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Peace Leadership: A Reflective Review of the Field

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Abstract

This reflective review posits that the emergent area of peace leadership may be the beacon of hope needed in a world riddled with conflict and divisiveness. Exploring over 60 pieces of peace leadership literature, this review highlights the skills, practices, and competencies spanning the continuum of personal and interpersonal peace leadership and describes the existing conceptual models and frameworks of peace leadership. Core traits, characteristics, and behaviors embodied by effective peace leaders are identified through analyses of renowned leaders throughout history, alongside Indigenous, religious, and spiritual philosophies that continue to influence peace leaders today. Interpersonal peace practices are described through the intentional application of these embodied peace leadership traits, characteristics, and behaviors, fostering peace through intentional connection, shared decision-making, conflict resolution, and a collective view of the world. The peace leadership models and frameworks presented guide leaders in implementing the delineated peace leadership traits, characteristics, and behaviors through approaches to fostering personal peace, interpersonal peace, and connecting both personal and interpersonal peace perspectives. Taken together, this literature considers the importance of promoting individual peace toward building and sustaining collective peace, positioning the work as a guide to foster hope for creating collective and sustainable peace in our world.

Keywords*: peace leadership, peace leadership frameworks, peace leader competencies,*

Introduction

There is little doubt that we live in a divisive world with upticks in conflict at local, national, and global levels. It is easy for us to spend our time mired in bad news and "doom scrolling" our way through life. Focusing on the negativity and the harm that arises from this divisiveness rarely helps us to feel motivated to step into the role of changemaker, action taker, and peacebuilder. While we must consider the negative, we need to foster hope, to find ways that we can unite to challenge the negativity and conflict in the world, and build spaces for positive, peaceful change. Enter the world of peace leadership, a space for individual and collective change to bring about the world we wish to see. This reflective review introduces the reader to the scholarly literature of peace leadership and frames this work as the hope we need to challenge our divisiveness and build together in unity.

Building from the fields of leadership studies, peace studies, conflict transformation, and peace psychology, peace leadership is an emergent and growing area of scholarship and practice. Peace leadership has developed significantly over the last 15 years, necessitating a reflective review of the literature to examine recent expansions on theoretical frameworks, models, and competencies that continue to support peace leadership scholarship and practice, as the last comprehensive review was in 2016 (McIntyre Miller, 2016). This reflective review examines over 60 pieces of literature, primarily from the past 15 years, to articulate the peace leadership skills, practices, and competencies spanning the continuum of personal and interpersonal peace. Also included are the peace leadership conceptual models and frameworks developed as ways to understand personal and interpersonal peace leadership skills and practices and delineate peace leaders' interconnected engagement toward collective peace. Therefore, this reflective review demonstrates that the recent work emerging from peace leadership scholarship has the potential to give us hope as we navigate the current challenges we face in the world and move us toward a more peaceful society.

Peace Practices, Skills, and Competencies

Many scholars have discussed peace leadership in terms of the skills, practices, and competencies necessary to engage in this work. In fact, a 2024 *Journal of Leadership Studies* symposium featured articles, which are included herein, linking core leadership competencies to peace leadership (McIntyre Miller, 2024). This literature often stems

from authors profiling individual peace leaders or those who engage in the work of building peace within organizations and social movements. This literature can be organized around the personal peace practices embraced by these individuals and the interpersonal practices that peace leaders use to engage with others in their peace leadership work. The next two sections detail both areas of the literature.

Personal Peace Practices, Skills, and Competencies

The reviewed personal peace leadership literature demonstrated that peace leaders often share core embodied traits, characteristics, and behaviors that support their efficacy in promoting peace and resolving conflict among communities and structures. For example, by exploring peace leaders working within ethnopolitical conflicts, Byrne (2018) found that peace leaders are shaped by their socialization and personality, including their worldview, and through this, are motivated to make a difference in their contexts. They possess strong communication and analytical skills, are compassionate, humble, trustworthy, and have compelling visions of nonviolent democratic futures. Finally, they have moral power and authority and are credible actors in their communities. Matesi (2013) worked aligned, demonstrating that in 17 Nobel Peace Prize winners' speeches, these peace leaders used communication skills to share a strong vision for the future using both intellect and imagination.

