

101 Ways to Foster Nonviolence in Your Life

The Way of Peace; Shannon McManiman, Pax Christi USA 2003

Educate yourself on injustice and nonviolence.
Be aware of God's embrace.
Question the status quo.
Spend time with a child.
Be conscious of your privileges—on the basis of place of birth, skin color, gender, wealth, etc.
Shout "Yes!" to life.
Use gender-inclusive language.
Seek justice and reconciliation, not victory.
Serve someone in need.
Use cars less—walk, bike, use public transit, or at least carpool.
Listen.
Get training in nonviolence.
Take responsibility for ending injustice.
Buy locally-made, produces, or grown products.
Value art, song, dance, poetry.
Avoid stereotypes.
Ask for forgiveness.
Challenge someone who says something offensive, be it a comment or a joke.
Say thank you—and mean it.
Learn another language or study another culture.
Plant flowers or trees.
Spend time in prayer or quiet reflection.
Refuse to have enemies.
Consider war tax resistance.
Speak for the voiceless.
Turn off the television.
Seek to understand.
Create something beautiful.
Share.
Write letters to the editor about important issues.
Resist materialism.
Stop needing to be "number one."
Recognize that everyone has a "piece of the truth."
Compromise.
Forgive someone who has hurt you or a loved one; let them know.
Make a connection with someone who is different than you.
Ask God to help you on your nonviolence journey.
Spend quality time building relationships.
Speak truth to power.
Offer solutions.
Live with compassion for all life around you.
Praise God.
Let go of fear.
Don't buy war toys.
Celebrate diversity.
Reach out to someone who is hurting.
Conserve energy and water.
Celebrate the beauty of life and creation.
Let elected representatives know which policies you approve and disapprove of.
Affirm and support your friends and family.
Stop rumors.
Smile.

Bring your own (reusable) bags to the store.
Sign a petition.
Research a nonviolent social movement.
Eat less meat or none at all (for the environment in solidarity with the poor, in respect of animals).
Reclaim you power as a child of God.
Oppose all wars.
Spend time outdoors.
Check the labels on the clothing you buy; be conscious of who might have made them, under what conditions.
Let go of your defenses.
Encourage your faith community to study nonviolence.
Reduce, reuse, recycle, restore.
Follow your conscience.
Don't buy into advertising—literally or figuratively.
Respect all human rights of all people: civil, political, social, economic, cultural.
Treat your body well.
Talk to someone about why violence is bad.
Get a job that supports people, human needs, or the environment—not corporate greed.
Ask your school to teach nonviolent conflict resolution.
Put others first.
Speak out against violence in the media and "entertainment."
Laugh.
Really try to understand the viewpoint of someone with whom you disagree.
Attend a demonstration for peace.
Relax your body posture.
Support organizations that work for peace and justice.
Try using consensus decision-making.
Read about someone who has tried to live nonviolently.
Remember that each day is a blessing and a gift.
Accept your own worth.
Watch a video about justice or peace with friends and discuss.
Recognize and name the divine in every person you encounter.
Refuse to be silent in the face of what really matters.
Question assumptions.
Truly concentrate on what someone is saying to you.
Don't hold grudges.
Write to someone in prison.
Slow down.
Be more aware.
Express your feelings before you reach the stage of anger and hostility.
Start a study circle on nonviolence or a related topic.
Cultivate awe.
Become aware of your own biases.
Seek out and create community.
Be open to transformation.
Cultivate a spirit of calm and inward quiet.
Spend time with someone you love. Imagine a world without violence and hatred.
Give of yourself.
Choose nonviolence always.

Voice for Justice

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Pope Francis' Fiftieth World Day of Peace Message

On January 1, 2017, Pope Francis issued his World Day of Peace message, titled *Nonviolence: a Style of Politics for Peace*. His message is a call for people of God to cultivate nonviolence as the authentic way for followers of Jesus to deal with conflict at all levels in our lives, from family, to community, our nation and the world.

The early Christian world to the time of Constantine had a strong tradition and practice which did not allow for the imposing of physical harm, the shedding of blood, when dealing with various conflicts and threats. But once the Roman political establishment and the Christian Church became reconciled, bloodshed and death became accepted and justified in dealing with law enforcement and war. The Church then adopted the *Just War Theory* in the development of a moral theology regarding conflict and war. The Just War Theory spelled out various conditions which had to be met to justify engaging in war, and restraints which were to be applied to how war could be waged. The concepts in the just war theory, however, came principally from the life and teachings of Jesus. Also the common understanding of the time that the Reign of God would never be of this world, only of the world to come,

diminished the importance of avoiding the imposition of bodily harm on those who threatened us.

Over the centuries a small minority of Catholics and other Christians have opposed the idea of a just war and held up nonviolent means of conflict resolution as consistent with the message of Jesus. But to a great extent this has been deemed impractical. It has been thought to be impossible to nonviolently protect the innocent and hold aggressors and criminals to account.

