these learnings & processes. Our hope at +Peace is to share this collective wisdom & experience with all to foster cultural & narrative peacebuilding movements.

MONICA CURCA, DIRECTOR, +PEACE
The #ShineOnTheVote campaign is gathering a coalition of peacebuilders, artist, activists & experts to engage & support a non-violent, fair & transparent election process in the US. We invite you to partner with us & to co-sponsor the #ShineOnTheVote campaign.

#ShineOnTheVote is a nonviolent peoples movement calling for a peaceful transfer of power. Calling on all of us to shine a light on the election process & call on political, media, civic & community leaders to refrain from inciting violence & on the federal, state & local officials to prevent the use of state violence on peaceful protests.

This cultural & narrative guidebook will support artists, cultural/narrative workers & peacebuilders to come together & take up space for peace through peace activations, art, shining your light & more ideas found here.

"The world will always need revolution. That doesn't mean shooting & violence. A revolution is when you change your thinking. Confucianism & Christianity were both revolutionary"—Jose Mujica.
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide embodies peacebuilding as we understand it: a container for narratives of hope, resistance & resilience. We want to engage community stakeholders in a process that reshapes, integrates & mainstreams peacebuilding principles; creating tools for strategic transformation across social movements & grassroots campaigns. Peace narratives & culture are a container for policies & behaviors of peace & justice. By creating art, music, dance & by returning to ourselves we remember our common humanity & the vision of collective equitable todays & futures for all.

The objective is, not to provide a recipe for how narrative change should happen, but rather lay the groundwork for collective co-creation & imagination, through this living document.

We firmly believe that sharing in these urgent times is a responsibility. If you're looking to create space for narrative change, design creative interventions & need art to use, or want to see what others are doing, join us on social media, our creative exchanges & the #ShineOnTheVote page.

This guidebook is written in collaboration with & informed by peacebuilders, activists, violence prevention experts & social justice organizers.

Through principles, narratives & calls to action we aim to inform & guide how we talk about & respond to a potentially contested US election & the division that will be with us before & beyond January 20, 2021.

We include important peacebuilding terms, narrative threads - including guidance on the stories we should be telling & what actions may look like - principles to guide our work, #ShineOnTheVote calls & key resources for further learning.
PEACEBUILDING

In 1975, Johan Galtung coined the term *peacebuilding* in his pioneering essay, Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking & Peacebuilding (1). Later on, John Paul Lederach broadened the term "as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, & sustains the full array of processes, approaches & stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships." Peacebuilding both precedes & follows formal peace accords, yet, it's not a phase or condition, but a dynamic continuum of socially-constructed transformations (2).

Laying the groundwork for peacebuilding means that "we are not merely interested in 'ending' something that is not desired. We are oriented toward building relationships that, in their totality, form new patterns, processes & structures" (1).

We know much of the violence that has erupted around elections is rooted in stories - stories about who we are as individuals & groups & who we are in relation to others. It is our duty as peacebuilders to lead in reframing & reshaping these stories.

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Conflict transformation is a mindset rather than a tool or an approach. It goes beyond resolving specific contradictions within a conflict setting. It is a comprehensive process aiming to address root & structural causes, challenge injustice, foster social participation & restore relationships. It should always take into account psychological, spiritual, cultural, social, economic, political & military dimensions (2).

John Paul Lederach refers to conflict transformation as "a holistic & multi-faceted approach to managing violent conflict in all its phases" (2). Thus, conflict transformation must be comprehensive, compassionate & creative (3).
TYPES OF VIOLENCE

"Violence produces only something resembling justice, but it distances people from the possibility of living justly, without violence." — Leo Tolstoy

Violence may seem like a straightforward concept: you know it when you see it right? It often manifests itself physically when someone attacks someone else or when we experience or hear loud voices or noises. However, violence can show itself in a variety of ways that are not always explicit (4). Electoral violence in the US has been on the rise recently. What might seem like small scale acts and "mildly" violent political discourse can actually justify & increase polarization & result in direct violence (5). To address it, we have to be aware of the social structures & cultural narratives that support it.

