



The Search for a Nonviolent Future
Daily Metta

By Michael Nagler

Transcripts

Table of Contents

Daily Metta Jan 1 2016	5
Daily Metta Jan 2 2016	5
Daily Metta Jan 3 2016	6
Daily Metta Jan 4 2016	6
Daily Metta Jan 5 2016	7
Daily Metta Jan 6, 2016	8
Daily Metta Jan 7, 2016	9
Daily Metta Jan 8, 2016	10
Daily Metta Jan 9, 2016	11
Daily Metta Jan 10	12
Daily Metta Jan 11.....	13
Daily Metta Jan 12	13
Daily Metta Jan 13	14
Daily Metta Jan 14.....	15
Daily Metta Jan 15.....	15
Daily Metta Jan 16	16
Daily Metta Jan 17	17
Getting Beyond the Moral Framework Daily Metta January 23	18
Daily Metta January 24--Strength to Defy and Forgive-	18
A Life-Affirming Orientation Daily Metta January 30	19
Discovering Nonviolence, Discovering Ourselves--Daily Metta January 31.....	20
She saved her friend s life--Daily Metta February 6	20
Getting beyond crisis-mode Daily Metta February 7	21
Empathy tells us something about nonviolence--Daily Metta.....	22
Three Lenses for Understanding Violence--Daily Metta [February 14]	23
Power of Vulnerability--Daily Metta February 21.....	24

Are we ignoring the lessons of nonviolence--Daily Metta February 20.....25

Seeing the Shadow Side Daily Metta February 2726

Awakening Compassion Daily Metta February 2826

Power is of Two Kinds Daily Metta.....27

On humiliation and nonviolence Daily Metta.....28

Nature, Nurture and Nonviolence Daily Metta 30

Transforming Anger into Nonviolent Power Daily Metta32

A force from within Daily Metta33

Peak experience Daily Metta 34

Person Power Daily Metta 35

The High of Nonviolence Daily Metta..... 36

Nonviolence resonates with our humanity Daily Metta.....37

The Long Haul of Nonviolence Daily Metta..... 38

Peak Experience to Way of Life Daily Metta..... 39

Anger as Distraction Daily Metta..... 40

Two-Fold Beginning of Modern Era Daily Metta42

Work Versus Work Daily Metta42

Myths of Violence Daily Metta 44

Realities of Nonviolence Daily Metta..... 45

Making nonviolent energy WORK Daily Metta..... 46

Stealth and Salt Daily Metta 48

Nonviolence is for everyone Daily Metta 50

Conflict Escalation Curve Daily Metta51

Recognizing True Power Daily Metta..... 53

Nonviolence is the highest law Daily Metta 54

Civil Disobedience Legal Daily Metta 54

Two Stories Daily Metta 54

Symbolism and Nonviolence_ Daily Metta..... 56

Predicting Violence and Nonviolence Daily Metta	57
Michael’s Big Claim about Nonviolence Daily Metta	59
The MEANING of nonviolence Daily Metta	60
Restorative Justice the Key Daily Metta	62
Eyes on the Prize Daily Metta	64
Restorative Justice begins in our mind Daily Metta	66
What will make restorative justice work Daily Metta	67
Restorative Justice as Constructive Program.....	68
Gandhi s Secret Weapon Daily Metta.....	70
Gandhi’s Basics of Constructive Program Daily Metta.....	72
Constructive Action vs. Constructive Program Daily Metta.....	72
Constructive Strategy Daily Metta	74
Heart Unity Daily Metta	75
Heart Unity and Leadership--Daily Metta.....	76
Inner Culture of Nonviolence Daily Metta.....	77
Constructive Program Review Daily Metta.....	78
Getting Real Daily Metta Weekend Video	79
The Inner Work Daily Metta Video	80
Conversion Happens_ Daily Metta Video	81
It took one hour Daily Metta Video	82
Nonviolent Moment Daily Metta Video.....	83
Three Giant Steps Daily Metta Video	84
Time to start nonviolence Daily Metta video	85
Nonviolence is human nature Daily Metta video	86
Transforming war culture Daily Metta video	87
Framing our values Daily Metta video.....	88
Unarmed Peacekeepers Daily Metta Video.....	90
Restoring dignity to the Earth Daily Metta video.....	92

Daily Metta Jan 1 2016

Hello. I'm Michael Nagler, I'm the President of the Metta Center for Nonviolence and this is your Daily Metta for 2016. Today is January 1st. We're going to be talking about this book, [Search for a Nonviolent Future](#) and the claim that I make in this book that the discovery of nonviolence can save us and really nothing else can.

