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JANUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER

From the Director's desk

The 19th year of the new millennium has drawn to a close. It's been quite a year—at the Peace Centre, in South Africa and globally. As we start the new year, we'd like to share some final snippets about what 2018 brought for the Peace Centre, as well as some of our exciting plans for 2019.

2018 was the year in which we reinvented ourselves. We have a new name! And we have a whole set of new priorities and activities. Some of this will be shared in this newsletter, and some has already been shared in previous newsletters. We would also like to give you all a sneak peek at our plans for 2019.

The Peace Centre will re-open on January 7th. The staff have taken a well-deserved break, and have girded their loins for the year ahead.

We take this opportunity of wishing all our friends and supporters a peaceful, productive and happy 2019.



Carol

A new name

As of August 2018, our organisation, formerly known as the Quaker Peace Centre, was renamed the Peace Centre. This was the result of a request from the Southern Africa Yearly Meeting (SAYM) that we stop using 'Quaker' in our name. The reasons for this were related mainly to the fact that our use of the Quaker name presupposes a relationship of mutual accountability which does not in fact exist.

The Peace Centre was founded by members of the Cape Western Monthly Meeting (CWMM) in the turbulent 1980s. We became an independent registered NGO in

2008, but maintained our close links with the local Cape Western Monthly Meeting. This continues.

Despite the fact that we are no longer the *Quaker* Peace Centre, we maintain and value ongoing close links with both SAYM and CWMM. Most of our Board (including the Chairperson) are members of CWMM,

and both the local and national bodies have continued to be unfailingly supportive about our work.

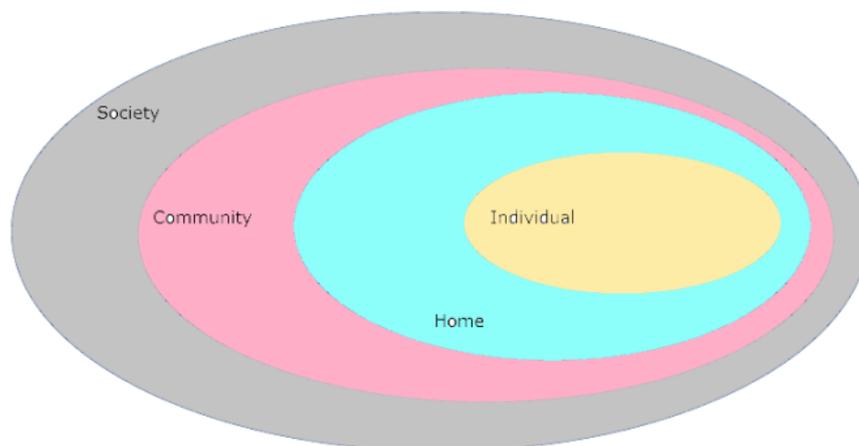


A new direction and new priorities

The retrenchment of all the staff in September 2017 was in part related to the fact that the Peace Centre, while doing excellent work, was focused rather narrowly and lacked impact. South Africa is beset by extraordinary levels of violence of all kinds, and there is a significant need for civil society to address some of the drivers of violence.

After a strategic planning process, we realised that the work of the organisation should be conducted within the community and focus more clearly on problems within communities which are fuelling violence.

We work for peace and against violence on the micro and macro levels, from the individual to the societal level. This graphic is a useful way to show the different levels of context which impact upon us.



At the level of *individuals and homes* (micro-level) we:

- Link parents to information and support on non-violent parenting;
- Assist people who are looking for employment with on-line searches, and cv-and application letter-preparation;
- Facilitate access to accredited skills training;
- Link students from a local university to scholars in the last two years of basic education, for support with Mathematics, Science and English;
- Facilitate and support access to skills and job-creation opportunities; and
- Build individual capacity to solve conflict without violence; and
- We provide access to and training on using the internet for research (scholars' assignments, employment offers etc.).

At the level of *community and society* (macro-level) we:

- Assist in addressing community challenges, such as poor service delivery;
- We build in community capacity to solve conflict without violence;
- We facilitate community dialogues on controversial issues such as land reform, LGBTI rights, women's rights and children's rights;
- Link teachers to information and support on safe schools;
- Advocate for stronger child protection; and
- Hold government to account wasteful and corrupt expenditure.

Highlights of 2018

- A partnership with Stellietech which gives hub-users access to accredited computer training at a fraction of the normal cost.
- A series of documentary screenings followed by facilitated discussion on a range of topical issues, including on land redistribution and climate change.
- The start of our community dialogue programme, with the holding of an event to debate the issue of corporal punishment in the home.



Participants at documentary screening

- Holding our first Stake-Holder Consultation, with local civic, religious and cultural organisations
- Amicus in a matter before the Constitutional Court on the constitutionality of the common law 'defence of reasonable chastisement' open to parents who assault their children.



Advocate Ann Skelton at the Constitutional Court on our behalf (and that of the Children's Institute and Sonke)

The court case generated a lot of publicity, and Carol was interviewed live on [ENCA](#) and [Morning Live](#).

- Complainants in a matter before the courts regarding the cancellation of the BAe component of the 1999 Arms Deal.
- Our Vice-Chairperson, Rommel Roberts has just returned from an extensive trip to Europe and the Eastern Seaboard of the US. The purpose of his trip was primarily to launch his book, [Seeds of Peace](#), but he also visited many Quaker communities and renewed and strengthened Peace Centre ties with Friends in other parts of the world. He brought back much hope of potential funding, and we will be following up on this in the new year.

A sneak peek at 2019

Voter education and constitutional literacy are high on our agenda for 2019, the year during which we will vote for the sixth time since the dawn of our democracy.

We will begin the process of starting a second hub.

The Constitutional Court decision will be handed down in late February or March.

Bank details

Standard Bank Mowbray

Current Account # 071391568

