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An Analysis of the Existential Underpinnings of the Cycle of Terrorist and Counterterrorist
Violence and Pathways to Peaceful Resolutions
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Abstract

The current article provides a terror management theory perspective of the psychological factors that lead groups and individuals to endorse, promote, and engage in violent actions against innocent individuals. This perspective provides an empirically-based, theoretically-driven approach to understanding the ways in which ideological, nationalistic, and religious beliefs interact with historical events and concrete complaints to lead people to accept, condone, or participate in terrorist activities. Research provides convergent evidence suggesting that many of the same psychological factors are at work in the minds of people on both sides of conflicts. This suggests that the factors driving people toward terrorism are the same as those which drive people toward extreme counterterrorism measures that often create substantial collateral damage which commonly helps terrorists grow broader support for their causes and increase recruitment. After describing this cycle of violence, research is presented that provides several pathways through which intergroup peace may be attained.

Keywords: terrorism, death, terror management, peace, conflict

An Analysis of the Existential Underpinnings of the Cycle of Terrorist and Counterterrorist Violence and Pathways to Peaceful Resolutions

An old apothegm claims that violence begets more violence and a quick review of the history of human conflict supports this adage. Consider a few historical examples where one group perpetrates one act of violence against another group that responds in an increasingly intense and violent manner. For example, in 1916 the IRA staged the Easter Rising rebellion to protest British rule. At this point the IRA lacked much substantial support from the Irish public, but following a harsh British rebuke in which thousands of Irish people were arrested or placed in internment camps while dozens of their countrymen were executed by a firing squad the IRA experienced a dramatic increase in support for their cause providing a steady stream of troops and supplies extending that conflict indefinitely. Likewise, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) experienced expanded support among Tamils following the Sri Lankan government's enactment of a series of brutal pieces of legislation targeting the Tamil population. Some scholars have argued the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States were designed to elicit an extreme retaliation from the United States as a way to unite the Muslim community behind the extremist movement that perpetrated those attacks (e.g., Richardson, 2006). Following the attacks, the United States and some allied Western powers invaded two Middle Eastern countries occupied predominantly by Muslims. In the process of invading these countries and fighting long-lasting wars within them, many moderate, ordinary Muslim civilians became "collateral damage" and died by the thousands ("Terrorism analyst: National intelligence," 2007). Concurrently, the world witnessed a dramatic eightfold surge in worldwide terrorist attacks and a threefold increase in terrorist attack-related deaths (Bergen & Cruickshank, 2007; Karl & Radia, 2008). Interviews with Afghanis and Iraqis following the invasions of their countries, suggest that not only were terrorist groups more active, but many people who had previously rejected terrorist groups and their fatal actions had decided to join the violent jihadist cause suggesting a surge in recruitment for terrorist organizations as a response to the war designed to eliminate terrorism (cf. Wessells, 2006). Beyond these real-world examples of violence begetting more violence, is laboratory research confirming this tendency (e.g., Button, 1972; Widom, 1989).

The current article presents research demonstrating an empirical basis for the notion that intergroup violence tends toward a cyclical nature and is motivated, in large part, by existential concerns shared by all people. From the perspective of terror management theory (TMT; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1986), we contend that these existential concerns are of primary import in understanding real-world conflict. While many conflicts do involve some instrumental issues, such as economic gain, they also carry a symbolic, cultural component that may supersede the instrumental motivations and may escalate the conflict (see Pyszczynski, Motyl, & Abdollahi, 2009; see also Pyszczynski, Rothschild, Motyl, & Abdollahi, 2009). In presenting this evidence, it may seem that existential fears may inevitably evince increased intergroup hostilities painting a bleak picture suggesting that long-lasting, deep-seeded conflicts may be insoluble. However, we also review recent research examining ways in which existential concerns sometimes lead to increased intergroup harmony and a preference for peaceful coexistence over perilous and persistent intergroup warring.