So, I'd like to start with just talking about the preface to the book. I describe in it the day that I heard about 9/11. I was riding in a commuter van, I was still teaching at the University of California at that time. The radio was on in the van and while we were riding we heard about the disaster. And when we got out of the van a fellow sitting in front of me said, "This has changed everything." And I thought, "This is so right. But on the other hand, it's also so very wrong," because violence is still violence. Nonviolence is still nonviolence. Nonviolence is still there to be discovered.

So, I'd like to invite you to think about a turning point, perhaps in your life when you began to realize the importance of nonviolence. And there are some people who say it's the discovery of this book, but for others, something much more personable, more immediate. And what you think nonviolence is why I make this claim that nonviolence can lead to salvation of the modern world will be the subject of our talks for this year. Thank you for listening.

[End of recorded material 00:01:44]

Daily Metta Jan 2 2016

Hello, I'm Michael Nagler, President of the Metta Center for Nonviolence which is where we are at the moment. And this is your Daily Metta for January 2nd, 2016. I started last time by talking about the foreword that I wrote for the book, "The Search for a Nonviolent Future." I'd actually to read you a few lines from that forward and comment on it.

I say that Dylan Klaybold and Eric Harris," those are the two very unfortunate young men who carried out that Columbine High School massacre. "Went off to perpetrate the massacre and they left a video. In that video they told of their dream to hijack a commercial plane and plow it into New York quote, 'Killing as many people as we can.'"

And my comment is that, you know, what the terrorists did on 9/11 was atrocious. It was not something to be condoned, but you cannot say that it was unthinkable because the fact is, in our culture, we think about violence all the time. On those rare occasions when I fly in an airplane I glance up at the screen every now and then showing the videos. It just looks like one explosion after another, one punch in the head after another.

If we soak our minds with this imagery, this is the things we're going to think of and eventually plan and eventually execute. So that's one of the most important sets of dots that I want to help us connect in this book, "The Search for a Nonviolent Future." How it is that what we put in our minds becomes our behavior. What we're putting in our minds right now and what we could put in that would be very, very different and give us a very different life.

So I would suggest this, it's impossible for us to avoid violent imagery. We should try. We should avoid it as much as possible, but we're going to be exposed to it anyway in one way or

another. So watch carefully what happens in your mind when you see that imagery. Yes, there might be a sense of excitement, but look a little closer. Underneath that excitement, don't you feel insecure? Don't you feel a little bit of anxiety? This is what we're going to be talking about and trying to correct.

That's our Daily Metta for today. And as Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Those who have an interest in nonviolence, I invite you to join the experiment."

[End of recorded material 00:02:48]

Daily Metta Jan 3 2016

Hello, this is your Daily Metta for January 3rd, 2016. You know, with the book we're talking about, *The Search for a Nonviolent Future* it's almost 12 years-old and yet it's one of those things – everything that I wrote in this book is truer today than it was 12 years ago. The violence that I talk about has gotten more intense. And the nonviolence has got more intense. So we live in extremely interesting times.

And I want to tarry a little bit more then on the introduction, the preface that I wrote to the book. When I finished that preface a lot of people said, "You'd feel differently if you actually had a relative who was killed on 9/11." Well, let me read you the last paragraph of the preface, "I dedicate this preface to my cousin, Chick, who suffered a heart attack and died after his wife, Sylvita, staggered home late that from her job on the first floor of the World Trade Center."

So I did have a relative who died as a direct result of the 9/11 attacks. And you know what? It doesn't matter. We all died a little bit in those attacks and we're dying over and over again in the attacks that roll on. Domestically and internationally. So we must come to grips with what is causing the violence in our world.

