

Chapter Nine — Basic Organizational Models For InterGroup

Interactions

There are a number of ways that groups can interact with one another.

People can interact in stress and conflict - and people can interact in Peaceful alignment.

People can oppose each other, and people can collaborate and help each other collectively succeed.

People can choose to be in rigid isolation — and people can choose to blend, meld, and even assimilate until there is only one group in a situation or setting.

There are a wide range of choices for intergroup interaction.

We need to understand each choice for intergroup interaction that is available to us on the functioning continuum of possible interactions.

In order to succeed at The Art of Intergroup Peace, we need to look at each intergroup situation that exists and we need to figure out what levels and what types of intergroup interaction structures, models, and approaches will give us the best chance of achieving and maintaining intergroup Peace in each intergroup setting.

There are multiple variations for interaction that are possible — but they can be distilled down for strategic purposes to eight basic ways that groups can functionally interact. Each type and each approach for interaction has its value and each has its appropriate use.

To achieve Peace in any intergroup setting, it makes sense to determine which of the eight basic approaches is the best fit for that setting.

Those eight approaches exist because they all work in the real world of intergroup interactions.

The list represents approaches that are used now in various settings.

Those commonly used approaches are commonly used and they are included on the intergroup interaction option list because they do work and because they add value to the relevant groups who use them.

Sun Tzu, in *The Art of War*, outlined a number of organizational approaches that can be used by armies as tools to help achieve victory in war settings. He based his list of approaches on models and strategies that are actually used in war. In that same vein, *The Art of Intergroup Peace* outlines and uses an organizational tool kit that contains a continuum of eight basic functional intergroup interaction approaches that can each be used by groups to have a functional relationship with one another.

Most intergroup settings end up using the approaches that their history of interactions has created for the setting. The people who arrange for the specific intergroup approaches tend to stumble into the approaches that seem to be possible in each setting.

The people involved generally don't choose their specific interaction model strategically from an interaction continuum.

They end up using models and approaches that are created by their circumstances and intergroup history of beliefs.

The Art of Intergroup Peace calls for a more deliberate and intentional thought process for choosing the specific intergroup interaction approach for each setting.

Groups should be able to make deliberate choices about the model they use.

Groups that need or want to have a powerful relationship with other groups in a setting should use the model and the interaction approach that works best in the specific context and the actual situation that exists for them as groups.

Each of the eight possible functional approaches on The Art of Peace continuum can be used to achieve and structure a specific degree and type of intergroup interaction.

Alternative Range From Unaligned To Merged

The interaction continuum ranges from complete, unaligned, entirely separate and potentially conflicted status between the groups of people on the far left side of the organizational continuum to building formal and very intentionally structured intergroup alliances in the middle of the continuum and then the list extends to a complete blending and full assimilation of people from all situationally relevant groups on the far right end of the continuum.

Intergroup Interaction Continuum

Minimum Interactions — Moderate Interaction Levels — Maximum Interactions

1. <u>Separation</u> (conflicts, intergroup distrust, stress, or war)	2. <u>Truces</u> (ceasefires, pullbacks, withdrawals)	3. <u>Treaties</u> (Agreements, Understandings)	4. <u>Alliances</u> (and favored status arrangements)	5. <u>Confederation</u> (or tribe/clan configurations)	6. <u>Integration</u> (functional and legal)	7. <u>Mergers</u> (and Consolidations)	8. <u>Assimilation</u> (or Full Blending)
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Each of the approaches included on this continuum has its own value and each has its own utility when it is used in a situation where it makes specific sense as the appropriate choice for the successful and functional interaction between the groups in that setting.

Knowing the full range of options that is available to structure those interactions can make it easier for the people who want to end conflict and create intergroup Peace to select the best option for the actual groups in each relevant setting.

Understanding the full set of potential interaction options is also very useful for looking back at the history of various intergroup interactions in a way that improves understanding about the approaches that have been used by groups in each setting in the past.

Each of the eight interaction options can functionally be used in combination with any of the 12 variable issues of instinctive terrain that were outlined in the first chapters of this book.

Those two sets of factors can be combined to design the situation specific strategies that can work effectively for intergroup alignment in each setting.

The approaches listed on the interaction continuum can obviously also be used in connection with the six approaches for defusing activated us/them instinct that were outlined in Chapter Two. In fact, a couple of the interaction options that are included on this interaction list — truces and ceasefires — also appear as major tools on that us/them instinct de-activation strategy and response list.

Those eight approaches to intergroup interaction can also all be used in strategic linkages with each of the six alignment triggers that bring people together in groups.

When people in a setting select one of the eight interaction approaches, then the six alignment-triggers can be used with the relevant people to increase the likelihood of success for the interaction approach.

Also, for obvious reasons, the choices that are made about which of the interaction options to use should be linked to the six-step culture-building tool kit that is described in the culture use chapter of this book.

For most of the interaction approaches to succeed, it will be important to put in place a culture that helps the people interact most effectively and with the highest likelihood of collective success.

Having the right culture in place can significantly enhance the probability of success.

Creating alignment as a group and basic culture building processes both have obvious relevance and use for several of the interaction options.

Separation, Truce, Treaty, Alliance, Confederation,

Integration, Mergers, And Assimilation

The eight basic functional categories of organizational structure and group interaction options that can be put in place between two or more groups of people are: (1) Separation, (2) Truces, (3) Treaties, (4) Alliances, (5) Confederations, (6) Integration, (7) Mergers, and (8) Assimilation.

Separation is the first option on the list — for various somewhat obvious logistical reasons. Separation clearly involves the lowest level of intergroup interaction.

Separation can actually be a very intentional Peace strategy when it is used to keep groups from fighting by keeping the groups separate from each other.

Separation can protect and enhance intergroup Peace situations when it is a strategic choice and when it is done in the safest and least inflammatory ways.

Full assimilation is at the other extreme of the continuum. That approach also needs to be done well to succeed.

Fully assimilated groups disappear entirely as separate groups. That process also needs to be well understood and well done to give it the greatest chance of success.

Each category of intergroup interaction on the continuum has its own risks, problems, and benefits.

Each approach has its potential use in the right situation and the right setting. It is useful to recognize that even complete separation between groups — the interaction approach that is listed on the far left end extreme edge of the continuum chart — can add value to the right set of groups and can be a good choice for groups to make if the separation between the groups is intentional, not hostile, and if the separation is not accompanied by some on-going levels of functioning and continuing intergroup stress or on-going intergroup conflict between the separate groups.

Full separation that results in conflict and perpetual intergroup stress is a bad choice. Full separation that results in no conflict or stress can be a useful choice.

Each option has the potential to be part of the tool kit for intergroup linkages that can be used to achieve Peace. Those approaches can each be used in a wide range of settings — and they can each have value in a number of ways when they are used.

(1) Separation

The first category on the full continuum of possible intergroup interaction is — for obvious reasons — simple and basic, complete separation of groups by group. In that level of interaction status, groups in any setting are each simply separate groups — each with their own identity, culture, approaches, and agendas.

Separate groups of various kinds can functionally exist near each other with no official, formal, functional, or structured intergroup interaction.

That full separation approach can be the easiest form of interaction between groups because it doesn't require any actual interaction between the

groups. Groups can decide to be Peacefully separate — with no formal and structural interaction at any level between the groups.

Being separate in a deliberate and intentional way doesn't require any structured issue-related contracts, or any structured rules of engagement or non-engagement.

Pure separate status happens for groups in many settings and that status can be a perfectly functional, normal, and Peaceful intergroup situation.

Separate Groups in Close Proximity Tend to Trigger Conflicts

Functioning as entirely separate groups works particularly well if the separate groups do not share turf of any kind, or if they are not locked into permanently adjacent geography. Proximity generally creates various intergroup issues.

