

## The Global Women's Peace Network's Final virtual GWPN Forum of 2020

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*Clockwise from top: Deborah Levine, Angelika Selle and Maggie Steele*

The Global Women's Peace Network stands true to its name as it continues to facilitate a platform for which it was founded: to avail the expertise of women leaders and organizations offering key insights in dealing with pressing social issues.

In its efforts to promote the culture of peace and healing, the fourth session in the GWPN series REFLECT. RESET. REBUILD took place virtually on December 9, 2020 with more than 55 participants who actively engaged on the theme, "Overcoming Hate." The theme of overcoming hate is more relevant than ever before as it offers hope of moving forward in life towards healing and growth. Two expert leaders, Ms. Maggie Steele, adult programs coordinator and mindfulness teacher at [Peace in Schools](#) and Mrs. Deborah Levine, [American Diversity Report](#) founder and editor-in-chief, brought hope and encouragement through sharing the science behind hate and the role of language in healing, as well as their personal history.

Our first speaker, Ms. Maggie Steele shared a new perspective on approaching hate and dealing with cognitive dissonance. She asked some thought-provoking questions: "What if I was able to recognize hate when it arose? To look at it with non-judgment and to really explore what that's about? Rather than pretending that this is a strong emotion that I don't really feel, what if I consciously welcomed it, allowed it, got curious about it?" She then shared how hateful emotions are, more often than not, a mix of fear, pain and a part of us which feels unloved.

Ms. Steele's talk, titled "Paving the path towards connection," focused on treating hate as any other emotion and giving it time to dissipate. She talked on how to use that emotion as a platform to explore ourselves more deeply and heal from there.

Our second speaker, Mrs. Deborah Levine, inherited her passion for diversity from her father, a World War II U.S. military intelligence officer assigned to interrogate Nazi prisoners of war. When speaking of her father's life experience, she said, "It is human nature to compartmentalize such horrors, bury them deep within us, and try to get on with a normal life. But when silence allows inhumanity and hate, it's time to speak up."

Through her consistent efforts which spanned over 33 years, she witnessed a cultural revolution and a sincere change in people's attitude towards inclusion of different religious backgrounds. In her talk, titled, "Nurturing Inclusion and Upending Hate" she reflected on developing a model based on neuroscience

which aims to target hate at its root: in thought. She elaborates on this topic in her book, "[Matrix Model Management](#)."

Often in her life, she said she felt like an outsider while at the center of turbulent times. This compelled her to actively work towards ensuring nobody else does. Such efforts required bravery, as she did not shy away from serving undercover for the FBI in an interview of a holocaust denier. She took on roles that helped her understand hate and domestic terrorism on the native land.



Women's Federation for World Peace USA acknowledged Mrs. Levine for her extraordinary courage with a [HerStory Award](#) during the program (a press release about the award was later published [here](#)).

Unfortunately our final speaker, Aimmee Kodachian of Empowering Humanity TV, fell ill and was unable to present on "True Forgiveness" during this time. That being said, the topic of forgiveness was addressed during the rich question and answer portion of the program, which also provided advice on navigating our current highly charged climate.

After a question and answer session, the moderator WFWP USA President Angelika Selle invited WFWP Western Regional Director Dr. Linda Nishikawa to narrate the poem "[Crown of Glory](#)" by Sun Myung Moon, written in 1935. The forum concluded with a giveaway of the "[Mother of Peace](#)" memoir to our three winners Marguerite, Sharon and the Wojtowicz family.

We thank everyone who participated in the concluding Reflect. Reset. Rebuild. speaker series for the year 2020. We hope this program has evoked a renewed determination to heal your heart and overcome the hate in your own life. To watch and revisit the timeless lessons, you can find the recording [here](#).

Comments from Participants:

"I love this wonderful, useful self-reflective and softening view of looking at hate! Thank you Maggie! That's so insightful and breaks down my emotional responses, and creates dignity."

"Ms. Levine, these are remarkable first hand experiences that give me insights to fear-based responses."

"It is wonderful to know that there are many gatherings bringing insight and change for our world. Thank you for what you are doing at this time."

"I love the storytelling model! My community is in need of bridges to connect differently oriented, diverse economic and cultural groups."