



International Coalition of
SITES of CONSCIENCE



Wassmuth
**CENTER FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS**

Home of the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial

PROJECT SUPPORT FUND

Wassmuth Center for Human Rights



About The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC) is a global network of museums, historic sites and grassroots initiatives dedicated to building a more just and peaceful future through engaging communities in remembering struggles for human rights and addressing their modern repercussions. Founded in 1999, the ICSC now includes more than 300 Sites of Conscience members in 65 countries. The ICSC supports these members through seven regional networks that encourage collaboration and international exchange of knowledge and best practices.

Learn more at www.sitesofconscience.org.

Unless otherwise noted, all photos were taken by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.

ABOUT THIS ASSESSMENT TOOL

Sites of Conscience “engage the public in programs that stimulate dialogue on pressing issues.” This Tool illustrates how one site produced and employs a singular model on the devolution of injustice to unify its programming as well as create brand identification for the Site. The Spiral of Injustice is shaping how the public understands the impact when “the other” is demeaned or marginalized in the community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Wassmuth Center for Human Rights, builder and home of the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial, is grateful for the project support received from the Sites of Conscience that enabled a site visit to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia for collaboration on the international applicability of the Spiral of Injustice and the funding to produce a video showcasing the education outreach at two very different Sites of Conscience.



Almost a full acre in the heart of the capital city, the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial is the only Anne Frank memorial in the United States and one of the few places in the world in which the full text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is on public display. Two prominent Quote Circles memorialize the universality of the struggle against injustice and oppression.

Photo provided by the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights.

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The centerpiece of the Memorial, the cast bronze sculpture of Anne Frank was created by Massachusetts artist Greg Stone. Climbing onto a chair to glimpse the outside world, the statue is located on a concrete slab approximately the dimensions of Anne's attic room.

Photo provided by the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights.

SITE BACKGROUND

In the winter of 1945, a few weeks before allied forces liberated Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, a 15-year-old girl named Anne Frank died of typhus. She was one of six million Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazi regime during the Holocaust.

The story of Anne Frank is not one of despair, but one of hope. Anne wrote in her diary, *"It's difficult in times like these; dreams and cherished hopes rise within us, only to be crushed by grim reality. It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart."* (July 15, 1944)

That quote, displayed on a prominent thoroughfare in downtown Boise, Idaho, marks the location of the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights and the neighboring Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial.

The Wassmuth Center was founded in 1996 for the purpose of constructing a memorial to human rights. That vision became a reality when the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial opened to the public in 2002. Inspired by Anne Frank and funded through the generosity of individual and corporate donors, the Memorial is not simply a static space to reflect on her short life or even on the horrors of the Holocaust. Instead, it was designed to actively engage visitors to think, to talk with one another, and to respond to the human rights issues we face in our community, our country and our world.

Both the triumphs and tragedies of the human story are on display. In every quote and every idea, visitors see the profound power of a single voice or bold action to overcome great odds and alter the course of history.

The educational park includes: a life-sized bronze statue of Anne Frank as she peers out an open window into an adjoining amphitheater, 80 quotes etched into the stone throughout the Memorial, the full text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on permanent display, the Rose Beal Legacy Garden honoring a local Holocaust survivor, a sapling from the Anne Frank Chestnut Tree in Amsterdam, the Marilyn Shuler Classroom for Human Rights, recognizing a founder of the Memorial and the state's first director of the Human Rights Commission, and state-of-the-art electronic technology showcasing the "History of Human Rights in Idaho."

Ryan Coonerty, in the National Geographic publication *Etched in Stone: Enduring Words from our Nation's Monuments*, commented, "Anne Frank could scarcely have conceived of Boise, Idaho. Therefore, it seems improbable that the author of a diary that has become among the world's most widely read books has become a symbolic fixture of this community almost 60 years after her death."

As the builder and home of the Memorial, the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights is guided by a mission to "promote respect for human dignity and diversity through education and to foster individual responsibility to work for justice and peace." While the Memorial physically embodies that charge, the Center translates it into programming and resources designed for classrooms and communities throughout the state. In this spirit, the Center launched the Spiral of Injustice program in 2016. A local metal artist was commissioned to interpret the program and create an original piece; the sculpture was installed in the Memorial in 2018. Combined, the program and the art piece have turned a site of memory into a site of action.