The issues that exist for entirely separate groups can be more problematic and potentially troublesome when any set of separate groups find themselves at some levels of close proximity to one another or actually overlap with one another in some way.

Being entirely separate can still generate intergroup problems when the entirely separate groups actually have experienced some levels of

situational InterGroup incidents and have had some negative InterGroup interactions that create negative InterGroup perceptions and reactions.

Because of our intergroup instincts, several kinds of negative intergroup interaction problems can be triggered as a consequence of close geographic proximity between separate groups that results in interactions.

Because we all have our us/them instinct packages in place, interaction between entirely separate but geographically proximate groups is unfortunately too often linked to on-going levels of intergroup distrust, intergroup dislike, or even to actual periodic intergroup conflict.

Us/them instincts can be too easily triggered when people are constantly and personally reminded in various ways of the differences that exist between their “us” and a particular interrelating and geographically proximate “them.”

When two groups do exist in proximity to one another and if the groups have no formal or functional relationship with one another and are not in a state of intergroup conflict at any level — the leaders of both groups can be very well served by deliberately avoiding any situations or circumstances that could trigger any of our us/them instinct packages and any related us/them behaviors for either group.

As outlined in Chapter Two, deliberate avoidance of any behavior that will trigger us/them instincts in a negative way can be a very good strategy for groups in those situations.

When any negative us/them behavior outcomes do begin to happen between separate groups, the separate groups can be well served by looking at the other interaction approaches on the continuum — often beginning with truces or even ceasefires — if the intergroup interactions have reached actual levels of conflict that require a ceasefire before the groups can move toward higher levels of intergroup Peace.

(2) Truces, Ceasefires, And Pullbacks

The second category of interaction on the intergroup alignment continuum is truces, ceasefires, and functional pullbacks or withdrawals of forces.

Those approaches can each be used when groups are interacting with one another and the interaction has escalated in negative ways to actual conflict or to impending conflict.

When groups are in some level of intergroup stress, intergroup conflict, or actual war — the groups can decide to deliberately and

intentionally create functional categories of intergroup interactions that are less conflicted.

Conflict at any level can be damaging, dysfunctional, destructive, and unsettling. Groups often benefit when conflict ends.

There are several standard and commonly used approaches that can end immediate conflict. Truces are a good way of ending conflicts. So are ceasefires and actual troop pullbacks or withdrawals that can be done when another group's turf has been encroached or invaded.

Those types of conflict-ending or stress-mitigating intergroup interactions are generally more formal as an intergroup interaction than simple geographically proximate co-existence.

Those specific kinds of negotiated truce-related interactions that are used in intergroup settings are usually the direct consequence of some level of active conflict between the groups. The approaches used by the groups to stop levels of immediate conflict in each setting tend to be specific to the facts and the circumstances that exist in each conflicted setting.

Truces are fairly common as a tool to use in those kinds of direct intergroup conflict situations. When two parties are in conflict, a common and useful way of ending the current bloodshed and/or reducing the

immediate levels of intergroup damage is for both parties to agree to call a truce.

A truce means that open hostilities between the groups stop for the time included in the truce. Truces can be very time limited and they can also be open-ended. When a truce is in place in any setting, active fighting at least temporarily ends in that setting.

Truces often contain specific agreements about expected behavior levels during the truce. Negative interactions and behaviors that are included as banned behaviors under the terms of the truce can end while the truce is in place.

A truce can be a good thing for groups. A truce can be a particularly good thing when it keeps blood from being spilled and when it keeps conflict from escalating.

Avoiding escalation is generally a good goal to achieve. When conflict escalates in any setting, it can be much harder to end that conflict and to minimize the damage done by the conflict.

A truce can offer significant benefit to a situation when it can keep active intergroup damage from being done, and when it keeps an escalation of hostilities from occurring.

A truce is not Peace, but a truce can help groups move in the direction of Peace. A truce can be an important step on the path to Peace.

A truce can be a formal negotiated and mutually agreed upon cessation of current overt hostile action — but it's generally not a cessation of intergroup hostilities or a permanent resolution of intergroup issues.

Truces are often an important tool to be used as an early step in an actual Peace making process, but a truce is usually not the end of the war or the end of conflict.

People sometimes confuse the two statuses and strategies. Peace is intended to be a permanent ending of hostilities. A truce is a delay in hostilities and a temporary halt in the processes of war and in the active manifestation of intergroup conflict.

So a truce is not the same as a permanent state of Peace, but it can create a temporary status of functional Peace that can lead to permanent Peace.

A truce can be created in times of actual armed conflict. Truces can also be created outside war settings when two groups in a setting — a community or a business or an organization of some kind — agree to stop whatever kind of intergroup fighting and negative actions are happening to

create at least temporary cessation of active hostile actions between the groups.

Ceasefires are a very specific category of truce that are aimed at ending military action at a direct level.

Ceasefires can also be very good things to do. Having shooting stop is a positive outcome. It is good in conflicted settings to stop blood from being shed.

Again — a simple ceasefire in any situation is usually also not a long-term solution for any two groups of people — but it can be a hugely important step in the process.

Other steps are needed to turn a truce, or a ceasefire, into a full cessation of hostilities or into actual Peace, but having a ceasefire can significantly increase the likelihood that the warring parties can create the context where they can negotiate a higher level of Peace.

Pullbacks can also be necessary in some settings.

When any group of people has invaded, intruded, or encroached into another group's geographic or functional turf, pullbacks from that invasion status are often used to end the active hostilities, and reduce conflict levels

in that specific setting. Pullbacks involve one group removing their forces and giving up physical control over another group's turf.

Groups hate having their turf invaded at a functional and instinctive level.

Pullbacks often have more positive impact on intergroup interactions than a simple ceasefire, because pullbacks can reduce the activation of very intense turf protection instincts that exist for any groups whose turf has been invaded.

Pullbacks are also not Peace, but they can also be an important step on the path to Peace in some settings if they are done in ways that enhance the likelihood of Peace being negotiated.

All pullbacks are not military. Pullbacks can also happen in various community settings, where one group of people has felt encroachment in some way by another group of people. Encroachment in a wide range of ways can set up a whole array of negative intergroup instinctive reactions.

Understanding that encroachment of one kind or another is a relevant issue in a setting and can be very important to the intergroup process. In many settings, having groups take both symbolic and functional steps to end

various kinds of encroachment can significantly reduce intergroup conflict emotions and energy levels.

If the goal in a setting is to reach a higher level of Peaceful and positive intergroup interactions, then truces, ceasefires, and pullbacks can all help to create a context where other levels of agreements are more likely to be reached.

It's hard to negotiate many levels of agreements while people are still killing one another or doing active damage to the other group.

(3) Agreements, Treaties, And Understandings

The next step up the alignment interaction continuum between groups is to actually reach agreements on various intergroup issues. Agreements are a widely used intergroup interactions tool.

Agreements can set up more formal intergroup interactions that can involve and include an explicit and codified understanding of some kind about future behaviors and future interactions between the relevant groups.

Agreements are a frequently used way to structure formal intergroup alignments and arrangements that are hard to achieve until the groups have achieved at least a truce or a ceasefire.

Formal agreements can also create the context and the infrastructure for a truce or ceasefire to continue to occur over periods of time.

Groups who want to end at least the current instances of conflict that are happening between themselves can reach situational agreements with one another to end the fighting, and then can use those agreements as part of longer term solutions and approaches that can help resolve issues between the relevant groups.

Basic intergroup agreements can — when they are well done — often functionally resolve some, or all, of the specific issues that have at least situationally triggered the current fighting.

Agreements between groups can be very basic and they can be very complex.

