

Hot topic: Violence

Presentation: **Street violence – interventions in the city by Timmy Myers**

After a short introduction to the phenomenon that has become known in Europe as “youth-violence”, Timmy, in his presentation, entertainingly described intervening in a fight between 2 groups of youths in a park in Zurich. With careful attention to detail he invited those present in the hot-topics discussion to focus on signals of escalation and de-escalation, on roles and ghost-roles present and on appropriate and potentially effective moments to intervene. He also related his discussion of roles to the conflict examples quoted by earlier speakers. This was followed by a lively and heartfelt question and answer session.

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Question and answer: **Lucas Hohler**

What were the main idea and, points in the theme that you presented?

My main idea I wanted to share was: There are many ways to intervene when physical violence happens. Mostly following your tendencies, phantasies and also your fears and hesitations lead the way for you. You don't need to step in physically to interrupt a fight. Using your voice, movement or whatever you feel like doing from a distance can have a big effect, if it's done with a metaskill of not putting the people down who are involved in the fight.

If it is relevant why did you choose these particular ideas and this theme?

I wanted to encourage people to move out of their trance around street violence. The archetypal pattern is that violence can only be stopped by violence. There is much emphasis on this kind of intervention e.g. military or police intervention in wars, riots, etc. So it seems that only violently walling people off will help. My experience shows that there are many more ways to stopping violence than we think and that following our impulses (flirts) from a safe distance can support alternative ways of dealing with conflicts.

Was there anything interesting or unexpected which happened that was related to the themes?

The great interest shown by the people present in dealing with street violence, was very touching and surprising. I was only expecting about 20 people or so, and there were more than 100 people. Violence or the fear of violence in public open spaces is an issue that many people are interested in and want to do something about.

Did the hot topic session bring any observations, insights or new learning to you, or response from others about their learning?

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The realization that street violence is a hotter issue than I thought and attracts many people's attention.

Any moving moment?

The number of people present and their interest and excitement about what I'm doing.