- **direct violence**: the violence we physically perceive: war, rape, murder, assault, verbal attacks - manifests out of conditions of structural & cultural violence.

- **structural violence**: social structures or social institutions that harm people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs. Disabilities, disparities & even deaths result when policies & institutions meet some people’s needs at the expense of others.

- **cultural violence**: violence in the symbolic sphere of our existence (rhetoric symbols, flags, hymns, history we tell) that justifies other manifestations of violence.
The term 'systems of oppression' helps us better identify inequity by calling attention to the historical & organized patterns of mistreatment. In the United States, systems of oppression, such as systemic racism, are woven into the very foundation of our culture, society & legal system. Other examples of systems of oppression are sexism, heterosexism, ableism, classism, ageism & anti-semitism (6).

Systems of oppression are formed when "the most privileged & powerful among us...create & spread dominant narratives to hide the ways that social structures keep various groups of people down for the benefit of those privileged & powerful few" (7).

Deconstructing dominant narratives helps us understand oppression as it relates to us personally & allows us to unveil the interconnectedness between society's institutions, such as government, educational & cultural systems, histories & lived experiences, including ours.
SHOWING UP LIKE HOPE

During times of crisis, violence & oppression become more assertive. Problems & challenges can be hidden during times of calm or peace, but crisis & conflict has a way of uncovering the hidden things. These can be structures or policies that benefit a few at the expense of the many. It can be historical traumas or current need for transitional justice.

There are many ways to respond in these times. We can provide mutual service to our community to insure our collective human needs are met. We can provide safety, food, child care, opportunities, etc. We can organize our communities, understand where power is and use people power to shift it. We can get deep into historical or current harms & traumas & seek to repair harm & activate transitional justice. We can seek to build political power through running for office or creating our own tables of political power like caucuses or activating our organized communities towards political power. We create and invest in alternative economies, using community assets, wisdom, trust & knowledge to build economic power. Finally, we can ignite the moral imagination that helps us build collective futures where many worlds, identities & perspectives fit in a symbiotic & mutually generative way.

This is guidebook focuses on the last type of making change - acknowledging that we need all types of change to have transformation. Each intervention is a way we bring hope & healing to our communities & in broken places. The chart below based on the work of the Deep Democracy Rooted in Beloved Community: Transitions Lab May 2017 (8) & integrated with peacebuilding concepts & processes.
HOW WE MAKE CHANGE: WAYS TO HELP

**MUTUAL AID**
- Meet communities tangibly human needs

**ORGANIZE**
- Build people power to resist violence & oppression

**REPAIR HARM**
- Restore health, balance, or justice to repair the harm restorative justice

**BUILD POLITICAL POWER**
- Manage resources, build, make or engage in decision-making processes
- Vote
- Deep democracy
- Running candidates from historically marginalized communities
- Setting our own decision-making tables: commissions boards within city government that manage resources, information & official narrative

**IGNITE MORAL IMAGINATION**
- Telling a new story of our collective futures through narrative and cultural transformation
- Meet intangible human needs like belonging, community, creative expression
- Narrative change
- Culture shift
- Peace activations
- Taking up space for peace
- Intentional communities

**BUILD ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIES**
- Designing & developing new solutions & structures for capital and social impact
- New livelihoods training
- Imagining a new economy
- Community banking or Tandas
- Time banking
- Social impact investing
- Investing in historically & structurally marginalized businesses
IGNITING THE MORAL IMAGINATION: NARRATIVES OF PEACE

Creating a world that fits many worlds, Constuyendo un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos”
— EZLN

Our world is changing rapidly & will continue to change beyond election day. The critical question is then, whose ideas & values will drive & influence this change? We have an opportunity to imagine together & create a future with bridges - connecting people & communities. The work of narrative change is not really about new stories, it is about the old ones that heal and root us in our ourselves and our relationships. These stories will help us create collective futures, where we all fit. These are stories that honor or different paths & help us fostering mutuality & reciprocity in a winner takes it all context. This is how we co-create a culture of peace.