Terror Management Theory

TMT is not a theory about terrorism, per se, but rather a broad theory of human motivation derived from the writings of Becker (1973), Lifton (1976; 1979), and Rank (1936/1950), which suggests that people are driven toward continued self-preservation, yet are faced with the potential for paralyzing anxiety due to their unique awareness of the inevitability

of death. In order for people to maintain psychological equanimity, they stave off this anxiety by devising and adhering to cultural worldviews that imbue life with meaning and create the potential for death transcendence through literal (e.g., Heaven, Nirvana) or symbolic means (e.g., through winning a Nobel Prize or admission into the literary canon). The prospect of continued life motivates members of a society to adhere to the prescriptions of behavior set forth by a particular worldview, which garners them a sense of value and self-esteem and thereby buffers the anxiety that results from human awareness of the inevitability of death.

The majority of the time this anxiety buffering system works well for most people, but becomes problematic when adherents of one cultural belief system encounter adherents of another. This is problematic because when people are exposed to alternative belief systems it calls into question the veracity of their own belief systems and if their belief systems are wrong, they will fear failing in their quest for death transcendence. Thus, cultural worldviews are rather fragile due to their socially-constructed nature and must be continually consensually validated. Though people may never know if their worldview is absolutely correct, they may perceive it as being more correct if many other people share in the belief in that worldview. Consistent with the idea that consensually validated worldviews provide protection against existential anxiety, much research has demonstrated that when people are led to think about death they display increased preference for people who support their cultural beliefs and decreased liking for and aggression against people who threaten their cultural beliefs (Greenberg, et al., 1990; McGregor et al., 1998). Rosenblatt et al. (1989) also showed that death reminders make people more punitive towards people who engage in moral transgressions. Similarly, threatening someone's worldview increased the accessibility of death thoughts; that is, it brings such thoughts closer to consciousness (Schimel, Hayes, Williams, & Jahrig, 2008). These increases in thoughts of death resulting from threats to cultural belief systems and self-esteem are problematic because they often foster more aggressive intergroup interactions.

According to TMT, people have several common recourses when encountering challenges to their worldviews. They may attempt to convert others, thus bolstering support for their own way of life by increasing social support for their worldview. Successfully converting others to one's own ideology increases the number of followers of one's own ideology and with it, the ideology is consensually validated. In a similar vein, believers of one worldview will sometimes try to accommodate threatening aspects of another worldview into their own. If conversion and accommodation fail to defuse the worldview threat, believers of one worldview often simply derogate believers of alternative worldviews. This approach is not uncommon in the contemporary Western discussion of terrorism. Westerners often assume terrorists to be mentally ill or weak and brainwashed by wicked leaders (Kruglanski & Fishman, 2006; Pyszczynski, Greenberg, & Solomon, 2003). Religious terrorists appear to use this same approach in response to targets that threaten their worldview, declaring that non-believers are heretical infidel slaves to an evil empire (Lifton, 1999). There is, however, another, more macabre response to particularly threatening outgroups. This response entails annihilating the adherents of the threatening belief system and can be seen throughout history in genocides such as the Holocaust in Germany and the Rwandan conflict.

To test these theoretical propositions, a series of five distinct hypotheses were derived. The most widely tested is the mortality salience (MS) hypothesis. This hypothesis suggests that when mortality is made salient, people will cling more closely to their worldviews, increase positive reactions to those who support their worldview, increase negative reactions to those who threaten it, and strive to bolster their self-esteem (Goldenberg et al., 2003; Greenberg et al.,

1990; Rosenblatt et al., 1989). In most of the studies using this hypothesis, mortality reminders are compared to a number of other aversive controls such as dental pain, intense physical pain, meaninglessness, public speaking, social exclusion, and uncertainty—none of which consistently mirror the effects of a death reminder suggesting that these effects are unique responses to MS (Pyszczynski, Greenberg, Solomon, & Maxfield, 2006). Four other hypotheses provide convergent support for the mortality salience hypothesis. More specifically, when threatening people's self-esteem or cultural worldviews, they display increased death-thought accessibility using implicit, automatic measures or paper-and-pencil word stem completion tasks (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, Solomon, Simon, & Breus, 1994). When people receive a boost in self-esteem or validating information about their worldviews, they do not show the typically defensive reactions following mortality reminders (Harmon-Jones et al., 1997). Lastly, when people are given scientific evidence suggesting the existence of a literal afterlife, they do not show the effect of mortality salience on self-esteem striving or worldview defense (Dechesne et al., 2003). To date, over 400 experiments conducted in 21 countries have supported these hypotheses (cf. Greenberg, Solomon, & Arndt, 2008; Pyszczynski, Solomon, & Greenberg, 2003). Taken together, this research provides convergent evidence supporting TMT's basic tenets and demonstrates that people have needs to both defend their cultural belief systems and to perceive themselves as valuable contributors to their cultural groups.