Treaties Can Create An Anchor For Future Peace

Treaties are basically a step up the interaction continuum from a basic agreement. Treaties can be a very positive step up the continuum from agreement toward Peace.

Agreements are key initial steps, however. Agreements are generally needed to start the process. Groups that have reached agreement are groups

that are not at war. Ending war — even temporarily — is a major step toward Peace.

Treaties can build on the agreements that are created. Treaties can be used as a more formal and more detailed level of agreement between groups. Nations often use treaties as a tool to create specific sets of understandings between nations on particular issues.

Written treaties are a very common tool that is used in almost every culture and national setting on the planet to document the agreements that were reached between various nations and between various warring parties.

Treaties can be used to end intergroup fighting, to achieve some understanding about future intergroup interactions, and then to define and codify specific areas of agreement between the parties.

Treaties and agreements can both be very good Peacemaking tools. Really well designed treaties can have a very positive impact on all parties and the very best treaties can create their own categories of intergroup Peace.

Bad treaties, however, can simply delay or disguise the conflict, and some bad agreements can even increase and tee up future conflict levels and prolong current intergroup anger and conflict.

Punitive and revengeful agreements tend to create problems for future Peaceful interactions. Win/win treaties and win/win agreements are the best approach relative to the long-term stability of Peace — because one-sided treaties tend to have one side continue to be angry and one-sided treaties can create on-going issues that continue to motivate and incite at least one group to undermine or somehow destroy the one-sided Peace.

“Understandings” Can Be Useful In Some Settings

In some cases, where the situation that exists doesn't lend itself to a formal, written, and explicitly documented agreement or treaty, then many of that same basic set of conflict abating goals and approaches can be achieved in that setting by creating “understandings.”

When two groups are in a state of conflict inside one of our cities, for example, the actual creation of a treaty might be difficult for a number of reasons, but the creation of an “understanding” that functions as treaty between the groups can have great benefit and can serve the cause of Peace in that setting.

Understandings can be reached between conflicted groups through various communication tools and approaches that can be used when the

hostile actions stop and when new and mutually agreed upon intergroup behaviors replace the prior hostilities and the prior damaging behaviors.

Understandings are often more fragile than a treaty. They can be less effective and less clear than an actual written agreement — but understandings also work very well in specific situations to stop open conflict in a setting. Understandings should be used to structure and support intergroup conflict reduction when agreements and treaties are not possible.

Understandings can directly help prevent bloodshed and understandings can cause pauses, ceasefires, and even pullbacks to occur for both war and for immediate conflict in some settings where a treaty is impossible to achieve.

North and South Korea have functionally had a type of “understanding” for decades — and with both sides understanding where their current functional boundaries are, and both sides understanding what the functionally acceptable behaviors might be that can keep those two armies from clashing with each other in the battlefield with full force of weaponry and arms.

Understandings can be very useful as a tool, depending on the specific situation.

In a given community in this country, local groups might have an understanding on relevant issues like having the head of the school system or the police force, or the majority position on some appointive or elective board, rotating in some agreed upon way between the local ethnic groups who make up the population of a city, a community, or a school district.

Those kinds of intergroup understanding can have the functional effect and the impact of a treaty between those groups of people without going through the same codification and signing processes that a formal treaty or a written agreement entails.

All three of those tools — agreements, treaties, and understandings — can help move a conflicted situation in a positive path toward Peace. Each should be used when the situation in a specific setting calls for that specific tool to be used.

(4) Alliances Create Mutual Support Alignments

The next step toward tighter alignment between groups on the overall interaction alignment continuum goes a step past ceasefires, truces, and even past treaties and creates formal intergroup alliances. Alliances can be a powerful tool for intergroup interactions.

In an alliance, groups agree to aligned behavior to jointly support the shared goals of the alliance.

Alliances can be very useful to create positive and productive on-going intergroup interactions in a collaborative and mutually beneficial way.

The next step up the continuum toward Peace from agreements and arms-length treaties is to create actual functioning alliances between two or more groups. Alliances can extend beyond neutrality and alliances can go far past simply ending hostilities.

The core concept of alliances is for the groups to be allies of one another. Alliances can be mutual support agreements — with the allies in any given situation agreeing to support each other in key, targeted, and generally well defined areas.

NATO – the North Atlantic Treaty Organization – functions as an Alliance that was created by treaties. NATO was originally formed in response to a common enemy and in regard to a collectively perceived shared level of danger.

Now the NATO organization has taken on its own substantial reality and functionality. It continues to give the NATO member organizations a defense tool as allies against external enemies.

Several of the six group alignment triggers that were discussed in the previous chapter are often used to incent groups of people to create alliances. Danger works well to cause people to form alliances. A sense of danger or a mutually perceived common enemy can clearly motivate the existence of alliances, and those triggers can cause alliances to be fostered, structured, and supported.

In some cases, a shared ideology or a common belief system can be a sufficient trigger to put an alliance in place. When people perceive that their groups have common goals or common missions in significant areas, an alliance can be set up to help the groups each achieve those goals.

A positive bi-product of alliances is that when they are appropriately structured, the alliances and their goals can trigger a working internal sense of “us” on key issues for the full set of allies in the alliance.

Alliances can create collective leverage in key areas of activity — like political power or economic influence.

At a national level in this country, we see an emerging Hispanic Alliance that is being created to achieve some of those alliance functions and purposes.

The various groups of people in this country that are labeled Hispanic are actually very different from each other as cultures and ethnicities. Cuban Americans and Mexican Americans do not share the same cultures. Puerto Rican Hispanics and Chilean Hispanics are also two very different groups of people.

There is no “Hispanic” culture for this country. The various cultures that exist do, however, increasingly function as allies of one another for various political and economic purposes.

The truth is that there can be significant political leverage created for all Hispanic groups in an area or in the country when there is the creation of an alliance of Hispanic groups that can function as allies in various ways for collective and mutually supportive political purposes.

All groups in that alliance can benefit in various ways in various settings because the alliance exists and because it does its collective work to create influence.

That alliance doesn't merge those groups of people. Those separate ethnic groups don't blend into one new Hispanic group. They do become allies, however, and that approach can create significant common and collective leverage for the people who are allied under that grouping.

In local American communities, various groups often form alliances of various kinds to influence elections, appointments, and government level decision-making and to create collective economic or political advantage for the groups involved.

Agreements to extend bus lines or to extend subways into areas that serve one or more of the relevant local groups are often more likely to be made into successful projects for communities if they have some level of local multi-group Alliance support.

Community Alliances Can Achieve Community Goals

Getting local groups to collectively support healthy living agendas is a good alliance focus area. Creating significantly healthier activity level logistics for entire communities is an area where alliance thinking can have a significant impact that can bring people together and can create benefits for all groups.

Likewise, getting local groups in each of our communities to collectively support the neuron development and the neuron connectivity levels for all of the very young children from all of our groups should also be looked at as a potential coalescing and high impact agenda for future Alliance approaches, tactics, and strategies.

Those issues and those specific opportunities to do important things collectively for the common good and the mutual benefit of all groups are discussed in more detail in the next chapter of this book. It is clear that creating safe streets, convenient walking areas, and community based transportation functionality are all often made more successful by the creation of Alliances between relevant groups in each setting.

Trade Associations Are Working Alliances

In the American political and governance environment, Trade Associations are an alliance tool that has been used for many years in a specialized and very effective way in this country by a very large number of organizations to influence much of the policy level decision-making that happens in our state and national governments.

Trade Associations are one of the most common alliance format approaches in this country, today. Trade Associations have been created both nationally and in a wide range of local and state settings to bring together the collective influence of multiple entities within an industry or within an interest group in a common course of action, with a common cause for association members who associate because they collectively want to

influence the laws, the rules, and the regulations that affect members of the group.