This is a difficult road full of discomfort, groaning & uncertainty - because we have yet to really knows what it means to belong to each other. But this groaning is not death, but new life - it means we are at the edge of our imagination. In this new threshold how we act & what narratives we give voice to will define how we are remembered & what future we build for generations to come.

Beginning in us & expanding to our communities & environment, we need to follow the lead of those who are already building a world in which many worlds can exist. Each of us can add value in a synergetic effort that will be as strong & resilient as our social fabric. This starts with the narratives we tell about who we are & how we relate to one another. Regardless of the results of this election, we have the power to build peace together. Below are a series of value-based narratives that we think can help guide us through an alternative, non-violent, equitable & inclusive future.
1. The People Who Have the Power to Name the World Can Change the World

About “Naming the world,” Paulo Freire tells us, "human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men & women transform the world. To exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it." This is a process of collective creation & re-creation & it must be infused with two expressions of love: courage & commitment (8). Empathy & dignity emerge when each of us uses this power to define our worlds. So that we are able to decide what change we want to see in our communities & how we want to name it.

The Stories We Need
- Stories that help us return to ourselves, that root us in our ancestors & remind us who we truly are
- Stories of individuals & communities that have challenged dominant narratives & shifted power dynamics of oppression or violence to liberation and nonviolence
- Stories of social courage; of reaching out to the unknown & calling out the dehumanization of others (both current & from the history of our ancestors)

This Might Look Like
- Creating collective healing spaces post elections where we can bring our whole selves
- Using theatre, storytelling, or poetry to expand our individual & collective identities
- Acknowledging that we are the ones we’ve been waiting for
- Deep Democracy in our electoral process – vote, show up shine!
- Create short videos for social media sharing your story or those of people you know telling how people heal & live courageously
- Creating posters about courage, patience, future & acting now

Slogans
- We are the ones we are waiting for
- We are our ancestors wildest dreams
- Let our hearts be the place of enough

"The most dangerous creation of any society is the man who has nothing to lose." - James Baldwin

"I believe in change. I believe in the power it has to unite us & ignite us." - Uzo Aduba

"Always be capable of feeling, deep down, any injustice done against anyone, anywhere in the world. It is the most beautiful quality of the revolutionary." - Ernesto Guevara
2. The Power is in our Relationships

We are but a web of relationships. However, building positive & meaningful relationships can be very challenging in a polarized environment such as the one we are living in. To create what Bell Hooks defines as the "beloved community," we need our relationships to be healed, built, nurtured & expanded through honoring our differences & fostering mutuality & reciprocity, meanwhile seeing each other through our suffering and seeking our collective liberation. Creating the space for each of us to claim the identities & cultural legacies that shape who we are & how we live in the world (9). We know that strategies & tactics are eclipsed by the depth & intensity of our relationships.

The Stories We Need

- Stories that celebrate expanding, boundless identities
- Stories of interconnectedness between people, ecosystems & nature
- Stories highlighting the power of diverse communities & individuals coming together & working towards creating a collective future
- Stories that shed light on the dangers of exclusion & otherness
- Stories that call out & reject the use of fear to divide us & weaponize us against each other (9)

This Might Look Like

- Webinars on bridge building, community cohesion & movements
- Community initiatives to strengthen social fabric after the elections
- Toolkits for community organizing & event creation during COVID
- Dialogue & community building even when it’s hard

Slogans

- Difference is richness; not a threat to our existence
- The change must be now; the change must be collective & whole
- Building collective futures together

“Let us develop respect for all living things. Let us try to replace violence & intolerance with understanding & compassion. And love.”
-Jane Goodall

“We are different; we always have been & always will be. However, different shouldn’t divide us, but unify us because different is an asset.”
-Elizabeth Margo

“So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth.”
-Bahá’u’lláh

“There is beauty & power in unity. We must be united in heart & mind. One world, one people.”
-Lailah Gifty Akita
3. Building Peace & Reconciliation is Possible; is Happening; is Necessary

Polarized & inflammatory language is a defining feature of our current political discourse. Our beliefs & values are the very things that separate us. We feel the divide is too large for anything to fill it. We want to use only the lens of justice to get what we think will fill our void - but often we forget that it is in the restoration of relationships with those that have harmed us will bring us the healing we miss. While there seems to be very little space for peacebuilding & reconciliation, we believe in the power of efforts taking place at the margins, where elders, leaders, and community builders are paving the way for collective healing & reconciliation, towards weaving our social fabric.

