



THE WHITE SQUARE PROJECT FOR PEACE

The White Square exercise is a way to start a conversation about peace and for the White Square wearer to show support for the quest for peace.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Small safety pins and an equal number of white squares cut from fabric. (A white felt square can be purchased at Michael's Crafts for \$0.49 and cut into 50 squares.)
- A statement to be completed. The statement we are suggesting for adults or older students to complete is: "In our quest for peace, we need to: _____".

Children may be asked to complete: "To make our classroom peaceful we need to: _____".

Make copies of this statement available to encourage others to replicate the exercise.

- White paper, 8 ½ by 11, on which the person writes the word or phrase to complete the statement.
- A camera to photograph the person wearing the white square and holding up the paper on which his or her answer is written so that both the square and the answer can be seen. (First, ask the participant if s/he is willing to have this photo appear unnamed on the Peace Quest website so that we can share the diversity of answers.)
- A method of tallying the number of white squares handed out in each session.

WHAT YOU DO:

- Explain to participants that as part of Peace Quest, this faith group / school/ class / group of friends / group of shoppers at the market ... is invited to participate in a short conversation about peace. Peace Quest's goal is to initiate 10,000 such conversations between now and July 1, 2014.
- After the participant has completed the statement, give the white square and pin to the person. We hope that people will continually wear the squares as a sign of support for peace and particularly "WEAR THE SQUARE" on July 1, Canada Day, 2014.
- Note on the tally sheet that a white square has been given and accepted.

- Ask the participant for permission to take a photo as described above for inclusion on our website.
- Ask the participant if s/he would like to take 5 or 10 white squares and copies of the statement to replicate the experience with friends and family.
- Send the photos to communications@providence.ca for inclusion on the website. The website where it will be posted is peacequest.ca.
- Also send to the above email address the number of white squares distributed, and the date and the venue.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PEACE QUEST'S WHITE SQUARE

- The White Square signifies our quest for peace.
- White is a symbol of non-combat, a truce, an agreement between opponents to stop fighting.
- White is the colour of the hundreds of thousands of crosses in war cemeteries.
- White poppies were adopted by the “No More War” movement of the 1920s. The white poppy has become a symbol of mourning for civilian deaths in war and war’s environmental devastation, and of the belief in peaceful conflict resolution.
- War supporters pinned white feathers on men who were not in uniform during World War I to shame them, even though many had completed service or been denied service.
- The Shot at Dawn campaign started in Britain in 1990 to highlight the killing of World War I soldiers by their own military. These soldiers were made mad by the carnage of trench warfare and were condemned as cowards for their inability to cope or refusal to continue to fight and kill. They had a white target pinned to their chests and were shot by firing squad. In 2006, the British government issued a blanket pardon to the more than 300 soldiers who had been executed this way.