Terror Management and the Cycle of Violence

Much research in the TMT tradition has examined the role of existential fears in intergroup relations. In earlier TMT studies, researchers demonstrated that priming MS leads to increased hostility toward outgroup members and people who adhere to different cultural belief systems (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1990; McGregor et al., 1999). In recent years, this research has been directly applied to the study of terrorism and the consequences of particular counterterrorist approaches. For example, Pyszczynski et al. (2006) conducted parallel studies in the United States and Iran. Among American participants, death reminders led to increased support for using extreme military action against Middle Easterners, even at the explicit expense of tens of thousands of innocent civilians. Similarly, among Iranian participants, death reminders led to increased preference for students who were advocated martyrdom attacks as a tactic against Western powers. This same basic pattern was demonstrated in Israel among Israelis who opposed disengagement from the Gaza strip. Death reminders led these conservative Israelis to view the usage of violence against Palestinians as more acceptable. Taken together, these findings suggest that our existential death-related anxieties play a role in intergroup conflict and may exacerbate conflict.

These studies clearly demonstrate that having people think about their own deaths leads to an increased striving to defend their cultural belief system and all those who adhere to it. Of essential interest to the proposed TMT model of terrorism is the effect of having people contemplate terrorism or view scenes of war and destruction. Landau et al. (2004) demonstrated that subliminal presentations of the letters "WTC" or the numbers "911" led to elevated death-thought accessibility among Americans. Similarly, Gillespie and Jessop (2007) showed that reading newspaper accounts of either the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in the United States or the July 7, 2005 subway and bus bombings in London led participants to make more death-related responses on an ambiguous word-stem completion task. Vail, Motyl, and Pyszczynski (2009) extended these findings to explore the effects of living in war-torn countries by presenting participants with images of in-tact buildings, buildings under construction, buildings being blown up with bombs or being struck

by airplanes, or buildings reduced to piles of rubble, and then measuring death-thought accessibility. As expected, Vail et al. found that when participants viewed pictures of acts of war and terrorism, they displayed increased death-thought awareness. This study also revealed that depictions of buildings reduced to rubble, presumably through acts of war and terrorism, elicited the same level of cognitive accessibility of death-thoughts as direct acts of war and terrorism do. This suggests that in war-torn countries, remnants of war may serve to perpetually heighten death awareness and may lead to a state of chronic worldview defense further complicating intergroup relations.

This is evident when considering the fact that in the three years following the 2003 invasion of Iraq, that country bore witness to more suicide bombings than the entire world had in the previous 22 years (Richardson, 2006). Similarly, Mogahed (“New Poll of Islamic World,” 2006) reported that from 2004 to 2006, there was a threefold increase in the number of acts of terrorism in the Middle East compared to the previous two years. Bergen and Cruickshank (2007) noted that there were a record number of terrorist attacks in 2007.

At first glance, it may seem that suicide terrorism might not make sense in light of a theory which begins with the central notion that people are driven to deny their deaths and project themselves far into the future. While TMT does suggest that people are driven by their fear of death, it also posits that people are motivated toward achieving death transcendence. In the cultures that have been producing many terrorists in recent years, there exists a great symbolic reward for those sacrificing their lives for their collective cause. For example, some Middle Eastern countries have annual “Martyrs Days” that closely resemble the American holidays of “Memorial Day” and “Veterans Day” (Richardson, 2006). To supplement this symbolic immortality, many Islamic terrorists are promised an idyllic afterlife complete with 72 beautiful virgins. These immortality assurances assuage believers of their death-related fear and encourage them to commit egregious atrocities in defense of their group. In this light, suicide terrorism makes a lot of sense from a TMT perspective.

