

PSYCHOLOGISTS FOR PEACE



Activities you can do to become more active in promoting peace

Read this list - then make a goal to do one thing every day or week. Put it in your diary or calendar to remind you to do it!

Integrate peace promoting activities into your work

- Consider what ways you are currently assisting in peace promotion and expand on those activities.
- Find new ways to build in peace-promoting activities in the work you do.
- Develop your skills in methods for assisting others in developing a peaceful or compassionate approach to themselves and others.
- Find ways to help others to solve conflict peacefully, or set up more just processes to prevent destructive conflict.

Take actions promoting peace in our community

Actively voice your opinion on issues related to war, peace and social injustice. (Active expression of your point of view can be a useful way of channelling feelings of anger, disappointment, or distress related to world or local affairs.)

There are many useful web sites that people can visit to find out about local or international activities. (e.g., <http://www.vicpeace.org/>, <http://www.moveon.org/declaration>)

Other suggestions, many from the vicpeace website, include:

- Make your voice heard on **talk-back radio**:
 - **774 ABC** phone 9414 1774
 - **1278 3AW** phone 9696 1278
 - **1116 3AK** phone 1 300 721 116
- Email a politician and tell them what you think. For a list of Parliamentary members and their contact details go to <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/members/mi-elctr.asp>, senate members go to <http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/senators/homepages/si-alpha.htm>. Write a letter to the editor. Keep it short and snappy, and include your name, address and phone number (or they won't publish it!):
 - The Australian: letters@the.australian.com.au
 - The Age: letters@theage.com.au
 - Herald Sun: hsletters@heraldsun.com.au
- Write to Prime Minister John Howard, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Defence Minister Robert Hill, stating your views about Australia's involvement in the war in Iraq (write c/- Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600). Or fax them on 02 6273 4100.

- Fax your views to: Carmen Lawrence 02 6277 8501; Simon Crean 02 6277 8495; John Howard 02 6271 5414; ; Ambassador to the US – Dennis Richardson, 0011 1 202 797 3331; Charge d’Affaires ad interim at the U.S. Embassy in Canberra, William Stanton, 02 6214-5930
- Write to Ambassador John Dauth, Australia's UN Permanent Representative, Australia@un.int
- Write letters to the editors of your local paper, as well as editors of other national media. Some have chosen to write them urging them to tell the truth, and stop censoring the news about pro-peace or antiwar movements, scandals and corruption plaguing the U.S. war coalition in Iraq, negative effects of U.S. interventions, treatment of refugees, and concerns about new laws reducing due process of law.
- There is a list of 300 email addresses for letters to newspaper editors in the English - speaking world, now up at <http://www.waronfreedom.org/activists/emleted.html> .
- Communicate about peace issues. Dare to disagree in public with those who support war. Talk to friends and family who are unsure about war or particular social justice issues to tell them what you know and why we should be concerned. Read the APS Tip Sheet Communicating about Violence, Peace and Social Justice for ideas about how to talk with other people.
- Send money to organizations who are opposing the war.
- Consider sending money to relief organisations to assist rebuilding after war

World Food Organization <http://www.wfp.org/index.asp?section=4>

UNICEF (children) <http://www.supportunicef.org/forms/whichcountry2.html>

UNHCR (refugees) <http://www.unhcr.ch/donate/index.html>

- Send money to agencies that do peacebuilding and development of disadvantaged nations and peoples.
 - Amnesty International (www.amnesty.org.au, phone: (03) 9427 7055, fax: (03) 94271643),
 - Oxfam (www.oxfam.org.au, phone: (03) 9289 9444, fax: (03) 9419 5318,
 - World Vision (<http://www.worldvision.com.au>, phone: (03) 9287 2233, fax: (03)9287 2427),
 - Red Cross(www.redcross.org.au, phone: (03) 9345 1800, Fax: (03) 9348 2513),
 - Greenpeace (www.greenpeace.org.au, phone: (02) 9261 4666),
 - The Wilderness Society (www.tws.org.au, Phone: (03) 6270 1701, Fax: (03) 6231 6533).
- Park your car. Use mass transportation, a bicycle, or take the extra time to walk whenever you can. You'll get healthier and lessen our dependence on oil.
- Assist in environmental causes. Reduce your use of disposable materials (e.g., plastic bags). Recycle and reuse materials.
- Support the United Nations and urge our government and MPs to do so. The UN is not an independent body- it is made up of the member states (i.e., all the nations of the world, including Australia) and responds to the wishes of those member states.
- Call or Fax the White House and U.S. Congress. There is a number for contacting U.S. Senators and House members to express your opinions on the war: +1 1-800-839-5276. For contacting George W. Bush - White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Washington, DC