These strong communication and visioning skills are also reflective of Lieberfeld's (2009; 2011) work that defined Abraham Lincoln, Nelson Mandela, and Chile's Michelle Bachelet as reconciliation-oriented leaders who focused on empathy, cognitive complexity, optimism, emotional self-control, and their leaning toward forgiveness and reconciliation in their peace leadership efforts. These also aligned with van Zyl's (2019; 2019b) reflections of Nelson Mandela and Kofi Annan as emotionally intelligent leaders, focusing on themselves first before leading others. The idea of emotional intelligence for peace leaders is also outlined in Campbell's (2019) writing and further explored by Haber-Curran (2024), who argued that emotional intelligence and emotionally intelligent leadership are essential for fostering leadership journeys that promote justice, inclusivity, and sustainable change.

Many of these peace leadership skills, traits, and characteristics are aligned with Reychler and Stellaman's (2005) research that defined characteristics of peace leaders,

including future-orientation, analytic thinking, reflexive, adaptive, integrative, flexible, relational, patience, nonviolence, ethical, motivated, and use courage, humility, and sense of humor. Several authors discussed some of these concepts in additional detail. For example, Ledbetter (2016) discussed the importance of ethical leadership and strategy when promoting peace leadership in business settings. Also, Widner and Smith (2024) shared the importance of using adaptive leadership principles, such as those aligned with Ron Heifetz's work, for peace leaders hoping to use their skills to mobilize others. Finally, Sowcik and Johnson (2024) further explored the importance of humility to peace leadership in their work, emphasizing self-reflection, adaptability, and resilience.

Much of the above research focused on general skills for peace leaders, while some research focused on gender to provide additional context for peace leaders' work. Adler (1998), for example, believed in the importance of including female leadership to help move spaces into peace. Adler's belief is that being inclusive, particularly of women in peace work, would yield more successful peacebuilding efforts.

Relatedly, Tegerstrand (2021) found a dearth of literature on women peace leaders and therefore studied the role of contemplative praxis in the development of Christian female peace leaders. Four themes emerged as foundational to female peace leaders' practices: inner life development for peace leadership, finding and living vocation, returning to one's best self, and contemplative stance for peace leadership (p. 410). Tegerstrand's (2021) work also highlighted Lederach's "moral imagination" as being critical to these female peace leaders' peacebuilding and conflict resolution efforts. Interestingly, a study by Spisak et al. (2012) demonstrated that those with more feminine faces, regardless of assigned sex, were more likely to be seen as peace leaders.

Additional literature has also focused on the personal peace work of leaders in various contexts. Integrating a focus on inner peace, positive self-oriented and nonviolent behaviors, and moral values reflects the evolving perspectives of peace leadership and education built upon ancient Eastern and Western cultures (Groff, 2002; Salomon, 2002; Yablon, 2013). As Yazzie (2000) demonstrated, in traditional Navajo communities, there has been a history of selecting leaders to serve on peace councils that oversee economic development, dispute resolutions, and diplomatic relationships

based on the leader's character, charisma, and speaking abilities.

In looking at peace leadership in education and schools, Duckworth (2024) found that both cognitive and affective elements were important to engage in peace leadership work. These practices included critical thinking, problem-solving, tolerance of ambiguity, agency, empathy, and positive self-esteem, and encouraged creating environments of peace. Also important was a nuanced understanding of communication, identity, religion, and culture for success in peace leadership engagement. Duckworth (2024) identified that educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers needed skills to work on the critical areas of reducing power imbalances, increasing representation of groups from lower-status groups, increasing community connections, and fortifying cognitive and affective skills to reduce violence, particularly in schools. Also focusing on peace education programs, Yablon (2013) shared the importance of the learner's motivation for obtaining peace, whether inherently intrinsic or instilled through the education itself, which is why education programs should be tailored to specific contexts, considering the needs of the learners based on an assessment of the state of existing social relationships.