And that's why I'm very happy about, "Search for a Nonviolent Future," because, okay, maybe I made some mistakes and I misidentified a little bit what causes violence and why nonviolence is so successful. Sure, I may have gotten some things wrong, but at least it points us to the problem, that the biggest dilemma that we're facing in our world is this crisis between violence and nonviolence.

Now the Buddha once said, "Hasten to do good. If you do not do good, evil may enter your mind." And sort of that's kind of my point too. Hasten to learn about and practice nonviolence. If we don't do that, violence can partake of our being even if we're very much opposed to it in our conscious life.

So thank you once again. This is your Daily Metta for January 3rd. And as Mahatma Gandhi once said, "If you are inclined to join us, don't hesitate to join the experiment."

[End of recorded material 00:02:48]

Daily Metta Jan 4 2016

Hello, this is your Daily Metta for January 4th, 2016. I'm Michael Nagler here at the Metta Center. And I guess I'd like to start with a correction. I mentioned the first version of the book, "Search for a Nonviolent Future" was 12 years ago. It's actually 15 years ago now. And that just goes to

show you, you should not trust me on numbers. To the extent that we – everything that was said in that book 15 years ago is still valid, you can know that it was aimed at and just seeking to unfold the essence of nonviolence because it's the essence that doesn't change. It's the details that will always undergo creative fluctuations of one kind or another. Even between Gandhi's time and our own there are some changes that we need to make to do an appropriate implementation of this force.

So it's such an important concept, this idea of what Gandhi called, "A living force." And he also said, "Nonviolence is not a blind force." Meaning it's not just a neutral physical force like gravity or electricity, but those are good analogies for us because the fact is that nonviolence is not just a set of actions. It's not just – certainly not just a moral prescription that you follow – though he used the term "moral" in his day a lot more than we might be inclined to do in ours.

But that nonviolence is actually a force that influences minds and hearts and we can learn to play along with that force. We can also make a mistake and try to act against it. And then it's kind of interesting to note what happens. I noted recently that in the film "Gatekeepers" which is about six former heads of the Israeli security apparatus, the Shin Bet – they were interviewed in that film – every one of them said that the situation is not working. They're all retired now. They were free to say that.

One of them made a very interesting comment. He said, "Winning all the battles and losing the war." Now that immediately caught my attention because one of Gandhi's biographers, B.R. Nanda, who wrote I think one of the best brief biographies of Gandhi, talked about an episode where everything seemed to go badly, but if you connect the dots and look later down the road, you'll see it was tremendously successful. And he stated as a general principle, "That nonviolence is the kind of thing where you can lose all the battles and go on to win the war."

So that's a very good way to point up the contrast of these two forces. Violence is a destructive force. Sometimes it produces results that you like in the short-term. In the long-term, never. And we're going to talk about that very shortly. Nonviolence is exactly the opposite. It sometimes does and does not produce results that you like in the short-term, but it always produces benefits in the long term.

So that's our Daily Metta for today. I would encourage you to think about the operations of forces which we cannot see, how can we understand them, how can we think about them. And as Mahatma Gandhi said, "If you find this intriguing, we are all invited to join the experiment."

[End of recording 00:03:52]

Daily Metta Jan 5 2016

Hello, this is January 5th, 2016 Daily Metta. I'm Michael Nagler here at the Metta Center. Some of you have been responding very nicely to these little conversations and sending us questions. I hope that will continue because I would really like to make this more interactive. So a question that came in was about my lineage – how I came to nonviolence. It was actually a very useful question and I'm glad it came up. I was always very averse to violence. For one thing, I was the shortest kid at Midwood High School in Brooklyn, New York and I didn't want there to be a whole lot of violence in my life.

But more seriously, I had some kind of innate aversion, though I was plenty angry – maybe about slightly different things than other people, but quite angry and had no philosophical basis for being against it. We didn't hear much about Gandhi in that era. I remember just seeing the cover of "Life Magazine" covering his funeral cremation. It looked sort of weird. But I came to Berkeley. In 1966 I met Sri Eknath Easwaran who had started the Blue Mountain Center of Meditation which is still a very flourishing institution to which I belong. I live in the Blue Mountain Center's ashram and I've been practicing meditation since then, since 1966 under Easwaran's guidance.

