

The UT Project in Conflict Resolution: Excerpts from Fundraising Brochure



**Leading the Way:
Resolving Conflict in Contemporary Culture**

*Discovering new truths in the delicate art of compromise.
Teaching the mediators, peacemakers and leaders of tomorrow.
Serving the community, the country – and the world.*

As a genuine pioneer, The University of Texas Project in Conflict Resolution is a groundbreaking organization focused on a unique aspect of the conflict resolution field: *conflict as it occurs in contemporary culture*. Clearly, this is a different approach from the ones taken by organizations that focus solely on politics and war. And yet the role of culture in our lives is so pervasive, so absolute, that successful results within this realm easily translate into positive solutions with the potential for global impact.

Culture

What exactly do we mean by contemporary culture? It's what makes arbitrary things seem natural to any particular group of human beings, ranging from their food preferences and their family traditions to their work customs and forms of entertainment. It is what they take for granted. Contemporary culture touches virtually every aspect of people's daily lives, making it a prime breeding ground for conflicts of all types and an ideal focal point for the Project.

Conflict

In today's world, people need to deal successfully with others, even if they have nothing in common. Conflict, however, is typically the result. Certainly great models of conflict resolution are found in the legendary leadership of people like Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Peaceful figures such as Mother Teresa inspire us, although they can make us think that conflict is an issue best left for saints and diplomats. The truth is, ordinary people can communicate more effectively and reduce conflict in their everyday lives if they simply have the right tools and a proactive strategy for success. The Project's approach to conflict resolution does not confuse understanding with passivity or promote acquiescence to power. Instead, it advances the concept of managing inevitable conflicts and creating the conditions to avoid those that are destructive.