In addition to defending against existential anxiety by belonging to a particular culture, people must feel that they are valuable contributors to *the* fundamentally correct cultural worldview. This need for self-esteem rooted in one’s cultural milieu may lead to individual aggressive actions to avenge attacks on one’s group. Terrorism scholars have examined the feelings of terrorists living in not only in Middle Eastern countries, but all around the world, and have revealed that one of the psychological factors that these terrorists reported was a sense of humiliation (Richardson, 2006; Stern, 2003). Survey research conducted in post-invasion Afghanistan and Iraq has reported similar feelings among residents living in areas experiencing high levels of conflict between terrorists and counterterrorists. Wessels (2006) explored these feelings by conducting a series of interviews in both Afghanistan and Iraq. In Afghanistan, he interviewed people supportive of and opposed to the Taliban and across both groups found that Afghans viewed the US-led war in Iraq as unjustified and a major force in the recent surge of support for terrorist groups. He found the same basic patterns of beliefs in Iraq. Despite their lack of support for Saddam, many Iraqis viewed the fall of his regime unfavorably because it allowed Western powers greater domination of the region. A number of those interviewed indicated that they believed many of their current problems, including increased lawlessness, violence, and rape could be attributed to the United States’ occupation. Especially problematic is the finding that many people in both countries claimed to have joined violent jihad groups as a result of the United States’ military actions. Within any Jewish, Western, or Muslim community, feelings of individual or collective humiliation all too frequently lead to a violent quest to restore dignity

and honor. Similarly, Fontan (2006) indicated that more than 80% of Iraqis in both Sunni and Shi'ite parts of Baghdad view western forces as "occupiers" rather than "liberators."

Thus far, this analysis has painted an ominous picture where the prospects for peace and a broader elimination of terrorist violence seem minimal, if not unobtainable. TMT suggests that threats to one's cultural worldview and self-esteem undermine the psychological equanimity that worldviews and self-esteem ordinarily function to provide, thus leading people to lash out at those who are perceived to be responsible for these threats. It also appears that violence begets further violence, by motivating people to defend themselves and "settle the score," playing into the view of the other as evil, and encouraging further violence as a way of denying any moral culpability in one's initial attacks. Violent attacks also leave a wake of death and destruction that keep the threat of death always close to consciousness and thereby motivate even more extreme reactions to ward off this very basic existential threat. These psychological forces are inextricably linked to real world grievances and injustices, but once set in motion, can take on a life of their own that blind people to prospects for peaceful co-existence. This creates a sense of pessimism in devising ways in which to improve intergroup relations in world where conflict is ubiquitous leading to a persistent concern with existential fears. This leads us to consider what factors may assuage our existential fears and improve intergroup relations, which is an empirical question receiving much attention in recent years.

Improving Intergroup Relations

This inchoate literature has begun to display that increased hostility is not an inevitable response to heightened existential concerns. A basic tenet of TMT suggests that under threat people are motivated to increase their adherence to their cultural worldview and live in accordance to the values prescribed by their cultural worldview. While past TMT research has oft-demonstrated that encountering followers of threatening worldviews will lead to anger and hostility, recent research explores the factors that moderate this relationship.

Common humanity. Throughout human history, many activists, ministers, philosophers, politicians, and scientists have suggested that if people could simply recognize that all people, regardless of creed or color, share a common humanity and have fates that are inextricably linked to each other intergroup conflict would be substantially reduced. For instance, former President of the United States John F. Kennedy once stated "a rising tide raises all ships," while reggae music star Bob Marley reminded his listeners that "we are [all] birds of a feather" ("Bob Marley Lyrics," 2007). In this age of science, some evidence even suggests that people really are members of one big family. The Human Genome Project ("Science behind the human genome project," 2007) recently reported that human beings share at least 99% of their genetic material in terms of their nucleotide base pairs. In some instances, such as those mentioned above and some later discussed (e.g., anti-Apartheid activism), social movements reminding people that they share a common humanity have succeeded in attenuating inter-group conflict.

Social psychologists have made some forays into the arena of empirically examining this activist assertion. In Gordon Allport's (1954) classic text *On the Nature of Prejudice*, he proposed that by construing humanity as a broad, hyper-inclusive ingroup intergroup relations should be improved. Later, Sherif et al. (1961) demonstrated in their classic Robber's Cave experiment that competing groups which are generally hostile towards one another can learn to cooperate and co-exist sans conflict when faced with superordinate threats and tasks that require intergroup cooperation. More recently, Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) devised the common ingroup identity model (CIIM) which proposes that group inclusiveness can be

altered to extend to a larger number of people to a point where intergroup bias is largely mitigated.