There are literally thousands of functioning and staffed Trade Associations in our states and in our national capital. Some of those Associations are massive and can be highly influential.

The American Medical Association has long been a significant power in American politics, for example. Medical practitioners who may actually compete with each other very directly for patients in their own individual daily workplace settings can use the AMA trade association's structure to function as a collective alliance to band together in Washington to speak with a common voice on issues that affect physicians at a more macro level.

Likewise, the pharmaceutical manufacturers and the airlines of America all tend to compete fiercely with one another in the marketplace and those manufacturers and industries also still find that their industry can be well served for many issues if they also function as an Alliance through their trade associations on issues of policy, law, and regulation.

Labor unions — who each have their own direct political voice in each setting — also tend to find that their collective influence can sometimes

be enhanced by functioning in some ways as a national or regional coalition of unions to make their positions collectively known.

The number of trade Associations that exist in this country and that deliberately function as Alliances is very large. The skill set that is needed to successfully run and govern some of those Associations looks very much, in many ways, like the skill sets that are often needed for community leaders to achieve local Peace in diverse and complex community settings.

Political parties also sometimes function as Alliances and those parties can also achieve and exercise both power and influence through the strength of their political alliance types of efforts.

Political parties can be a very effective alliance tool — and the people who run the parties who want to personally be political successes are highly motivated to have those political party-linked alliances succeed.

Leaders of political parties often try to get their supporters and their party members collectively aligned on particular issues. That can be challenging work, but that kind of political alignment has obvious impact and influence when it succeeds.

People both join and manage political parties to function in the context of an alliance.

One challenge that can exist for political party leaders in some settings can be to figure out what levels of alliance activity and allied beliefs can give them both the highest level of support from their own party members, and also receive the broadest level of support from the general public when elections determine, through voting levels, whether or not their party will be in power.

Leadership of those political alliances is also both a skillset and an art form — because the political positions that create the most positive energy from some party members may not be the political positions that also attract a majority of total voters when elections are held.

Leading political parties can be difficult work. When the process works really well, we can end up with public policies that meet the needs of the public and that have been refined, improved, and enhanced in the context of a robust multi-level interactive political debate and feedback process.

When the process goes really badly, we can end up with confused and conflicted policy leaders who are addicted to Alpha status, but don't have a clear agenda for actual leadership and who work hard to damage one another.

When the political process goes badly, it can result in various levels of us/them intergroup conflict that can trigger and activate many of our more negative us/them instinctive reactions and behaviors, and bring levels of conflict them to the political arena.

In a very worst-case situation, the political process deteriorates from a focus on contending and competing public policy strategies into very low levels of primarily instinctive us/them values and us/them behaviors, with political leaders deliberately demonizing and even dehumanizing the other party in an effort to trigger us/them instinctive reactions with voters in ways that will win elections.

The overall political alliance process that we have invented for our country can create great government when it succeeds and it can create dysfunctional, primal, and even damaging anger and conflict when it fails. In either case, the organizational model that is used in the process is to form political party level alliances.

The trade associations who influence so much of the policy making in this country face many of the same issues. They also are subject to the same sets of instinctive behaviors.

All of the levels of alignment triggers that were described in Chapter Seven are used regularly, by the people who lead Associations, to bring the people in each association together. A sense of collective danger can create alliances and can improve support for trade associations.

Common enemies and possible collective gain both very directly enhance support for those same alliances.

A sense of shared mission can obviously trigger some alliance support. All of those alignment factors can create a sense of being an “us,” who needs the support of other “us” to survive or succeed as a trade association.

Some of the public membership groups that influence public policy in this country are also based entirely on people supporting a common cause — like environmental protection or equal rights for some segments of the population.

People who join environmental groups to have higher levels of collective influence also, very often, create a sense of “us” with other members of their group.

Each of the various public policy community organizations ends up with its own hierarchy, its own sense of turf, and its own sense of shared mission and group identity.

People who have joined together in the context of an actual trade association tend to overlook or set aside some of the prior differences between their organizations in the interest of their common mission.

Probably the most common alignment factor that is used to bring people and organizations into Alliance membership as a trade association or as a public policy coalition group is simply the presence of a defined and perceived common enemy. That common enemy trigger functions as a high energy unifying force for political party members, public policy coalitions, and trade alliance members — giving them all a factor to be allied against.

Alliances are a good tool kit to understand and utilize selectively in the right situations as we work to create and sustain Peace.

(5) Confederations Create Tighter Collective Alignment

The next step up the Interaction Alignment Continuum from alliances toward tighter intergroup interaction levels is the Confederation. That particular model has its own distinct and very useful characteristics.

The confederation approach has had very useful and significant impact in a number of settings around the world because that approach works with some of our tribal instincts and with our us/them instincts in very functional ways.

Confederation resembles alliances, but the model goes a step further because the members of a confederation typically agree to form, join, and be part of a common confederated umbrella entity of some kind.

The usual pattern is that each of the confederated parties maintains their own separate status at one level, but they generally each cede some of their own actual current power to the confederation on some relevant issues and selected functions.

Ceding actual power on selective issues to a confederation takes confederations a step past alliances. Allies almost always have the option of ending and leaving an alliance, and Allies each tend to maintain their own complete and individual autonomy.

Allies and signatories to agreements and treaties generally do not have functional power over one another at any level.

Alliances guide behavior and can structure various activities for members, but they generally can't impose behaviors on alliance members in

any functional way. A confederation goes a step further — and that additional process usually creates an infrastructure and governance approach for the confederation that has some actual governance roles and functional rules that apply to all members.

A Confederation generally moves past alliance to form an overall organization of some kind that contains and involves the confederated members as functioning and at least semi-autonomous sub-units within the whole confederation.

That model has been used historically in a number of traditional tribal settings. It has been the basic model used in many settings where clans are part of the tribal structure.

One of the most common and often very successful versions of the confederation approach has been to have clearly defined clans inside each tribe who function both as clans and as confederation members. The clans each have their own turf, their own identity, and their own local governance, but they also cede some powers to the senior tribal leader and to the senior governance of the tribe.

The clans of Scotland came to mind as a good example of that approach. So do the clans of the Bogandan nation within Uganda.

In each of those tribal settings, the clans continue to exist and clans self-govern in many ways, but the clans also cede some power and some basic governance and direction setting to the confederation structure at the tribal level.

We have used the confederation model very directly in our own country.

The United States of America was originally set up to actually be a confederation of states, rather than a single nation with clear national powers. That initial confederation of states was defined to have a legal status that also kept major governance for most powers reserved to the states.

The Articles of Confederation that were developed and used after the Revolutionary War defined both the roles of the independent states and the roles and rules of the National confederation.

That original, very pure, confederation model for this country evolved relatively quickly into another confederation-like approach that now functions as the United States of America.

The term “United States” that we use as our national name implies the existence of separate states that have agreed to unite.

One reason for the evolution of our national governance model from the original Articles of Confederation into a stronger version of confederation, was that the initial member states perceived a need to be better protected against a common external enemy and the original member states believed that a more national approach to governance would help create that protection.

The original confederation model wasn't entirely abandoned when the new United States of America National Constitution was created — and it was made clear in the writing of the key founding documents that some of the functions and the powers that were originally held by the states when they were functioning as separate countries and when each state still had full local autonomy on all local issues continue to remain as governance powers that are held by the states, today.

States in this country are not allowed to secede from the new national American Union. We resolved that issue with a civil war.

But states in this country can and do clearly still set up their own laws on a wide range of legal issues. Our national government creates laws in a number of areas that apply to all citizens — and there are clear national rights that apply to the citizens in all of the states, but there are also some

areas where the laws are set by the states, and laws in those areas can only be set by the states.

