

PSYC 209 - The Psychology of Personal and Interpersonal Peace

Course Outline

Description: The study of behavior and mental processes associated with human violence and nonviolence, approached from Western and Eastern psychological perspectives. This cross-cultural course closely examines and analyzes individual personal and interpersonal experience to reveal and clarify processes of conflict and peace. Students will learn psychological methods to resolve conflicts and achieve personal and interpersonal peace.

Course learning outcomes

- A. General--Through the content, assignments and activities of these experiential, hands-on course, students learn how inner peace makes for outer peace. Students will acquire a broad, cross-cultural understanding of the psychological bases of human Violence and non-violence. They will learn to diminish violence and increase compassion in their own lives; and, they will be able to model good practice and help others to achieve personal and interpersonal peace.
- B. Specific--Students will learn the following techniques and strategies.
 1. Through meditation and mindfulness training students will learn:
 - a. to examine and analyze their personal and interpersonal experience with greater clarity, detail and comprehension.
 - b. the role of negative-afflictive emotions in personal life and interpersonal affairs.
 2. Through stress and anger management training, combined with meditation and mindfulness, students will learn to identify, diminish and resolve stress and anger within themselves, with implications for others.
 3. Through strategies of non-violent communication and conflict resolution, students will learn to help others achieve less violent, conflict-free, peaceful lives.

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- I. Western psychological perspectives on human violence and nonviolence
 - A. Behavioral
 - B. Neurobiological
 - C. Cognitive
 - D. Psychoanalytic
 - E. Socio-cultural
 - F. Existential/humanistic
 - G. Systems theoretical
- II. Eastern (Buddhist) psychological perspectives on human violence and nonviolence
 - A. The four noble truths
 - B. The noble eight-fold path
 - C. The six paramitas
- III. East/West psychological methods to resolve conflicts and achieve personal and interpersonal peace.
 - A. Stress and anger management
 - B. Meditation
 - C. Mindfulness
 - D. Nonverbal communication

E. Conflict resolution

IV. Learning and practicing compassion through volunteer service. Students choose a place to volunteer. They journal on their volunteer experiences, addressing the following learning objectives:

- A. What is this place?
- B. What am I doing here?
- C. How do I see myself in those I am serving?
- D. How do I see those I am serving in myself?
- E. How am I learning to be with others as I would like them to be with me?