

PROTEST!

THE EXTREMISTS AND THEIR GOALS FOR OUR NATION



LEARNING HOW TO PROTEST IS LEARNING HOW TO LIVE

A NONVIOLENCE HANDBOOK

BY

MEL WHITE

CO-FOUNDER SOULFORCE, INC.

DEDICATED TO
THE LAWSON BROTHERS, JIM AND PHIL
APOSTLES OF NONVIOLENCE
HEROES, MENTORS, FRIENDS





About the Author by Ken Martin, MCC Elder and Pastor (ret.)

In 1993 Mel White was appointed Dean of the Cathedral of Hope Metropolitan Community Church in Dallas, Texas, the world's largest congregation ministering primarily to LGBTQ Americans. In his 1994 autobiography, "Stranger at the Gate: to be Gay and Christian in America," Mel describes the thirty painful years he spent trying to overcome his homosexuality through ex-gay therapies, exorcism and electric shock and the relief he felt when finally able to accept his sexual orientation as a gift from God. Commissioned to begin the Cathedral's national justice ministry, Mel and his partner, Gary Nixon, wondered what they could do to help end similar suffering by their LGBTQ sisters and brothers. In Mel's words, "Without taking much time to study civil rights movements of the past, we just blundered in."



1995



2014

On February 1, 1995, Mel was arrested trying to get an appointment with Pat Robertson to help him understand the tragic consequences of his endless antigay rhetoric. While in jail, Mel had a "pastoral call" from Coretta Scotts King's personal assistant, Lynn Cothren. During their brief visit Lynn gave Mel an autographed copy of Dr. King's "Why We Can't Wait" and a polite warning that Mel's justice ministry would not succeed until he understood M.K. Gandhi's principles of nonviolent resistance.

After a twenty-one day fast, Mel was released from jail. While reading through Dr. King's essential writings and speeches, he was surprised to learn how important Gandhi's teachings had been in shaping Dr. King's civil rights movement. Mel was about to give up hope in ever working his way through the 50,000 pages of Gandhi's "Collected Works" when he discovered "The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi" by Gopinath Dawhan, a rather mysterious colleague and contemporary of Gandhi who managed to create a 350 page map or guidebook through Gandhi's 103 volumes.

With Dahwan's guidebook in hand, Mel spent the next five years studying Gandhi's principles of nonviolence or Satyagraha, "the force of truth" or "soul force." He also studied nonviolence at the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Nyack, New York, at the King Center in Atlanta, on various nonviolent direct actions with civil right leaders Jim and Phil Lawson and on a journey to India on the anniversary of Gandhi's assassination as a guest of Gandhi's grandson, Arun. During that time, Mel began to organize Gandhi's principles of nonviolence into a NONVIOLENCE HANDBOOK that would shape his justice ministry and with Gary he co-founded Soulforce, an organization dedicated to helping end the religious and political oppression of LGBTQ people.

Gandhi and King had little time to systematize the principles of Satyagraha, or "soul force." Mel has extrapolated these principles from their essays, diaries, articles, books, speeches, interviews, collected writings and rare copies of original print materials, for example the actual pledges Gandhi and King asked their marchers to sign in South Africa, India, and in the U.S. If you are interested in the original data follow Mel's footnotes then check it out for yourself in "The Collected Writings of M.K. Gandhi" (Navijivan Publishing) and in Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr. (Harper Collins).

“PROTEST!”
A NONVIOLENCE HANDBOOK
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Coretta Scott King on Gandhi and Martin

"... by the time he was assassinated in 1968 my husband had fashioned a black movement powerful enough to shatter forever the practice of racial segregation. What you may not have read about is where he got his method for resisting injustice without compromising his religious beliefs. He adopted the strategy of nonviolence from a man of a different race, who lived in a distant country, and even practiced a different religion. The man was Mahatma Gandhi, the great leader of India, who devoted his life to serving humanity in the spirit of love and non-violence. It was in these principles that Martin discovered his method for social reform. More than anything else, those two principles were the key to his achievements."

The Call to Justice and Mercy

Judaism



Isaiah: "What good are your sacrifices to me? I am tired of your offerings.. I am offended by the noise of your solemn assemblies. Quit doing evil and learn to do good. What is good? Seek justice, (1:10-18)."

Amos: "I hate, I despise your feast days. Though you bring me offerings, I will not accept them. Shut up your noisy singing. I will not listen to the music of your orchestras and choirs. Instead, let justice run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream, (5:21-24)."

Micah: "What kind of worship does God want from me? This is what the Lord requires: do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God, (6:8)."

Christianity



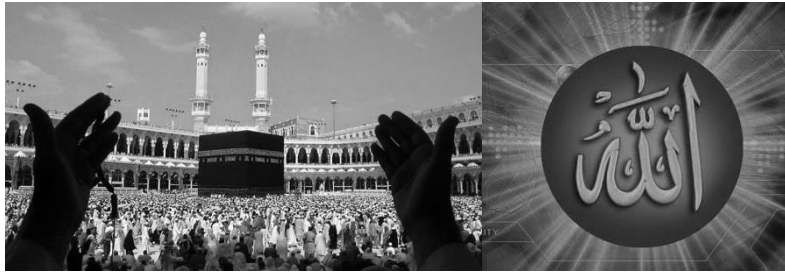
Jesus in Matthew: "Too bad for you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You know how to tithe the spices in your gardens, but you have neglected the weightier matters of the Law: Justice, Mercy, and Good faith,(23:23)."

Jesus in Mark: "Woe to you Pharisees for you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God, (11:42)."

Jesus in Luke: "Be ye merciful as your Father in heaven is merciful, (6:36)."

Jesus in John: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends, (15:12-13)."

The Call for Justice in Islam



Believers!

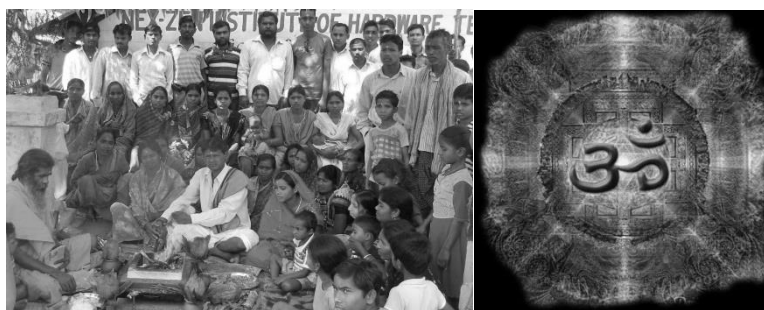
Be resolute in your allegiance to God, staunch witnesses for *justice*.
On no account let hatred against any people cause you to be perverted from what is just.
Deal justly. To do so is the nearest thing to the fear of God. (Surah 5.8-9)



The Call for Nonviolence in Buddhism

Buddhist traditions offer rich resources for peacemaking and the cultivation of *nonviolence*. For Example:

- Four Noble Truths (pali *ariya sacca*) offering relief from the causes of human suffering;
- The moral precepts especially to refrain from harming living beings (*ahimsa*);
- The practice of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity (*brahmaviharas*);



The Call for Reconciliation in Hinduism

The spirit of nonviolence is seen in the Rgveda
Come together, talk together, Let our minds be in harmony.
Common be our prayer, Common be our end,
Common be our purpose, Common be our deliberations, Common be our desires,
United be our hearts, United be our intentions,
Perfect be the union among us. (Rgveda X.191.2-4)

In every faith tradition prophets and teachers call us to do justice.

To protest injustice is the first step.

Join tens of thousands of your fellow Americans.

PROTEST!



Let Gandhi's **PRINCIPLES OF NONVIOLENCE** guide your protest.

ONE PREMISE:

"...to see my adversary as a VICTIM OF UNTRUTH as I have been."

ONE TASK:

"...to bring TRUTH to my adversary and to hear her TRUTH as well."

ONE METHOD:

"...to be guided by LOVE (NONVIOLENCE) exclusively."

ONE SECRET:

"...to accept VOLUNTARY REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING without retaliation or complaint as a means of convincing my adversary of my sincerity."

ONE GOAL:

"...to seek RECONCILIATION with (not victory over) my adversary."



An act of passive resistance, Beijing, China, 5 June 1989

NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE

Nonviolent resistance is NOT a new idea. For centuries brave men and women used the proven tactics of passive resistance: protests, fasts, civil disobedience, sit-ins, pray-ins, boycotts and strikes. But Gandhi hated the term “passive resistance.” It was just too ... “passive.” And he also realized that in the face of the mighty British Empire, it would take more than the tactics of “passive resistance” to send their oppressors back to England.

In South Africa Gandhi began his experiment at creating change nonviolently both in the lives of single individuals and whole societies. So that his understanding of NONVIOLENCE would not be confused with “passive resistance” Gandhi offered a prize to anyone who could contribute a word that would name his emerging NONVIOLENCE movement. A reader suggested the word SATYAGRAHA, freely translated as "insistence on truth" (*satya* 'truth'; *agraha* 'insistence'). At first Gandhi called his system of NONVIOLENCE “truth force” but as he witnessed how practicing Satyagraha was changing the minds and hearts of his followers (the Satyagrahi), he began to use the term “soul force” to identify his NONVIOLENCE movement.

Mahatma Gandhi



M. K. GANDHI DEVELOPS THE PRINCIPLES OF NONVIOLENCE WHILE PROTESTING BRITISH INJUSTICE

South Africa 1893 – 1914 India 1915 – 1947

Martin Luther King, Jr.

United States 1955- 1968



ADAPTS GANDHI'S PRINCIPLES OF NONVIOLENCE
WHILE PROTESTING SEGREGATION
AND SECURING CIVIL RIGHTS FOR AFRICAN-AMERICANS



Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez

United States 1965 –



ADAPTS GANDHI'S PRINCIPLES OF NONVIOLENCE
WHILE PROTESTING FARM WORKER'S MISTREATMENT
AND ORGANIZING UNITED FARM WORKERS (UFW) UNION



OCCUPY WALL STREET

UNITED STATES September 17, 2011 –



**A 21ST CENTURY EXPERIMENT IN NONVIOLENCE
WHILE PROTESTING THE POWER OF THE 1% OVER THE 99%**

THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Saturday, February 8, 2014



**LAUNCH MORAL MONDAY MOVEMENT
TO PROTEST ACTS OF INJUSTICE AND INEQUALITY
BY THE EXTREMIST IN THEIR STATE AND IN ALL FIFTY STATES**

“An estimated 80,000 to 100,000 people
gathered in Raleigh, North Carolina

To call for Justice!

“The rally was the largest civil rights rally in the South
since tens of thousands of voting rights activists marched
from Selma to Montgomery to support the Voting Rights Act in 1965.”ⁱⁱ

JOIN THE PROTEST!



The Coming Storm

There is a very dark cloud on our nation's horizon. A powerful storm is upon us. Fundamentalist Christians, billionaire capitalists and Tea-party loyalists are mobilizing their forces. At this moment, extremist Republicans hold sway over a significant minority of the U.S. House of Representatives and an influential Republican Caucus in the U.S. Senate. Extremist Republicans also have a powerful influence over the political careers of approximately twenty-nine state governors and literally thousands of state legislators. The spokesmen and women for the extremists – Ted Cruz, Mike Lee, Michele Bachman, Rush Limbaugh, Bill O'Reilly, Sean Hannity, Glenn Beck, Laura Ingraham and the rest of their Fox News allies – have convinced a rather sizeable segment of our society that the only way to save our country is to destroy it. Lies drown out truth. Fear mongering undermines the foundations on which our free society is built. The ancient call to Justice and Mercy is forgotten. Already, extremist Republicans are...

- ... disenfranchising millions of minority voters;
- ... gerrymandering precincts to eliminate progressive incumbents and candidates;
- ... denying 11,000,000 immigrants a reasonable path to citizenship;
- ... eliminating a woman's right to choose and closing the health clinics they depend on;
- ... building higher walls, hiring more border guards, deporting and dividing families;
- ... advocating a Constitutional Amendment denying LGBTQ Americans their civil rights;
- ... demeaning trans* men and women by refusing to acknowledge their sacred humanity;
- ... cutting programs that feed, house and educate underprivileged children;
- ... closing down agencies that protect the environment;
- ... abolishing administrations that regulate the production of food and pharmaceuticals;
- ... deregulating banks and rewarding incompetent bankers;
- ... empowering corporations with absolute political influence;
- ... increasing the power and privilege of the one percent;
- ... decreasing the rights and protections of the ninety-nine.