Yablon (2013) also regarded the inner peace of individuals as a critical component of world peace, positing that attaining inner peace is a necessary foundation for cultivating peaceful relationships. Yablon (2013) highlighted the importance of personal responsibility in peacebuilding interventions and processes, demonstrating a connection between both personal and interpersonal peace, as will be discussed below, including the role of religious beliefs and attitudes as tools for increasing peaceful relationships. Correspondingly, Mishra et al. (2023) found that components of Buddhism are often reflected in the practices of peace leaders, discernible through reverence for nature, recognition of the interdependence of humans and the environment, compassion for all living things, and the belief in the transient nature of suffering.

Therefore, the personal peace skills, competencies, and practices found in the literature are those that peace leaders can grow and develop. These are opportunities to know oneself better and to feel prepared to be the best version of oneself, to engage in peace leadership. Peace leaders focused on these personal skills can be prepared to take up the work of peace leadership and lead with the hope and courage it takes to challenge the destruction of the world.

Interpersonal Peace Practices, Skills, and Competencies

Existing peace leadership literature also focuses on the work of interpersonal peace, or how it is that peace leaders move through their own personal peace leadership work to interact with others. For example, Goulah and Urban (2013) argued, based on Daisaku Ikeda's work, that there is a need to move through inner transformation to dialogue with others and, ultimately, global citizenship. Similarly, Mishra et al. (2023) cited Thich Nhat Hanh, an exemplar whose mindfulness peace practices are infused with spirituality: "peace and happiness must first be developed from within, and then one can bring peace to others" (p.13). Through mindfulness, intentional presence in the moment allows peace leaders to engage in "deep listening" while suspending judgment or thoughts of the past or future and promoting a true understanding and respect for the perspectives of others by aligning words and actions and maintaining peaceful interconnectedness.

Mishra et al. (2023) discussed attaining sustainable peace leadership through leaders applying these personal skills and competencies toward interpersonal peace practices, specifically those rooted in spirituality. Effective peace leaders can motivate, influence, garner trust, mentor, and empower people through nonviolent approaches, humble servitude, and sacrifice. Further, to achieve sustainable peace, leaders must shift focus from personal gain to what is best for the larger movement, allowing room for opposing views, shared decision-making, and seeking solutions that benefit both sides of an issue. Jumaa (2022), similarly, claimed that successful peace leaders collaborate to find common ground, avoiding advocating for the needs of one group of constituents. The following sections discuss the interpersonal peace leadership literature, with particular interest on Indigenous practices, and those that include power and politics, and education.

Indigenous Traditions

Aligned with the aforementioned personal peace practices, many interpersonal peace practices are also rooted in Indigenous traditions. For example, Jeranyama and Mpofu-Hamadziripi (2022) recognized the spiritual threads present in the peace practices of negotiation or carrying out rituals and further drew parallels between traditional healers and peace leaders in their study of local, traditional practices in Zimbabwe. Lessons from Jeranyama and Mpofu-Hamadziripi (2022) focused on the importance of relationships in conflict

resolution practices, both for traditional healers and modern peace leaders. The African female leaders that Ngunjiri (2010) studied also demonstrated a spirited leadership that contained spaces for tempered radicalism, critical servant leadership, and spirituality to create peace leadership movements.

Similarly, Moonga's (2017) work, focusing on conflict resolution within a local chiefdom in Zambia, demonstrated that negotiation among Indigenous communities favors traditional methods, moving past assigning blame and consequences and focusing instead on relationship development and collaboration. Moonga (2017) emphasized the impact of the cultural and Indigenous underpinnings in reconciling conflict and community building in African societies, which proved essential to sustainable peace. In these communities, relationship repair is prioritized over corrective or retaliatory approaches to problem-solving. Moonga (2017) further described an approach to peace education that coalesces traditional and modern means of conflict resolution, recognizing the usefulness of each method in mitigating disputes in communities.

In examining the impacts and challenges of conflict between migrants and host communities in Zambia, Tembo (2018) noted the lack of a formal method for conflict management as a primary barrier to effective peacebuilding. Further, Tembo suggested developing a collaborative conflict resolution group to address tension points between the migrant and host communities, centering efforts on the promotion of cultural and religious principles of tolerance and the peaceful sharing of space.

