

Letter of Nomination of Dr. Arnold P. Goldstein for the Nobel Peace Prize 2002

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The undersigned are honoured to nominate Professor Arnold P. Goldstein for the Nobel Peace Prize 2002. For over 35 years Dr. Goldstein has treated, researched, taught and written on the development of pro-social alternatives to aggression. His work has touched and transformed the lives of tens of thousands of individuals, families and schools across the world. He has constructed and refined some of the most sophisticated, yet easily transmitted, programmes of prevention and treatment of aggressive and violent behaviour in children, youth and adults. A list of countries employing Dr. Goldstein's work include Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Sweden, Taiwan, United Kingdom, United States of America. His programmes of treatment are being utilized by parents, teachers, social workers, psychologists of all colours, creeds and ethnicity and represents a major and lasting achievement.

His approach is based upon solid scientific and empirical knowledge gained through systematic research and practice throughout the world. Arnold Goldstein's message is simple. Aggressive behaviour is learned behaviour. It is learned in the same manner as other social behaviour. It is acquired in the home, on the street and in the school through modelling and imitation. It is learned in contexts of coercive interactions between parents and children, between peers, between groups and between nations. Aggression is constantly being demonstrated in all forms of media – in books, comics, television, cinema, video, computer games and the like. Use of aggression is consistently being maintained by membership in street gangs, anti-social networks and political affiliation to extremist organizations. Ultimately, aggression is maintained by its consequences for the user.

However, we now know that aggression is also linked to paucity of social, emotional and cognitive skills. Human beings who are not equipped with fundamental social perceptual and communicative skills are less able to withstand and refrain from aggressive behaviour. Without basic skills in empathy, the ability to understand and accept the rights of others to think, feel and act differently, human beings increase their vulnerability to fall prey both to the politics of confrontation and the culture of violence. In terms of difficulty of treatment, aggression has been likened to drug addiction. Arnold Goldstein has demonstrated repeatedly that aggression can indeed be effectively replaced by learning and using pro-social skill alternatives. His work has effectively and consistently exposed the fallacy that aggression is an unavoidable and innate trait in humans.

Dr. Goldstein has tirelessly challenged the militarization of our children's minds by the media in his lectures, speeches, articles and books. He has consistently championed the need for effective collaboration between school, home and wider community in building robust repertoires of cognitive, emotional and social skills that are required to cope with the challenges of daily life - without resorting to violence. He has provided national educational agencies in America, Asia, Europe and Oceania with an ecological approach that addresses both the physical environmental and social environmental causes and influences of aggressive behaviour. His emphasis upon whole school, community and systemic approaches to

removing and replacing the conditions that foment aggressive behaviour has inspired countless projects and programmes in the above named countries.

Arnold Goldstein's programmes, especially "The Prepare Curriculum" and "Aggression Replacement Training", provide pupils and teachers, prisoners and wardens, children and parents and in reality, all concerned members of the human family with the ability to live peacefully with one another. Importantly they enable us to withstand the barrage of incitements to use force to achieve goals and to avoid one's common human responsibilities. They provide individuals, groups and societies with the tools to critically evaluate their own and others' actions. They are amongst the most effective strategies yet developed in providing our young citizens with the building blocks necessary for mastering the task of fulfilling their individual and social potential.

In the USA, in New York, Dr. Goldstein has directed a state wide task force on violent gangs and in addition provided teachers, social workers and creators of public policy with eminently practical and effective programmes for the prevention and treatment of violence among children, youth and parents. He has directed police training and training of prison officers in how to respond to familial and youth violence without escalating the problem.

He has written over 50 books which have been bought and read by at least 1 million people world wide. He has published over 90 scientific articles in peer reviewed journals. His programmes have been adopted by several countries as first choice treatment and prevention measures in the UK, Netherlands, Poland and the USA.

Despite a life threatening medical condition Arnold Goldstein has recently led an international conference on Aggression Replacement Training in Malmö which attracted over 800 delegates from 20 countries. He has formed an international association for the dissemination of aggression replacement training, ICART and work is already underway to spread knowledge and use of the above programmes to other countries, especially to the Baltic and eastern European countries

The potential implications of Arnold Goldstein's work for the provision of concrete, pedagogical strategies to further the goal of peaceful multi-ethnic and multi-cultural integration are enormous. His approaches inspire creativity in the development of basic social skills, anger reduction and moral reasoning that are open for national, cultural, local and individual variation.

A wise man once said that for the forest to be green each tree must be green. Peaceful co-existence between individuals, groups and indeed nations does not occur automatically. It must be worked at. The events of 2001 have shown that young men and women can, with apparent ease, be recruited to perform the most savage and desperate acts of terrorism. Arnold Goldstein has convincingly demonstrated that such behaviour often begins with early exposure to violence, both direct and by exposure to media violence. We may ask how are we to enable our young citizens to withstand the propaganda of extremists? How can we hinder recruitment to violent gangs and organizations? We are convinced that the acquisition of skills in empathy, interpersonal problem solving, anger control as developed by Dr. Goldstein is a sound beginning.

In the light of recent events we forget, perhaps, that millions of children are exposed every day to terror in the form of violence in the home, bullying and violence in school and in their

local neighbourhoods. Indeed violent death is endemic in young male populations in both advanced, industrialized countries as well as third world countries.

Abstaining from aggression requires skill. It requires effort. Arnold Goldstein's own untiring efforts have provided the human family with concrete and effective strategies that help us all attain this goal. He has done this with patience, humour and a deep understanding of the human condition. We ask that the Nobel Committee give serious attention to his candidature and thereby strengthen a much needed pedagogical approach to achieving peaceful co-existence amongst all members of the human family.

Signature

Luke Moynahan