Wassmuth Center for Human Rights / Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial

One of the core operating principles is the interaction and relationship between the Center and the Memorial. Rather than functioning as separate entities, each exists as a constituent part of an overarching charter – to promote and protect human rights. Center-created programs are regularly executed and featured in the Memorial; for example, the “Summer Reading Program for Ages 4-8” and the “Faces of Idaho” poster series. Elements within the Memorial are also incorporated within Center programs, such as the quotes etched in the stone and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Designed to illustrate how injustice devolves in a community, the Spiral of Injustice began as a discussion within the Memorial.

In one of the fifteen quotes drawn from her diary and showcased in the Memorial, Anne questions the events unfolding on the streets below the secret annex and why this is happening **“all because they’re Jews.”** (November 19, 1942)

This illustrates how a group of people who are marginalized or demeaned become viewed by a majority as “the other” and therefore less than or inferior.

Incorporating the Spiral of Injustice into programming has changed the way in which the Memorial is presented, while the Memorial in turn has helped inform the way the Spiral is taught.

The Spiral of Injustice

The Spiral of Injustice is a model created by the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights to illustrate the devolution of humanity whether discussing the Holocaust, other genocides, or contemporary acts of injustice. The model suggests that the “stages” of injustice (language, avoidance, discrimination, violence and elimination) are in motion and employed as weapons targeting “the other.”

During Center-sponsored teacher trainings in 2015, the need for a new pedagogical model to teach about human rights and social justice was recognized. Other models were not speaking to the Center’s view of injustice. Injustice does not evolve but devolves. A graphic was designed to provide a visual during an educators’ professional development session. It became a way to frame discussion, surrounding an examination of the various stages of injustice that were witnessed during the 2016 United States presidential campaign.

The model engages participants to understand how everyday societal practices have created individuals who are viewed as “the other” and to oppose the marginalization of any group within the fabric of our community. “The other”



is defined as an individual who is perceived by the group as not belonging, as being different in some fundamental way; often targeted because of association with a group based on class, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, nationality or religious preference. The model consists of a downward-spinning spiral with five devolving stages: language, avoidance, discrimination, violence, and elimination (cultural, behavioral, and/or physical genocide).

Each stage is defined as follows:

Language: targeting “the other” through language, word choice, connotation, and imagery (name calling, ridiculing, telling jokes, belittling, accepting and promoting stereotyping, etc.)

Avoidance: excluding “the other” through conscious or unconscious treatment that denies participation, limits and/or restricts access (social avoidance, scapegoating, portrayal and non-portrayal of marginalized communities)

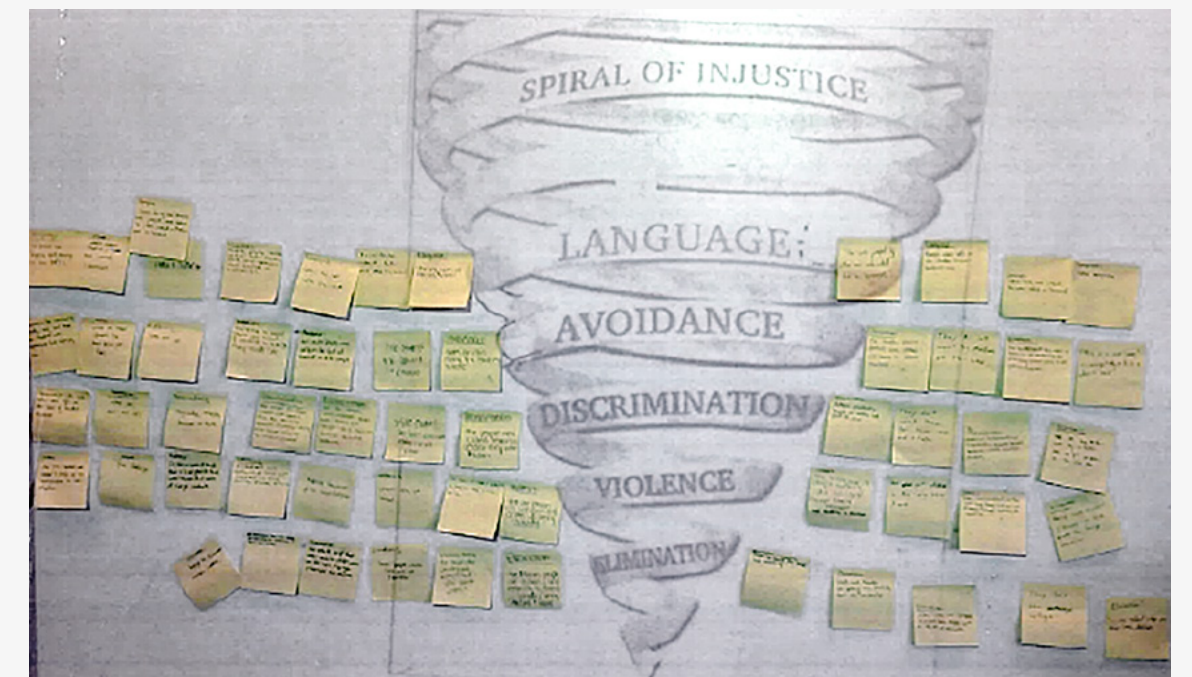
Discrimination: denying and disadvantaging people through direct and non-direct acts based on class, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, or religious preference (employment and/or educational opportunities, workplace and housing accommodations, lending opportunities, etc.)