The Stories We Need

• Stories that remind us that we are human first, opinions second
• Stories that shine light on reconciliation & healing as a complex process that entails both rage & kindness
• Stories that show enemies coming together for a common cause
• Stories of reconciliation & belonging

This Might Look Like

• Webinars on restorative justice & peacebuilding
• Restorative justice toolkits & trainings dealing with current issues in our communities
• Spaces to discuss how alternative models of justice & reconciliation can help heal our nation & move it forward beyond the elections
• Dialogue & listening to people different than ourselves

Slogans

• We separate from each other at our own peril
• We are 100% human first, opinion second
• We weave our social fabric with listening, respect, curiosity and open hearts

"Hate begets hate; violence begets violence; toughness begets a greater toughness. We must meet the forces of hate with the power of love." — Martin Luther King Jr.

"Forgiving is not forgetting; it's actually remembering — remembering and not using your right to hit back. It's a second chance for a new beginning. Especially if you don't want to repeat what happened." — Desmond Tutu

"By peace, we mean the capacity to transform conflicts with empathy, without violence, and creatively - a never-ending process.”
— Johan Galtung

“Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars.”
— Kahlil Gibran
4. Activating Our Creative Imagination

Radical imagination has been the catalyst for every movement of cultural transformation that this world has witnessed. It is about ordinary people coming together & deciding to risk it all for the idea that their world can be a better place. What we need now is to imagine what shifting violence to nonviolence might look like & what it will require. Our current political discourse in the USA is entrenched with binary narratives. It will take creativity & imagination to find new ways of talking about divisive issues in non-polarizing ways; honoring the nuanced nature of these issues & not shying away from the complexity of our values & what we believe to be right.

The Stories We Need

- Stories that help us reclaim our roots & our identities
- Stories that highlight & celebrate the communities, the individuals around us & the resources available to us - with a sense of abundance
- Stories of everyday individuals & communities who dared to imagine a better reality & worked toward making it a reality (moving from trauma & despair to hope)
- Stories of artists & creative leaders & what inspires them

This Might Look Like

- Creating spaces for creative expression grounded in our roots & expansive identities
- Making art (Posters, puppets, theatre, music about creative imagination)
- Toolkits & trainings on leading & facilitating co-creation processes that cultivate radical imagination & the moral imagination
- co-visions & co-creating workshops around issues that matter to our communities (imagining our future together)

“Change happens by listening and then starting a dialogue with the people who are doing something you don’t believe is right.”

– Jane Goodall
5. TransFormative Leadership is Needed Today

Transformative leadership is the leadership of everyday people, that decide to lead with empathy, listening first, humility, curiosity, and assertive non violent communication. Transformative leaders understand that the world is interconnected and that we belong to each other. They know that what they say, how they behave, & what attitudes they adopt influence the people around them & the spaces they inhabit. Transformative leaders are able to effectively harness collective responsibility & imagination towards co-creation.

The Stories We Need

• Stories of everyday people who take it upon themselves to become the change they want to see in the world & lead with empathy & resolve
• Stories of transformative leadership at the margins, paving the way for social change

This Might Look Like

• Webinars on how to channel & give force to your inner transformative leadership
• Training & toolkit for community organizers on transformative leadership during & in the aftermath of the elections
• Alternative expressions & ways of leading through art, music, service, facilitating or helping others.

"A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves." – Lao Tzu

"We adore chaos because we love to produce order." – M. C. Escher

"Raise your words, not voice. It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder." – Rumi

Slogans

• Seeking leadership that brings out the best in each of us
• Shifting power & light towards the essential
THE SHINE ON THE VOTE CAMPAIGN

The narratives shared in this guide bring our values to life, with ideas & stories that lay the groundwork for a nation that can stand together against polarization & away from the binaries of winners vs. losers.

It's important to remember, though, that the work of culture change is not just about channeling our best selves & appealing to our & others' highest ideals. It is also about turning narratives into action, through laws, institutions & resource allocations (9).