Now Easwaran had met Gandhi and was deeply, deeply impressed by him. Interestingly enough, Easwaran did not become political so he never joined the Satyagraha. It shows you how huge Gandhi was, what kind of dimensions that man had, that he could affect someone like Easwaran, pick him up, change his whole life, change the life course of now thousands of people, without having him become a direct disciple or a member of the ashram or a political activist.

And through Easwaran's eyes I began to see another Gandhi. And this may sound a little paradoxical, but I saw that Gandhi was much, much greater than I had thought. And as Easwaran said, "Just father of the nation didn't even begin to say it." I'll say a little bit later on about what I think Gandhi was. And on the other hand, he was much less inaccessible. He was more accessible than I thought. All I knew about Gandhi, I thought, "I could never do that, you know, I can't fast for days on end," and stuff like that.

But to see that he was such a tremendous figure and yet that he had laid down certain practices and certain disciplines that even an ordinary person like myself could follow, that intrigued me to say the very least. That really changed the course of my life. And at one point Sri Easwaran said, "I'm going to take you out of politics." He said to me, "I'm going to take you out of politics and when I put you back in you'll be much more effective." I had been in the Free Speech Movement at that time.

And that's exactly what happened. I think I found a unique way of expressing something that I've gained through meditation on the one hand and my deep study of Gandhi on the other hand. So maybe I could leave us today to ponder that question. Let's think of what kind of being we think Gandhi was. What enabled him to do what he did and have the impact that he had? And we can be talking more about that later on. So please do continue sending us in questions, this is just the kind of conversation we were hoping to have. That's today's Daily Metta and as the Mahatma said, "If you find this interesting, we are all invited to join the experiment."

[End of recording 00:04:12]

[Daily Metta Jan 6, 2016](#)

Hello. I'm Michael Nagler, we're at the Metta Center for Nonviolence here. And this is the Daily Metta for January 6th, 2016 and we're talking about "A Search for a Nonviolent Future." In the introduction to "Search" I use, as an allegory, a story about a community – an intentional community that was started in Columbia in the barren *llanos*, far from civilization where the Gaviotans found out by much research if there was a type of pine tree, a Caribbean pine that came from nearby Ecuador that might thrive in that soil, in that environment. So they brought some in, they planted them. And it did thrive. They were very happy with that experiment, but to

their surprise, an entire tropical rainforest then come up out of the soil, that there were seeds that had been waiting there for maybe thousands of years. And here's why I talk about that allegory in this book. Let me read you a little bit from the introduction.

"This book will be about a renewal that, if we can make it happen, will resemble the miracle of the pines in Gaviotas, for it also will evoke forces that lie hidden in the soil of our impersonal, "bottom-line," violence-prone modern civilization, where human meaning has faded and human bonds are often scattered like the dust. As with Gaviotas' unexpected forest, the seeds of this renewal do not have to be created; they are waiting there in the soil of our own existence—waiting for us to create the conditions to awaken them. Like those of the new-sprung rain forest of Gaviotas, they are primordial, I will argue: far more native to the human condition than the world of abusive relationships we have surrounded ourselves with in this industrial age. And, again like the surprise rain forest of Gaviotas, we don't have to know ahead of time exactly what this new world is going to look like. But we do know and what we do have to be very clear about is what are the conditions that we have to work on—the right conditions that we can nurture so that nature—in this case human nature—can do the rest."

Thank you very much. That's our Gaviotan Daily Metta for January 6th for today. Read up about Gaviotas, get a hold of "Search for a Nonviolent Future," if you haven't done so already. And as Gandhi says, "Come join the experiment."

[End of recording 00:3:20]

[Daily Metta Jan 7, 2016](#)

Greetings. This is your Daily Metta for January 7th and incidentally this picture shows you Eknath Easwaran who I mentioned awhile back as being the person who really introduced me to Gandhi. So I'd like to talk about the very end of my introduction. And with that, lead into a very good question that's been sent in. So I say we are here in a culture where violence seems to dominate everything. And the question we're leading up to is, "Where does nonviolence come from?"