Much of this aligns with Haastrup and Nwakibea's (2024) research, which cited human rights advocacy, social justice, equality, and safeguarding the environment as effective peace leader practices. Haastrup and Nwakibea (2024) discussed the efficacy of peace leaders in resolving conflict by cultivating trust and collaboration, considering diverse perspectives, and engaging multiple stakeholders in inclusive decision-making. These ideas were also reflected in the work of Christiana Thorpe of Sierra Leone, who used similar skills to build organizational capacity in several organizations as a way of creating peace leadership space (McIntyre Miller & Wunduh, 2015). Similarly, these organizational leadership, accountability, and decision-making processes were also important elements for Ganz (2010), who focused on leaders of peace movements

utilizing narrative and creative practices to challenge those with power. Narrative was also an important element to peace leadership for Bolden and Gosling (2024), who focused on the value of narrative in facilitative leadership for conflict resolution and peace.

Peace Leadership, Politics, and Power

Often, then, there is an important dynamic of power and politics to be considered. Several authors focused on these key elements when discussing interpersonal peace leadership. Some spoke to the importance of peace leaders being savvy through political challenges and those who wish to spoil peace actions (Boyer, 1986; Stedman, 1997) and balancing the need to be peacemakers, those who resolve conflict, and peacebuilders, those who create long-term peace to become peace actualizers (Sarsar, 2008). Aligned with the identified personal peace practices, these actualizers must be able to communicate and realize their visions and strategies for peace.

Ledbetter (2012) asserted that peace leadership work should utilize a dialectic approach to connect the divide between power and resistance in sustaining peaceful, moral progress. Framing this argument for considering resistance as a critical component of building sustainable peace, Ledbetter (2012) introduced the following four propositions: (1) Mapping a process of leadership for peace requires a dialectical approach; (2) Resistance leadership for peace must be moral; (3) Moral resistance for peace assumes the idea of moral progress; and (4) Moral progress and the work of resistance for peace depends on the next generation. The dialectical approach, dating back to Plato, requires the ability to recognize relevant pieces of each contradictory idea to conceptualize their utility within a larger view. In the context of peace leadership, Ledbetter (2012) described the power/resistance dialectic where resistance is perceived as "a form of power where power is seen as influence, exercise as resistance as not as power over and against" (p. 13). Peace is therefore reached through resistance.

Consequently, leaders need to be more concerned with creating peace than they are with power, appearance, and maintaining credibility (Auerbach & Greenbaum, 2000; Stedman, 1997). In the case of local leaders, international pressure can help maintain the focus and the course of peace (Peake et al., 2004). Amaladas et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of a deeper examination of distinctions between groups and public leaders' roles in developing and maintaining community peace. Despite the knowledge already

gathered in this area, Khalil and Hartley (2022) called for a deeper understanding of the practices and political savvy of leaders involved in peacebuilding efforts.

Scholars also considered interpersonal skills as important for leaders who work in community spaces. For example, Augustine (2022) reflected on the writings of Saint Augustine and the notion of *paterfamilias* to understand peace leadership. While originally thought of as males leading family units, these ideas could broaden in today's world to be reflective of anyone leading for peacebuilding and might, in some cases, be associated with community elders. *Paterfamilias* can now be thought of as those who serve in peacebuilding roles across familial, community, and societal levels, where peace and justice are promoted through a belief in the common good. "A good and responsible paterfamilias is one who not only instructs those under his care in the virtue of justice but also ensures that justice is practiced by everyone" (p.12). Therefore, peace leaders are those who lead others with an eye for justice for all.

Lee-Koo and Pruitt (2024) believed in the idea of peace leadership as belonging to anyone when they discussed the idea of intergenerational peace leadership, which aimed to recognize and integrate young women into peace initiatives, where they have been, historically, broadly excluded. This targeted inclusion speaks to the increased acceptance of a more diverse group of peace leaders over the past decade. Lee-Koo and Pruitt (2024) advocated for a shift in the "traditional hierarchies and social privileges" (p. 4) that have systematically discounted the credibility of youth and women leaders due to assumptions tied to age and gender. Further, recognizing the ways women and youth lead informally also includes more opportunities for both formal and informal leadership positions, creating opportunities for members of all generations. The inclusion of youth voice in peacebuilding was also essential for Alomair (2016), who reviewed relevant youth-oriented peacebuilding literature to make a case for providing access to youth and youth voices within peace leadership in political systems, schools, and communities.