Occupy Wall Street Protests Sound the Alarm



Do you remember how you felt when you saw those first OWS photos? At first the reason for their protest didn't seem clear. Although their slogan "We are the 99%" became a national buzz word, critics demanded that OWS "get more specific" with their demands. Three years later we understand why Occupy Wall Street protestors had difficulty stating "the one reason" for their protest. There was no "one reason." There were many!

Occupy protestors realized that a coalition of extremists were turning back the clock on civil liberties, diversity and equality. There wasn't just one reason for their protest. There were dozens of reasons and more being flushed out every day. Now we understand why the one percent (1%) seemed so determined to drive representatives of the ninety-nine percent (99%) from Zuccotti Park. Now we can thank Occupy Wall Street for providing us one more warning that evil forces are mobilizing to undermine the very character of our democracy. They were among the first to see it. Their protest was a call to Justice and Mercy.



Here's the good news!

Now that we understand the danger extremists Republicans represent to everything we hold dear, progressive people are also mobilizing. Nonviolent protests are making headlines: marches, sit-ins, sleep overs, equality rides, nuns in busses, Internet campaigns, flash mobs with a purpose and creative nonviolent protests of every kind on Wall Street, at the White House, the Congress and the Supreme Court, at Governor's offices and state legislatures, at corporate offices and pipeline construction sites, at national parks and wetlands, at Cathedrals, mega-churches and denominational conventions, even at borders that separate children and parents.

PROTEST THE EXTREMIST'S WAR ON



WOMEN'S RIGHTS



IMMIGRATION RIGHTS



THE POOR



VOTING RIGHTS



THE ENVIRONMENT



PRISON REFORM



SENIORS



MEDICARE



LGBTQ RIGHTS



HIV/AIDS PREVENTION



PUBLIC SCHOOLS



THE 99%



GUN REFORM



HEALTH CARE REFORM



CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM



At the Heart of Gandhi's Nonviolence: Jesus' Call to Love

Martin Luther King, Jr. was just twenty-four-years old when asked to lead the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. He didn't know much about protest movements until suddenly he was asked to lead one. King knew that "love" was at the heart of Jesus' teachings but he struggled with the idea of building a protest movement on LOVE. Dr. King writes:

*"When Jesus commanded us to love our enemy he was very serious. He wasn't playing... We can't just dismiss this passage as another example of Oriental hyperbole... We have the Christian and moral responsibility to seek to discover the meaning of His words, and to discover how we can live out this love."*ⁱⁱⁱ

In seminary Martin studied Gandhi's successful protest movements that ended the British Empire's strangle hold on his people in South Africa and India. King, a Southern Baptist preacher was surprised to learn that Gandhi a Hindu lawyer had based much of his nonviolent protest movement on Jesus' teachings about love. Gandhi writes:

"The Sermon on the Mount went straight to my heart. The verses 'But I say unto you that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have thy cloak too,' delighted me beyond measure."^{iv}

The English Viceroy of India once asked Gandhi what would solve the problems between Great Britain and India. Gandhi opened a Bible to the book of Matthew and said: "When your country and mine shall get together on the teachings of Christ in this Sermon on the Mount, we shall have solved the problems not only of our countries but of the whole world."^v



*"As I read Gandhi," Dr. King writes, "I became deeply fascinated by Gandhi's campaigns of nonviolent resistance. As I delved deeper into the philosophy of Gandhi, my skepticism concerning the power of love gradually diminished, and I came to see for the first time its potency in the area of social reform..." "Gandhi is probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale. **Jesus furnished the end goal while Gandhi provided the method for reaching it.**"*^{vi}



GANDHI AND KING ON GOD AND PRAYER

Mahatma Gandhi (the Hindu lawyer) and Martin Luther King, Jr. (the Southern Baptist preacher) were thoroughly convinced that NONVIOLENCE requires belief in a Creator, a Power greater than us, a Soul Force at the center of the universe without requiring sectarian allegiance to any one faith.

GANDHI ON GOD: Gandhi asked his followers before every march to sign a pledge that he or she "had a living faith in God." *"God is a living force,"* Gandhi writes. *"Our life is of that Force. That Force resides in, but is not the body. He who denies the existence of that great Force, denies to himself the use of that inexhaustible Power and thus remains impotent. He is like a rudderless ship which, tossed about here and there, perishes without making any headway."* Gandhi ^{vii}

Gandhi defined God as Truth but began each day with personal and group prayer and meditation on the holy writings of all the "great religions." His favorite Christian text was Matthew 5-7, the "Sermon on the Mount" and his favorite Christian hymns were "Lead Kindly Light" and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." He often quoted the Jewish prophets and poets in the Hebrew Testament, especially the Psalms.

KING ON GOD: Dr. King, marched arm-in-arm with Jews, Catholics, Protestants and other people of faith, agnostics and atheists but almost invariably he asked marchers to sign a pledge that they would at least "meditate daily on the life and teachings of Jesus." (Soulforce, the organization follows King's example.)

King writes: *"At times we may feel that we do not need God, but on the day when the storms of disappointment rage, the winds of disaster blow, and the tidal waves of grief beat against our lives, if we do not have a deep and patient faith our emotional lives will be ripped to shreds...Only God is able. It is faith we must rediscover. With this faith we can transform bleak and desolate valleys into sunlit paths of joy and bring new light into the dark caverns of pessimism."* King ^{viii}

MAHATMA GANDHI ON PRAYER

"Prayer is our greatest weapon..." ^{ix} *"As time went on my faith in God increased and the more irresistible became the yearning for prayer. Life seems to me dull and vacant without it..."* ^x *"Prayer is even more indispensable for the soul than food for the body. One may have a surfeit of food but never that of prayer..."* ^{xi} *"A heart-felt prayer...is a yearning from within which expresses itself in our every word, every act, nay every thought..."* ^{xii}

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. ON PRAYER ^{xiii}

"If I had the luxury of an entire uninterrupted week, I would spend it meditating and reading, refreshing myself spiritually and intellectually..." ^{xiv} *"...Amidst the struggle, amidst the frustrations, amidst the endless work, I often reflect that I am forever giving - never pausing to take in. I feel urgently the need for even an hour of time to get away, to withdraw, to refuel..."* ^{xv} *"We ask people everywhere to pray that God will guide us, pray that justice will be done and that righteousness will stand. Through these prayers we will be strengthened. It will make us feel the unity of the nation and the presence of Almighty God. For as we said all along, this is a spiritual movement..."* ^{xvi}

Nonviolence Guideline #1.

We Aren't Really Motivated to Protest Until We **Experience Suffering**

Like Dr. King, M.K. Gandhi was twenty-four years old when he first experienced the suffering of his people. He grew up in India a child of privilege. On his first train ride in South Africa, the conductor demanded that Gandhi go back to THIRD CLASS with the other “coolies.” Gandhi refused. A policeman threw Gandhi off the train.^{xvii}

Gandhi remembers that “small suffering” as the beginning of his journey from lawyer to activist. As the train pulled away he decided to do something to help end the suffering of his people. During the half century that followed Gandhi developed his principles for the practice of NONVIOLENCE while seeking justice for his people in South Africa and India.



It seems ironic that the thirteen year old Martin Luther King Jr. would have a similar experience on a train forty years later. Young Martin had just spent a summer in Connecticut where he could ride in any seat he pleased on the train from New York but in Washington he had to change to a segregated car. “The first time that I was seated behind a curtain in a dining car,” King remembers, “I felt as if the curtain had been dropped on my selfhood.”^{xviii}



Martin had lived his entire life in Atlanta, a great city at the heart of the segregated South. From earliest childhood he had seen the suffering of his people but until he felt that suffering in a deeply personal way he had not really experienced it. Activists are shaped by suffering. Gandhi saw his people suffering. King saw his people suffering segregation. For both men, the struggle for justice began when they experienced the suffering of their people.

EXAMPLE #1:

We aren't really motivated to PROTEST the extremist's treatment of the 99% until we...

Experience the Suffering of the 99%



"People's frustrations are rooted in the nagging sense that no matter how hard they work, the deck is stacked against them.

*Taxes have been slashed for the wealthiest.
The economy has become profoundly unequal and families more insecure.*

Since 1979, our productivity is up by more than 90 percent, but the income of a typical family has increased by less than eight percent.

Since 1979, our economy has more than doubled in size, but most of that growth has flowed to a fortunate few.

The top 10 percent no longer takes in one-third of our income -- it now takes half.

*In the past, the average CEO made about 20 to 30 times the income of the average worker.
Today's CEO now makes 273 times more.*

A family in the top 1 percent has a net worth 288 times higher than the typical (99%) family.

*A child born in the top 20 percent has about a 2-in-3 chance of staying at or near the top.
A child born into the bottom 20 percent has a less than 1-in-20 shot at making it to the top.*

*Our levels of income inequality rank near countries like Jamaica and Argentina.
It is harder for a child born in America to improve her station in life than it is for children in most of our wealthy allies -- like Canada or Germany or France.*

The combined trends of increased inequality and decreasing mobility pose a fundamental threat to the American Dream, our way of life, and what we stand for around the globe.

*And it is not simply a moral claim that I'm making here.
There are practical consequences to rising inequality and reduced mobility. "**

**Excerpts from "Remarks by the President on Economic Mobility" (December 4, 2013)^{xix}*

EXAMPLE #2:

*We aren't really motivated to PROTEST
the extremist's treatment of the people of North Carolina in just three years until we*
Experience the Suffering of the People of North Carolina



- ...900,000 North Carolinians have lost their hard earned-income tax credit;
- ...500,000 North Carolinians have lost their Medicaid coverage;
- ...170,000 North Carolinians have lost their unemployment benefits;
- ...30,000 North Carolinian children have lost their pre-K programs;
- ...North Carolinian women are victims of “the most draconian anti-choice” laws;
- ...North Carolinian voters are victims of the nation’s worst voter suppression law;
- ...North Carolinian voters must show strict voter IDs;
- ...North Carolinian voters have lost same-day registration and early voting;
- ...North Carolinian public schools saw \$90 million switched to voucher schools;
- ...Public financing of judicial races has been axed;
- ...Death row inmates cannot contest racially discriminatory verdicts.
- ...Taxes have been lowered for the one percent (1%);
- ...Taxes have been raised for the ninety-nine percent (99%).



Thousands of North Carolinians are responding to the suffering

Nonviolence Guideline #2.

Once we've experienced the suffering we have to decide exactly how we will...

Respond to the Suffering

Option A.

We could ignore the suffering.



"Every time we ignore the suffering of others or stand by and watch, we do not only act against our own interests but we violate a part of our humanity." H.K.

Option B.

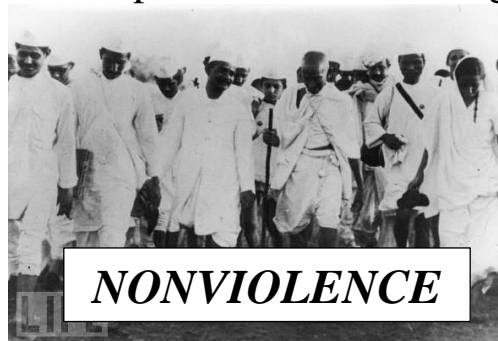
We could attempt to end the suffering through



"An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and the whole world ends up blind and toothless." Gandhi

Option C.

We could attempt to end the suffering through



"We had to make it clear that nonviolent resistance is not a method of cowardice. It does resist...but it resists without violence." Martin Luther King, Jr.



A Fable
The Jogger and the Evil Men in Black Suits



1. Experience the suffering

A young woman was jogging on a river trail when she heard a cry for “Help!” Like the Pharisees in the story of the Good Samaritan, there were all kinds of reasons to keep on running. But the jogger listened to her heart, plunged into the river, and rescued a young girl who was struggling to keep her head above water. The jogger was wrapping the shivering girl in her jacket when she heard another cry for help. This time it was a little boy caught in the current. The jogger had barely rescued that second child when she two more children floundering against the current. Immediately she rushed back into the river.