In more recent times, however, there has been a growing consideration of nonviolent conflict resolution as both authentic in keeping with the Gospel and effective in dealing with those using lethal force against others. This developing understanding, brought about by examining recent history and the writings and teachings of a number of people of faith, has influenced many such as Pope Francis and has played a major role in this new call. This past April the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, with Pax Christi and others, held a conference in Rome dealing with these questions. This resulted in publication of a document, *An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Recommit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence*. This had a strong influence on the Pope's issuing this World Day of Peace message and, many hope, may lead to a papal encyclical delving deeper into this subject.

Bill Carry

What Is Active Nonviolence? Some Insights...

Active nonviolence is not simply a protest against violence...

It also presents a vision that Another World Is Possible, and suggests a way to fulfill that vision. Against the makers of violence, it proposes not passivity, but action, and because it is nonviolent it has a unique power greater than the power of guns and bombs. - Inspired by Howard Zinn, *The Power of Nonviolence*

We grow deeper into Active Nonviolence by practicing...

we don't have to be perfectly nonviolent before we take action; nonviolence is something we practice and grow into... As Gandhi said, "Nonviolence is a continual (and lifetime) series of 'experiments with truth' through which we gradually learn to become more human." "*The arc of justice...*" (MLK)

Active nonviolence is a spiritual journey...

Addressing the violence in our lives and the life of the world launches us on a journey bringing us face to face with our illusions as well as the merciful and replenishing love of the Nonviolent God who longs for our wholeness as individuals and as a community. It is therefore not purely mechanical, where one simply applies a particular technique.

Active nonviolence does not propose to end conflict...

Real nonviolence does not attempt to create a world where there is no conflict; it recognizes that we face conflict all through our lives. The goal is to end the violence.

Active nonviolence takes the reality of evil seriously, but it takes the reality of good even more seriously...

Nonviolence maintains that while violence is a fact, the world also rings with love, courage and grace which are ultimately more powerful than violence and capable of transforming it.



Active nonviolence begins with taking responsibility for our own state of mind, feelings and actions...

In most conflicts, we have two ways of responding. The first is to react defensively. Often we do this by instantaneously acting out our deepest ingrained "conflict scripts." The second way is to allow our true self to take action. This is the way of active nonviolence. Nonviolence is a means of creating a situation that stops the immediate violence, clarifies the real issues and produces a resolution. Ultimately this means taking responsibility for our own behavior, no matter what others do.

Active nonviolence can be used to respond to every level of violence...

These include interpersonal violence, violence in the workplace, violence between communities, violence against the Earth. These also include the overarching structures of violence that consciously and unconsciously shape and inform our personal and social lives in profoundly disturbing ways, including economic violence, racism, and sexism. The nonviolence practitioner seeks creative and persistent ways to use nonviolent methods to transform these conditions and their underlying attitudes and assumptions.

Inspired by Howard Zinn and Pace e Bene, San Francisco (*Peace and All Good*) <http://paceebene.org/>

"In the most local and ordinary situations and in the international order may nonviolence become the hallmark of our decisions, our relationships and our actions, and indeed in political life in all its forms." Pope Francis

Pope Francis said "nonviolence has produced impressive results." He challenges us to familiarize ourselves with nonviolence, its practices, its results, its success, so that we can follow in the footsteps of the nonviolent Jesus.

The people of Egypt proved that nonviolence can work! To the many who think nonviolent conflict resolution is just an ideal and cannot work in the real world: Egypt and Tunisia have shown differently...

By David D. Kirkpatrick

Cairo - An 18-day-old revolt, led by the young people of Egypt ousted President Hosni Mubarak on Friday, shattering three decades of political stasis here and upending the established order of the Arab world.

Shouts of "God is great" erupted from Tahrir Square at twilight as Mr. Mubarak's vice president and longtime intelligence chief, Omar Suleiman, announces that Mr. Mubarak has passed all authority to a council of military leaders.

Tens of thousands who had bowed down for evening prayers leapt to their feet, bouncing and dancing in joy. "Lift your head high, you're an Egyptian," they cried. Revising the tense of the revolution's rally cry, they chanted, "The people, at last, have brought down the regime."

One by one the protesters withstood each weapon in the arsenal of the Egyptian autocracy—first the heavily armed riot police, then a ruling party militia and finally the state's powerful propaganda machine.

A victory for a largely secular, nonviolent movement for democracy.



"In nonviolence, the masses have a weapon which enables a child, a woman, or even a decrepit old man to resist the mightiest government successfully. If your spirit is strong, mere lack of physical strength ceases to be a handicap." Gandhi

Then President Obama, in a TV address at the time, heaped praise on the Egyptian revolution as a "model of nonviolence" and compared it to Gandhi's nonviolent resistance to British rule. "It was a moral force of nonviolence that bent the arc of history," he said. NYT 2-12-11