Chunoo and Schellhammer (2024) echoed these ideas of creating opportunities in their scholarship, which highlighted the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging principles in peace leadership in order to address societal divisions and to build sustainable peace and harmony. As peace leaders, we can be intentional about inclusion work when we understand and

expand our networks. The idea of social network approaches to peace leadership, a concept that explores the ways peace leaders can utilize their relationships as a way of accessing resources and influencing outcomes for peace and stability, was presented by Weinberger and Carter (2024). This social network thinking sets the stage for a further understanding of systems thinking and the ways that peace leaders can utilize the interrelationships and patterns within their systems to address the complex, wicked problems of peacebuilding to find more collaborative and community-driven solutions to peace efforts (Sheridan & Satterwhite, 2024).

Educating for Interpersonal Peace Leadership

Other scholars discussed building interpersonal skills and competencies for peace leadership through educational practices and programs. These programs often focus on interpersonal skills and relationships and exist both in schools as well as in community settings. Teig and Walsh (2024), for example, implored leadership educators to cultivate students' skills in relationship-building, making connections with people across identities, practicing openness and vulnerability, and maintaining the dignity of others while addressing societal challenges. Ricke-Kiely (2016) also called for a global focus for developing peace leaders, one that respected diverse points of view and provided opportunities for authenticity, and Schellhammer (2016) believed that peace leadership education ought to focus on mindsets, values, and competencies that are aligned with creating a culture of peace. Gott (2025) discussed the importance of leadership educators practicing their peace leadership skills in the classroom as part of the work they are doing to teach students, implying that educators with a practice orientation might create more transformational learning environments.

Harber and Davies (2003) recommended that schools should do no harm and lower the level of pain by including democratic practices as ways to challenge conflict education and provide for a sustainable future. Msila (2024) suggested highlighting social justice in schools' peace education curricula to promote harmony and equality and counteract violent themes in the media. Similarly, Nkechi (2020) posited that peace education should include human rights and leadership training, which must be made available across multiple societal levels, social settings, and age groups. Nkechi (2020) further argued that these programs

ought to reflect the community's morals to promote peace literacy so that individuals might be peaceful in their homes, places of business, and communities. Chitah (2017) recommended that governments increase resource allocations toward advancing peace and education, and partnerships with youth networks as an investment in future conflict resolution and peacebuilding engagement.

In the community sphere, Topuzova and Horsman (2022) described the Jesuit Worldwide Learning's Peace Leadership Certificate program in refugee camps around the world as an example of building interpersonal peace leadership practices through online education. Topuzova and Horsman (2022) detailed a servant leadership view of peace leadership, where servant leadership values and skills are taught as foundational principles for establishing a culture of peace. These principles align with a notion of heartfulness, or the centering relationship between the heart and the mind, and Jesuit education ideals around educating the whole person. Taken together, they discussed a view of peace leadership that is holistic and collective in efforts to promote justice and peace.

It is clear to see from the literature on interpersonal peace leadership skills, competencies, and practices that there is a push to prepare leaders to holistically engage with others in meaningful ways. This often takes leaders who have engaged in personal peace work and are willing to build their expertise in practices such as dialogue, conflict transformation, building collaborative spaces with diverse groups, and understanding any power and political dynamics at play. Each of these skills, while also working to challenge violence and aggression, has a strong focus on building the positive, sustainable change needed in our world. When taken together, seeing work being facilitated to develop and improve these skills, competencies, and practices may well provide us with the hope we need to continue this work when it feels like hope is a rarity.

Peace Leadership Conceptual Models and Frameworks

In addition to scholarship, focusing on personal and interpersonal peace leadership skills, practices, and competencies, there have been scholarly efforts to create conceptual models and frameworks to begin to understand the ways in which peace leaders might engage with the aforementioned skills, practices, and competencies. These conceptual models and frameworks often incorporate components of existing leadership theories, philosophies,

and approaches while envisioning new ways of being and engaging in peace leadership in the world. This next section presents peace leadership conceptual models and frameworks in a similar fashion to the aforementioned skills, competencies, and practices, by aligning those that focus primarily on personal peace leadership, those that focus on interpersonal peace leadership, and a new category, those that align both personal and interpersonal peace leadership.