I say, "A surprising number of the projects we'll be looking at in the ensuing pages led to results – good results beyond what the actors have a right to anticipate." I'm saying this to give us a kind of sense of what kind of force nonviolence is. "Often, their best and most enduring successes were not quite what they intended. Indeed, sometimes what they intended to do failed." We'll be calling this "work" versus work, when we get to that topic. "But in every case, they did one right thing, they chose persuasion and inclusion over threat power and hatred and domination. They chose nonviolence."

So it's often remarkable to me how despite the very complicated world that we live in, it really is a product of two forces and Saint Augustine and many others have noticed this. And if we choose the right force, we can't predict exactly how it will play out, but we can predict that it will play out well. If we choose the wrong force, we can't predict how it will exactly play out, but we can predict that it will play out badly. And the best name for those two forces in today's world, the ones that focus what's best so that we can kind of understand what we're talking about are violence and nonviolence.

So the question I wanted people to think about is, “Where does violence come from?” And I think in terms of the human spirit it ultimately comes from a instinct for self-preservation. Well, where does nonviolence come from? It also comes from the instinct for self-preservation, but it’s with a higher sense of the self. And I’d have to say that if we have an instinct or a competition and self-preservation, I think you examine what human beings do. We also have an instinct for self-sacrifice, for sacrificing the smaller self in favor of a larger Self.

So perhaps we can think of – or think about for the next Daily Metta is this. You are all familiar with the instinct for self-preservation and it leads us to do a number of things. Sometimes it gets us involved in competition with others. But isn’t there an also an instinct for self-sacrifice? If you look around you, if you look at your own feelings, your own behavior, perhaps you can identify a few instances of this instinct for self-sacrifice, this instinct for service, manifesting itself. And perhaps when you see it manifesting itself, you can also spot the results.

We’re going to be sharpening the ability to do that in the course of this study. So that was Daily Metta for January 7th and as Gandhi used to say, “If this sounds interesting, if it sounds intriguing, we’re invited to join the experiment.”

[End of recording 00:03:50]

Daily Metta Jan 8, 2016

Greetings! I’m here with the Daily Metta for January 8th and this launches us into Chapter 1 of “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” The chapter is called, “Hard Questions. Hard Answers.” The point of this chapter is to try to help us to look below the standard questions and answers that we are fed by the mass media about violence because this is one of the things that prevents us from dealing with the problem of violence.

The cliché that you often run into when there’s an act of violence that nobody can explain, somebody is killed for his tennis shoes, or a couple commits suicide for no apparent reason. They say, “There really aren’t any answers.” Well, “I refuse to accept this,” is what I wrote. “I refuse to believe in the journalistic cliché, ‘meaningless violence.’ I refuse to believe that there are no answers to the cheapening of life and the rise of violence against it.”

And I go on to say, “That what the media do is focus always on the details in a way that almost prevents us from getting down to the underlying causes,” which were those two forces that we talked about yesterday in our Daily Metta. And if you remember, I had quoted the case of these two teenagers who did the Columbine Massacre. They said that they wanted to hijack an airplane, plow it into New York and kill as many people as possible. And this has become a kind of cult.

If you ask me, the country should have stopped dead and not gone back to business as usual until they could answer the question, “why do our young people feel that killing as many people as possible is desirable?” But instead, the newspapers and the coverage in the media focused us on the fact that these boys had been teased. In some cases, it focused on the fact that they wore long trench coats. So the answer to violence is to forbid boys from wearing trench coats.

And it’s, I think, helpful for us to remember that there are three big questions that we should be answering. What is violence? Why is it getting worse? And how can we make it stop? Do not let the mass media distract you from those questions. Those are the ones that will lead to a

solution to this problem. They will lead to and lead from a sense of human agency, that we can do something about this – which is part of the New Story of humanity that I'll be leading up to eventually.

So thank you very much for listening in and do send us your questions. Let's see, why don't we ponder those three questions for today and ask yourself, "Do they make sense? Do they help you reorient yourself? And what might the answers be?" And as Mahatma Gandhi used to say, "If you find this intriguing, we are invited to join the experiment."