20500 or phone +1 202-456-1111 or +1 202-456-2580, or President@whitehouse.gov .
Find out how to contact the US Senators
http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm and U.S.
representatives: Representative <http://www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW.html>

Educate yourself and others

- Educate yourself about the issues surrounding your interest area in relation to peace. Topics could include issues of supporting multiculturalism and acceptance of difference; the war in Iraq; asylum seekers; the proliferation of arms; various international conflicts; methods for promoting peace; dispute resolution mechanisms; alternative views of terrorism; U.S. history of intervention in foreign affairs; and/or the politics of oil.
- Participate in conflict resolution, peace or mediation courses.
- Find out information about the Conflict Resolution Network, and the courses and training they offer. PO Box 1016, Chatswood NSW 2057
Phone: 02 9419-8500 Email: crn@crnhq.org Website: www.crnhq.org
- Purchase and display Psychologists for Peace's series of conflict resolution posters and other material:
http://www.psychology.org.au/units/interest_groups/peace/publications.asp
- Disseminate information about peace. Leave materials (books, magazines) on peace and conflict resolution topics in public areas and waiting rooms in your workplace or clinic. Leave copies of APS Tip Sheets, for example, *Communicating about Violence, Peace and Social Justice*, to give others ideas about how to talk about the issues. Display posters (e.g., PPOWP) on peace and conflict resolution themes.
- Give peace related literature and materials for gifts.

Support yourself and others

- Develop a peaceful lifestyle, to help support yourself, to help you serve as a good role model for others, and to give you energy for peace activities.
- The American Psychological Society has a series on building resilience (<http://www.apahelpcenter.org/featuredtopics/feature.php?id=43>). One of the lists they have developed provides practical steps to building resilience that help people adapt to unexpected events and stressful situations in a time of war. Included in their list are the following ideas: make connections; help yourself by helping others; maintain a daily routine, take care of yourself, give yourself a "news" break, nurture a positive view of yourself; keep things in perspective; and maintain a hopeful outlook.

Join a group

- Support groups that represent the points of view that you are wanting to contribute to. Pay membership or subscription fees to support them; give donations; go to meetings; find interesting activities to contribute to.
- Join Psychologists for Peace (interest group of the Australian Psychological Society). Pay your for membership when you pay your APS dues in order to support the group, or become a more active member.

- Find like-minded friends or colleagues and organise coffee get-togethers, meals, and outings. Discuss issues, frustrations and what you can do.
- Ideas for actions, advocacy, publications and events can be found at the Psychologists for Social Responsibility website (<http://www.psysr.org/>).

The media

Approach the mass media coverage of war with caution. During crises (e.g., 9/11) limit viewing of TV coverage, and retain a critical viewing lens of the material you are exposed to. Public opinion is easily manipulated by what we are told, and mass media has a large part to play in this. The major news outlets are not known for their objectivity, and often present a biased or distorted view of our world.

Read and support independent media sources (e.g., SBS, *The Guardian*, <http://www.indymedia.org/>, <http://www.alternet.org/>, <http://www.zmag.org/>, <http://www.democracynow.org/>, <http://www.commondreams.org/>, <http://www.thenation.com/>) Consider listening to Radio National, community radio stations (e.g., ABC 774 in Victoria). Consider magazine subscriptions to alternative current affairs magazines like New Internationalist, World Press Review or others.