That makes our country a kind of confederation.

Switzerland is a Successful Confederation

Switzerland and Canada also both function as types of confederation. Each of the provinces in Canada writes its own laws on a variety of topics. Those processes are potentially able to split off from Canada and become independent nations if the people decide in a province that the path of separation is the right path for the province.

The citizens of Quebec have held elections on that very issue. They have not voted to separate — but they do periodically make that topic of separation into a self-governing nation a subject for the local electorate to address.

The provinces of Canada each function as part of the nation of Canada — and each have major areas where they create their own laws and govern their own people.

Switzerland may be the best example of a well functioning and very long-standing confederation in the world. Switzerland is a nation that functions very clearly and very intentionally as a confederation of Cantons

— or local states. Each Canton in Switzerland has its own official and preferred language. Each Canton sets its own local laws in a wide range of areas.

The National Swiss government and the Canton specific governance units are all elected by the people. The Swiss use a democratic approach for both the government of the cantons and for the national government. The elections are decided by popular votes.

Each citizen of Switzerland has the same freedom, the same protection of all Swiss laws, and the same right to vote and be heard regardless of their ethnicity, or place of residence.

There are three fundamental categories of Swiss citizens — German speaking Swiss, French speaking Swiss and Italian speaking Swiss.

Those citizens in all Cantons are all Swiss — but the reality is that those three original and separate Swiss tribes have never assimilated or merged with each other. The people in each Canton continue to exist side by side as separate ethnic groups and as separate language groups inside Switzerland.

The Cantons have equal status on selected issues and all Swiss citizens also have equal status under the law, regardless of where they are in the country.

Each area has its own clear and institutionalized preference for its own culture and its own language, and the Cantons carefully preserve and protect that specific legacy and approach for each group.

People who are German Swiss can move to the territory of French Swiss or Italian Swiss and have full rights to own property, be employed, and vote in the local elections.

Each Canton has its own identity, its own culture, and its ability to govern itself in key areas. So the Canton model in Switzerland has both retained major areas of local differences between tribal groups of people, and the Swiss have simultaneously created a functioning nation that protects all of its citizens' rights and safety, and then also does very effectively the things that a nation needs to do as a nation when National economic or National defense issues need to be addressed on behalf of the entire Swiss people.

A couple of other European countries follow a similar multi-language organizational model — with both a local ethnicity approach for governance and an overall national status for all groups of people.

Belgium is legally one country — and it is also officially, historically, and functionally split into two major self-governing populations — the Flemish and the Walloons. Each group in the Belgium confederation proudly and sometimes aggressively maintains its own culture, its own geographic base, and its own separate language.

One of the legacy languages used in Belgium is based on German and the other legacy language in the country is based on French. There seems to be little or no interest by either legacy group in Belgium in blending into a single shared national language or into a single Belgium-centered national culture.

Belgium has had and still has some significant tensions between those two groups. Those tensions have existed for a very long time.

Some people who know the country well predict that Belgium will ultimately split into two separate parts along ethnic lines and will become two separate, divided, and linguistically pure countries at some point in time.

That could happen. There are quite a few people in Belgium who believe that a split into two countries would be a good thing to do. There are others who very much want Belgium to continue to function as a single nation.

The momentum for decision-making in those situations where people in a country want to spin off a piece of the country generally favors the status quo because separation is so hard to do and because separation into two separate ethnicity defined nations is not generally supported by other countries across the planet for all of the reasons that were mentioned in Chapter Four relative to internal diversity issues in other countries.

As in Switzerland and Canada, the separate groups in Belgium have strong linkages to their separate languages. The language differences between the two groups tend to help each group identify itself to itself, and the language difference also helps each group to differentiate itself from the other group.

The Confederation Model Can Support Multi-Language Countries

That point about those nations having more than one language and still functioning as a nation is mentioned in this chapter on organizational

approaches that can be used for intergroup interactions because the multi-language nations who have succeeded and survived over time and who have not destroyed themselves with internal conflict have addressed that specific key issue in ways that honor and protect the language of each group.

A tendency to split into separate parts based on each group language is a major concern in every multi-lingual setting and always needs to be addressed through the strategies that are used for intergroup interactions in each setting.

The internal tribes in any setting that have language differences obviously experience periodic flare-ups of the same patterns of instinct-driven us/them energy levels and emotions in all of the countries where those language and tribal differences exist.

Cantons Might Be Useful in Nigeria, Syria, or Pakistan

Switzerland has been the most successful user of that formal tribe-centered confederation model in the world. That separate local language model has survived in the Cantons of Switzerland for centuries. It clearly has great functional value to create local intergroup Peace. Other countries should study that model carefully.

Using that confederation model — or something very much like it — might be the only way that some other highly ethnically diverse and ethnically divided countries — like Nigeria or Pakistan — could also manage to survive as nations over extended periods of time.

If each of the major tribal groups in the Congo had its own Canton — and if the civil rights of all of the individual people of the Congo from all of the local minority tribes were carefully protected in important ways by some kind of central government oversight mechanism — and if an effective protection process for civil rights existed that would be in force for all people in the country regardless of the Congolese Canton that each person from each tribe chose to live in or visit — then that level of confederation based governance functionality could finally lay to rest some of the local intergroup bloodshed that happens far too often in far too many of these countries now.

If those multi-tribal, multi-ethnic countries moved carefully to a canton-like confederation model, those multi-tribal multi-ethnic countries could continue to function as countries at one level — but they could simultaneously use the Canton mechanism and structure to give the local tribes who are both angry and conflicted today enough self-governance and

local autonomy to meet their needs as tribes and actually enable them to function as tribes without hurting other people.

Individual Safety And Rights Would Need To Be Protected

That would not be easy to do. It could be done — but there would be some real risks involved for some of the people.

Changing to a Canton-like model in those settings would require some enlightened agreement about the rights of individual people in each new Canton, and it would need to protect the rights and the security of minority tribes in all of the Cantons in each of those countries.

Those rights could all be defined. They are pretty basic. That work is possible to do. The challenge in each new Canton setting would be to enforce those rights and protections for everyone as they are defined.

That Canton-based process would take tribal leaders in each setting who are collectively committed to actual Peace, and it would probably also require some level of United Nations oversight through at least a transition time frame for each setting.

The United Nations could create a process that puts the right pieces in place in every setting that decides to become a confederation. All parties in

those countries would need to agree to use the UN and the UN template to help do that work.

That work — or something like it — needs to be done in a number of settings. The current multi-tribal model is failing in far too many internally conflicted settings for us not to explore functional alternatives. People are dying every day in intertribal conflicts.

Countries with significant intertribal war today need to evolve into a win/win set of solutions that reflects Canton-like autonomy and also provides Canton-like civil rights protections and safety protections for various tribes in local settings in each country.

Dividing Multi-Tribe Nations Into Separate Nations Could

Create Major Negative Repercussions

That suggestion is not made lightly.

Simply splitting those nations into entirely separate countries by tribe might be possible in many of those settings. That could be the right solution for many settings. But that level of functional separation into entirely separate and autonomous tribal nations would create its own set of highly negative local issues and tee up obvious dangers for many local minority people in countries like Nigeria, Pakistan or Sri Lanka.

The United Nations could and should also play a role in both defining those protections and helping people both set them up and make them real.

Personal Safety Would Be Key

Personal safety for individual people who would find themselves in local minority status in various parts of each country after the separation process would be the key concern relative to complete separation of those countries into pure tribal states.