Personal Peace Leadership Models

Personal peace leadership models provide frameworks that depict ways leaders foster inner peace through the embodiment of skills, competencies, and behaviors. These skills, competencies, and behaviors support leaders in their approaches to peace leadership and further provide examples to encourage and guide others toward successful peace leadership. The personal peace leadership models explored below represent structures that reflect compassion, inclusion, respect for Indigenous knowledge, and change-making through intentional human connection.

Authentic Peace Leadership

In his 2018 chapter, Schellhammer outlined the principles and practices of authentic peace leadership. The authentic peace leader utilizes compassion with democratic leadership to build trust and motivation, all in the service of creating a culture of peace. Spawning from a 1999 United Nations General Assembly effort, a culture of peace is seen as providing respect for life, a movement away from discrimination and intolerance, and the use of nonviolence for creating a strong, peaceful civil society. Schellhammer (2018) saw authentic peace leadership as the ultimate multiplier; authentic peace leaders create and empower more authentic peace leaders. To get there, though, authentic peace leaders need to embrace humility, empathy, and integrity. Where traditional leadership favored a top-down, authoritarian, linear style, Schellhammer envisioned current leaders as now needing to unify diverse individuals and communities with varied worldviews under a shared vision of peace. This requires leaders to align their personal values with those of the larger society, and in so doing, a leader must employ both humility and self-awareness.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Peace Leadership

Higgins Parker (2022) oriented peace leadership work to that of Indigenous Ways of Knowing. These are traditional practices that recognize that all things are part of a single whole. While traditions vary, many

Indigenous Ways of Knowing are those that focus on seven teachings: love, wisdom, respect, truth, humility, honesty, and courage. For Higgins Parker, the challenge for peace leaders is to embrace Indigenous Way of Knowing through these seven teachings and to recognize their work as part of the greater whole by finding the connections between each other and the land.

Peace Dwelling

Amaladas (2024) viewed peace leadership as the work toward peace dwelling. For Amaladas, peace leadership is the interaction between four ways of being: being a guardian, being a curator, being a welcoming presence, and being a neighbor. Amaladas maps these principles of being alongside what he calls the 4Hs: the Head, the Heart, the Hands, and the Holy. Amaladas uses this structure, expanded from Heidegger's (1977) concept of *the fourfold,* to invite us to live into the four ways of being and the 4Hs to create spaces where we might all dwell in peace.

In his earlier work, Amaladas (2021) asserted that the *head*, or minds, among the group must recognize and acknowledge their prejudices toward others to "show what is hidden" and become cognizant of their way of thinking (p. 80). The *heart* carries the sentiment, "we are all in this together," encouraging the sharing of stories to evoke feelings, which Amaladas (2021) asserted is the catalyst needed for real change through deep-level connection (p. 80). The *hands* are explained as the mechanism of transformation, a component of human action that serves a higher purpose. Amaladas described the sharing of conversation over a meal prepared by human hands, an "ordinary event" free from "internal and external coercions," where participants can listen and speak with the higher purpose of understanding, healing, and reconciling (p. 81). Finally, *holy* encapsulated the shared purpose of loving reconciliation through protecting others from harm.

Interpersonal Peace Leadership Models

While personal peace leadership models describe the individual embodied skills, competencies, and practices that contribute to peaceful leadership, interpersonal peace leadership models focus on how leaders apply these skills, competencies, and practices to engage peacefully with other individuals, communities, and globally. These frameworks guide leaders in connection-building, communication, and conflict resolution, all essential to cultivating and sustaining environments of peace. The following highlights interpersonal peace

leadership models that promote shared power dynamics, active acknowledgment of conflict, subsequent collaborative resolution, and empowerment of constituents to encourage leader accountability and shared decision-making processes.

PEACE Powers

Chinn and Falk-Rafael (2018) created the PEACE Powers models to reflect the critical caring needed from peace leadership. PEACE is an acronym for praxis, empowerment, awareness, cooperation, and evolvement, and PEACE Powers involve the power of the whole, of sharing, of nurturing, and of consciousness. These PEACE powers involve empowerment, enabling power, and collaborative power to be inclusive rather than engage in power-over practices. Groups working within this framework do not completely ignore the power-over approach, but instead, acknowledge the conflict between power over and peace power practices and work through them collaboratively (Chinn & Falk-Rafael, 2014). The outcome of this dialectic is an "emancipatory group process" (p. 67). PEACE leaders are, therefore, those who are reflective, change-makers, who build solidarity to transform conflict.

