AYEISH Concept Note – Skype Pro Bono Peacebuilding Program

AYEISH Mission
Our mission is to deepen capacity of political systems and leaders to transform conflict into connection, and then solution; we offer tools to facilitate understanding and solution-finding between parties, rooted in skills to stay connected to self and others in the midst of intensity.

PRO-BONO SKYPE SUPPORT PROGRAM
AYEISH's pro bono web-based (e.g. Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp calls) pilot supports active agents in peacebuilding or political progress through more-effectively facilitating relationship building to reach their goals. We aim to gather data for future funding requests for on-the-ground or ongoing support.

Participant group options:
  a) Peacebuilders
  b) *One* party in conflict – not both/multiple all together

Outcomes options:
  ▪ Deepened capacity for transformative mediation (whether interpersonal, formal, or internal i.e. decision-making on strategy) despite emotional intensity
  ▪ Immediate strategic progress on roadblocks in relationship-building between parties in conflict

Sample scenarios
  ▪ Peacebuilder engages in on-going mediations between fighting parties, and we provide weekly support to identify new strategies around roadblocks in relationship-building between parties
  ▪ Colleague engages in big-picture strategic work to bring parties together literally and politically, but perhaps does not formally "mediate" between parties – we can provide weekly support for critical decision-making to identify new strategies around roadblocks in relationship-building
  ▪ One party in a conflict *wants* to find a way forward, and is either actively engaged in talking to another conflicting party, or wants to be; we support them generating new strategies around perceived roadblocks to finding mutually-beneficial solutions

BACKGROUND
AYEISH Core tools:
Rooted in Nonviolent-Communication and mindfulness approaches, our core tools include

  (1) Self-Connection Practice, for a moment-to-moment awareness of one's own intense reactions and underlying needs during an interaction, in order to simultaneously represent one's own positions effectively *and* stay centered to facilitate solutions and connection
  (2) a four-component Empathy practice that cultivates real understanding and humanization between all parties

Agreement-building Process:
Three basic steps that repeat until solutions are reached, using key language distinctions:

  (1) Clarify parties' *underlying* needs and desires, as separate from the *strategies* they say or believe they want
  (2) Facilitate parties hearing each other's deep needs – whether or not they agree they're valid – and the shifts that occur in that mutual hearing
  (3) Help parties identify solutions that will meet the underlying needs of all parties