2. Help those who suffer

As she ran to rescue two more drowning children she shouted to a crowd that was gathering “Could you get these children dry and start a fire to warm them?” With four children by the fire and a park ranger rushing back toward the river to rescue yet another two, the jogger began to organize campers, sightseers and Park employees who had rushed to the scene to see how they could help. One group recruited lifeguards. Another collected towels and blankets. A third made hot chocolate. The jogger had done an amazing job recruiting, organizing and training volunteers (creating tax deductible 501c3 charities). At last she could rest confident that her team could rescue and care for an endless number of children in the river.

3. Help cut off the suffering at its source

Suddenly the jogger realized that it wasn’t enough to rescue and care for the children. She put on her wet shoes and hiked up stream to find out why the children were in the river. It wasn’t easy going. She was about to give up when she saw a rather ominous group of men throwing children into the river. “Who are you,” she shouted. Why are you doing this?” “We are True Believers,” their leader began. “Our BOOK tells us that the only way to save the world is to sacrifice our children.” The jogger replied, “Are you crazy?” The leader answered calmly. “This is America and we have the right to our beliefs.” The jogger replied. “Yes, this *is* America,” she said, “And I have an equal right to condemn your beliefs and organize a nonviolent campaign to end them. And so she did (following Gandhi’s principles of NONVIOLENCE of course.)

Nonviolence Guideline #3.

Before our Nonviolent Protest begins Gandhi says we must do something immediately to...

HELP THOSE WHO SUFFER

Gandhi insisted that every satyagrahi (those who followed the principles of satyagraha) spend time and money on programs that helped those who suffer *before* participating in a direct action to help cut off the suffering at its source (e.g. a protest, a march, or an act of civil disobedience). It is not enough to know about the suffering. When we really experience it, when we know personally those who suffer, when we feel their suffering as our own, then we are motivated, empowered, determined to help cut off the suffering at its source.

Gandhi wanted to free his people but millions were poor, hungry, homeless without education or health services and no way to support themselves. They couldn't PROTEST until their basic needs were met. To help the suffering, Gandhi formed communities (ashrams) where every class, race or religion could live together not unlike the 1st century Christian Church.

"And all those who believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need, (Acts 2:44)."

Gandhi's goal was to prove that the poorest Indian living in the poorest Indian village could become self-sufficient. In Gandhi's ashrams, men, women and children took turns at every job without exception even cleaning the common toilets. The people shared their resources, met morning and evening to pray and sing hymns, grew their food, prepared their meals, and ate together in a common room where they shared their concerns.

Gandhi also required followers to spin yarn that could be made into "khadi," a homespun, home-woven cloth to be worn and sold or bartered for other basic needs. Millions of Indians learned to make khadi in Gandhi's scheme of self-employment for the masses. His spinning wheel became a symbol of Gandhi's determination to help those who suffer and an icon for Gandhi's campaign to liberate his people. In the process Indians who had been demoralized by poverty and dehumanized by the colonial powers, **began to see themselves in a whole new way.**





44 PRACTICAL WAYS TO HELP THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS IN THE U.S.
And in helping those who suffer, seeing yourself in a whole new way.

1. Read up about hunger in the United States and then look for it where you live.
2. See your community with fresh eyes. Where are the needs? What do you see, hear, smell, touch?
3. Think of your kids' summer camp. Could you (and they) provide a way for a needy child to attend.
4. Does your church serve meals to the hungry? Have you considered volunteering to assist, provide food?
5. See if your local schools have the Food 4 Kids program sending food home with needy kids in backpacks..
6. Visit your local food bank. Ask what is needed. Volunteer to go help find, sort and bag food for them.
7. Buy fast food gift certificates to give out to people you see who need a meal.
8. Start a food bank or food pantry in your church, temple or synagogue. Offer used clothing there.
9. Fix sack lunches for needy kids in the summer or senior adults for the weekend.
10. Deliver meals on wheels to seniors. Get your friends to volunteer and divide up the days.
11. Join those who provide hot meals weekly for the needy in your town.
12. Join Habitat for Humanity and help build houses for needy families.
13. Volunteer to paint the home of a needy person (call DHS or a home health agency for a name).
14. Do yard work: rake leaves, trim limbs, clean up yard of a needy neighbor. "Who is your neighbor?"
15. Clean house or build a ramp or install smoke detectors for a needy person who is elderly or disabled.
16. Learn and then teach basic home repairs (fixing a leaky faucet, a toilet, a roof leak, etc.)
17. Call your local homeless or domestic abuse shelters and find out what kinds of programs they could use.
18. Call and find out what they need: washcloths, shower caps, shampoo, underwear, or other needs.
19. Provide funds so a needy kid can go on a school outing or a concert or game.
20. Provide a place for kids and youth to play basketball or soccer in a low income area.
21. Build a park, a meditation or memorial garden in a low income area.
22. Get permission from the school to eat lunch with kids who don't have a parent ever come.
23. Be a volunteer babysitter for a teen mom finishing school.
24. Donate infant and children's car seats to those who can't afford to buy them.
25. Donate band instruments to your school for low income kids.
26. Host a party at your local Head Start center.
27. Donate coats, gloves, lice shampoo and other needs to your local school.
28. Offer a free scholarship so a needy kid can take art, music or gymnastics classes.
29. Provide affordable, quality child care.
30. Sponsor a wholesome, fun movie night for kids in an apartment complex outside.
31. Be a big brother, big sister, a mentor for a kid.
32. Be a mentor to someone out of work.
33. Involve your friends and/or family in sending cards to nursing home residents.
34. Get floral shops to give you dated flowers and deliver to home bound seniors or nursing home residents.
35. Help seniors change light bulbs, take down their curtains to wash, etc.
36. Donate fans for the summer heat for needy seniors.
37. Volunteer to teach English as a second language in your home, community center, church or synagogue.
38. Start a free medical/dental clinic with the churches of your area.
39. Collect and distribute used medical equipment (walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs, etc.).
40. Volunteer as a teacher's assistant gather school supplies, prizes, flashcards, learning games for a tutoring.
41. Donate old reading glasses to an organization that works with low income people.
42. Take bottles of water to migrants in the fields. Donate gloves, warm shirts in winter.
43. Lobby, petition, crusade for laws that help the poor and against laws that make them poorer.
44. Support a universal health care system. People are forced into poverty because of medical bills.

See Diana Lewis and her Southern Baptist Missions Ministries Team* for 101 ideas.^{xx}

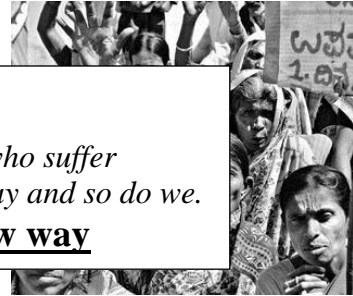
***You see. Gandhi was correct to say even our adversaries have something to contribute to our lives.**



Nonviolence Guideline #4.

Gandhi suggests that by helping those who suffer they begin to see themselves in a whole new way and so do we.

Seeing ourselves in a whole new way



Gandhi read Jesus' command to "love your neighbor as yourself." Reverse the words. "You love yourself so (now you are able) to love your neighbor." It's easy to understand why Gandhi required us to help those who suffer before we can help cut off that suffering at its source. When we reach out to help those in need, when we help relieve their suffering, they begin to see themselves in a whole new way and so do we.

Viscount Samuel (a British High Commissioner for Palestine) wrote, "*Gandhi taught the Indian to straighten his back, to raise his eyes, to face circumstances with a steady gaze.*"^{xxi}

For centuries, India's "untouchables" had been seen as inferior, outcasts, not quite human. They couldn't join Gandhi in freeing India until they saw themselves in a whole new way. So Gandhi renamed the "untouchables" **Harijan**, "Children of God." It worked. During Gandhi's lifetime the Harijan began to see themselves in a whole new way and fifty years later, K.R. Narayanan, a Harijan, was elected President of India.



For centuries, African-Americans had been seen as inferior, outcasts and not quite human. In a speech to the National Press Association, Dr. King explained that his people had to see themselves in a whole new way before they could rise up nonviolently against oppression.

"Once plagued with a tragic sense of inferiority resulting from the crippling effects of slavery and segregation, the Negro has now been driven to reevaluate himself. He has come to feel that he is somebody. With this new sense of somebodiness and self-respect, a new Negro has emerged with a new determination to achieve freedom and human dignity whatever the cost may be."^{xxii}

What does Gandhi mean by “Seeing ourselves in a whole new way?”

Before they could participate in a march, a protest, or an act of civil disobedience volunteers had to sign VOWS. Here are two historic examples of those vows. Look closely. What qualities of character do the vows demand? Remember King’s words “not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” Signing (or not signing) these vows forces us to examine the content of our character in a whole new way. Would you sign them? Why? Why not?



Vows Taken by Marchers with Gandhi, 1939

1. He must have a living faith in God.
2. He must believe in truth and nonviolence as his creed and, therefore, have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through suffering.
3. He must be leading a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up life and possessions.
4. He must be a habitual khadi-wearer and spinner.
5. He must be a teetotaler and be free from all intoxicants.
6. He must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid down.
7. He should carry out the jail rules unless they are especially devised to hurt his self-respect. ^{xxiii}



Vows Taken by Marchers with Dr. King, 1963

1. Meditate daily on the life and teachings of Jesus.
2. Remember that the nonviolent movement seeks justice and reconciliation - not victory.
3. Walk and talk in the manner of love; for God is love.
4. Pray daily to be used by God in order that all men and women might be free.
5. Sacrifice personal wishes that all might be free.
6. Observe with friend & foes the ordinary rules of courtesy.
7. Perform regular service for others and for the world.
8. Refrain from violence of fist, tongue, and heart.
9. Strive to be in good spiritual and bodily health.
10. Follow the directions of the Movement leaders and of the captains on demonstrations. ^{xxiv}

A Soulforce* Credo
Seeing Ourselves in a Whole New Way



1. I believe that I am a child of the Creator.**

“The first and last shield and buckler of the non-violent person will be his (or her) unwavering faith in God.” Gandhi^{xxv}

2. I believe that I am loved by my Creator exactly as I am.

“Every human being, however degraded, has in him (or her) the divine spark, i.e. limitless potentiality for growth and is capable of responding to kind, generous treatment.” Gandhi^{xxvi}

3. I believe that I am not an accident. I have a purpose. I was shaped by my Creator to help win justice for all who suffer injustice.

“Self-realization cannot be achieved unless you identify yourself with the whole of humankind and try to advance the greatest good of all.” Gandhi^{xxvii}

4. I believe that I will not discover my purpose nor realize my power (my own soul force) until I join my Creator in doing justice (making things fair for all.)

“I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself.” Gandhi^{xxviii}

5. I believe that when I join my Creator in doing justice, my life will be empowered and made more meaningful.

“The only weapon of the Satyagrahi is God, by whatsoever name one knows Him. Without him the Satyagrahi is devoid of strength before an opponent armed with monstrous weapons. But he who accepts God as his only protector will remain unbent before the mightiest earthly power.” Gandhi^{xxix}

6. I believe that in serving others it is as much my moral obligation to refuse to cooperate with evil as it is to cooperate with good.

“Without the co-operation, direct or indirect, of the wronged the wrong-doer cannot do the wrong intended by him.” Gandhi^{xxx}

* “A Soulforce...” means it is my attempt to organize and simplify Gandhi’s guidelines.

**Don’t worry. Neither Gandhi nor King required sectarian allegiance to any one statement of faith or religious practice. People of every religion, agnostics, and even atheists marched with both men.

Nonviolence Guideline #5.

*Gandhi suggests we not PROTEST until we see our adversaries in a whole new way.
(I think Gandhi is afraid that it isn't safe for our adversary or for us until we do.)*

Jesus' "Love your enemy" is at the heart of this guideline.

Seeing our adversaries in a whole new way



Our adversaries are not the extremist Republicans, greedy bankers, Tea-party regulars or fundamentalist Christians. We are not fighting the leaders on the extremist right or their followers who may complicate and confuse our personal lives. We are not out to conquer or silence them. We are fighting their *beliefs*, *beliefs* we believe that threaten our nation's future.