Violence: intimidating or harming “the other” through physical acts (threats, assault, desecration, stalking, harassment, arson, murder, terrorism)

Elimination: eradicating “the other” through deliberate and systemic destruction of life and/or liberty. Elimination can take various forms--Cultural: customs and traditions, language, music, art, history, science, political participation; Behavioral: segregation, isolation, relocation, resettlement, removal; or Physical: murder, genocide.

Following a workshop, an Idaho educator assigned his students to watch the local and national news and “post-it” examples each time an incident illustrated one of the stages of injustice. Within days, the classroom bulletin board was covered.

By the fall of 2016, the model had become a signature program at the Center.



Developing the Spiral of Injustice

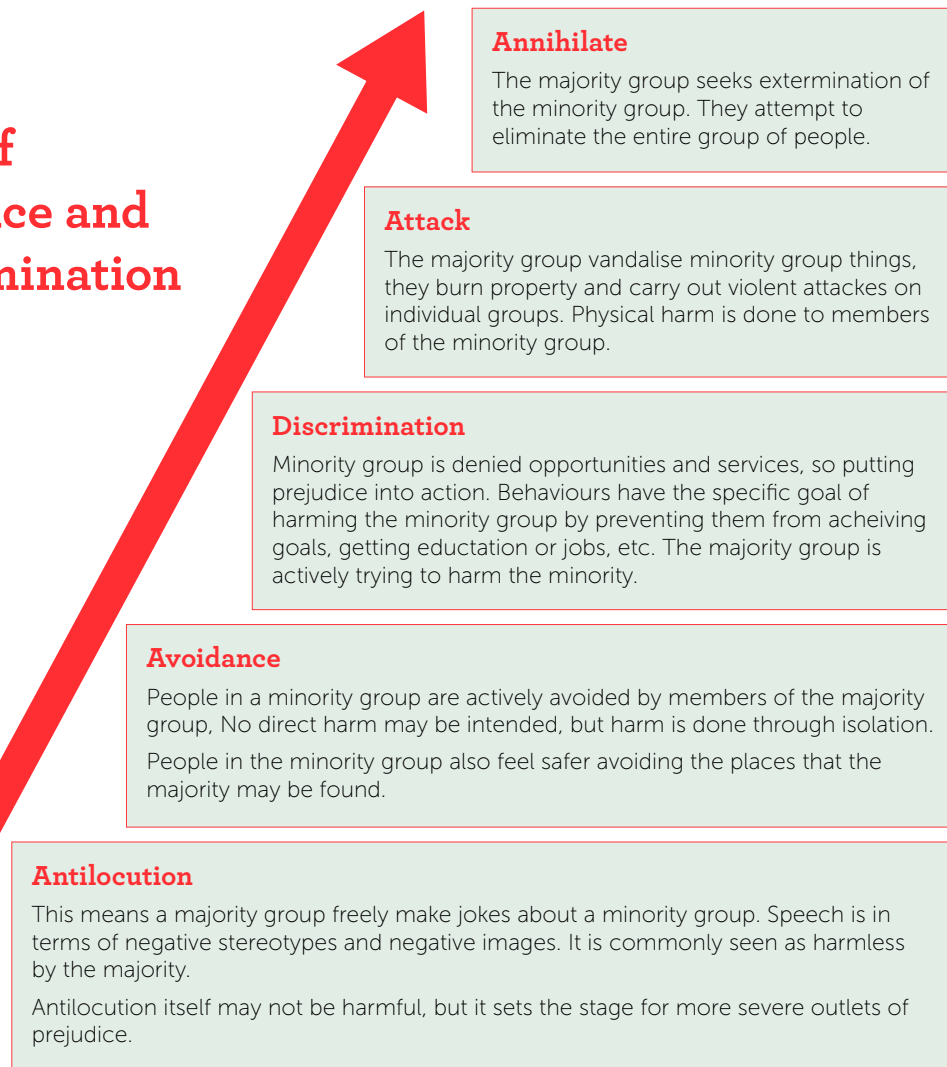
Inscribed in the stone of the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial, Mahatma Gandhi reminds us to "Make injustice visible." Models used to illustrate a pattern or progression of injustice – making it visible - assist in educating for and about social justice.

