

SATYA - Truthful in Thought, Speech & Action

Welcome to the first edition of *Yes! We Can Peacebuilders* newsletter.

You've heard the word before -- SATYA -- it is the first part of Gandhi's Satyagraha and we've adopted it for our newsletter because its meaning meets our mission - to be truthful in thought, speech and action.

Unfortunately we were amiss in getting our January issue out and so I will relate what our good friend Paula Hulet put together in that issue. Satya is a Sanskrit word that means truth. The root of the word is "sat," that which is. In Yoga truth is a virtue which includes restraining from falsehood and distortion of reality in one's expressions and actions. Satya is about being truthful in all things in our thoughts, words and deeds. Satya is knowing who we are.

As Peacebuilders we know we seek a nonviolent, truthful life so that within our communities all will be accepted and included and all will achieve a fruitful quality of life.

Nonviolent Living

Gandhi believed that seeking the truth means we let go of violence as a way of life. Nonviolence is not a passive way of being. Gandhi tells us, nonviolence is:

- Active
 - Unconditional love towards others
 - Persistent pursuit of truth
 - Radical forgiveness
 - Steadfast resistance to every form of evil
 - Willingness to accept suffering in the struggle for justice
 - No desire for retaliation
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Yes! We Can Peacebuilders is part of Peace Bene/Campaign Nonviolence and participates in the Nonviolent Cities Project - www.paceebene.org -- www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org/ yeswecanpeacebuilders1@gmail.com / on Facebook @YesWeCanPeacebuilders

The Truth of Nonviolence

By Ruth Ann Angus

In a recent article on the Waging Nonviolence website author Kazu Haga wrote about why we must move closer to King's understanding of nonviolence. It's called Kingian Nonviolence but is no different than the nonviolence practiced by Mohandas Gandhi and Jesus of Nazareth. In an excerpt of Haga's new book *Healing Resistance: A Radically Different Response to Harm* published by Parallax Press, she writes of the philosophy and teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr.

The most relevant point made in the article is the best description of nonviolence that I have ever come across. In offering workshops and discussion groups, those of us at Yes We Can Peacebuilders have wrestled with participant's misunderstanding of what it means to be nonviolent. Haga, according to King, explains it excellently. Here it is:

"There is a distinction made between nonviolence spelled *with* a hyphen and nonviolence spelled *without* a hyphen. Non-violence is essentially two words: "without" "violence." When spelled this way, it only describes the absence of violence. As long as I am "NOT" being violent, I am practicing non-violence. And that is the biggest misunderstanding that exists."

Most people tell us, as we offer nonviolence instructions, that they are not violent and therefore they already are practicing nonviolence. If we think that nonviolence is simply about the absence of violence on our parts and we define nonviolence as "not violent," "then we can hide behind the veil of nonviolence while still condoning violence."

Haga goes on to say, "It's easy to be a bystander. We see rising homelessness, and we turn the other way. We see unarmed black folks being killed by police, and we blame the victim. We hear about the high rate of suicide rates among LGBTQ youth, and we do little about it. We read reports on the climate crisis but leave it to the next generation to deal with. We watch our communities and the earth being assaulted every day, and we just gather around and watch. Nonviolence is not about what *not* to do. It is about what you *are going to do* about the violence and injustice we see in our own hearts, our homes, our neighborhoods and society at large. It is about taking a proactive stand against violence and injustice. Nonviolence is about *ACTION*, not *inaction*."

In our next issue we will cover the topic of negative peace, an outcome from the misunderstanding of nonviolence. In the meantime I invite you to think on these things. Where do you stand? Are you living Non-Violence or Nonviolence?

Peace Podcast from John Dear

On the first day of each month, Pace e Bene is pleased to post a free, new podcast featuring Fr. John Dear reflecting on some aspects of nonviolence. John Dear has been studying, teaching and writing about nonviolence for forty years, given thousands of lectures and published over 36 books. We are happy to share his latest insights on nonviolence each month. They are specially recorded for Pace e Bene in an informal conversational style. We encourage you to listen to the whole show, or to break it up and listen to it over the course of a week.

You can access John's latest podcast The Nonviolent Psalms of Peace at www.paceebene.org and click on the link on the front page - "John Dear's Peace Podcast." You can also find John's podcasts on Apple at <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/podcasts-by-peace-activist-author-and-lecturer-fr-john-dear/id1485034295?ign-mpt=uo%3D4> and Google at <https://podcasts.google.com/?feed=aHR0cDovL2ZlZWRzLnNvdW5kY2xvdWQuY29tI3VzZXJzL3NvdW5kY2xvdWQ6dXNlcnM6Njg5NjAwNTM3L3NvdW5kcy5yc3M-> .

Book Tour Send Off for John Dear

Join us on Sunday, March 1st at Coalesce Bookstore Garden Chapel 845 Main Street, Morro Bay, CA from 1 to 3 PM for a send-off talk with John about peace and nonviolence in his new book "Praise Be Peace." We hope to see you there!



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