



Module 3, Unit 3, Lesson 2:

Committing to Nonviolent Social Change

Directions:

Working in groups of three to four, read King's Six Principles of Nonviolence and Six Steps to Nonviolent Social Change. Then, respond to the set of questions found below:

1. Select a current issue of concern and describe in detail how you would use Step One
2. What will you give of yourself to strengthen your personal commitment?
3. What form of direct action would you use, if any?
4. How does modern technology impact Step One -Information Gathering and Step Two - Education today vs . how it was done during the civil rights era?
5. How would you determine and explain your negotiating points?

DR. KING'S FUNDAMENTAL PHILOSOPHY OF NONVIOLENCE

Fundamental tenets of Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence described in his first book, *Stride Toward Freedom*. Dr. King often said, he got his inspiration from Jesus Christ and his techniques from Mohandas K. Gandhi. These principles should be embraced as a lifestyle.

1 PRINCIPLE ONE: Nonviolence Is a Way of Life for Courageous People.

- It is not a method for cowards; it does resist.
- It is active nonviolent resistance to evil.
- It is aggressive spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

2 PRINCIPLE TWO: Nonviolence Seeks to Win Friendship and Understanding.

- The outcome of nonviolence is the creation of the Beloved Community.
- The end result of nonviolence is redemption and reconciliation

3 PRINCIPLE THREE: Nonviolence Seeks to Defeat Injustice, or Evil, Not People.

- Nonviolence recognizes that evildoers are also victims and are not evil people.
- The nonviolent resister seeks to defeat evil not persons victimized by evil.

4 PRINCIPLE FOUR: Nonviolence Holds That Unearned, Voluntary Suffering for a Just Cause Can Educate and Transform People and Societies.

- Nonviolence is a willingness to accept suffering without retaliation; to accept blows without striking back.
- Nonviolence is a willingness to accept violence if necessary but never inflict it.
- Nonviolence holds that unearned suffering for a cause is redemptive and has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities.

5 PRINCIPLE FIVE: Nonviolence Chooses Love Instead of Hate.

- Nonviolence resists violence of the spirit as well as the body.
- Nonviolent love is spontaneous, unselfish, and creative.

6 PRINCIPLE SIX: Nonviolence Believes That the Universe Is on the Side of Justice.

- The nonviolent resister has deep faith that justice will eventually win.
- Nonviolence believes that God is a God of justice.

SIX STEPS OF NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE

The Six Steps for Nonviolent Social Change are based on Dr. King's nonviolent campaigns and teachings that emphasize love in action. Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence, as reviewed in the Six Principles of Nonviolence, guide these steps for social and interpersonal change.



Information Gathering

To understand and articulate an issue, problem or injustice facing a person, community, or institution you must do research. You must investigate and gather all vital information from all sides of the argument or issue so as to increase your understanding of the problem. You must become an expert on your opponent's position



Education

It is essential to inform others, including your opposition, about your issue. This minimizes misunderstandings and gains you support and sympathy.



Personal Commitment

Daily check and affirm your faith in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence. Eliminate hidden motives and prepare yourself to accept suffering, if necessary, in your work for justice.



Negotiation

Using grace, humor and intelligence, confront the other party with a list of injustices and a plan for addressing and resolving these injustices. Look for what is positive in every action and statement the opposition makes. Do not seek to humiliate the opponent but to call forth the good in the opponent.



Direct Action

These are actions taken when the opponent is unwilling to enter into, or remain in, discussion/negotiation. These actions impose a "creative tension" into the conflict, supplying moral pressure on your opponent to work with you in resolving the injustice.



Reconciliation

Nonviolence seeks friendship and understanding with the opponent. Nonviolence does not seek to defeat the opponent. Nonviolence is directed against evil systems, forces, oppressive policies, unjust acts, but not against persons. Through reasoned compromise, both sides resolve the injustice with a plan of action. Each act of reconciliation is one step close to the 'Beloved Community.'