We have pulled together a series of PRINCIPLES & CALLS TO ACTION that we think outline the actions needed for reshaping the narrative of who we are as a nation in the aftermath of this election season.
2020 ELECTIONS

PEACEBUILDING PRINCIPLES

• The concept of Election Night, is no longer accurate. This year, the term is even dangerous

• Democracy needs engaged citizens

• Election & post-election violence is a real risk – we must be aware & be ready to build peace

• We need discipline to remain non violent

• We take up public space for peace

• People build peace
Call 1: Our Votes Count & Must All Be Counted

Voting is the foundation of our democracy. The election isn’t over or valid until every vote is counted. From the first day a ballot is cast in mid-September, until January 20, 2020, we face a long period of uncertainty (10).

The concept of ‘election night,’ is no longer accurate. This year, it’s actually a dangerous idea. Because of the unprecedented number of mail-in ballots, we most likely won’t know the winner of the election on ‘election night.’ It will likely take weeks to count every ballot — especially considering possible court challenges.

Whether we vote by mail, absentee, early, or on election day, together we declare that each of our votes count & each of our votes must be counted.
Why Does Every Vote Count?

BECAUSE... If only around half of Americans chose to vote, it is difficult to claim that any elected official truly represents the will of the people or has a clear mandate to carry out policies.

BECAUSE... A democratic government draws its legitimacy from the citizens who elect it & this legitimacy is threatened when few citizens exercise their democratic right to vote.

BECAUSE... It is the responsibility of the government & the American people to identify the obstacles to voting & to find ways to make the electoral process more efficient & accessible so that our democracy can function as intended (11).
Call 2: A Free, Fair & Transparent Process

Protecting a free, fair & transparent 2020 election process transcends party and ideology. It is the bedrock of our democracy. Especially in the midst of polarization & a global pandemic, we depend on our election process to move forward as a country.

A successful election is one that is (10):

- Free – where all eligible voters are able to vote without hindrance, interference, or intimidation.

- Fair & Transparent – where all votes are counted transparently, non-partisan rules & laws are followed & any disputes are resolved without bias towards any particular candidate.

- Respected – where the loser of the election accepts the results, concedes & engages in a good faith transition of power.

- Safe – where risks of COVID-19 transmission & political violence are minimized.

Together, we declare that the presidential election must be free, fair & transparent, a true democratic & non-violent process.
Call 3: We Expect Our Civic, Faith, Media, Community & Elected Leaders to Not Incite Violence but Lead with Dialogue & Empathy

In times of crisis & uncertainty, we look to our civic, faith, media, community, & elected leaders for guidance & direction. This election season, we need to call on our leaders to resist the urge to agitate their base and possibly incite violence. We need civic, faith, media, community & elected leaders on the record before the election to commit to honoring the voice of the people, count every vote & make sure the next administration is chosen by the people.

Melanie Greenberg & John Paul Lederach see four phases of polarization & dehumanization that bring us towards violence:

1. Dialogue between groups breaks down.
2. People focus less on realizing their demands than on blocking the other side from achieving their goals.
3. Blocking the others’ goals devolves into actually wishing & doing them harm.
4. Coupled with harm, the last phase emerges when the goal becomes the humiliation of the other side & their community (12).

Peacebuilders around the world have taught us that it is possible to step back from the brink of violence. It takes courage & hope. What we need then is for our leaders to have the courage & hope to publicly denounce violence & instead lead with dialogue & empathy.
Call 4: We Commit to Respecting the Results of a Free & Fair Election

In a democracy each of us are agents of change, we commit to respecting the will of the people & fulfilling our democratic values. 'Calls' or predictions made by newsrooms & the AP are not official - only the state can certify election results. And only the Republic can legitimate the State. Any legal challenges need to be resolved before a result is truly final.