The ability to protect the status and safety of minority people in each of the new tribal nations and the new canton settings could be impaired significantly if each tribe ran its own turf with full local tribal power and full local tribal authority and if each tribe that gains power in a setting could simply exercise full law enforcement authority over everyone local with no civil rights screens, no personal protections, and no oversight role for the minority people who would inevitably need to live in each of those new tribal nations.

Centuries of intergroup anger and intergroup discrimination could cause people who are the new leaders of any new tribal nations to take revenge against minority people in their settings who have had a history of doing negative things to their tribe in prior years and times.

Minority people in any kinds of new ethnic majority settings can often find themselves at huge personal risk just because they are a local ethnic minority — so any division into more local tribal governance situations would need to take explicit and effective steps to reduce that risk.

The danger of revenge-focused behavior is not a hypothetical concern. There is very real ethnic cleansing going on today to a significant degree in quite a few of those settings now.

Syria has almost a million ethnic refugees today. There are major refugee camps in dozens of settings in Africa and Asia.

Some of those people who have been oppressed and damaged in that setting will want revenge if the opportunity becomes available to them. That set of intergroup, us/them motivated behaviors is likely to get significantly more dangerous for local minority people if a division of those nations into separate tribal nations creates full local tribal autonomy with police power linked to us/them instinctive behaviors.

That is why creating Swiss style Cantons with full legal protection for all local minorities in each of those multi-ethnic nations in the context of an overall national government and legal process that could enforce and

administer protection when protection is needed for minority people in each Canton — like tribal state could work in many settings.

The Swiss approach works well for the Swiss because it includes and involves rules that protect people's safety, and rules that very deliberately protect people's civil rights.

That Canton model could be a much better outcome for many multi-tribal areas than the purely tribal path many of these countries are on today, but it will take a well structured transition to get to that status.

The United Nations could and should set up both a confederation model set of guidelines and a template for minority group safeguards that could be used by those Canton-based countries — with actual U.N. protection used in some places for transitional protection as the new model is put in place.

The issues of using confederation as an alignment model for people are somewhat less relevant for groups in the United States at this point in time. But that approach is not entirely irrelevant to us. As noted earlier, the power of each state in this country to perform local governance on a number of issues is actually growing right now. The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights provide a national infrastructure that can be an offset and counter to

any threats to American freedom from any group that achieves power at the level of each state and then has its own us/them instincts negatively activated in any state setting.

Our country has key and functional confederation components today. We need to clearly understand the areas where we function as a confederation, and we need to be sure that those areas also help us achieve intergroup Peace rather than hinder and obstruct intergroup Peace.

For other countries, confederation is a good model to use in the right settings because it recognizes the reality of intergroup divisions and it definitions and incorporates those instinct-impacted groups into an effective collaboration rather than just continuing complete division between the groups.

(6) Integration

The next step up the scale on the intergroup interaction continuum from confederation is functional integration. Integration is not the same as either merger or assimilation — the next steps for intergroup interaction — but integration does create a very direct on-going level of direct interaction between people and between groups of people.

Integration keeps people in their separate group, but integrates the activities and the opportunities for all people from all groups and creates joint access to all functionality by all groups.

Integration also creates open interactions between members of each group. We have used the integration model extensively in the U.S. We decided in the second half of the last century to “integrate” America. We have had partial success.

In our broader society, we have not actually merged our legacy ethnic groups and we have not merged our racial groups — but we have consistently been putting in place a number of processes, approaches, rule sets, guideline, and functional realities that are very deliberately intended to integrate people in important ways into schools, work sites, and public settings from each and every group.

Integration at multiple levels has been a very deliberate and clear policy goal for America for the past half century. That was a change of direction from our historical approach. We moved from intentional segregation to intentional integration as our interaction strategy. Many of our older laws were used to support, endorse, and even require intergroup segregation. We have evolved over several decades to very deliberately replace mandated segregation with mandated integration.

Integration for many activities is now required by law — with people from every group given equal access to schools, equal access to jobs, equal access to public facilities, and equal rights relative to the purchase and ownership of property.

Integration functionality at the individual level means that the work sites, schools, and other functional parts of society that used to be deliberately and officially segregated by race or ethnicities are no longer segregated in those ways.

We still do some functional segregation for all of the instinctive reasons and historical realities that are described at multiple places in this book, but we no longer legally mandate and impose segregation.

Integration is now the law of the land for many clearly defined aspects of life in America. It is now illegal to discriminate in hiring people. It is also illegal when we are selling things to people to discriminate by race, gender, gender preference, age, or ethnicities in any part of the selling process.

These laws are not perfect, but they have had huge impact on intergroup behaviors and on hiring practices for many people. Deliberate and structural segregation is now illegal. Integration now happens — often imperfectly — but with great regularity and full legal support.

As we figure out how to create Peace at this point in time for our country, one of the functional tools that we now have to help us move in that direction are all of the laws and regulations that have been passed that create, require, define, and support integration.

We need to be sure that our integration and anti-discrimination laws meet our needs and we need to become extremely competent in our integration efforts and approaches, and in our application of those laws.

As this book has described in a number of places, one of the best ways of guaranteeing that newly enlightened behaviors become our new normal set of behaviors and are not lost in the backlash of periodic instinct re-activation, is to write the new behaviors into our laws.

Education is good. Teaching is good. Cultural belief enlightenment is good. Laws that stay in place are even better — when it comes to guaranteeing the survival and the continuation of the new enlightened behaviors.

The natural tendency of people from all groups to have a high level of comfort in being with other people like ourselves can skew employment practices in any setting away from integration if we simply allow instinctively natural behavior to guide our hiring actions.

Requirements to not discriminate are sometimes needed to keep discrimination from being the behavior that people return to from pure instinctive comfort. Anti-discrimination laws fit that category of strategy that offsets instinctively comfortable behaviors.

Chapter Fourteen of this book describes the instincts we have to feel comfort in being surrounded by “us,” and the stress and the discomfort we can feel whenever we are surrounded by whoever we perceive to be “Them.”

That package of instinctive reactions by each of us can make it very hard for anyone who is the first person from any group to integrate any setting — and it can trigger a sense of stress anytime we are in a situation of minority status for significant periods of time.

Those instinct packages all make integration more difficult.

(7) Mergers and Consolidations

Mergers create even tighter levels of intergroup alignment than integration. When people want to move beyond integration into a higher level of intergroup interaction, merging the relevant groups or organizations can meet that goal.

The next step up the Interaction Alignment Continuum that goes beyond alliances and goes well past simple confederations as a way of aligning two or more groups is actual merger.

Mergers happen. Companies merge with one another. Some religious groups merge with one another. Trade Associations merge with one another — particularly in cases where the trade associations already have both overlapping membership and joint members before the merger.

Labor unions merge with one another. So do some political parties.

Mergers are a tool that groups use to direct their future relationship with other groups, with the goal of being a single group, when the merger process is complete.

Merger goes beyond confederation into forming a new single merged entity with a single hierarchy, a single chain of command and a common name for the merged organization. Newly merged entities each tend to develop their own cultures that are specific to the new merged entity and they tend to do that very soon after the mergers become a functional reality.

Corporate mergers or acquisitions often take organizations that each had their own history and their own culture and put them into a new

functional reality where the culture and the structure both need to change into the new reality and into the new belief system of the merged entity.

Many kinds of mergers happen in our country today. They can be a good functional way of creating permanent alignment and a permanent sense of common agenda and common good within merged entities.

The most skilled business leaders in corporate merger settings use the sets of tools outlined in this book to create internal alignment and to build functioning post-merger cultures. The most skillful of leaders set up their own internal cultures and internal alignment approaches in ways that help each business achieve its own functional goals.