The "Ladder of Injustice," first referenced in 1954 by psychology professor Gordon W. Allport in his book *The Nature of Prejudice*, was a physical representation developed initially as a model for teaching about discrimination to elementary through high school students.

Allport's Scale of Prejudice and Discrimination is a measure of the manifestation of prejudice in a society. Antilocution is a form of prejudice in which negative verbal remarks against a person, group, or community are made in a public or private setting and not addressed directly to the target. Following antilocution, the greater stages of prejudice emerge: avoidance, discrimination, physical attack, and genocide.

In 2003, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) produced "The Pyramid of Hate" using the same five-step model tracing discrimination through stages of prejudiced attitudes, acts of prejudice, discrimination, violence, and genocide.

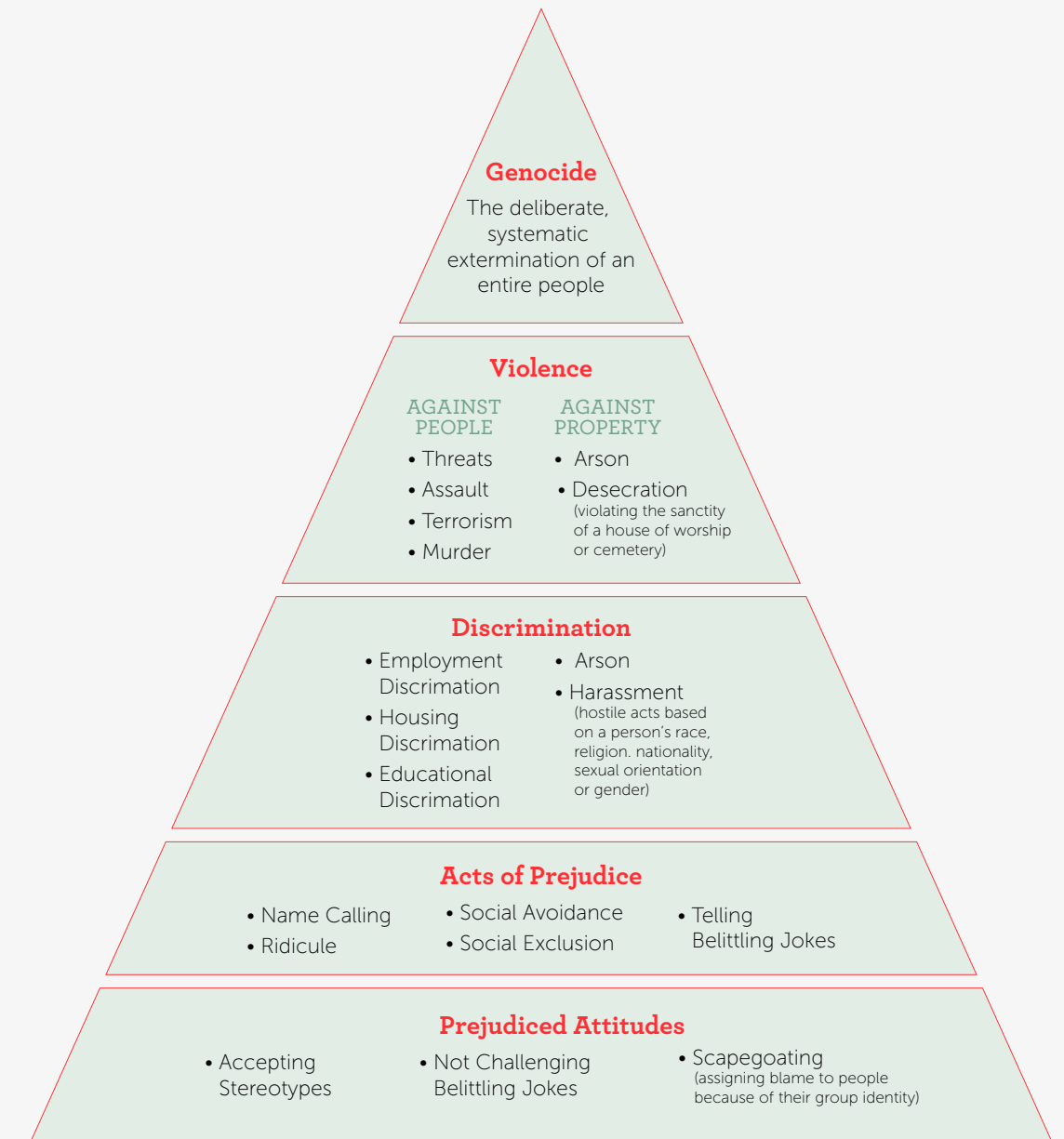
Scale of Prejudice and Discrimination



Adapted from "The Nature of Prejudice", Gordon Allport 1954

According to the ADL, "The Pyramid shows biased behaviors, growing in complexity from the bottom to the top. Although the behaviors at each level negatively impact individuals and groups, as one moves up the pyramid, the behaviors have more life-threatening consequences. Like a pyramid, the upper levels are supported by the lower levels. If people or institutions treat behaviors on the lower levels as being acceptable or 'normal,' it results in the behaviors at the next level becoming more accepted. In response to the questions of the world community about where the hate of genocide comes from, the Pyramid of Hate demonstrates that the hate of genocide is built upon the acceptance of behaviors described in the lower levels of the pyramid."

Pyramid Of Hate



©2003 Anti-Defamation League and Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation

The Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial and the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights serve as the only memorial to Anne Frank in the United States and the only statewide human rights education group in Idaho. As such, when instances of discrimination and violence occur, particularly when they capture national attention and rock the foundation of our values, it is critical that educational resources, workshops and tools are available to those seeking ways to recognize and confront injustice and create change in their own communities.

