Research Brief:

"Clear and Uplifting:" New Haven Police Recruits Perspectives on Introduction to Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Management

January 9, 2023

Introduction

This report presents results of a two-day (approximately 16 instructional hours) *Introduction to Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Management for Police and Community Engagement*, for 19 Police Recruits from the City of New Haven**.** The training was conducted by Pastor John Lewis, Ms. Victoria Christgau and Pastor James Lane from the Connecticut Center for Nonviolence (CTCN), and Sargent Cherelle Carr from the New Haven Police Department. All instructors were CTCN certified trainers. This report is an analysis of the seven-question program survey administered to the recruits on December 16, 2022.

Methods

All 19 New Haven police recruits completed the seven-item survey, which was administered at the end of the two day-training. Survey responses were anonymous, transcribed, and analyzed by an independent evaluator.

Results

Overall, the police recruits were very satisfied with the training. When asked to rate the "overall quality of the program," 100% of the participants rated the training "good" or "excellent;" 90% rated the program "excellent."

When asked, "How relevant was the course content to your job?", 100% of the police recruits rated the training at least "good" or "excellent;" 84% rated the training "excellent."

What was Most Helpful

When asked, "What was most helpful from the presentation?", the following three themes emerged:

Interactive and Engaging Structure. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of participants specifically mentioned the interactive and engaging structure of the training. Some comments include: "*What was most helpful to me was the instructors getting the recruits engaged;" "The interaction. The hands-on stuff. I really enjoyed how everyone was involved;" and "The group interactions were very helpful."*

Essential Content: Readings, Films, Stories from Instructors. Nearly one-half of all participants specifically mentioned that the content (readings, films, and stories) was most helpful. Some comments include: *"Using excerpts and writings directly from Dr. King to solidify the points being made about nonviolence; "The non-violent tactics we learned. The de-escalation*

tips and when Sgt. Carr related everything to policing;" "Understanding the history and the importance of violence and how people view things;" and "Different speakers were very helpful."

Community Policing. Two of the participants specifically mentioned that they found the model of community policing to be most helpful. This concept of community policing is important as it provides not only an acknowledgement that police cannot ensure community safety alone, but also in that the type of partnership and collaboration required to build such a 'beloved community,' was modeled by the instructors of this program. One police recruit stated, "Most helpful was the togetherness we need to bring as a community ~ Love and compassion conquers all."

Suggestions for Improvement

When asked, "What segment would you consider removing from the program?" 95% of the participants gave no suggestions for improvement. The only suggestion given was that there should be more training: "*I think probably more police officers* [to be involved]*, if they are available to talk about their non-violent experiences, and how it helped them become good officers. More videos of past and present civil rights movements, interviews or documentation*."

Overall Comments: Exceptional Instructors

When asked to provide any "Overall comments on the instructors (Constructive insights both positive and areas for improvement are helpful)," 100% of the comments were positive. Some comments included: "*All the instructors were very engaging as well as knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the course;" "I want to let the instructors know that their time here made a significant impact on my thinking and goals to community policing;"* and "*Instructors were clear and uplifting."*

Recommendations

As similar studies of CTCN's police trainings have found [see evaluations of CTCN's trainings of CT State Police (2022), CT State Police Recruits (2020), Yale University Police Department (2016), New Haven Police Cadets (2016), among others] positive feedback of the program is nearly unanimous. Thus, it is recommended that the *Introduction to Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Management for Police and Community Engagement* to be continued as part of the professional development of all Connecticut police departments in the future. This recommendation is made based upon the years of overwhelming evidence from all levels of the force.

About the Connecticut Center for Nonviolence:

The Connecticut Center for Nonviolence (CTCN) is a leader in Nonviolence education and is dedicated to bringing people from diverse communities together in dialogue to explore the root causes of violence, and to learn constructive methods for developing and applying alternative solutions.

CTCN has worked with thousands of people of all ages in the City of Hartford, New Haven, and beyond, to train and implement the philosophy and strategies of Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation across racial, social, economic and generational divides, and has presented our work at some of the top academic conferences across the nation, including at American Educational Research Association (AERA) and for the American Association for Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) at multiple, national, *Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Institutes* (TRHT) in Atlanta and Washington, DC.

Authored by: Jacob Werblow, Ph.D. werblowjac@ccsu.edu, 860-832-2474