



# Satya

truthful in  
thought, speech, and action

## Yes! We Can Peace Builders March/April 2023

*Yes We Can Peacebuilders is dedicated to promoting and teaching nonviolence, inspiring and engaging people to create a nonviolent community, nation and world.*

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or ever touched but must be felt in the heart."

Helen Keller

## Disarming the Heart with Kingian Nonviolence By Jill E. Harris

*(Jill Harris is a retired teacher and Certified Kingian Nonviolent Trainer, a member of Pace e Bene's Writer's Affinity Group, a mother and grandmother living in Connecticut with her husband and cats.)*

"Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people." Kingian Nonviolence, Principle 1  
During the summer of 2018, I studied the Six Principles of Kingian Nonviolence as part of the University of Rhode Island's International Nonviolence Summer Institute. The discussion of this first principle surprised me. The root of the word courage is "cour," Latin for heart. What distinguishes courage from bravery, then, is that it arises from love. Its purpose is love. The goal is to re-establish love.

A few months after receiving my nonviolence training, I travelled to the little known village of Caicedo in the province of Antioquia, Colombia, which is home to about 7,000 people who live in this remote region high in the Andes Mountains. In the 1990's, the people of Caicedo suffered from a series of terrorist attacks. In one attack, the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia, known as the FARC guerrillas, killed Caicedo's police officers and bombed their police station, leaving them defenseless. In another attack, the guerrillas stole the coffee crop which was the financial backbone of the village. The citizens gathered to discuss what to do. "We decided that until we disarm our hearts, the war never stops," they told me. They gave me copies of books they had written about their long struggle with the guerrillas.

When I returned home, I pinned their remarkable quote above my desk and kept their books on my nightstand. Again and again, I turned to the pictures in the books. Stick figure drawings

depicted Caicedo's violent history, but the picture I contemplated most often was labelled "After" and it showed a drawing of the village encapsulated by three concentric hearts.

While these hearts expressed the first principle's emphasis on a more complex understanding of courage, the emphasis on nonviolence as a "way of life" also surprised me. A way of life is deep work. It's not fancy and it's not dramatic, and that is its own challenge. I am fortunate that my personal world in the United States in 2023 is a very different context from that of a citizen living in Caicedo twenty years ago, but I am still challenged to practice being courageous in the face of my small, daily conflicts.

In one small conflict, a friend cut herself off from me without explanation, and I felt shamed and hurt. Drawing upon Caicedo's example, I drew a picture of the two of us, and then I drew a heart around us. Although I hadn't "acted," my internal perspective shifted. In my mind, I once again could picture my friend's warm smile; I could hear her laugh. To me, these internal changes were evidence that I had "disarmed my heart."

But when I shared this experience with another friend, he responded that I had not done anything. "Nothing changed," he said.

It was true but it wasn't the truth. I hadn't said anything to my friend, and I hadn't staged a confrontation. But I had changed myself. I had changed the angry, hurt thoughts that sent shock waves through my own mind. I had silenced them, restoring my own peace of mind. I had also changed my intention. I had disarmed my heart, and in response, my heart warmed and opened.

The people of Caicedo have left humanity with an extraordinary treasure: even in the face of cruelty and terrorism, they chose to disarm their hearts, making it possible for the rest of us to point to their example and note what is possible. Their courage inspired their political leader, Governor Guillermo Gaviria Correa, to give his own life for the cause of protecting them. "And you were never attacked again?" I asked them. "Never. Never ever."

A few weeks after I had put courage into practice in a small way, my friend and I crossed paths. She looked in my eyes; she squeezed my hand. Reconciliations, big and small, are always possible. But first we must disarm the heart.



## Where is Noah When You Need Him? By Ruth Ann Angus



This is no joke. We need an ark in Morro Bay, California – well, everywhere in California. I am writing this as we endure yet again another atmospheric river today. Estimates of three to six inches of rain forecasted. That it is too wet already is evidenced by the mold creeping up the side of the building. Soil is so saturated there just isn't any place for water to go.

Last week my town became an isolated island for the second time in two months. All roads in and out flooded and not passable. Friends who live in a mobile home park adjacent to what is usually a nearly dry creek had just finished digging two to three feet of mud out from under and in their homes when the creek overflowed again bringing with it several feet of sloppy mud and debris. The city had barely begun to address the infrastructure issues or to haul away

the tons of tree limbs, garbage, and debris from the roadways, when a ton more came traveling down creek, under the overpass and onto the Highway, shutting it down.

