



Voices of Peace

Reading time 5 mins

Issue 1 - January 2022

This year we will be launching a series of Peace Circle stories and musings from our network in the UK and across the globe. It will be a chance for you to meet some of the participants that took part in our Peace Circles and also give you an opportunity to ponder on reflections from our facilitators and founders.

The Peace Circle experience can impact people in many ways and it is easy to lose sight of some of the journeys that people experience, so we thought that collecting and sharing stories would give our community an opportunity to continue the peace creation conversation.

Our first story is from Margaret who joined one of our online 7-week Peace Circles in 2021. Our gratitude to Margaret for sharing part of her journey.

‘A chance to let go of something’

Written by Margaret Simms, Northern Ireland



"I did an online Peace Circle in July and August 2021 and it was a wonderful experience. After the initial pre-course worry about meeting up on Zoom with people I had never met, I looked forward to our meetings and found them very productive and enjoyable. We were blessed with three great facilitators who were really kind and caring and they took part as well, which meant that there was no 'them and us'. We really were a circle."



Initiatives of Change
United Kingdom



Creators of Peace

We were 10 participants in all, including the facilitators, all women, and what was best of all was that we were from different continents. We were from South America, Africa, Asia and Europe. It was enriching to get different perspectives. The countries we came from were Mexico, Brazil, South Sudan, Uganda, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Denmark, England and Ireland. We made connections which will remain. I was surprised that there was another woman from the North of Ireland, where I am from. This never happens!!

Though we talked about and reflected on serious subjects, we had light moments as well as deeper sharing. The sessions were never stodgy.

Each week one of us shared a part of their story. What I liked was that each person was free to choose which parts of their life to include. In 10 minutes, it wasn't going to be a whole biography! It was such a privilege to be allowed to hear some very moving personal experiences from women who had known each other for such a short time. It showed the trust which had been created over the weeks we had been together online. The fact that only one, or two people spoke each week, rather than all participants sharing in the same session, was good.

We explored our concerns, inner peace and the qualities of a peacemaker; what builds peace and what destroys it; also, listening to others, the power of forgiveness, and peace in practice. For me, the crucial experience was the telling of my story (which sounds egotistical, but I don't think that it was.) When listening, we were asked not to comment or to offer advice. So, it was a chance to let go of something.

I was amazed at how free I felt of a little bit of my past after being listened to with full attention. Now, when I go in my mind to the personal experience which I shared, I feel differently about it, in a good way.

Since the Peace Circle, I feel a bit more together, a bit more resilient."

Edited by El Laskar.

Join a Peace Circle

The Peace Circle that Margaret joined was delivered online from 21 June - 2 August 2021.

If you are interested in booking a taster or joining a Peace Circle please email creatorsofpeace.uk@iofc.org Creators of Peace UK is a programme of Initiatives of Change UK and is an affiliate of Creators of Peace International.



Initiatives of Change
United Kingdom

Facebook: @creatingpeaceUK www.iofc.org.uk/