Here are typical untruths repeated often by political and religious extremists:

PAUL RYAN'S UNTRUTH: *"There are nearly 100 programs at the federal level that are meant to help [the poor], but they have actually created a poverty trap...turning safety net into a hammock."* ^{xxxix}

TRUTH: *"Between the ages of 25 and 60, almost 40 percent of Americans will spend a year living under the poverty line, but only 11.6 percent spend five years or more of their adult lives impoverished. Likewise, that 45 percent take advantage of the safety net at some point, but only 16.4 percent do so for more than five years."* ^{xxxix}

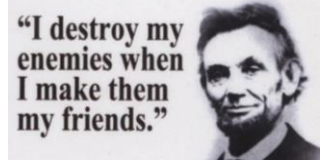
PAT ROBERTSON'S UNTRUTH: *"Planned Parenthood is enormously rich. Some of these chapters may have as much as a billion dollars in cash on hand. They are getting right now from the federal government - it's in the budget - \$550 million a year. Taxpayer money goes into that abortion mill."* ^{xxxix}

TRUTH: *Planned Parenthood's total national budget 2012-2013 was \$1.21 billion: 35% Testing and Treatment: Sexually Transmitted Disease/Infections (men and women); 35% Providing Contraception Information and Contraceptives; 16% Cancer Screening and Prevention; 10% Other Women's Health Services; 3% Abortion Services; 1% Other Services federal law already forbids Planned Parenthood from using the funds it receives from the government for abortions."* ^{xxxix}

RUSH LIMBAUGH'S UNTRUTH: *"If you feed them, if you feed the children, three square meals a day during the school year, how can you expect them to feed themselves in the summer? Wanton little waifs and serfs dependent on the State. Pure and simple."* ^{xxxix}

TRUTH: *Good nutrition, particularly in the first three years of life, is important for establishing a good foundation that has implications for a child's future physical and mental health, academic achievement, and economic productivity. Unfortunately, food insecurity is an obstacle that threatens that critical foundation. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 15.9 million children under 18 in the United States live in households where they are unable to consistently access enough nutritious food necessary for a healthy life."* ^{xxxix}

A Soulfence* Credo
Seeing Our Adversary in a Whole New Way



1. I believe that my adversary is also a child of the Creator a member of the same human family, sisters and brothers in need of reconciliation.

"For a non-violent person the whole world is one family." ^{xxxvii} The Satyagrahi who is conscious of the working of soul-force and of his own spiritual kinship with the opponent, should treat the opponent as a member of his family. ^{xxxviii} "I must apply the same rules to the wrong-doer who is my enemy as I would to my wrong-doing father or son." ^{xxxix}

2. I believe that my adversary is not my enemy but a victim of misinformation as I have been.

*"I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow beings wears and am, therefore, as liable to err as any." ^{xl}
"Courage comes from the belief that God sits in the hearts of all. The knowledge of the omnipotence of God also means respect for the lives of even those who may be called opponents." ^{xli}*

3. I believe that my only task is to bring my adversary truth in love (nonviolence) relentlessly.

"The silent and undemonstrative action of truth and love produces far more permanent and abiding results than speeches or such other showy performances." ^{xlii} "Nothing is more impressive or works a more effective spell than truth." ^{xliii}

4. I believe that my adversary's motives are as pure as mine and have no relevance to our discussion.

*"No one is wicked by nature. And if others are wicked, are we the less so? That attitude is inherent in Satyagraha." ^{xliv}
"My faith in the people [individuals] is boundless. Theirs is an amazingly responsive nature." ^{xlv}*

5. I believe that even my worst adversary has an amazing potential for positive change.

"The soul is one in all. Its possibilities are the same for everyone." ^{xlvi} "To do full justice to the adversary a Satyagrahi must try to keep his mind in a detached state, understand the adversary's point of view and, if needed revise his judgment." ^{xlvii}

6. I believe that my adversary may have an insight into truth that I do not have.

"The way to treat the opponent as a member of the family is to give him the same credit for honest of purpose which the satyagrahi claims for himself." ^{xlviii} "I am essentially a man of compromise because I am never sure that I am right." ^{xlix}

7. I believe that one day my adversary and I will understand each other and that if we conduct our search for truth guided by the principles of love, we will find a new position to satisfy us both.

"The whole conception of satyagraha rests on the psychological assumption that the innate goodness of the most brutal opponent can be aroused by the pure suffering of a truthful man." ^l "The satyagrahi fights with a view to bilateral and not unilateral victory. He aims at the integration and not suppression of legitimate differences." ^{li}

8. I believe that there is no need to fear death even if my opponent kills me while I am attempting to bring him/her the truth.

"Let us fear God and we shall cease to fear man... Those who defy death are free from fear... All the fears revolve around the body as center and would disappear as soon as one got rid of attachment for the body... To develop non-attachment we must conquer our passions, the internal foes." ^{lii}

* "A Soulfence..." means it is my attempt to organize and simplify Gandhi's guidelines.



Nonviolence Guideline #6.

Gandhi suggests that NONVIOLENCE requires these VOWS.

Gandhi's Five Vows **For a nonviolent life and for a nonviolent protest**



I. VOW TO TRUTH

“I promise to seek truth and confront untruth wherever I find it.”

M. K. Gandhi titled his autobiography, *My Experiment with Truth*. At the heart of Gandhi's life was his commitment to truth. God has many names but for Gandhi God's ultimate name is Truth. Satyagraha means “the force of truth.” Gandhi began calling Satyagraha “soul force” because practicing “Truth” empowers the soul.

Gandhi: “Truth rules out prejudice, evasion, secrecy and deception as well as exaggeration, suppression or modification of reality. It requires that we should never be afraid of confessing our mistakes or retracing our steps. Truth also implies mutual toleration and avoidance of dogmatism and bitterness; for truth as discerned by man is always relative and fragmentary.”^{liii}

II. THE VOW TO LOVE

“I promise to love my enemies, to reject violence (of heart, tongue or fist), and to use only the methods of nonviolence in my search for TRUTH and my confrontation with UNTRUTH.

For Gandhi, truth is the highest law, but love or NONVIOLENCE is the highest duty. He uses the word *ahimsa*, the absence of violence, to describe love. “Love is the law of life,” he writes. “It must pervade the whole being and must not be applied to isolated acts.”^{liv} In other words love is not something we try to practice in a protest against our adversaries but a way of life that applies love to everything.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom given posthumously to Dr. King reads: “Martin Luther King, Jr., the conscience of his generation, a southerner, a black man, he gazed on the great wall of segregation and saw that the power of love could bring it down.”^{lv}

III. THE VOW TO VOLUNTARY REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING

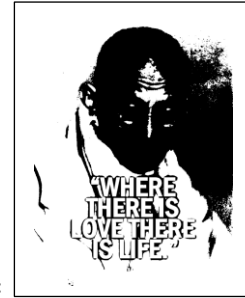
“I will take on myself without complaint any suffering that comes from doing justice; and I will do what I can to help my adversary avoid any suffering from our confrontation.”

Gandhi's call to *voluntary redemptive suffering* is widely misunderstood. Accepting suffering without retaliation or complaint does not mean we accept the *involuntary* suffering that comes from discrimination and intolerance. Gandhi calls us to suffer *voluntarily* in order that *involuntary* suffering might end.

Indians in South Africa and India suffered involuntarily from British laws that made them servants and slaves. But Gandhi's voluntary suffering (arrested, beaten, imprisoned) changed minds and hearts. African Americans suffered involuntarily from segregation but Dr. King's voluntary suffering (arrested, beaten, imprisoned) changed minds and hearts.

“Given a good cause, suffering for it advances it as nothing else has done...No country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering...The appeal of reason is to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering.”^{lvi}

1. Vow to truth...
2. Vow to nonviolence...
3. Vow to voluntary redemptive suffering...



TWO MORE GANDHI VOWS*

4. Vow to control passions...

At the heart of this vow is Gandhi's observation that instead of controlling our "passions" we are controlled by them. Therefore, he suggests...

Because my life itself is a gift from my Creator;

Because my Creator means for me to live my life fully;

Because I cannot live life fully if I am dominated by my appetite for food, or sex, or alcohol, or drugs, or entertainment, or travel, or position, or power;

Because I will live life fully only if I control my passions and allow my best self to be set free to join with my Creator in helping those who suffer.

CREDO

I promise to control my appetite for food, sex, intoxicants, entertainment, position, power that my best self might be free to join with my Creator in doing justice (making things fair for all).

5. Vow to limit possessions...

At the heart of this vow is Gandhi's observation that we "need" more and more material possessions for ourselves with little if anything left to share with others. Therefore, he suggests:

Because everything I possess is a gift from my Creator;

Because I will find new freedom if I limit my possessions to things I need to survive;

Because I am just a trustee over all my other possessions;

Because my life will be enriched and empowered if I use my remaining possessions to help those who suffer.

CREDO

I promise to limit my possessions to those things I really need to survive and to see myself as a trustee over all my other possessions, using them exclusively to help make things fair for those who suffer.

*A CONFESSION

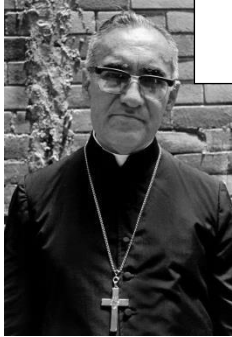
I don't pretend to keep Gandhi's vows with any degree of consistency. But I add them to these 'Guidelines for Nonviolence' because Gandhi believed in them, lived them, and taught them and that's reason enough to take them seriously if we can't take them literally.

Thankfully Gandhi admits that imperfect man cannot fully realize the ideal state. "*All the same,*" Gandhi says, "*the ideal after which we strive must be the correct ideal even as children are shown perfect shapes of letters and required to reproduce them as best they can.*"^{lvii}

Nonviolent Guideline #7.

Gandhi suggests that before, during and after a Protest
we must remember (we must not forget)

WHY WE PROTEST



Bishop Romero assassinated by graduates of the
School of the Americas, Ft. Benning, Georgia



Maryknoll Nuns assassinated by graduates of the
School of the Americas, Ft. Benning, Georgia



"You Are Under Arrest!"

On November 22, 1998, Martin Sheen, the actor-activist, led a march of 2,000 protestors to the locked gates of the Ft. Benning military base near Columbus, Georgia. We were there to protest the "School of the Americas," a U.S. Army training center for soldiers and policemen from Central and South America who use terror, torture, and death to keep corrupt Latin American regimes in power. ^{lviii}

"I come here in nonviolence," Martin Sheen began, **"not only to help end the suffering of our sisters and brothers in Central and South America but to win my own freedom as well."** Even if Martin didn't accomplish his goal to close the School of the Americas he knew that his own life would be empowered and renewed just by trying.

"The nonviolent approach does not immediately change the heart of the oppressor. It first does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them new self-respect; it calls up resource of strength and courage that they did not know they had. Finally, it reaches the opponent and so stirs his conscience that reconciliation becomes a reality." KING ^{lix}

Martin Sheen made clear the reasons for his protest. He protested...

(1) For the renewal of the individual spirit (we do it for our own good);

(2) For the transformation of corporate society (we do it for the good of others).

These two goals are at the heart of NONVIOLENCE or "soul force."



15,000 protestors seek closing of the School of the Americas. Martin Sheen's prayerful protest.

SATYAGRAH: “Truth force” or “Soul force”

HOW IT WORKS

A Brief Soulforce* Summary

1. See YOURSELF in a whole new way!

Satyagraha is based on the fundamental truths that the soul remains unconquered and unconquerable even by the mightiest physical force and that every human being, however degraded, has in him the divine spark, limitless potentiality for growth.” Gandhi in Gopi Nath Dhawan^{lx}

2. See your ADVERSARY in a whole new way!

The Satyagrahi who is conscious of the working of soul-force and of his own spiritual kinship with the opponent, should treat the opponent as a member of his family. I must apply the same rules to the wrong-doer who is my enemy as I would to my wrong-doing father or son.” Gandhi^{lxi}

3. Bring TRUTH to your adversary!

“The entire philosophy of Satyagraha is based on the fact that Truth alone can be victorious, for Truth is ‘that which is’ while untruth means ‘non-existent.’ If untruth does not so much as exist its victory is out of the question and truth being that which is can never be destroyed.” Gandhi^{lxii}

4. Bring truth to your adversary NONVIOLENTLY!

"Hatred ever kills, love never dies...What is obtained by love is retained for all time. What is obtained by hatred becomes a burden in reality, for it increases hatred." Gandhi^{lxiii}

5. Bring truth to your adversary RELENTLESSLY!

The whole conception of Satyagraha rests on the psychological assumption that the innate goodness of the most brutal opponent can be around by the pure suffering of a truthful man...It is a difficult ideal requiring constant effort and ceaseless vigilance.” Gandhi paraphrased by Gopi Nath Dwawan^{lxiv}



June 3, 1947

Satyagraha (Soul Force) liberates India from British rule.
M.K. Gandhi, Apostle of Nonviolence,
reconciled with his adversary,
Lord Mountbatten, last British Governor-General of India.