We prayed for rain for almost seven years as the ground got drier and drier, grasses disappearing, trees dying, reservoirs so low there was worry that whole towns would run out of water. The explanation from weather forecasters was the continual existence of La Nina, that naughty girl-force keeping our ocean water too cold. Atmospheric situations are complicated and involve many things that play into how weather develops and moves across the planet. With La Nina, here on the west coast, the cold ocean affects the atmosphere disallowing the development of usual winter storms. The Internet explanation of La Nina says it is the colder atmospheric counterpart of El Nino, that being the bad boy of the development of excessive rain.

It's not just here on the Central Coast of California. It's everywhere.

California has a reputation for being a state that supplies the world with produce. The Salinas Valley is home to miles and miles of fields of vegetables and the Central Valley from Sacramento to the Imperial Valley in the south is the same. Today all those fields, just being planted with spring and summer time crops, look more like the Great Lakes as they are drowning in water. The reverberation from this destruction will reach around the world. What farmers might be able to salvage of these crops will not fully supply distribution centers. Markets will be out of things taken for granted. Prices will soar.

We whisper the words ***climate change*** and ponder who is at fault for all of this? We are living with environment as a medium of violence, whether it is excessive drought or excessive rain. We used to understand the up and the down of El Nino and La Nina, but now it doesn't make any difference. We cannot point our fingers there. It is our own violence to the planet that has us in this situation.

After all, what is a normal winter weather pattern for this area? Is an El Nino or La Nina the usual weather pattern? Was the climate and weather like this hundreds of years ago? It doesn't appear that we know the answers to these questions. Some people say they have never experienced such excessive amounts of rain in their short lifetimes. But what is a lifetime in relation to the time of climate change?

We can no longer accurately predict what tomorrow will bring. However, the forecast says rain and rain again at the end of the week and again next week.

We prayed for rain.

**"Thanks God!**

**But you can stop now."**



## Peace Projects for our Planet an Earth Day Celebration

The rains came to California and especially to the Central Coast and one good thing about them is that we are in store for what most think is going to be a spectacular wildflower season!

Grabbing hold of that promise Yes We Can Peacebuilders in conjunction with The Central Coast

Center for an Ecological Civilization introduces an Earth Day activity *Spring For Peace – A Peace Project for our Planet* to youth groups everywhere. It is a play on words with the word *spring* standing for the season and the physical act of leaping. As the world beautifies itself with carpets of wildflowers, we “leap” for peace in our lives and our communities. We pledge to do what we can to further a better understanding of the needs of humanity and our planet.

This creative project is meant for kids of all ages and is an easy one to do. This is an art project celebrating a new season of planetary peacefulness. The words *Spring For Peace* are printed on 8-1/2 x 11 inch copy paper in an assortment of colors in large block print for kids to embellish with their own creative drawings of flowers, bees, and butterflies all around the words.

Youth coordinators can get the group excited about “leaping into peace” by asking the group to suggest words to complete a sentence that begins with: “Peace is . . .” Those words in colorful large block letters are printed on separate sheets of paper.

To help the group understand the project better, coordinators or teachers should explain that we recognize that peace is not only the absence of war or killing but is trying our best to live a nonviolent life recognizing that we are all one in nature and we need to take care of each other and our planet.

The art can then be displayed on a bulletin board. This display could be placed in a school cafeteria, or a recreation hall, a community center, or a church – wherever they can be presented to the community at large. Coordinators can take a photo with the youth artists by the display and send it to their town newspaper with an explanation that it is a Positive Peacebuilder Project to celebrate Earth Day.

SPRING

FOR

PEACE

## Peace Tea Nonviolence Discussion Group in Morro Bay, CA.

Violence in our world seems to be on the rise. There is another way – positive peacebuilding using nonviolence! The program at the Peace Tea Nonviolence Discussion Group in Morro Bay, California consists of a variety of video programs. We began in January with videos by Dr. Bernard Lafayette on the Six Principles of Nonviolence from Martin Luther King, Jr. In February a video program entitled *An Introduction to Basic Nonviolence* was presented by Michael N. Nagler, President and cofounder of The Metta Center for Nonviolence.

In this video Nagler says, “Nonviolence is not the recourse of the weak but actually calls for an uncommon kind of strength; it is not a refraining from something but the engaging of a positive force.” In this program Nagler shows that nonviolence is more than a tactic but is a way of living. He recounts the successful methods that helped Gandhi free India from colonial rule and Martin Luther King, Jr. liberate people of color from oppression.