Pulling on these ideas and others, Motyl et al. (2009a) concocted a series of studies in which they tested the possibility that activating a sense of common humanity may lead to improved intergroup relations, even in situations where existential threats are salient. In Study 1, Motyl et al. had American participants write a short essay about death or experiencing physical pain, then evaluate a series of pictures depicting groups of Americans engaging in basic human activities (e.g., eating dinner, playing games), groups of people from diverse locations engaging in those same basic human activities essentially activating a sense of common humanity, or individual Americans standing around, and then completed a measure of implicit anti-Arab prejudice. This study found that death reminders led to increased implicit anti-Arab prejudice when participants viewed pictures of American groups or American individuals, but a significant decrease in anti-Arab prejudice when viewing pictures of people from around the world. In Study 2, participants read a series of three vignettes purported to be favorite childhood memories that were either authored by American children or children living in diverse places from around the world, wrote a brief essay on death or dental pain, completed a measure assessing the extent to which they perceived to share a common humanity with people living around the world, and finally completed a measure assessing anti-immigrant hostility. This study demonstrated that death reminders led to increased anti-immigrant hostility when people read about the favorite childhood memories penned by the American author, but not when people read the memories penned by international authors. Furthermore, this study demonstrated that this effect was partially mediated by the perception that people living around the world shared a common humanity with Americans. In Study 3, participants were led to think about death or pain, asked to write about similarities or differences between all people living around the world, and then completed the same measure of anti-immigrant hostility as in Study 2. This study revealed the same basic pattern as the previous two studies. When participants were led to think about death and then how all people were different, they demonstrated increased anti-immigrant hostility, but not when they contemplated how all people were similar. Taken together, these studies lend empirical credence to the notion that activating a sense of common humanity can lead to reduced intergroup conflict.

In a similar vein, Motyl et al. (2009b) extended these findings by looking at the effects of global threats that would negatively affect all of humanity and if this would lead to increased intergroup harmony even in the face of existential threat. In Study 1, participants were led to think of death or intense physical pain, contemplate how global climate change could affect all people living around the world or how an earthquake in an American city would affect that city's residents, and then complete a measure assessing their support for diplomacy with other countries. This study revealed that death reminders led to decreased support for diplomacy when participants were primed with a catastrophe affecting only a small group of people, but an increase in support for diplomacy when participants were primed with a common catastrophe affecting all people living around the world (i.e. global climate change). Importantly, these findings were not contingent upon participants' beliefs toward global warming. In Study 2, participants again were primed with thoughts of death or uncertainty, global climate change or a great flood in China, and then asked to complete a scale assessing moral disengagement and a role-playing measure assessing support for war with Iran. As hypothesized, death reminders led to increased moral disengagement and support for war with Iran when people contemplated the foreign catastrophe that affected only a relatively small

group of people, but no such increase occurred when participants were led to think of global climate change impact all people living around the world. In Study 3, conducted on Arab-Israelis during the Israeli invasion of Gaza, participants were led to think of death or pain, global climate change or an earthquake occurring in Israel, and then complete a measure of support for peaceful co-existence between Israelis and Palestinians. Among Arab-Israelis open to the concept of a common humanity, MS decreased support for peaceful coexistence after imagining a localized catastrophe, but this effect was reversed after imagining a global threat. Together, these studies suggest that reminders of threats that affect all people may activate a sense of common humanity and thereby lead to an increased willingness to engage in diplomacy, a decreased willingness to endorse war, and a resistance to morally disengage from those typically viewed as belonging to outgroups.