Those tools are easily diverted to that use by businesses when business leaders know how to use them. That culture-building work is particularly useful to do after a merger because the merged entities or organizations each had their own culture and there is almost always immediate confusion when a merger happens about what the new culture of the merged organization will be.

The best leaders in merger situations avoid cultural confusion, cultural ambiguity, cultural dissonance, and conflict and intercultural stress by using the kinds of culture creation and implementation tools that are listed in this

book to put a new culture in place that meets the needs of the merged organization.

Mergers, as an alignment tool, are not likely to be relevant to very many of the key ethnic issues here or in any country, however.

It is hard to merge races or ethnicities. We will not use formal mergers to deal with basic racial or ethnic issues in the country because there is no practical way to officially merge multiple entire ethnic groups, as groups, into a new blended ethnic group.

As groups work together to create the new set of collaborative cultures we need to achieve Peace, we will, however, see increased alignment on key values between cultures and that will constitute a form of culture merger on some issues and behaviors.

At a personal level, obviously, the increased the levels of intermarriage that are happening between people from our various racial and ethnic groups will create its own momentum toward ethnic group blending in ways that will function like a merger for some sets of people.

Multi-ethnic, “mixed” marriages create their own level of merger. That also is an area where we need to be better as a country in helping

people in a multi-ethnic situation find inclusion in an “us” that feels right to each of the relevant people.

The book, *Cusp of Chaos*, deals with some of the intermarriage issues and the opportunities they create.

The mass media, and a wide array of blended popular culture activities, will also point us toward a shared set of culture beliefs and approaches in many areas.

It is possible that the collective momentum that is generated from weaving together multiple elements of our increasingly diverse popular culture will create some merger-like consequences — but the process of blending the blessings of our cultures will not actually merge any of our separate groups into a new ethnicity.

(8) Assimilation

The interaction category listed on the far right hand category on the Interaction Alignment Continuum is full assimilation — the blending of various separate groups into a single amorphous fully assimilated new group.

Assimilation does happen. Assimilation is a full step past either integration or merger — because the people who are integrated are still part

of their original groups and are interacting with each other in an integrated way as individuals.

In a merger, there are usually major echoes of the former groups that continue to exist in the merged entity in various ways. But when full assimilation happens, the old separate groups basically disappear and they are functionally replaced by the assimilated group.

Assimilation happens. We have seen it happen in our country. We have done it in this country in several ways.

The various historic legacy Euro-American tribal groups all basically blended — after roughly one generation in this country — into White. White is an assimilated group. Chapter Seven of this book describes that blending process.

Likewise — the people who are descended from all of the various categories of old and very separate tribes and separate ethnic groups who lived in Africa have also basically blended in this country into Black.

The African Americans are no longer Ibo or Zulu. African Americans who share ancestry from Africa have — in this country — usually blended into a group labeled Black American.

That assimilation process has only happened to those groups of people in this country.

In each of the legacy countries that exist for all of those people from both Africa and Europe — that blending into a single new skin-color based ethnic group in the old world countries actually has not happened. That blending into a racial group doesn't exist today for the people who still live in those ancestral countries on either continent. Each country in Africa and each country in Europe still uses their local legacy tribal labels for all of their people — and the laws in some of those countries still tie political and legal rights to those very specific ancestral identities.

That blending into those two groups only happened to the people from those countries who moved to this country. That blending of multiple ethnic groups from Europe and Africa into those two macro American group categories is both true and real in the U.S. today, however.

Some people who are black and some people who are white still do hold some links to their personal ancestors specific legacy ancestral tribes from Europe or Africa. But the assimilation of both Black and White Americans into those two new blended categories of people tends to be pretty consistent and functionally complete.

Asian American and Hispanic Have Not Blended

As noted earlier, not all various legacy groups who immigrated to this country have blended or assimilated into new combined categories or into a new collective and aggregated ethnic definition in this country.

We do use some group names that can mislead people into believing that other levels of assimilation have happened for other sets of people in this country. Those labels are misleading.

Our Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans and Native Americans have not blended in the same way we have seen blending for Black and White Americans. The collective strategic choices that exist today for each of the Hispanic groups in this country that were mentioned earlier in this chapter were included under the heading of forming and using Alliances as an intergroup interaction model.

The likely future for our various Hispanic Americans does not include blending the Hispanic groups into a single new group as part of any strategy or any future that will happen for those groups.

We clearly need to understand the other major macro group labels that we use for the groups of Americans that reflect other sets of non-African and non-European legacies. For reporting purposes and for much of our media

coverage and our political debate, we do label some people as Asian American and some people as Native American and we label a number of people as Hispanic.

Those specific categories represent widely used group labels. Those labels are often part of the political debate in this country at several levels.

Those labels actually do not represent any level of functional group assimilation or any real blending for the groups of people in each of those categories.

None of the legacy groups that fall under those general categories have actually merged into a single new group that uses that aggregate new label to describe themselves or to organize themselves.

Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, And Asian Americans

Are Not Blended Groups

Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans still tend to identify more closely with their own very specific ethnic subgroup rather than feeling as though they have somehow blended into a new composite category of people with a new aggregate group label.

As noted earlier, in the discussion of Alliances, we do use the term Hispanic or Latino to label various sets of people who speak Spanish today

or who have ancestors who once spoke Spanish. We use those particular grouping names approach to collectively describe those groups of people fairly often.

But that use of the Hispanic label doesn't create or represent an assimilated set of Hispanic people. People who fit that aggregate definition sometimes find that collective labeling process useful in a number of ways, but that isn't how each subgroup included under that aggregate label actually defines itself.

Mexican Americans, Cuban Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Panamanians all tend to link their own personal identity to their specific legacy country.

The term Hispanic in Miami refers to a very different ethnic group than the term Hispanic in San Diego or the Hispanic group in East Harlem. The groups have different histories, different cultures, and different functional and economic realities.

From the perspective of the group alignment continuum choices listed above in this chapter, that particular macro ethnic alignment that does exist today for Hispanic peoples in this country is actually generally closer at this point in time to either affiliation or to alliance as a group-linking tool.

That intergroup interaction for all of the Hispanic groups functions as an alliance in some ways because the various subgroups within the Hispanic population tend to have very distinctive histories and cultures, and the people in those cultures continue to have separate identities by group.

That is true — but it is also true that there are clearly some political areas where having joint leverage under the Hispanic label can be useful for each legacy group.

Political leaders who want to influence the Hispanic vote are often more willing to be inclusive and supportive in key areas because of the sense that there actually is a relevant Hispanic vote. That vote is more of an alliance than assimilation.

Cuban Americans and Mexican Americans obviously each have their own very clear identities, histories, and internal alignments. So do Puerto Ricans. People from the various Hispanic groups are increasingly aligned on political issues, however, and that can create a reason for an alliance.

Looking at the six triggers that we can use to create alignment for people, the prospect of mutual gain is a clear and current motivator for some level of Hispanic alignment. The existence of a common enemy can also function as a powerful alignment trigger for Hispanic groups of people.

The issues of immigration reform, in particular, tend to create alignment for the various Hispanic groups against the people who are perceived to be a common enemy to various Hispanic groups on those issues.

So common enemies and shared opportunity and gain can create alignments for our Hispanic citizens at some levels — but those features do not — like Whites and Blacks in this country — create assimilation as Hispanics.

Native American Tribes Are Intact As Well

Likewise, our Native American tribal groups have not assimilated. Each of the original tribes tends to keep its own tribal identities and its own tribal geographic turf.

The distinctions between tribes continue to be both clear and clearly enforced. Members of the Cree Nation are not simultaneously Navajo, Sioux, or Cherokee. Each tribe has its own reservations, its own turf, its own hierarchy, and its own history.