Amidst escalating acts of discrimination in schools and communities in Idaho and across the country, the Center's response was to create a tool that captured the essence of the feelings expressed by many: "The world is spiraling out of control and I don't know how to make sense of it!"

The model reverses the sequential order in a downward spiral to explore injustice through the devolving sequence of language, avoidance, discrimination, violence, and elimination. As a instrument, the Spiral counters static images of injustice to present the fluidity and/or the internal and external motions of a community in which injustice becomes publicly apparent.

It rests on a fundamental principle that the biases one has are not inherent, but rather learned and inherited through individual, cultural and institutional prejudices, and reinforced through acts of discrimination that are both witnessed and performed throughout one's life. While one cannot be divorced from his or her social and historical context, it is important to understand that what has been learned can be unlearned over time. Fundamental to understanding and dissecting the devolution of injustice is that each level acts individually and in concert with others to normalize bias, promote and codify discrimination, and lead to the devolution of the next corresponding level.

Using the Spiral of Injustice

The Spiral of Injustice serves to both identify and frame discussion of injustice in our society. The expectation is that injustice is readily recognized and addressed. In particular, the model illustrates the power of language and why words matter. The first stage of the Spiral is language – when words are used as weapons – which signifies a devolution within society, potentially culminating in elimination. Since the subsequent stages of the Spiral are much more difficult to interrupt, it demonstrates the efficacy of addressing injustice at the earliest stage.

The model is adaptable for instructional use. It exists as a way of linking various programs and ideas via one consistent model or unifying framework. The following are ways the Spiral of Injustice is used in Center programming and projects.