Plans are to continue studying Nagler's series of videos on nonviolence with March's program of Part Two- Degrees of Nonviolence.

Michael N. Nagler is President Emeritus of Classics and Comparative Literature and founder of the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at the University of California, Berkeley. He is author of *The Nonviolence Handbook*, *Our Spiritual Crisis*, and *The Search for a Nonviolent Future*.

Yes! We Can Peacebuilders is a division of People of Faith for Justice a 501c3 nonprofit. You can learn more information at [www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org](http://www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org) or email at [yeswecanpeacebuilders1@gmail.com](mailto:yeswecanpeacebuilders1@gmail.com).

## LINKS

### Jane Thornton Presents All Together in Dignity Fourth World and New Thought Musicians Showcase

ATD (All Together in Dignity) Fourth World is a movement of solidarity among and in collaboration with the most excluded families around the world. Founded in 1957 by Joseph Wresinski, ATD Fourth World brings together women and men from all cultures and social classes and is active in 34 countries. It is an international non-governmental organization with no religious or political affiliation.

<http://www.atd-fourthworld.org/>

The "Season for Nonviolence Playlist" is offered for free, Each song plays individually, and the entire list can simply play through for use in meditation and prayer. Songs cannot be purchased through this link, except if a user would want to join empower as a member, which is free, it just takes registering.

This was compiled by emPOWER M/A, which is a licensing agent and promoter for "New Thought" musicians and artists.

<https://www.empowerma.com/nonviolence-playlist/>

Jane Thornton's monthly Show "New Thought Musicians Showcase," and my YouTube Channel uses music videos, the songs of which are licensed through emPOWER.

ESSENTIAL LINKS - New Thought Musicians Showcase™

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SHOW ARCHIVE

New Thought Musicians Showcase™ - Host Jane Thornton

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pDFGOPgg_Qc&list=PLyPQgFnwI6KdCBNwdcDyU9GNF2N7xmHm0)

[v=pDFGOPgg\\_Qc&list=PLyPQgFnwI6KdCBNwdcDyU9GNF2N7xmHm0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pDFGOPgg_Qc&list=PLyPQgFnwI6KdCBNwdcDyU9GNF2N7xmHm0)

(This link is for a May 2022 show only)

ALL PLAYLISTS

All NT Artist Fan/Tribute Pages:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXxT-ABkS0GufUFLfpp4YXw/playlists>

POPULAR VIDEOS

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXxT-ABkS0GufUFLfpp4YXw/videos?view=0&sort=p&flow=grid>

### People of Faith for Justice Podcasts

This podcast tells the story of Ken Hill's and Gina Whitaker's three weeks traveling the U.S. Civil Rights Trail this past October through Mississippi and Alabama. Everywhere they went, everyone they met and all the stories they heard added pieces of the puzzle that eventually formed a picture of our single garment of destiny, and highlighted our network of mutuality. What they learned was that we are all connected, and that Martin Luther King had it right...only love can overcome hate.

<https://pfjpodcast.libsyn.com/weaving-our-garment-of-destiny-a-pilgrimage-026>

*"Nonviolence means avoiding injury to anything on earth in thought, word or deed." -- Mohandas Gandhi*

On September 11, 2018, Yes We Can Peacebuilders accepted a proclamation of peace and nonviolence from the mayor and city council of Morro Bay, California establishing Morro Bay as a Nonviolent City. In September 2022 a second peace proclamation from the current mayor and city council was accepted by Peacebuilders strengthening the City of Morro Bay's dedication to peace and nonviolence through the Nonviolent City Project.

The Nonviolent City Project is a grassroots movement that organizes strategy for activists to work for the transformation of their community into a peaceful, nonviolent city. This is a shift in consciousness to work holistically with every sector of the city to establish a culture of peace.

**Yes We Can Peacebuilders offers workshops and training for adults and youth on ways nonviolence is fostered, defining nonviolence to aid in the development of nonviolent communication and strategies for change within ourselves and our community. You can learn more at: [www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org](http://www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org) or email us at [yeswecanpeacebuilders1@gmail.com](mailto:yeswecanpeacebuilders1@gmail.com).**

**You Can DONATE to help us with our work by going to [www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org](http://www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org) and clicking on the DONATE button to reach People of Faith for Justice's PayPal (a secure donating site) - Please indicate "Peacebuilders" in the Notes section. Thank You!**



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