Those Native American legacy tribes have not assimilated and they also have not merged. Alliances do happen. Again — as with our Hispanic groups of people, there are often a number of very valid reasons to create

situational alignment as an aggregate group for Native American tribes, however.

The same sets of triggers on the alignment pyramid apply to our Native American groups.

Again, common enemies to all tribes do exist relative to some issues and the common gain potential that exists for all tribes in other areas does create levels of alliance functionality for our Native American people.

The alliances that result from that shared need tend to resemble more closely the collective functions of the Trade Associations that were also mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The label Native American has use in multiple settings, but it isn't a label that indicates any level of assimilation, and it also isn't the primary label most Native Americans use to define themselves.

Asian American Groups Are Not Merging

The same is true for the Asian Americans.

Asian Americans have also clearly not assimilated into or merged any of their specific component groups in this country. Asian American is another very specific category used by various government reporting forms,

but that blended label doesn't actually represent the identity label for any group of people in any functional way in this country.

The very specific Asian American intergroup differentiations and identities that continue to exist in this country today for each Asian legacy group are equally clear and equally powerful.

Both state and federal government actions do label people from a wide range of legacy groups as Asian American. Sometimes the category used for reporting for some forms is now "Asian and Pacific Islander." That further increases the confusion levels about valid and informative use of those labels.

Anyone who thinks of Japanese American, Chinese American, and Korean American as being one new melded Asian American ethnic group, or who believes that assimilation of any kind between any of those groups is happening at any level, can quickly learn the reality of that situation by talking to actual people from any of those actual groups of people.

In many cases, the specific groups included in that blended category actually harbor historic animosities against one another in ways that make current assimilation non-existent and future assimilation highly improbable.

Alliances on some issues under that label do exist for some purposes, but the differences between the groups under that label are significant enough that the actual benefits that result from mutual effort in a formal or informal alliance under that label are not very significant.

Neither assimilation nor alliance is happening at any significant national level for Asian American groups in this country and both of those interaction levels are highly unlikely to happen at any time in the future.

Intermarriage for various Asian Americans does happen with a high level of frequency, but it is usually intermarriage with White, Black, or Hispanic Americans and it is very seldom intermarriage between the various Asian legacy groups.

Various Sets Of Immigrants Are Creating Functional Identities

Likewise, the blending of people in this country who have Middle Eastern ancestry into one Middle Eastern category makes no sense as a functional label. Each of the various groups who make up that category have very clear and very separate identities.

The people from Iran, the people from Egypt, and the people from Israel all very clearly have their own legacy alignments and identity — and

thinking of those groups as having somehow blended into a group that can be accurately given an accurate Middle Eastern label have very little functional use as a naming strategy.

The fact that immigrants from some of those nations tend to be Muslim does create its own set of alliances that could become increasingly relevant in a number of settings.

Those particular sets of labels are all mentioned in this chapter under the intergroup interaction category of “Assimilation” because there are some people who believe that we can think of people in all of those categories as having some degree of Assimilation in this country. That thinking would be wrong.

The Labels Trigger Checklists

Those sets of labels tend to be confusing. They are actually useful in a very simplistic and sometimes misleading way for some government record keeping.

The U.S. Government officially lists people as Asian American, Native American, Hispanic, or Middle Eastern for checklist purposes for various reporting categories.

It was better to have that information about groups of people for some purposes than it would have been not to have that particular set of information about our diversity.

Those labels give us a generic sense of how diverse some areas of our country are — but they generally tell us almost nothing about the specific realities of our diversity in those places and settings. The separate ethnic and racial groups that make up the component parts of each of those reporting categories are clearly not adequately described by those simplistic macro labels. It would be a major mistake to think that those labels point in any way to assimilation by group. Assimilation for groups included in those labels is clearly not likely to happen for any of those people beyond the point where assimilation has already been accomplished.

However, as noted earlier, White Americans and Black Americans have actually created more of a true assimilation process.

But even within those two major subgroups, there are some significant subsets of people that do not feel assimilated into the macro label for their group. There are a number of key subsets under each of those categories that are very relevant to the people in those categories.

We need to deal with that diversity even within those categories as we celebrate the overall diversity of the people of the United States.

America is a Mosaic of Peoples

The truth is — we are a mosaic of peoples — with a variety of legacy ethnicities, cultures, and even races. We have chosen to use a mixture of all eight of the organizational models for intergroup interaction that have been described in this chapter to help our groups functionally interact.

We are actually using the entire continuum of interaction options in this country. We still have some groups who are separate and in a state of intergroup conflict. We have other people who are moving or have moved into integration, merger, and even — in a limited way — assimilation.

We need to clearly understand the full set of directions we are using now and we need to understand clearly the approaches we are headed for in the future. We need to use the tools on this continuum well to achieve The Art of Peace for America.

Our culture of Peace that is embedded in The Art of Peace strategy is not a culture of ethnic merger or a culture of ethnic assimilation. We need to support and celebrate our diversity and have it be a strength going forward as a country. We will not simply all assimilate into a single new American

ethnicity or a new American race. We need to deal effectively with the reality of the mixture of groups we will have going forward.

We will need to build a new sense of us that incorporates all of our legacy categories of us as part of the new framework and as part of the woven fabric of America. We need to build on those categories and not making those categories disappear. We do need to blend some values and beliefs. We need to create real alliances, and we need those alliances to thrive.

One of our great strengths as a nation has been our ability to draw on the best elements from across our various legacy groups and we need to again blend that input — but not the actual groups — into an American culture, an American infrastructure, and a set of clear and enlightened American values that we all can share.

We need to build on that pathway of shared beliefs going forward to succeed in the Art of Peace. We can do that by creating a clear sense of what directions we want to go in the future with each group of people to achieve intergroup Peace. Using the continuum of interaction options listed in this chapter, we need an alliance for intergroup Peace at this point rather than an assimilation of groups in this country into our Peace process.

We Need Win/Win Solutions For All Groups

To go to that next level of intergroup understanding — and to tee up the prospect of intergroup Peace — we need to understand across all groups how that strategy of becoming a universal mission-driven us can be a win for all groups. It is actually functionally and strategically important for each group to win as we go forward.

Since we are going to have a future in this country where our various groups are going to continue to be relevant to each other, we will need a future where all groups do individually well as component parts of the overall fabric and the overall tapestry of America. We need every group to win. We need to have all groups allied with each other to do that work.

We need our alliances to function nationally — and we need our alliances to function well in each community. Our real strength will come from local alliances — hinged on local trust and local alignment on key local issues that are important in each community.

We need to make our Peace where we live. We need our understanding to let us each function in aligned ways where we each are.

The model we need to use to achieve intergroup Peace in America isn't mergers and it isn't truces. The model we do need to use is Alliances —

and to do the alliance work well, we need to have a good sense of what the key intergroup issues are today that alliances can focus on.

That is the topic of Chapter Ten.

Succeeding at the Art of Peace will require us to clearly understand who we are as a country and to understand what issues we face at this point in time relative to achieving Peace. Chapter Eight describes who we are now and explains how our history got us to where we are today. We need to anchor our understanding of those key issues with a recognition of that historical reality and context.

We have both a very complex history and a very simple history that we need to understand and address. We need to understand that our instinctive behaviors have created much of our history. We need to remember that those same instincts continue to create current behaviors and current intergroup perceptions, energies, and emotions. We need to use that knowledge to create a better future for our society and country. We can't escape our instincts. We need to build on them to achieve the goals we need to achieve.

If we blend our instinctive terrain with our alignment opportunities, and if we do that in the clear context of our history and in the context of our

current status on intergroup issues, we will be much more likely to achieve and sustain Peace.

The next chapter looks at a key commitment we need to make if we want Peace to be our future state.