1. IDAHO ANNE FRANK HUMAN RIGHTS MEMORIAL PORTABLE EXHIBIT

Located in the heart of the Boise, the Memorial receives an average of 120,000 visitors annually. Over 10,000 K-12 and university undergraduate students participate in free docent-led tours. While recognized as one of the top attractions to visit in the state's capital city, the Center acknowledges that the vast majority of Idaho students do not have the opportunity to engage in an on-site, in-Memorial, experience. One remedy is a portable exhibit available to transport the Memorial to classrooms and communities throughout the state.

A production design with four, two foot x two foot, six-foot high columns, provides 16 panels to showcase the Memorial's messaging in select photos, quotes, biographies and QR coding for embedded audio. The Spiral of Injustice is featured within the design.



2. CLASSROOM RESOURCES: POSTERS, E-BOOKLETS AND VIDEOS

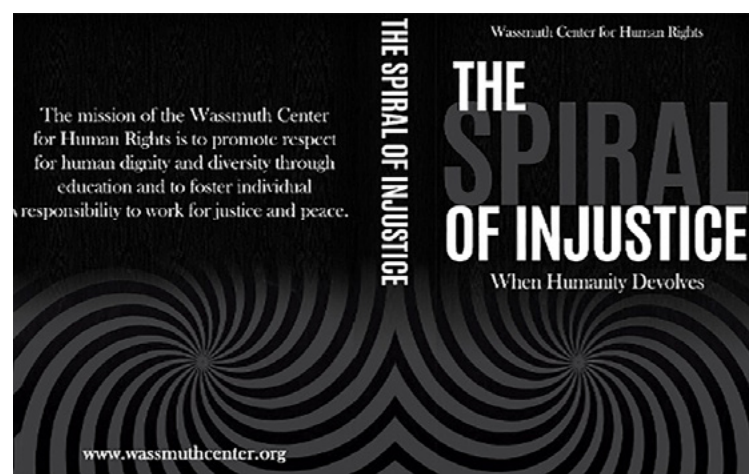
The Center has designed a series of posters for classroom use. Packaged as a five-poster set, the Spiral of Injustice is paired with another Center program “Be an Upstander” (see page 15). Free-of-charge to Idaho educators attending Center-sponsored presentations or training, the posters are both a vehicle for instruction in the classroom and an opportunity to display Center work and branding – easily distributed and intuitively understood.

While the posters provide graphic portrayal of the concepts, they do not showcase individual stories or contextualized illustration of injustice according to the identified stages. Center-published e-booklets and videos supply that content.

Each e-booklet lends further definition to the concepts. “The Spiral of Injustice – When Humanity Devolves” includes five chapters: each featuring one of the stages of injustice, each written by a different scholar, and each integrating both a local and global account to give context.

Likewise, another e-booklet “Words Have Weight,” examines how the use of language sparked the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, the Cambodian Genocide, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Bosnian Genocide. In each chapter, it is assumed that the reader is aware that the accounts end in genocide but will learn how the injustice originated with words. As presented in one chapter, the Holocaust did not begin with gas chambers.

With film footage taken at Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial, members in the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, the Center developed a seven-minute video. Completed in 2019, the video, also titled “Words Have Weight,” utilizes the Spiral of Injustice, and specifically the first stage of language, to



illustrate how injustice can quickly devolve into violence and elimination.

The video is installed in an electronic kiosk in the Marilyn Shuler Classroom for Human Rights within the footprint of the Memorial.

Though initially developed to support classroom teaching and learning, the resources are also utilized by an expanding audience of consumers including community groups, community organizers, faith leaders, and local businesses for instruction regarding the use of the Spiral to frame the discussion of injustice.

3. ON-SITE AND ONLINE TRAINING AND SUMMER INSTITUTES

A major element in education outreach, in addition to conducting a regular series of professional development opportunities for Idaho educators, the Center maintains an e-Classroom with over 160 hours of online content.

As the 13th geographically largest state in the U.S., but only the 39th most populous, providing online courses and/or workshop modules enables the Center to reach into all six education regions in the state.

The online training provides additional opportunity to develop instructional content that either incorporates the entire Spiral or focuses on just a specific stage. Online modules include:

- “The Spiral of Injustice,”
- “A.C.T. (ask, choose, teach) to be an Upstander,”
- “Understanding Discrimination,” and
- “Language and Privilege.”