Ten Soulforce Suggestions for Conducting **NONVIOLENT NEGOTIATIONS**

1. I will investigate my opponent's position carefully, trying to understand exactly what my opponent is saying or doing and why my opponent is saying or doing it;
2. I will ask my opponent for an opportunity to present my case in a private, off-the-record meeting hoping to use that occasion to negotiate our differences and be reconciled.
3. I will confront my opponent's words and/or actions that lead to suffering on the basis of truth alone (without resorting to half-truth, hyperbole, or lies of my own.)
4. I will confront my opponent's words and/or actions politely without seeking to embarrass or coerce and without resorting to physical, spiritual, or psychological violence.
5. I will confront my opponent's words/actions relentlessly, refusing to give up or to compromise my truth (or any portion of it) unless my opponent proves me wrong. In that case, I will admit my error gratefully, seek my opponent's forgiveness, and when all is resolved, end the confrontation in peace.
6. I will work to earn my opponent's trust and friendship throughout our negotiations.
7. I will refuse to break off our negotiations until we have reached a third position that is acceptable to us both.
8. I will question the ideas that lead to suffering. I will not question the motive or the integrity of the person who holds those ideas.
9. If my opponent and I cannot reach an acceptable third position, I will ask my opponent to choose with me a neutral, third party, respected by us both to arbitrate our differences.
10. If my opponent breaks off negotiations, refuses to arbitrate, or maintains negotiations to stall or end our confrontation, I will have no other option but to take direct action against my opponent's untruth.



Thirteen Soulforce suggestions for conducting a
NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

1. The goal of a nonviolent direct action is to get negotiations started when our adversary refuses to negotiate or to show unbending commitment when negotiations break down.
2. The ultimate goal of any direct action is reconciliation, not victory.
3. Any direct action must be planned and conducted to win the heart and mind of our opponent, not to terrorize, overwhelm, shame or force our opponent into submission.
4. A direct action is taken when we know no other way to end the impasse and to revive the discussion that will lead us to a third position we both can accept;
5. Although one individual alone may enter into a direct action, consider the greater good that comes by recruiting and training allies to stand with you;
6. Sometimes just in the act of recruiting/ training allies, the opponent is moved to reconciliation.
7. The primary principles of 'soul force' (truth, love, voluntary suffering) must guide our relationships with our allies as much as it guides our confrontation with the adversary;
8. Any direct action(s) we take must be as pure and as loving as the end we seek;
9. We refuse to participate in any direct action that involves physical violence;
10. We refuse to participate in any psychological or spiritual violence as well.
11. We will accept/absorb any suffering that results from our direct action without anger or retaliation;
12. We will do our best to take on ourselves any suffering that our direct action causes our opponent;
13. We will not fear (or seek) our own death but if death comes to us out of our quest for justice, we will accept it because we are confident "that death is not the end, but the beginning of life."

A Soulforce Check-List for Nonviolent Protest

1...Commit and recommit ourselves to the Soulforce principles of nonviolence;

Review Gandhi's vows: *Truth, Nonviolence, Voluntary Redemptive Suffering*. Print them. Review them. Make them your own. Nonviolence is not a tactic. It is a way of life. Live out those principles in your life long before a protest begins. Jesus commanded his followers to "love your enemies." Nonviolence in three short words. "*Where there is love,*" Gandhi reminds us, "*there is life.*"

2...Research your adversary's untruth and develop your case for truth;

Untruth: What are the untruths your adversary promotes? Collect samples of the half-truth, hyperbole and lies that illustrate those untruths from your adversary's speeches, radio/TV appearances, books, articles, newspapers, interviews, fundraising letters. Don't even think of a protesting until you can state clearly your case against your adversary.

Truth: Be ready to respond to each of your adversary's untruths with truth. Be sure you can present your truth as clearly as you as you can present your adversary's untruth.

3...Negotiate with our adversary first: amicably, relentlessly, but if this fails;

Review the TEN SOUL-FORCE GUIDELINES TO NONVIOLENT NEGOTIATIONS.

4...Educate the media, your allies, and the even the allies of your adversary;

Don't "go public" with your grievance until you've exhausted all possibilities for quiet, "face-saving" negotiations; however if your opponent refuses to negotiate seriously with you in private, then present your case to the media, to your allies and your potential allies. If your adversary continues to refuse your invitations to negotiate take the next step.

5...Confront your adversary with a direct action to move negotiations forward;

Before you and your allies plan and conduct a nonviolent direct action, become thoroughly familiar with the TWELVE SOUL-FORCE GUIDELINES TO NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION. If possible involve an experienced nonviolence trainer to help you recruit, plan, train, and execute a nonviolent direct action. Learn all you can from those who have succeeded and those who have failed.

6...Negotiate a third position that will satisfy us both;

To assist these (hopefully final) negotiations, review again the TEN SOUL-FORCE GUIDELINES TO NONVIOLENT NEGOTIATIONS.

7...Reconcile with your adversary and help bring in "the beloved community" which is the ultimate goal of soul-force.

"We must learn to live together as brothers and sisters or perish together as fools."

Martin Luther King, Jr.



A FEW EXTRA HARD LEARNED LESSONS

For Conducting More Effective Nonviolent Negotiation and Direct Actions

Be sure...*that your Action is planned and executed carefully to win minds and hearts not to alienate friends and/or adversaries alike. Nonviolent Direct Actions have one goal: to prove to your subject that you are serious about getting him or her to negotiate with you. Your Direct Action must show that you are loving, sincere and determined not angry and revengeful.*

Be sure...*that your direct action will win people's respect, not make them hate or fear you more. If your adversary is a religious leader, would it help to march on the church, interrupt a service, spill the communion cup, or shout angry charges from the pulpit? NOT!*

Be sure...*that your adversary as been notified of your action well in advance. That news alone might cause your adversary to undertake serious negotiations. Be sure negotiations aren't used to delay justice. As Dr. King said, "Justice delayed is justice denied."*

Be sure...*that the media have been notified well in advance. It may also be wise to notify the authorities. Explain your case carefully and then respond honestly and frankly to the demands the police might make. Remember there were times Dr. King had to break good laws - trespassing, blocking an entrance, closing a street - as a part of his action against bad laws.*



Remember...*When negotiations begin, it is not what you "win or lose" that matters. Reconciliation is your goal. Not some kind of triumph over your adversary.*

Remember...*You will change the minds and hearts of your adversary by the relationships you establish while negotiating. As Gandhi said, "Be the change you want to see."*

Remember...*Your adversary may be afraid to meet with you the first time. You become the TRUTH. You are the case you bring. Facts will not change minds and hearts. The change comes in knowing you. Be sure you decrease, not increase, your adversary's fear.*

Remember...*Monitor your adversary's actions after the negotiations end. If the adversary follows through on your agreed solution, show your appreciation; but if the change is not adequate or even non-existent, restart negotiations even if another direct action is necessary.*

Fifty Nonviolent Direct Actions to Consider*

(And there are many more!)

1. Formal Statements (letters, declarations of support, signed public statements, petitions)
2. Wider Communications (slogans, symbols, leaflets, pamphlets, press, radio, TV releases)
3. Advance Groups (behind the scene meetings, appointments, phone trees, letter writing)
4. Symbolic Public Acts (prayer, worship, symbols, banners, songs, chants, speeches)
5. Pressure on Individuals (vigils, fasts, phone trees, letter campaigns, networking friends)
6. Processions (marches, parades, rallies, pilgrimages, mock funerals, homage at burial sites)
7. Group Actions (sit-ins, stand-ins, pray-ins, non-violent occupations, non-violent obstructions)
8. Social Interventions (overloading facilities, guerrilla theater, stall-ins, speak-ins, filibusters)
9. Delegations (political, religious, scientific, medical authorities to present our case on our behalf)
10. Non-cooperation (boycotts, civil disobedience, arrests, refusing bail, trials, prison time)

The Civil Rights movement of the 50s and 60s can teach us so much about effective (and ineffective) direct actions. Read David Halberstam's *The Children* or one of Taylor Branch's books, *Parting the Waters* or *Pillars of Fire* or Gandhi's *Satyagraha in South Africa* and/or watch the Academy Award winning film, *GANDHI* or Dr. King's collected works in *Testament of Hope*. More resources are listed on the last pages of this Handbook to help you and your allies plan a nonviolent direct action.

*Gene Sharp is a primary source for possible nonviolent direct actions. The above samples are in Sharp's *The Methods of Nonviolent Action* (from his 3 book series, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, published by Extending Horizons Books, Porter Sargent Publishers, 11 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108, 1973. [Available from Fellowship of Reconciliation Press by calling (914) 358-4601 or from Amazon.com]



Soulforce Equality Riders took their Nonviolent Direct Actions across the U.S.



GUIDELINES FOR A NONVIOLENT MARCH

Extrapolated directly from the writings of Gandhi and King

1. A march has a specific, narrowly-focused, clearly-stated goal.
2. A march is not an end in itself but one tactic in a total strategy to reach a specific goal.
3. A march is only called for after negotiations have broken down with an adversary and then only to compel the adversary back to negotiations.
4. A march is costly to volunteers and the organizations they represent (in time, money, and energy). That cost must be honestly and openly considered before the march is called.
5. A march is timed for maximum effect.
6. A march must require risk, courage, and stamina from the marcher (to demonstrate the marcher's total commitment and genuine concern).
7. A march is a serious-minded attempt to persuade the adversary that your request is just. A march based on the principles of nonviolence as described by Gandhi and King is not a parade, a party, or a celebration that may confuse the adversary or even give the adversary more reason to hate or fear you.
8. A marcher must be carefully trained in the goal(s) of the march and sign a pledge to maintain behavior and dress that will help convince the adversary that the marcher is determined and sincere.
9. A march is not called to support a candidate, party, or issue which may divide the marchers but a specific goal or purpose upon which the marchers are united.
10. A march must focus the print and electronic media on the specific, clearly-stated, narrowly-focused goal before, during, and after the march to avoid any confusion as to why the march has been called.
11. A march must be directed by carefully trained monitors and before the march all marchers must agree to obey those monitor's commands.
12. A march must not seek to embarrass, coerce or terrorize the adversary, but quietly, calmly, and courageously convince the adversary that the marcher's goal is just.
13. A marcher must understand the principles of nonviolence and pledge to refrain from violence of fist, tongue or heart during the march.
14. Gandhi says a marcher "must be a person of faith." King says a marcher "must meditate daily on the life and teachings of Jesus." Soulforce says "Wherever you are on your journey of faith you are welcome to march with us but only if you are willing to sign and abide by our Nonviolence Vow."

NOTE: *Neither Gandhi nor King required sectarian allegiance to any one statement of faith or religious practice. It is well known that thousands marched with Gandhi, King and with Soulforce who did not consider themselves "people of faith" or were "recovering" from bad faith experiences.*



GUIDELINES FOR A NONVIOLENT VIGIL

WHAT IS A VIGIL: A vigil is a "devotional watching" or "maintaining a state of spiritual wakefulness" in anticipation of positive change or things to come.

WHY WE VIGIL: We vigil primarily for our own spiritual renewal and for the hopeful transformation of society. We participate in this simple act of voluntary redemptive suffering in faithful anticipation that hearts and minds, especially those of our adversary, will be changed by our personal truth and witness.

WHEN DO WE VIGIL: It is always wise to initiate a vigil only after careful mental, physical and spiritual and preparation.

WHAT KIND OF VIGIL: A "silent vigil" is prayerful, without engaging in conversation with each other, passers-by or the media. In a "teaching vigil," those who stand vigil are interactive and communicate with the public and media, distributing leaflets or other educational materials.

WE VIGIL:

- 1...Under the direction and manner set forth by the leadership team or designated leader;
- 2...With a carefully thought out and well defined plan and purpose;
- 3...With a carefully constructed printed case for "Why We Vigil" for media, police, spectators;
- 4...After preparing ourselves spiritually, mentally and physically;
- 5...In a spirit of love and nonviolence, seeking reconciliation, not victory;
- 6...When those who vigil have signed a vow to avoid violence of heart, tongue and fist;
- 7...When those who vigil have promised to be respectful/observing the rules of common courtesy and mutual respect for friend and adversary alike;
- 8...When those who vigil have promised to care for the safety and wellbeing of ourselves and others, including our adversary;
- 9...With means and methods that are as pure and honorable as the goals we seek to achieve.



GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING YOUR CASE

(A brief statement explaining the reasons for your nonviolent direct action)

1. Describe the time and place of your vigil;
2. Describe your organization and a brief history of its mission;
3. Describe your adversary and the adversary's words or actions you protest;
4. Describe a brief history of your attempts to negotiate and reconcile with your adversary;
5. Describe exactly what you are hoping that this direct action will accomplish;
6. Describe your contact information for the media and the public;
7. Distribute your case to the media and your various publics before and during the action.

A SAMPLE CASE

WHY WE VIGIL

December 2008

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Bi-Annual Meeting at the Capitol Hilton, Washington D.C.

We, the people of Soulforce, stand vigil to implore the Vatican through the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to sign the non-binding *"United Nations Statement on Human Rights, Orientation and Gender Identity."* The Statement, put before the U.N. in December, 2008, condemns violence, harassment, discrimination, exclusion, stigmatization, and prejudice based on sexual orientation and gender identity. It also condemns killings, executions, torture, arbitrary arrest, and deprivation of economic, social, and cultural rights on those grounds. In 77 countries, homosexuality is illegal. In 7 countries it is punishable by death.

While proclaiming all life as sacred, the Vatican has failed to date to join the 54 countries who have welcomed this important document. We are here today to remind the Vatican that recognition of the inalienable dignity of the human person is the only path toward justice and reconciliation.

For almost ten years now, Soulforce has challenged the Roman Catholic Church to recognize that it is most "catholic" when it reflects the gospel message of the all-inclusive Jesus. Unfortunately over these last ten years we have witnessed the Church becoming even more rigid in its statements and proactive in its anti-gay legislation, not just here, but throughout the world.

We gather to invite the Holy See to a new atmosphere of openness and dialogue, a dialogue which includes the lived experience of its many Catholic members. The arguments used by the Vatican to justify discrimination are based on stereotypes that have long since been renounced by psychological and sociological experts. These stereotypes cause psychic and spiritual damage to LGBTs everywhere.

We invite all justice-minded people to join with us today to invite the Vatican to repent its destructive rhetoric and begin to live out the Gospel of love. If you would like to join this VIGIL see Vigil Director for instructions and for signing Nonviolence Pledge.

SOULFORCE, P.O. Box 1234, Lynchburg, VA. 24503

**VIGIL CONTACT: Kara Speltz, Soulforce Catholic Team Co-Chair Vigil cellphone: 562-444-5556
Office Phone: 562-444-5555 Office Email: Soulforce@aol.org Official Webpage: www.soulforce.org**



GUIDELINES FOR USING THE MEDIA WISELY

Be Aware: The media are using you to sell product and make profit. In exchange, use the media wisely to make your case and change minds and hearts. (Guidelines by Laura Montgomery Rutt, a Soulforce Media Coordinator.)

Be Prepared: If you are willing to talk to reporters think ahead. Plan carefully *exactly* what you want to say. Then jot down and memorize your message, the central point or points you want to make. Don't let the media distract you from your message.

Be Mindful: You are not required to answer the question that was asked. ("I think more to the point is the fact that...[repeat your message]"). Reporters sometimes don't know the right questions to ask, help them out. Or if they know it but hesitate to ask, ask it yourself rhetorically. ["You probably would like to ask me...[repeat your message]"].

Be Yourself: Short personal stories are powerful. (But think of them ahead of time). Jot them down. If the media make you nervous, don't be embarrassed to glance quickly at your list.

Be Proactive: Do not allow reporters to frame the debate or you on the defensive.

Be Positive: Don't repeat negative phrases or let reporters' questions draw you off message. If the reporter accuses or criticizes you, stay positive and on message.

Be Respectful: Do not assume the reporter is friendly to our cause, but treat reporters with respect and congeniality. They are the ones that get our message out. Never lose your temper or say things you'll regret. If you feel trapped or tricked end the interview!

Be Cautious: Never speak "off the record." If you think you are, you really aren't. And be sure that your mike is off when talking casually with the media. If you don't see the light go out, ASK!

Be Brief: Keep repeating your answer BRIEFLY whatever question might be asked. Stay on message. Don't be cute or clever. Don't let the reporter mislead you with a joke or a personal reference. Get back to one of the message points in every answer.

Be Quiet: Once you have made your point, stop talking. If you ramble on you may open the door to being misquoted or taken out of context. And be sure your mike is on or off.

Be Smart: A good reporter will always ask, "Is there anything you want to add?" The only wrong answer to this question is "NO." If you have nothing new to say, reiterate your message points, If you've forgotten one of your message points, state it now.

Be Happy: After the interview, you will think of things you didn't say or should have said differently. We learn from our mistakes.



GUIDELINES FOR A SOULFORCE DIRECT ACTION

(Using a vigil as an example)

Introduction: An effective nonviolent direct action requires thoughtful, detailed planning.

1. Before considering a nonviolent direct action you must be certain that you have tried every possible means to negotiate a solution, if there is anything else you could do to get your adversary to begin or continue negotiating in good faith.
2. Decide what kind of direct action is most likely to motivate your adversary to negotiate a solution which is the ultimate goal of a direct action.
3. Be certain that the direct action you select will not alienate your adversary further.
4. Discuss how your direct action might affect all the others who might see your direct action and be influenced by it: friends or organizations who share your common goal, on site spectators, the media, the general public, city officials, etc.
5. Decide on a site that seems most appropriate for your direct action (with sufficient traffic).
6. Discuss the sites" a.) symbolic values, b.) ease of access, c.) media appeal, etc.
7. If the site is "off limits," choose another and follow the same steps; in no circumstances should you just "do it anyway;" however if the site is key to your action and it's worth risking an act of civil disobedience and arrest that requires extensive extra preparation (examples follow);
8. Make sure to coordinate with the police to properly "choreograph" the vigil. Be sure to make it clear to the police that you are NOT asking them to facilitate or even participate in what one of our critics called: "media driven street theater."
9. You might be planning just such an action but the police must know that you are NOT asking them to assist or cooperate or participate in any way. You are notifying them only to allow them to prepare for maintaining public safety and whether you abide by the rules or not abide by them, your action will be NONVIOLENT from beginning to end.
10. After the site is chosen and permits obtained as necessary, brainstorm problems or challenges that the site may present.
11. Send a follow-up letter to the chief of police, thanking him/her for the meeting and promising to stay in touch if changes occur.
12. If the site chosen for the vigil is private (e.g., church) property and not public (e.g., park) property, follow the same steps to obtain appropriate permissions.



Choosing a "Soulforce central" (an action headquarters)

1. Locating a place for participants to meet before and after the vigil is optimal.
2. Welcoming churches or GLBT community centers may be willing to be "Soulforce central" before and after the event.
3. Make sure to obtain all appropriate permissions from the staff, including the permission to use the phone or other equipment or facilities.
4. Also make sure that the building is open at the proper times and that it is secured and in good shape when you leave.
5. Having participants meet together immediately before the action - and going to the site together - also is optimal. That way, last-minute changes can be communicated most easily and parking can be coordinated.

Being "upfront"

1. Let other appropriate municipal authorities know of your plans. Call the mayor's office and offer to meet with mayoral staff.
2. Send a thank you letter for the meeting and promise to stay in touch if changes occur.
3. Stay in touch "if changes do occur."

Recruiting participants

1. E-mail lists are probably the best way to recruit participants for a local action.
2. Also consider making a simple flyer announcing the vigil and posting it across the area that will be most affected: friendly churches, bookstores, restaurants, etc.
3. You may decide to ask potential participants to "register" their intent to participate so you can communicate with them regarding the plan as it develops.
4. Anytime you get together with potential participants, make sure to get their name, phone number and e-mail addresses.

Developing a theme

1. Create a theme that states your purpose clearly, succinctly without jargon (words or phrases outsiders might not understand)
2. If there are sister or similar organizations across the state or the nation asking for similar change you might consider using the common theme that has developed: "End the War on..." "Let the Dreamers Come Home," "Stop Spiritual Violence,"
3. Encourage participants to use the theme when describing the vigil to others, particularly the media; then, participants can provide examples of what that theme means to them.



Communicating the Event

1. Choose a media coordinator for the vigil who will be responsible for drafting media releases and/or media alerts.
2. The media coordinator may act as the group's spokesperson, or he/she may find out the media's particular interest and locate an appropriate person for the media to interview.
3. Consider a well-known local person to be your media "hook" and/or your spokesperson.
4. A volunteers should be appointed well before the event to a.) collect all newspaper articles or other print mentions of your action; b.) to "tape" or download television media coverage; c.) to use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram (etc.) before, during and after the event to guarantee that your message reaches the largest possible audience well beyond the actual action site (people whose minds and hearts you wish to change or to encourage or to confront.)

Developing "visuals"

1. Although the site your group has chosen may itself be symbolic, what else could the group show - or do - to dramatize its point?
2. If the group decides on a banner and/or hand-held signs, consider having them made at a "quick banner" company and then provide them to those on the vigil line; however handmade signs with personal messages can be just as powerful (or more) than signs made by professionals.
3. Make sure that the banner and signs are large enough with bold, readable lettering.
4. Having a large Soulforce banner (banner describing your organization with your logo and especially with your web address or contact information also can be effective.

Communicating at the vigil

1. It is helpful if the vigil coordinator and the media coordinator have cell phones at the vigil.
2. Depending on the number of participants, the vigil coordinator should ask two or three capable, trustworthy individuals to be vigil "monitors" who can answer questions, make sure that participants know where to go, and the like.
3. Bring ribbons or special armbands for the vigil monitors to wear that distinguish them from a volunteer on the vigil line.
4. The vigil coordinator should have all necessary emergency phone numbers (e.g., the cell number of your police liaison, rescue squad, EMT (emergency medical technician) or ambulance, fire department, and the vigil director and perhaps the vigil squad leaders.

Following through after the vigil

1. Getting participants together after the can be a healthy way to end the event. Participants can share stories, successes and lessons learned. (This follow-up, feedback session often creates more positive, personal change than the event itself.)
2. After the vigil, the vigil and/or media coordinator creates a brief summary and "thank you" e-mail (who, what, when, where and why) to all concerned.
3. A "scribe" should be appointed to write up the history of your event and keep a log on every event for your historical archive (or just to be reminded of what you've learned from the event both good (do it again) or bad (don't do it again).



GUIDELINES FOR RECRUITING AND TRAINING SQUAD LEADERS

(Trained squad leaders are a key element to a successful nonviolent direct action.)

NOTE: *Squad leaders are absolutely necessary for any direct action involving more than 10 or 15 people. Their first task is to help the action move smoothly through its various stages. But their second, equally important task is to be the teacher/confessor/helpmate to the individuals involved in your action. What follows is an actual Squad Leader Manual for a Soulforce Action in New Orleans, June 11, 2001.*

(Check the author's Huffington Post Blog for details and long term results of that action in New Orleans.)
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rev-mel-white/southern-baptist-convention-gay-rights_b_1621100.html

A SOULFORCE MEMO TO OUR SQUAD LEADERS IN NEW ORLEANS:

YOUR ROLE IN NEW ORLEANS: We are grateful that you have volunteered for this very important duty. We are asking you to shepherd a group of volunteers through the Soulforce activities in New Orleans: There will be a.) several vigils, b.) a funeral procession behind a New Orleans Jazz Band with a casket filled with true stories of the suffering of GLBTQ Southern Baptists and c.) and the possibility of a civil disobedience and arrest when delivering the casket to 12,000 delegates inside the Superdome.

You and your squad will be scheduled to vigil together at various times to present our case against the homophobic rhetoric of the Southern Baptist Convention. During the funeral procession you will walk with your squad. Specially trained and experienced volunteers will attempt to carry the casket into the Superdome. You will be responsible for ensuring that your squad carries out the various actions according to our NONVIOLENCE VOWS and other on-site directives in a safe and loving manner.

SQUAD FORMATION: You will be meeting your squad during the first training. Please sit near the front of the room so you can easily stand and be seen when the squads are forming. We will provide you a large brightly colored card with your squad number on it. You will also receive an arm band that indicates you are a squad leader. Please wear these at all times.