Infra-humanizing violence. Related to the notion of encouraging people to recognize each other's shared humanity is the need to feel like uniquely human, symbolic beings (Cox, Goldenberg, Pyszczynski, & Weise, 2007; Goldenberg et al., 2001). Accordingly, one of the key psychological mechanisms that enables people to commit atrocities and engage in violent behaviors against other people who belong to other groups is *infracumanization* (Bandura, 1999). In intergroup conflicts we can more easily engage in violent acts against others if they are perceived as less than human because then they are seen as beyond the realm of moral consideration. Consider, for example, how the Bosnians in the Balkan wars, Jews in the Holocaust, and Tutsis in the Rwandan conflict were equated to vermin by their perpetrators (cf. Haslam, 2006). Motyl, Goldenberg, Pyszczynski, Heflick, and Hart (2009c) questioned whether this mechanism could also be used to prevent people from engaging in violent acts. In Study 4, participants thought about death or a negative control topic, read a passage depicting violence as a behavior that is either uniquely human or very animalistic (effectively *infracumanizing* the *behavior* of violence), and then completed a role-playing assessment of support for extreme military action against Iran. This study indicated that among right-wing authoritarian participants, death reminders and depictions of violence as a uniquely human behavior led to increases in their support for military action. These same participants, however, became significantly *less* supportive of military action when they read about how violence was an animalistic, *infracuman* behavior. Together, with the previously discussed research on common humanity reminders, it appears that we have an existential need to feel that we are unique, symbolic beings and when we perceive others as being unique, symbolic beings much like we are, we can no longer endorse violence against others.

Compassionate values. TMT proposes that people have a need to follow the prescriptions of value contained in their cultural belief systems and a survey of cultural belief systems indicates that, despite there being many alternative interpretations of the actual meaning of the sacred texts of these belief systems, all worldviews contain some compassionate values. For instance, the Bible instructs people to achieve justice by taking "an eye for an eye," while inspiring people love their enemies and turn the other cheek. Similarly, the Koran has many conflicting passages that implore followers to "take an eye for an eye", while "doing goodness to others." Social psychological research has demonstrated that behavior can be modified by making different aspects of a belief system salient (Bargh, 1996; Crano & Prislin, 2006; Ross & Nisbett, 1991).

Rothschild, Pyszczynski, and Abdollahi (under review) conducted a series of studies testing whether making the compassionate aspects of people's religious worldviews salient could have a palliative effect on intergroup conflict. In Studies 1 and 2, participants contemplated death

or pain, read compassionate Biblical values, compassionate non-Biblical values, neutral Biblical statements, or neutral non-Biblical statements, and then examined participants support for the war on terrorism. Among participants scoring high on a measure of religious fundamentalism, death reminders led to an increase in support for war in all conditions, except when they first contemplated compassionate Biblical values. This study was replicated on a sample of fundamentalist Shi'ite Muslims in Iran. Iranians were asked to think about death, read a set of compassionate values that were either labeled as Koranic or secular, and then were assessed on their attitudes toward the Western countries. Again, a death reminder led to increased anti-Western attitudes unless participants were first primed with compassionate Koranic values – under these conditions, the death reminder actually *decreased* anti-Western attitudes. These studies suggest that although religious fundamentalists are often among the most aggressive and most supportive of war (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992; Hunsberger & Jackson, 2005; Laythe, Finkel, & Kirkpatrick, 2001; Rock, 2004; Rowatt & Franklin, 2004), this aggression can be eliminated by emphasizing the compassionate aspects of their specific worldviews.

Conclusion

Many terrorism scholars have lamented the dearth of empirical scrutiny given to developing an understanding of terrorism and the fact that much terrorism theory merely builds on itself rather than across disciplines with applied scientific methods (e.g., Atran, 2003; Gupta, 2006; Stohl, 2006; Victoroff, 2005). In the present paper, we presented a terror management analysis of terrorism and the often unintended reverberating consequences of hard-line counterterrorist retaliatory actions. This analysis provides one empirically-based psychological explanation of an extraordinarily complex issue that has claimed the lives of countless people over thousands of years. In composing such an analysis, it is our hope that we will encourage further empirical and interdisciplinary research examining the problem of terrorism and the efficacy of different counterterrorism approaches. Through our analysis, we have attempted to communicate that simply assuming that members of an opposing culture are evil, inferior, irrational, or subhuman is not sufficient and will be more likely to perpetuate the conflict than quell it. Rather, it is important to consider the psychological motivations of people on all sides of the conflict to develop a more dynamic understanding of the conflict and properly tailor counterterrorist methods to the particular situations. Hard-line military responses are surely sometimes necessary, but if they do not clearly target those responsible for the initial terrorist incursion, they may precipitously lead to surges in terrorist group recruitment and support. In developing this comprehensive understanding of terrorism, we can begin to address it. Early empirical work reviewed in this article suggests that by promoting a sense of our shared humanity, shared struggles in life, and emphasizing compassionate values inherent in all cultures, we may work to lay the groundwork for lasting intergroup harmony.

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