The Center’s 2019 three-day summer institute “The Power of Words” was conducted in partnership with ADL using their national Holocaust education program “Echoes and Reflections.” Idaho educators and Memorial docents were given the opportunity to earn two continuing education credits from Boise State University for completing the institute which drew primarily from the first stage of the Spiral - language. Using historical examples from the Holocaust, presenters highlighted the power of words and contemporary realities. The institute did not merely teach the history of the Holocaust but how it could be incorporated into a discussion of current events.

4. FACES OF IDAHO AND VOICES OF IDAHO

Core to the concept of the Spiral of Injustice is the recognition of “the other.” Employed to deepen understanding of the model, the Center designed “The Faces of Idaho” as a rotating display within the Memorial. The display spotlights a broad spectrum of Idaho residents under the tagline “Seeing me is not knowing me.” Each display introduces both a person and his/her identity statement – providing a *face* to those who some might view as “the other.”

The “Voices of Idaho” is a Center-produced podcast available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and YouTube. Each of the Season One episodes focuses on an individual from Idaho’s human rights community in a conversation with the Center’s director. All episodes are personal journeys shared to further define the Spiral. In doing so, those who might be viewed as “the other” have been given a voice.



"I just love this sculpture," says Sondra Hackborn, in center. "If you see discrimination, speak out. Don't keep quiet."
<https://www.idahostatesman.com/news/local/community/boise/article218740890.html>

5. MEMORIAL TOUR AND STATUE

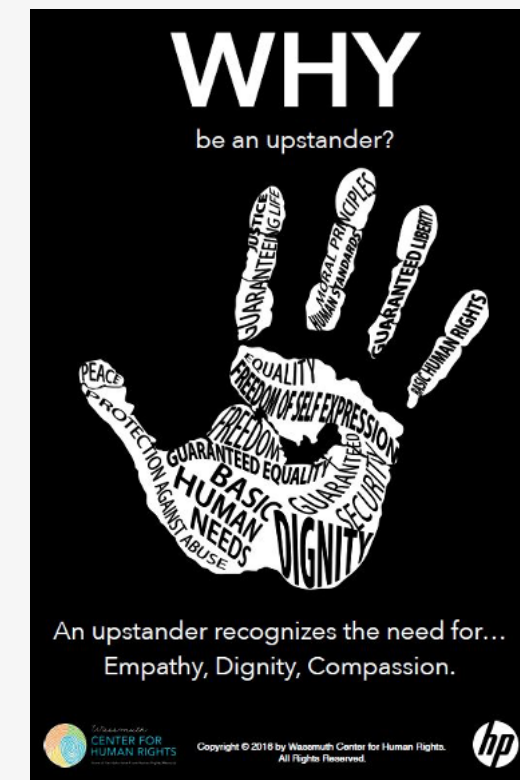
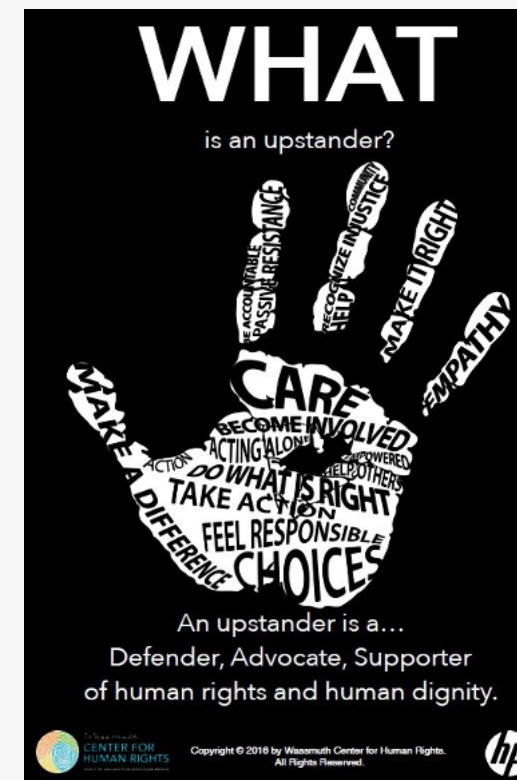
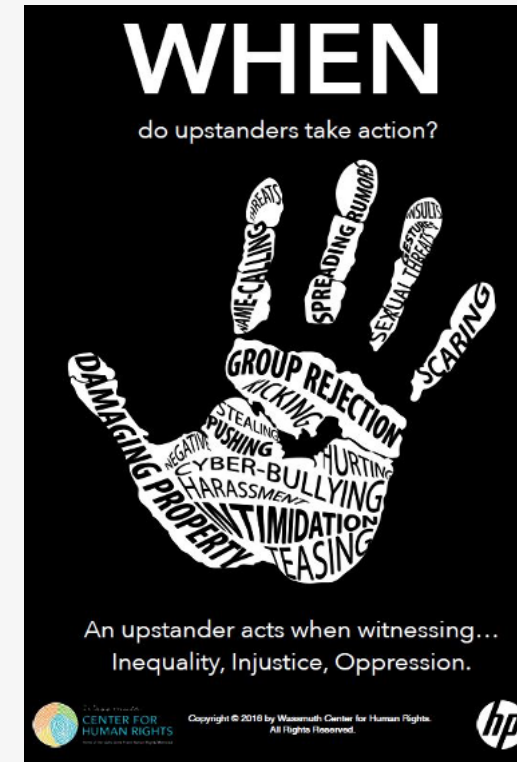
To include more of the Center's programming in the Memorial and recognize how compelling the concept of the Spiral of Injustice had become, the Center commissioned Boise metal-artist Ken McCall to artistically capture the message of the Spiral in a distinctive statue.