FIRST TRAINING: At the first training our vigil director will give a brief explanation of our squads and their function. You will be asked to come to the front of the room. Find a spot to stand that allows folks to see you and to gather around you. Each squad is numbered. Hold your bright squad number high so folks can see it. Make sure you are not too close to another squad so you have some room to gather.

INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO YOUR SQUAD: Tell them a bit about yourself and your understanding of your role as a squad leader. Then invite the others to introduce themselves. As they speak check their names on your lists. Make sure that all those on your squad list are present. Have each person put his/her local phone number on each of the two copies of the squad list sheet. You will keep one copy and give the other to the vigil director. If more folks are added to your group we will both make the additions.

GATHER INFORMATION FROM YOUR SQUAD: Be sure you write down each person's name and phone number. Be sure that everyone knows where and when to meet for your next gathering. Tell your squad how to find you easily. If you need to leave your squad, be sure you have a "second-in-command" to step into your shoes and continue your guidance of the squad.



DISTRIBUTE ARM BANDS: Make sure that all have the black armband for the funeral procession.

PARTICIPATING IN THE POSSIBLE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE: List squad members who have decided (or who are considering) to participate in the possible civil disobedience and arrest. Those who are **MUST** attend the civil disobedience training on legal and potential violence issues and be asked again if they are certain they can handle arrest and detention process.

PERSONAL INFORMATION CARDS: All registrants will be required to fill out personal information cards in order to get a t-shirt. Make sure your squad members have this t-shirt and be sure to double check that they have filled out this card-it asks for medical information that you will need.

BEFORE THE ACTION: Be sure that those who are willing to be arrested have a signed nonviolence pledge, \$100 cash, a written description of medical needs and a picture ID with them at all the times.

USING THE NAME BADGES: Ask squad members to place in the back of their name badge plastic holders a contact person, contact's number and medical information for handling an emergency.

BEFORE ARRIVING ON LOCATION: Ask squad members to arrive at Action Central with sunscreen, hats, rain gear, layered clothing (for cold weather), t-shirts, name badges, and any water or food they may need just before or during the action. Participants should eat energy bar, drink water and use the toilet before they arrive on location.

CENTERING: Several (if not all) of your squad members will be nervous or tense or excited. If you have meditation skills or simple exercises for centering, use them. If not, ask one of our leaders for centering suggestions. Tell your squad to become as centered as possible before they arrive at Action Central.

GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH YOUR SQUAD: Arrange at least one extra opportunity to get to know each other better. Please be aware that some folks may be coming to their first Soulforce event and may not know anyone else. Let's be sure to extend the hand of hospitality that will help them feel included and an important part of this important action. Please try to eat and rest together at the action.

CLOTHING: Make sure that everyone knows to wear his or her Soulforce shirt to all the actions. Getting extra-large T-shirts makes it easier in cold weather to wear the shirt over their heavy winter clothing. Help them understand why it is so important to conduct themselves in a loving, non-violent, respectful way to all.

KEEPING THE LAW: We will not break any laws during the action with the exception of the civil disobedience. This means we obey all traffic and pedestrian laws. You might suggest that your squad form a buddy system to keep track and keep safe.

QUESTIONS: Encourage questions at every stage of the action. Please don't let a squad member feel uncertain about anything that is planned. If you can't answer a question, ask for assistance from any of the leadership team. Give folks suggestions about what to think about or focus on during the vigil. Remind everyone that things can change any time and often do quite unexpectedly.



GUIDELINES FOR ACTION DAY:

CONVENE YOUR SQUAD: Make sure that you arrive early and that you are located where your group can find you. Be sure to have your colorful squad number card available to hoist overhead.

LIST OF NAMES AND INFORMATION CARDS: Make sure that each member of your squad is on your squad list master. Make sure you have a copy of the personal information card from everyone.

DECIDING ABOUT LAST MINUTE VOLUNTEERS: We are planning for groups of 10-15. More may join you as we reconfigure for new arrivals. If there is no one from the leadership team available it is up to you to decide if a last minute volunteer qualifies to join your squad. Try to get a T-shirt for each last minute arrival but if that's not possible you decide if that person can join you without that identifying clothing. Be certain that any last minute volunteer signs (in your presence) a pledge to nonviolence. If he or she won't sign do not add that person to your squad. If he or she gives you any kind of trouble, signal a team leader to assist you immediately.

REQUIREMENTS FOR LAST MINUTE VOLUNTEERS: Once accepted as a new member of your squad BE SURE TO ADD that person's name and contact information to your squad's master list. Ask the new member to place his/her signed nonviolence pledge, photo ID, emergency contact, contact's phone number and emergency medical information. Have your squad master list with you at all times.

CHECK-IN WITH EVERYONE: Make sure that each squad member risking arrest seems physically, emotionally and spiritually ready to participate. Review the requirements for arrest: 18 or over, signed pledge, valid photo ID, ability to pay fine, no limiting medical issues, name on list, etc. Check to see if all have what they need for the weather. Make sure that everyone has your cell phone number and the local emergency number given to you in the training.

REPEAT SOME FORM OF CENTERING EXERCISE ACTIVITY: Pray, meditate, sing, talk with each other as appropriate until the action/vigil begins. If folks appear afraid or angry, be sure to check in with them.

MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE REMEMBERS THAT WE ARE ENGAGING IN AN ACT OF VOLUNTARY REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING. Invite them to prayerfully offer any discomfort, fear, inconvenience, pain, and anger to the Spirit as an antidote to others whose suffering is caused by our adversary. If it is helpful ask them to speak the name of someone whose suffering we are there to help end.

REMIND EVERYONE HOW QUICKLY THINGS CAN CHANGE: You will be the liaison with the Soulforce leadership team and will direct your squad members in responding to those sudden changes. You will be told before the event of the changes that have already been called for; but in those last second emergency changes stay focused and don't get rattled.



BE ATTENTIVE TO THE INDIVIDUALS IN YOUR GROUP THROUGHOUT THE ACTION, ARREST AND DETENTION. Group prayers, singing, processing feelings/thoughts are often helpful. Sometimes just the slightest touch helps to center someone who is having difficulty. Make sure that you ask “Are you OK?” and if not, be sure you ask if it’s OK before you touch or hug them.

KEEP TRACK OF INDIVIDUAL SQUAD MEMBERS THROUGHOUT THE ACTION: Know which individuals are willing to face arrest. Write down their names if/when arrested. If you join the civil disobedience be sure a responsible, respected member of the squad takes your place as leader. See that replacement person has an up-to-date copy of squad’s master list to underline or circle the name of anyone arrested.

DO NOT LET A SQUAD MEMBER GET LOST DURING THE ACTION OR DURING AND AFTER AN ARREST. Some squad members will want to meet at the place where the arrested have been taken. A member of the leadership team will notify you or your replacement what happens next.

AFTER THE ARREST: You or your stand-in squad leader should check the list of names against those being released until all are accounted for. Those not arrested will reconvene after the arrest for processing and closure. You or your stand-in must be certain that every squad member is present (or if not present accounted for) at that final meeting. If you or your stand-in is not available for the time and place those arrested will be released, **BE CERTAIN** the names and numbers of those arrested from your squad are in the hands of the leadership team member who is waiting at the jail or processing center.

ABOVE ALL STAY CALM. Your spirit is contagious. Your squad members will feel calm and certain if you are calm and certain. Your squad members will panic if you even come close to panicking yourself. Remind yourself and them that to participate in an act of relentless nonviolent resistance is for their benefit first. If their lives are not inspired by the action, something is going/has gone wrong. But second remind them they are also there to help cut off the suffering of others at its source that we were born to do justice and that in doing it we will discover a “soul force” within us that we may not have known.



ENJOY THE ACTION. BE BLESSED BY IT. **NAMASTE!**



GUIDELINES FOR A CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND POSSIBLE ARREST

BASIC REQUIREMENTS: If you are willing to be arrested in a Soulforce Action you must...

- ...Be 18 years of age or older
- ...Be a U.S. citizen
- ...Have no outstanding arrest warrants and not be on probation.
- ...Agree to follow the directions given to you by your squad leader.
- ...Sign, wear, and uphold the Soulforce "pledge to nonviolence" adapted from Dr. King, 1963
- ...Be able to keep your cool and remain silent even when people openly project hatred at you.
- ...Carry a photo and license or official ID.

THE POSSIBILITY OF ARREST IN NEW ORLEANS: We've described our direct action in New Orleans (the march, the vigil and the possible civil disobedience at the Superdome) based on our current plans and our past discussions with the police. However actions can sometimes change at the last moment due to a variety of reasons not possible to anticipate during the action planning. However, barring unexpected developments this is what we expect to happen.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH: No infants, children or youth under 18 may accompany you if there is even the smallest risk of violent confrontation or arrest. If arrested, police are required to take a child or youth under 18 to a local social services office. You may have legal difficulties regaining custody.

ARRESTEES AND THEIR SQUAD: All arrestees must attend the special civil disobedience training. After completing the training, you will be assigned to a civil disobedience squad leader. We will have extra squad leaders ready to train last minute volunteers on site. But these last minute volunteers will be questioned in detail by the leadership team to see if they are qualified to face possible arrest.

SQUAD ARRESTS: The squads whose members have been specially trained in civil disobedience and arrest will walk together to the police line. They will cross the line one squad at a time as directed by their squad leader. Police will arrest one squad at a time and arrestees will be taken to a mass arrest processing locale.

INTERACTING WITH POLICE: Show respect to the police at all times. Our complaint is not with the police. It is with the untruths of our adversaries. We have come to do a nonviolent action and the police are here to help us complete it safely. Our behavior toward the police is one of many opportunities that Soulforce has to witness to our cause and to earn the respect of those around us.

RESPONDING TO ARREST: Do not go limp. Do not resist. Any resistance is in violation of your Soulforce vows. It will reflect very badly on Soulforce and could result in your being charged with a serious crime.



GUIDELINES FOR MAKING YOUR DECISION TO RISK (OR NOT RISK) ARREST.

It is best to advise your Legal Chair - in advance -- of any of these situations.

1) Those with outstanding arrest warrants: People with outstanding arrest warrants will be treated differently. They may be held for a long period and returned to the arresting jurisdiction. Soulforce requests that people with outstanding arrest warrants NOT participate in the arrest portion of the action.

2) Trans*: Typically, trans* folk are processed and jailed according to the gender stated on their ID. A person whose valid ID is not the same gender as their appearance often faces special challenges. The jail might require a change into jail clothing (including loss of wigs and/or under garments).

3) People taking medications: There are potential problems for people taking medication! **IT HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT YOU NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ARREST UNLESS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT YOUR MEDICATIONS FOR UP TO 20 HOURS.** Any prescription medications you will need should be left in its original container with clearly marked pharmacy label displaying your name, contents, doctor's name and dosage instructions. It is recommended that you notify your squad leader, who will tell our Soulforce legal chair. Letter from your doctor could be very helpful.

4) Infectious Disease Status (HIV, TB, etc.): If you inform the authorities that you have an infectious disease such as tuberculosis or an active HIV-related infection, you are likely to be separated from the others. Be certain the Soulforce attorney is aware of your health status.

5) People with Disabilities: Physically disabled persons may not be arrested at all, and are not usually placed in a cell with others who are arrested. Sometimes special accommodations are made but don't count on it.

6) Stop Drinking Coffee a week or so before your possible arrest. To suffer the first stage of caffeine withdrawal in jail is a very painful experience. Nicotine withdrawal can also be a problem.

7) About toilets. Know where they are. Use them if possible before arrest. Another opportunity might not present itself for hours.

8) Do not bring valuables: Bring only a picture ID, \$100 cash, your name badge with your medical and contact information tucked neatly into the back of the plastic holder. Don't wear rings, watches, necklaces, or other jewelry. Wear comfortable but not showy or risqué underwear. Just before arrest hand extra items like sunscreen, hats, layered clothing, copies of your case, maps to your squad leader.



GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO SUDDEN UNEXPECTED VIOLENCE

1. Most physical violence is preceded by or coincides with verbal violence. It is imperative that you prepare yourself to encounter both. And always refrain from responding violently (with fist, tongue or heart) to any and all violence.
2. In your voluntary redemptive suffering, your goal is to change hearts and minds through your non-violent response to your adversary's violence - both verbal and physical.
3. When we take a voluntary stand against injustice, we don't know how our adversaries will react. However they respond, we take on the suffering without complaint or retaliation and our adversaries will see our courage and witness our commitment.
4. Your non-violent response requires a "zero" reaction to the violence. Do not engage your adversary verbally or physically. Instead, focus mentally, spiritually and physically on the redemptive purpose of your suffering.
5. To help calm yourself focus on a specific point. Maintain a calm facial expression. Silently repeat words: ("love my enemies" or just "love.") You also may choose to pray or meditate silently.
6. If the violence ever becomes physical, it is crucial that you make no attempt to stop the attacker(s). (There is no redemption in forcibly stopping violence in this situation. It is our role to suffer on this small scale in order to demonstrate the greater suffering in our cause.)
7. HOWEVER you should immediately take measures to "shield" the vital areas of your body. Use your hands and forearms to protect your face. Bend your elbows and drop your arms to protect your ribs. If you fall or are knocked to the ground, stay there! DO NOT ATTEMPT TO GET UP! Instead, roll to your back and continue to use your arms as shields. Lying in a "fetal position" on your side leaves your spine vulnerable to serious injury.
8. When physical violence is directed toward another person in your group, you may choose to shield that person using your own body, absorbing his/her suffering yourself. Again, make no attempt to stop the attacker(s). Position your body between the victim and the attacker(s). Or stand and face the attacker(s) shielding yourself as described. Or face the victim and wrap your arms around him/her in a protective manner.
9. When two or more of you choose to shield one or more victims, it is effective to surround the victim(s) in a "huddle" arrangement, locking arms at waist level in order to better protect your own ribs. (Or surround the victim(s) facing the attacker(s).)
10. When the violence stops, seek medical attention if necessary. Notify the action leader. Do whatever you need to do in order to renew your spirit and heal physically. Remember that your suffering has real purpose and is changing hearts and minds.



GUIDELINES TO HELP THOSE BEING ARRESTED

THE LEGAL PROCESS: A BRIEF INADEQUATE INTRODUCTION (NOT LEGAL ADVICE):

The legal system's terms and mystique may create an impression of complexity and unapproachability. But with study and thought the legal process can be less intimidating. When we understand the steps, the choices, and the effects of those choices, then we can make decisions about the things in which we participate and what we want to avoid. There are many possible levels of commitment. We must individually choose our involvement according to our own situation. Every level is important.

1ST STEP: WARNING

1. Immediately prior to arrest the police will give a warning to the group of demonstrators.
2. They will say the law(s) being broken and warn that anyone remaining will be arrested.
3. Typical charges may include: disorderly conduct, trespassing, resisting arrest, and obstruction.
4. This is your final moment to make a choice about arrest: to stay and be arrested or to leave.
5. Each individual may be warned after the group has been warned (or not). If you've changed your mind, this is your last chance to avoid arrest.
6. Once arrested you have no more choices.

The Soulforged pledge requires that we cooperate.

2ND STEP: ARREST

1. An officer will officially place you under arrest by saying something like: "You are now under arrest."
2. He or she will then direct you to the holding area.

The Soulforged pledge requires that we cooperate.

3RD STEP: HOLDING

1. A temporary location may be set up by the police to hold your group. It may be in an informal area, or on a transport bus.
2. Don't be confused by the apparent informality. You are under arrest and must do exactly as you are told.
3. You are not free to leave the holding location or to interact with others outside the holding area.
4. It is very likely that you will be handcuffed. Whatever valuables you still carry will be taken away.

The Soulforged pledge requires that we cooperate.

4TH STEP: TRANSPORT

1. Often those who are arrested will be taken to transportation vehicles, usually a bus or van.
2. Sometime you are asked to walk a short distance as a group to the police processing area. Remember the Soulforce pledge requires that we cooperate with the police.
3. Resistance of any kind during these steps is symbolic at best and will cost you more than you want to pay.

The Soulforce pledge requires that we cooperate.

5th step: Processing and Booking

1. Most people who are arrested are placed in a holding area or asked to remain on a transport while you wait to be booked.
2. Don't expect meals, drinks, phone calls, or bathrooms. Sometimes there are pay phones, so you may want to bring quarters, or your phone card # and a contact phone #.
3. Typically you will be photographed, fingerprinted, asked to empty pockets and turn over property, and asked for info.
4. You are only required to give your name, address, and usually your Social Security number.
5. It is essential to bring a current, government issued ID for identification. A driver's license is best.

The Soulforce pledge requires that we cooperate.

6TH STEP: ACTION ON YOUR CASE

1. The case may be resolved soon after processing. Or you may be released after being given a summons or ticket with the charges and court date for later resolution of the case.
2. Or you may need to be arraigned. If you wait in jail it will usually take 24-48 hours after being charged. Or you can post bond to get out of jail more quickly but you may be required to return for arraignment several weeks even months later. Your choice at this stage: To wait. To post bond and get out of jail more rapidly.

FURTHER EXPLANATION OF ARRAIGNMENT

1. Appear before a judge and answer to the charges. Within 24-48 hours after arrest a defendant who remains in custody will be brought into court for an arraignment. If you post bond, you may be required to return for arraignment several weeks later. At arraignment the defendant is read his/her rights and is informed of the charges.
2. At arraignment, each person (now called a defendant) will be asked how s/he pleads to the charges. You can make one of several pleas, as shown below: You can request that charges be dropped, or dismissed.
3. Note: You don't need a lawyer for this and can represent yourself. But it is generally helpful to have counsel of your own choosing to guide you through the process. Soulforce will have a legal representative available for the group. That person will have negotiated, in advance, about possible charges. There should be few, if any, surprises.



GUIDELINES ABOUT YOUR DAY IN COURT

Three possible pleas and what they mean.

GUILTY:

1. By entering a "guilty" plea a defendant makes an admission that there is factual bases for the charges and waives the right to contest the charges, obtain a trial, or appeal the decision.
2. By pleading guilty you are saying, "Yes I committed the act of which you accuse me. I don't deny it. I am guilty as charged." Mahatma Ghandi was a civil disobedient who always pled guilty in court as a matter of principle.
3. The judge will take the plea, sentence the defendant and impose the penalty. This is typically what Soulforce negotiates for the civil disobedience action.

NOLO CONTENDERE OR NO CONTEST

1. By entering a plea of No Contest a defendant waives the right to contest or challenge the
2. charges. Like a guilty plea, it waives the right to a trial or appeal. However is not an
3. admission of guilt.
4. The judge reviews the complaint and makes a determination of guilt. If found guilty,
5. the judge will sentence the defendant.
6. Some people feel that this plea is a compromise between pleading guilty and not guilty.

NOT GUILTY

1. By entering a plea of not guilty a defendant is entitled to a trial and must be convicted, or change to a guilty plea, before s/he can be sentenced.
2. A "not guilty" plea can have two basic grounds. First, it may mean that you claim you did not commit the act alleged in the summons and complaint. Or, it may be based on a legal defense.
3. The burden of showing guilt lies with the state; you are presumed innocent unless the state can prove your guilt. In rare cases a defendant may be acquitted (found not guilty) during the trial.
4. Sometimes the charges will be dismissed.

A VOW OF NONVIOLENCE

From Pax Christi USA (A Roman Catholic Justice Movement)

Pax Christi USA strives to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ by exploring, articulating, and witnessing to the call of Christian nonviolence. This work begins in personal life and extends to communities of reflection and action to transform structures of society. Pax Christi USA rejects war, preparations for war, and every form of violence and domination. It advocates primacy of conscience, economic and social justice, and respect for creation.

A VOW OF NONVIOLENCE

“Recognizing the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, I vow to practice the nonviolence of Jesus who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount---

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called [sons and daughters] of God... You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be [sons and daughters] of your Father in heaven,” (Matt. 5:9, 43-44).

Before God the Creator I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus

- by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life;
- by accepting suffering in the struggle for justice rather than inflicting it;
- by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence;
- by persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart;
- by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of a means to live;
- by actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth.

God, I trust in your sustaining love and believe that just as you gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so you will also bestow grace to fulfill it.

---Pax Christi USA

_____ (Your name) _____ (Date)

The Vow of Nonviolence was composed by Eileen Egan and Rev. John Dear, S.J. Tens of thousands of people have taken the Vow. The Vow of Nonviolence can be pronounced privately, with a local peace community, as part of a parish liturgy, or any other way that suits you. Many profess the Vow each year as part of their New Year observance.^{lxv}

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- ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.ipoet.com/archive/beyond/King-Jr/Loving-Your-Enemies.html>
- ^{iv} <http://www.examiner.com/article/in-jesus-gandhi-king-connection-sermon-on-the-mount-s-influence-comes-full-circle>
- ^v <http://www.2006torino.org/sermon.htm>
- ^{vi} <http://www.thekingcenter.org/news/2012-10-gandhis-birthday-dr-kings-tributes-mahatma>
- ^{vii} Harijan, June 18, 1938, p. 152 in TPPMG, p.41.
- ^{viii} Testament of Hope, Harper San Francisco, 1986, pg. 508, from a sermon at Ebenezzer Baptist Church.
- ^{ix} Harijan, Dec. 9, 1939, p 371, in TPPMG, p. 125.
- ^x Nation's Voice, p. 102, in TPPMG, p 125,
- ^{xi} N.V., p. 103, in TPPMG, p. 124.
- ^{xii} Young India, III, pp. 976-977 in TPPMG, p. 124
- ^{xiii} H, July 201935, p 180 TPPMG p. 73
- ^{xiv} Fellowship of Reconciliation Magazine, (May 1957, pp 5-7) in TofHope, p. 84
- ^{xv} Playboy Magazine Interview with MLK Jr. (1965) pp. 175ff in TofHope, p. 372.
- ^{xvi} FOR Magazine (May 1956), p. 507 in TofHope, p. 84
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- ^{xxi} S. Radhakrishnam (ed.), Mahatma Gandhi, p. 295, TPPMG p. 82)
- ^{xxii} An Address Before the National Press Club, 19 July, 1962, Testament of Hope, Harper San Francisco, 1986, p.101.
- ^{xxiii} ??Op. Cit., pp 182-183.
- ^{xxiv} Young, Andrew, *An Easy Burden*, p. 238
- ^{xxv} The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, Gopinath Dwawan, Navajivan Publishing , Ahmedabad-14, 1946, p.41.
- ^{xxvi} TPPMG, p.40.
- ^{xxvii} TPPMG, Gopinath Dwawan, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14, 1946, p.39.
- ^{xxviii} Y.I. III, p.872 in TPPMG, p.52.
- ^{xxix} Harijan, Oct. 19, 1940, p. 319 in TPPMG, p.41.
- ^{xxx} Harijan, Dec. 10, 1938, p. 369, TPPMG, p. 227.
- ^{xxxi} http://www.slate.com/articles/business/moneybox/2014/03/paul_ryan_war_on_poverty_federal_programs_are_not_a_poverty_trap.html
- ^{xxxii} Op. cit.
- ^{xxxiii} http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/18/pat-robertson-planned-parenthood_n_4810886.html
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- ^{xxxv} <http://www.addictinginfo.org/2012/03/08/35-hateful-and-stupid-rush-limbaugh-quotes/>
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- ^{xxxviii} Speeches, p. 284, TPPMG, p. 134.
- ^{xxxix} Speeches, p. 284, TPPMG, p. 134
- ^{xl} Y.I. I, p. 996 in TPPMG, p. 104.
- ^{xli} Harijan, June 18, 1938 in TPPMG, p. 41.
- ^{xlii} Y.I. I, August 8, 1929, TPPMG p. 185.
- ^{xliii} Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. I, p. 91, TPPMG p. 187.
- ^{xliv} H. June 3, 1939, p. 150, TPPMG, p. 134.
- ^{xlvi} Y.I. I. p. 635, in TPPMG, p. 105.
- ^{xlvi} Y.I. III, p. 517, TPPMG p. 106.
- ^{xlvi} Y.I. II, pp.227 and 1320; Y.I. III, p. 387, TPPMG. P. 135-136.
- ^{xlvi} Y.I. II, p. 1319, TPPMG, p.135.
- ^{xlvi} Louis Fischer, A Week with Gandhi, p. 102, TPPMG p. 138.

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- ^{lxii} Satyagraha in South Africa, M.K. Gandhi, p.433 in TPPMK pg. 57.
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