

Non Violent Resistance

1. What is Nonviolent Resistance?
 - a. "Disruptive actions such as strikes and boycotts used by civilians, who are part of a movement struggling for rights or justice." www.nonviolent-conflict.org/faq.shtml
2. What/who influenced MLK?
 - a. Henry David Thoreau – Civil Disobedience
 - i. It is morally justified to peacefully resist unjust laws
 - b. Mohandas Ghandi
 - i. 1950: MLK attended a lecture given by Dr. Mordecai Johnson (Howard University)
 - ii. Spoke about life and teachings of Ghandi
 - c. Montgomery Bus Boycott (1956)
 - i. Demonstrated to MLK the power of nonviolent resistance
 - ii. "Living through the actual experience of the protest, nonviolence became more than a method to which I gave intellectual assent; it became a commitment to a way of life. Many issues I had not cleared up intellectually concerning nonviolence were now solved in the sphere of practical action." King Encyclopedia
3. What are the four ideals of nonviolence
 - a. MLK published his ideas on Nonviolence in the February 1957 issue of the Christian Century

1) This is not a method for cowards; it does resist. The nonviolent resister is just as strongly opposed to the evil against which he protests as is the person who uses violence. His method is passive or nonaggressive in the sense that he is not physically aggressive toward his opponent. But his mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade the opponent that he is mistaken. This method is passive physically but strongly active spiritually; it is nonaggressive physically but dynamically aggressive spiritually.

2) Nonviolent resistance does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his friendship and understanding. The nonviolent resister must often express his protest through noncooperation or boycotts, but he realizes that noncooperation and boycotts are not ends themselves; they are merely means to awaken a sense of moral shame in the opponent. The end is redemption and reconciliation. The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community, while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness.

3) This method is that the attack is directed against forces of evil rather than against persons who are caught in those forces. It is evil we are seeking to defeat, not the persons victimized by evil. Those of us who struggle against racial injustice must come to see that the basic tension is not between races. As I like to say to the people in Montgomery, Alabama: "The tension in this city is not between white people and Negro people. The tension is at bottom between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. And if there is a victory it will be a victory not merely for 50,000 Negroes, but a victory for justice and the forces of light. We are out to defeat injustice and not white persons who may happen to be unjust."

4) Nonviolent resistance avoids not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. At the center of nonviolence stands the principle of love. In struggling for human dignity the oppressed people of the world must not allow themselves to become bitter or indulge in hate campaigns. To retaliate with hate and bitterness would do nothing but intensify the hate in the world. Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate. This can be done only by projecting the ethics of love to the center of our lives.

Taken From: King Encyclopedia. http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/about_king/encyclopedia/nonviolence.htm