Artistically, the statue presents "The Other" being ensnared by the Spiral. The shape of "The Other" implies human form, but it is ageless, genderless, and open to interpretation. As the Spiral literally wraps from throat to ankle, each stage is embossed in English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Hebrew, and debossed in braille.

In a combination of stainless steel and bronze, the piece is a reflective, mirror-like material, on which viewers begin to see themselves in "The Other" or as "The Other."

Prior to the addition of the statue, Memorial docents were limited in their opportunity to integrate discussion of the Spiral during tours. Now physically featured in the Memorial, docents enrich the tour experience with a full discussion of the Spiral and apply the concept to other elements or discussion topics within the Memorial. Additionally, the statue is placed on a plaza adjacent to the Marilyn Shuler Classroom for Human Rights and its electronic kiosk with videos defining each stage of the Spiral as well as "The Weight of Words."

As one Memorial visitor noted, "I used to come to the Memorial and see the statue of Anne Frank; Anne is not my story. Now I come to the Memorial and see the statue of "The Other" and in it I see myself. In finding myself in the Memorial, I now understand Anne Frank."



6. INTERRUPTING THE SPIRAL OF INJUSTICE AND “BE AN UPSTANDER”

Several of the quotes within the Memorial issue a call to action. Elie Wiesel suggests, “I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”

Once the Spiral of Injustice is understood, the next question is, “How do you interrupt it?” The Center has developed parallel programming on the responsibility of being an upstander who stands up and *speaks out* to interrupt the Spiral. The emphasis throughout is on interrupting demeaning language or action before a situation devolves.

Just as the Spiral became a model for examining injustice, “Be an Upstander” has become a model for social justice. Rather than concentrating on the actions of the “bully,” the Center presents a larger view of those who stand by and passively spectate. The program focuses on the positive actions each can take as an upstander – drawn from a place of kindness and hope echoing Anne Frank’s conviction, *“In spite of everything, I still believe people are good at heart.”*

Conclusion

The Spiral of Injustice is first and foremost a way of packaging information; it is both adaptable and flexible in reaching a variety of audiences. Since its development, three specific outcomes have resulted. First, it has generated other Center programming designed to take the messaging deeper rather than broader. Secondly, it has streamlined educational outreach; most Center programming now connects to the Spiral. Lastly, the Spiral of Injustice has strengthened the branding of the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights and the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial.

The interaction between the Center and the Memorial has increased its overall impact in human rights education. Combined, the two have broadened the relationship with the community at-large by expanding opportunities for access and education. In the spirit of Sites of Conscience worldwide, the Memorial has become a place of memory with a call for action.

“How lovely to think that no one need wait a moment, we can start now, start slowly changing the world.” Anne Frank, March 26, 1944



Providing tours for over 10,000 annually, the 2018 addition of the Marilyn Shuler Classroom for Human Rights within the Memorial provides covered presentation space. The adjoining plaza features “The Other,” a stainless sculpture by Boise-based artist Ken McCall depicting the Spiral of Injustice.

Photo by Erstad Architects.



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