

introduction

"We came because of our nightmares, we stayed because of our dreams."

saying from the Greenham women's peace camp 1983-2000

In the 60 years or so that the nuclear industry has existed the impacts on our health, our environment and our collective psyche have been enormous.

The psychological impacts of nuclear weapons are well recognized. In the past half century, the world has seen a massive change in attitudes towards nuclear weapons and the disproportionate threat posed by a handful of countries who possess them. While nuclear weapon arsenals have been reduced in number by almost half of their Cold War levels, smaller arsenals have been upgraded in quality to wield an even larger destructive power.

Major international bodies such as the International Court of Justice have made unequivocal statements on the illegality of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. World-wide protests have seen nuclear weapons testing come to a virtual standstill in most areas of the world. Strong debates continue about the farcical notion of "deterrence" and its contribution to proliferation. Meanwhile, a strengthened role for non-government organizations has developed in discussions around non-proliferation and in developing models for peace keeping and conflict resolution.

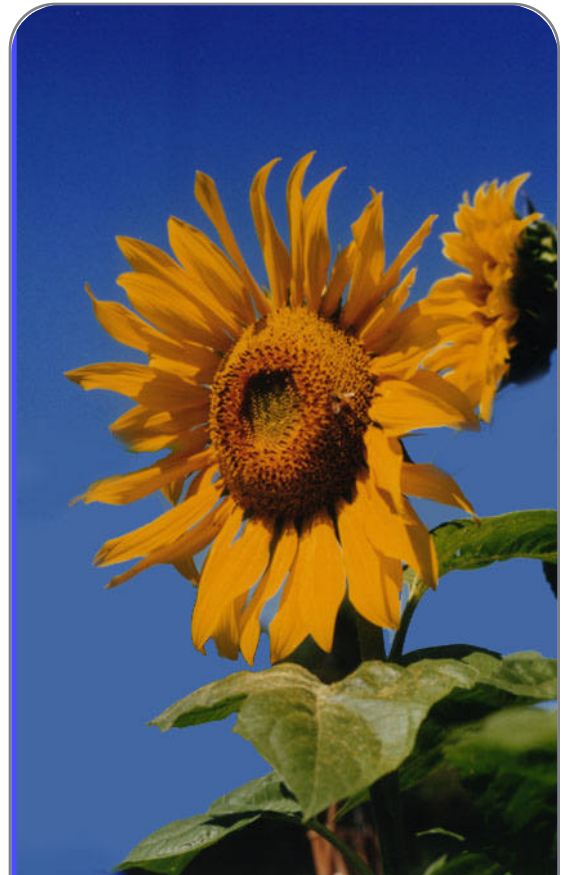
Despite the assurances of industry and government, studies show that the threat of nuclear holocaust is still one of the most prevalent fears for young people today. Yet it is not simply the fear of a nuclear war that has impacted on our lives.

For people located at the "coal face" of the industry, whether living or working near a uranium mine, a nuclear power plant, or a radioactive waste dump, the industry has a very real daily impact, often with devastating health risks.

The issues associated with the nuclear industry are as far-reaching as any faced by humanity; debilitating communities, galvanizing debate and creating an atmosphere of fear which many find almost insurmountable.

Talking Nukes is an education toolbox for activists around the world. We provide basic fact sheets and background information on a range of nuclear issues for activists to use as tools in broader education work on the nuclear industry. This kit is by no means comprehensive, but intends to provide activists with a foundation from which they can begin to learn.

You will find all these and any updated fact sheets on the website of the Reaching Critical Will initiative: www.reachingcriticalwill.org.



The Sunflower

"Sunflowers instead of missiles in the soil would ensure peace for future generations"

Sunflowers have been adopted by the anti-nuclear community around the world to symbolize hope and peace and represent the work towards nuclear weapons disarmament.