Three things to keep in mind while watching election results come in from the Election Integrity Project:

1. Results that seem extreme, even absurd, probably are.
2. Do not assume a race is over before knowing what ballots are left to count.
3. It’s never a bad idea to withhold judgement while waiting to see how things roll out. (13)

The 2000 election wasn’t finalized until mid-December. The 2016 election was decided by 77,744 votes in three states - when we have election results with razor-thin margins, every person’s vote matters & we must wait for every vote to be counted before a winner is declared. History shows we know that we will likely not know the outcome of the election until well after November 3rd.

Together, we commit to respecting the results of a free & fair election.
Call 5: We Stand Against All Forms of Violence From State & Non-state Actors

Americans are cynical, uncertain & afraid this 2020 election cycle. Those who work to prevent election violence around the world are sounding the alarm. We need discipline to remain nonviolent because election & post-election violence is a real risk. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) identifies five key criteria that make election violence most likely to occur:

1. Politics based on patronage;
2. Weak electoral management bodies;
3. Ongoing conflict and division in the country;
4. Repression of opposition, civil unrest & violence against protesters; and
5. Lack of a multiparty effort for election integrity (14).

Many groups are leading de-escalation training, anti-violence training, etc. See our campaign page for resources and opportunities.

In the US, trust in the political system is nearing an all-time low. This past summer, nonviolent protests have seen violence from state & non-state actors where militia groups have organized & activated across the country. We saw state violence against peaceful protestors from the National Guard, police, unidentified federal agents in Washington, DC, Portland & more. Recently, we saw a militia plot to kidnap the Governor of Michigan thwarted. As peacebuilders, we are confident that conflict can be resolved nonviolently.

Together we stand against all forms of violence from state & non-state actors.
Call 6: As Diverse as we are, we stand united as Americans knowing that we have the collective power to build peace, no matter the outcome of the 2020 elections.

The United States is a mosaic of cultures, ethnicities & beliefs. Regardless of the amount of melanin in our skin, our roots, religious preference, gender identity, culture & time living in this land, we are all citizens of the same country. Diversity is a strength, not a weakness, we believe that everyone counts & we have the power to build the world we want - no matter the outcome of the 2020 elections.

It is very likely that we will need ongoing public mobilization & nonviolent protest to ensure that our institutions uphold the rule of law & honor the outcome of the election.

We choose to be nonviolent because we need to win & violence only leads to loss. It is a tool used to spread division, fear & distract communities from coming together. We refuse to be provoked by violence or deterred by it & instead will remain focused on our collective goal & take care of each other as we engage in this peacebuilding initiative. Our success depends largely on acknowledging our humanity & respecting diversity (15).

Together, we recognize that the American people have the collective power to build peace, no matter the outcome of the 2020 elections.
Lead your own peace activation for #ShineOnTheVote
Go to pluspeace.org/shineonthevote for:

- #ShineOnTheVote Pledge
- Banner
- Posters
- Stickers
- Coloring Book
- More...
INITIATIVES & PROJECTS TO INSPIRE ACTION

• **Messaging on Voting & the Election** - A memo aimed at claiming the moral high ground & fostering the public will to demand that every vote is counted.

• **Hold the Line: A Guide to Defending Democracy** - A guide designed to help both political newcomers as well as experienced activists take action to ensure free, safe, fair & respected elections.

• **Why Every Vote Counts | EVC** - A student-led non-partisan organization supporting state & national initiatives to expand voting rights, increase voter turnout & ensure that the electorate accurately reflects the true makeup of America.

• **Everyone Counts Project Presentation Deck** - A series of recommendations & insights for how to engage the public & institution to to ensure a free, fair & constitutional election.

• **Building US Resilience to Political Violence** - A paper that reviews insights & lessons learned from social science & international peacebuilding to bolster US resilience in the face of escalated risks for political violence.

• **Election Night Integrity Project • 2020 Live Election Results** - A project of Data for Progress & VoteAmerica modeling responsible reporting & visualization during the 2020 general election.

• **USDAC Election Defense Visual Strategy:**
  https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1cn9ngBJcWwMG0UGEzRpRD-YMlrU6DldrDS9bdRux3n8/edit#slide=id.ga51b2b5469_0_0

  **Design assets:**
  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1apgELQ6ICiw3gVsAERwbLdF15JTQhyL3EMNecZgbkE/edit


