
Peaceful resolutions are possible



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Rochester is my home. In 30-married years, it is the place I have lived longest. Twice I lived in Tucson; a piece of my heart remains there, a piece broken with the shooting of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and others, including her district director, a friend with whom I worked on human rights issues.

Rochester and Tucson claim differences in landscape, the use of water, the visibility of the sun. Now, we are tied more closely by violence. Yet we always are tied to other places. Ideas, like people, move, evolve,

flourish and transform individuals and societies. What we do in our own backyard affects the world.

While it appears that the alleged shooter was suffering from mental illness (raising the need for early identification and access to treatment), the incident has sparked a much-needed debate about civility.

This horrifying shooting in Tucson reminds us that our efforts to create a city known for peace-building must be sustained for the growth and safety of Rochester, and for the movable, replicable model it may become for places near and far.

Restorative Rochester brings together voluntary organizations using restorative principles and practices. The purpose is the "creation of a restora-

tive community in and around the city of Rochester, N.Y."

The Gandhi Center for Nonviolence and Partners in Restorative Initiatives are two such organizations that teach restorative justice principles, and help implement peaceable practices and policies in schools, the justice systems and our community.

Other peace-promoting efforts touch different facets of life, encouraging viewing conflict as opportunity for growth rather than cause for violence.

Among them are The ACT program, which teaches divorcing parents how to interface in respectful ways to protect the well-being of their children; mediation to resolve, manage or transform conflict; collaborative law which seeks to reduce contentiousness be-

tween parties who opt for respectful problem-solving over litigation; the Commission on Christian-Jewish Relations, The Interfaith Alliance and the Center for Interfaith Studies and Dialogue at Nazareth College, which promote understanding of various religions and how to apply that understanding to problems of inequity in our backyard and global communities.

Many more organizations promote peace, providing us a plethora of opportunities.

For those appalled by the shootings in Tucson and in our own city, know that we can still work to connect — wherever we call home — not by violence but by peace. □

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