

What is PCTN?

The Paradise Center for Tolerance and Nonviolence (PCTN) is a grassroots, nonsectarian, nonpartisan organization dedicated to:

- **honoring and protecting differences**
- **resolving conflicts peacefully**
- **advocating for a safe, hospitable and harmonious community for all**

What we do

Based on a 2008 community-wide survey and the incidents of hate-motivated behavior and intolerance reported to PCTN, we know that discrimination and bullying exist on the Paradise Ridge and that there is a perception by many that some groups of people are not accepted here.

PCTN programs and services offer support, mediation, and advocacy for those who have experienced bullying, harassment, or violence resulting from prejudice; bullying prevention programs for youth; and activities for all ages that foster appreciation of diversity.

How we are funded

All PCTN programs are funded with contributions from individuals and corporations, fundraising events, planned giving and grants. PCTN is a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE VALUE

PCTN recognizes each person's right to his or her beliefs and opinions and advocates for unbiased and respectful behavior. Our members have diverse religious beliefs, affiliations and political views.

The core values that drive PCTN include:

- **Inherent Dignity of Everyone**
- **Advocates for Social Issues**
- **Non-Violence**
- **Available to the Community**
- **Educating Ourselves and Others**
- **Integrity of Management**

PCTN is a volunteer-driven organization. Volunteers play an important role. More than 90 volunteers serve the Center by providing anywhere from periodic assistance to regular on-going jobs in all areas including programs, administration and fundraising.

Volunteers oversee the day-to-day operations and run all programs. The Board of Directors is composed of community members who share an enduring commitment to promoting social change and eradicating racism. The Board and the standing committees meet monthly.

What is Tolerance?

Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. Tolerance is harmony in difference.

From the Declaration on the Principles of Tolerance, UNESCO

The above definition of tolerance most closely matches PCTN's philosophical use of the word. We view tolerance as a way of thinking and feeling - but most importantly, of acting - that gives us peace in our individuality, respect for those unlike us, the wisdom to discern humane values and the courage to act upon them. From Tolerance.org web site.

About Nonviolence

Adapted from World Without Violence, by Paul Lansu (as published on gandhiinstitute.org)

Nonviolence is a series of acts of choosing life rather than injury or death - whether physical, psychological, social or cultural.

Nonviolence is in fact very different from what public opinion imagines it to be. To be sure, it makes itself known first in negative guise as the refusal to violence. But this refusal suggests neither weakness nor passivity. Nor should nonviolence be identified with an absolute pacifism or with non-resistance.

Gandhi, the apostle of nonviolence, put it this way: "I would prefer to see India defend her honor by armed force than to see her stand like a coward, watching her defeat without an attempt to defend herself. But I still believe just as strongly that nonviolence is infinitely superior to violence." Nonviolence is not cowardice. On the contrary, as Eustave Thibon wrote: "the violent person is simply a coward who pretends to be bold."...

Nonviolent action brings the power of love into play in the arena of conflict. Nonviolent action uses only means that promote the well being of all parties to the conflict. Those who act nonviolently seek to overcome enmity rather than to impose their own will on their adversaries.

To the extent that nonviolent action succeeds in any given instance, it changes the situation itself from one of dominance and submission to a state of mutual respect for human rights and active concern for the genuine need of all parties to the conflict.

As Gandhi pointed out, nonviolent action seeks to overcome the enemy and make the enemy a friend.

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