A Participatory Model of Leadership Toward Peace

Spreitzer (2007) argued the need for a participatory model to engage in peaceful leadership and business strategies through increasing trade, engaging in two-track diplomacy, and enhancing economic well-being for more collective agency and a shared sense of peaceful action. Spreitzer further discussed the importance of citizens being emboldened to assume an active role in holding their leaders accountable, resulting in perceived justice and decreased incidence of discontent and unrest. This model, present in democratic political systems, can be applied to organizations where employee voices are integrated into decision-making processes.

Models Aligning Personal and Interpersonal Peace

The frameworks above represented peace leadership models that described either personal or interpersonal approaches; first, by identifying embodied skills, competencies, and behaviors that scaffold effective peace leadership, and then by discussing how these attributes are leveraged to foster peaceful engagement with others. Below, the alignment and connection of personal and interpersonal peace are shared through two leadership models. These holistic models acknowledge the importance

of and interplay between individual and collective peace, describing components of self-awareness, connection, mindfulness, and collective action toward peacebuilding at multiple levels.

Conscious Peace Leadership Model

Dinan's (2012) Ubuntu leadership prioritizes a relational model of peace leadership that balances between the many stages of self to global mastery, creating space for collaboration and connection across social, economic, and environmental sectors based on compassion, dignity, and humanity. Drawing from systems and relational theories, and servant and transformational leadership, Dinan utilized this framework in her conscious peace leadership model (2018), which highlights the importance of positive intention, methods, and values; self-awareness; and deep connection with others, all to create harmony, interconnectedness, and the higher evolution of humanity.

Integral Peace Leadership

Conceived by McIntyre Miller and Green (2015) and then honed by McIntyre Miller and colleagues in additional publications, the integral peace leadership framework considers the relationships between four interrelated sectors of peace skills and practices: Innerwork, Knowledge, Community, and Environment. Within these distinct areas, individuals strengthen personal peace practices through self-reflection, apply conflict transformation practices through mindful interaction with others, engage the community in peacebuilding through collective action, and address peace at the systemic and structural levels. At the nexus of this work, peace leadership occurs when individuals and groups are intentionally and actively operating in all four areas. The integral peace leadership framework has been used to study women peace leaders (McIntyre Miller & Alomair, 2019; 2022), school settings, including campus culture and teacher and administrator perceptions (Abdou et al., 2025; McIntyre Miller & Abdou, 2018; McIntyre Miller et al., 2024a), and community-based peace leadership programs in the United States and virtually around the world (McIntyre Miller et al., 2024b; McIntyre Miller et al., 2025).

Peace Leadership as a Chance to Hope

Emerging from the field of leadership studies, and aligning with the work of peace studies, conflict transformation, and peace psychology, peace leadership has been a growing movement to help challenge the negative, doomsday narrative that is prevalent in our world. Peace leadership scholarship does not attempt to ignore or devalue the real concerns about inequity,

conflict, and abuse of power in our world. Rather, peace leadership strives to become a means of fostering hope and finding ways that we can both challenge our world's hardships and strive to build a world that is at peace, both among global peoples and with our planet.

The personal and interpersonal peace practices outlined in this reflective review give us the tools we need as peace leaders to strengthen our own peace leadership practices so that we might be better prepared within ourselves to work with others for peace. The models and frameworks shared here provide us with some structure to help us achieve and implement these peace leadership skills, competencies, and practices. Taken together, we can create spaces of our own and with others where we can grow and develop our abilities to bring peace into the world. The increase in scholarship in peace leadership scholarship and the growing number of training and development programs around the world with a peace leadership focus (McIntyre Miller et al., 2024b; McIntyre Miller et al., 2025; Topuzova & Horseman, 2022), demonstrates that there is a mounting movement of hope that we can do something in our world to bring about peace. Therefore, the advances in peace leadership demonstrate that there are plenty of scholars and practitioner54s who are willing and able to embrace peace leadership as the critical hope we need to bring positive, peaceful change to our world.

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