[End of recording 00:03:52]

Daily Metta Jan 9, 2016

Greetings! This is January 9th. This is the Daily Metta for today. I wanted to thank a lot of our viewers for the comments and questions they've been sending in. We're still talking about the introduction to "Search for a Nonviolent Future" because it's in the introduction that we do get into a couple of basics. I want to use an analogy here. Sometimes I've seen colleagues of mine in the law school saying to the first year students in law school that, "I'm going to get in and change your mind. I'm going to change your way of thinking."

Well, in a slightly less drastic way I think we have to do that to come to grips with nonviolence because we've been so conditioned to think about it in a useless way. We need to reframe the way we approach the question in order to come up with some useful answers. So to start off, I had a quote from a French philosopher who said – Jacques Ellul, is his name – and he said, "This isn't the age of violence despite appearances." Of course, in his time it wasn't quite as evident as it is now. "This isn't the age of violence so much it is the age of the awareness of violence."

I think that's highly significant because I think what it says is that human consciousness has always been evolving. And we know that up to a particular point, slavery seemed absolutely normal, and then something clicked and we saw the horror of enslaving another human being. It's hard to know exactly how those changes take place, but I think we're now facing a similar change with the phenomenon of war and that's why more and more and more veterans are committing suicide. And I think we need to see a change like that with the whole question of violence.

We're accepting violence as normal now, is more retrograde and more harmful than accepting it, say, 50 years ago – not to mention back in the early 19th century before World War I. So I'd like to lead up to our conversation with another philosopher, a Greek philosopher, Epictetus, who said, "The beginning of all ignorance is a failure to understand the basic dynamics underneath the particulars of the given case." So bear that in mind, think it over, tomorrow we're going to apply that directly to the question of violence.

So thank you very much and let me remind you of Gandhi's famous statement, "That those who are interested in nonviolence are invited to join the experiment."

[End of recording 00:03:13]

Daily Metta Jan 10

Hello, this is the Daily Metta for January 10th. We're working on the introduction to "Search for a Nonviolent Future." And what we're trying to do now is learn how to wrap our minds around violence despite the fact that the mass media presents it to us in a completely bewildering way. You know there's a lot of attention been paid, and will be paid throughout "Search," on the fact that the mass media stimulate – promote violence by glamorizing it and making it exciting and giving it kind of a false sense of meaning in our life. That part is pretty well known. But what's not as well known is the way that in reportage, they trivialize nonviolent events. The present only the particular details and never the underlying forces - never the dynamics. And the end result of that is very disempowering. You know, one of my favorite representatives of the wisdom tradition was a Greek philosopher by the name of Epictetus. And he functioned in Rome in the 1st Century of our era. And among many brilliant things he said was, "All ignorance arises from the failure to see the general principles operating under," what he called, "[Ta kataikosta]" which means, "the particulars."

So the first focus here in this part of the introduction is on the way that we're told a bewildering barrage of details every time that there's a violent event. And these details are disempowering because naturally they differ from one event to the next. No two massacres are going to be exactly alike. So what's the carry-over? The only attempt at a generalization is where the mass media say, "this is starting to look like the new normal."

Now recently President Obama made a plea and issued an Executive Order to limit the very ready access to handguns and rifles in our country. That is a step in the right direction, but you may have noticed that he didn't say a word, not one syllable about what we think is the real cause of gun violence. And that is rage, frustration, and especially alienation. The glamorization of violence on the one hand and the separateness that it leads to in our feelings for one another on the other hand.

And so in this chapter coming up I cite a text from the wisdom tradition again, but this is from a 14th Century mystical document. Let me just read it to you.

"Beneath you and external to you lies the entire created universe." That's, "Beneath you lies the entire created universe. Yes, even the sun, the moon, and the stars. They are fixed above you, geographically. Splendid in the firmament, yet they cannot compare to your exalted dignity as a human being." So that is the essential corrective to the image of ourselves that's been created, cumulatively, by our modern culture and the mass media.

And this image that we've been conditioned to accept will never allow us to escape from violence. We've got to confront with this much higher image of the human being. So that's a step in the direction of what I'm going to suggest you try to do right now for a day - and that is look at any kind of reports in any violent event – I mean even any accident. And see if you can read through the details, get under the details to what is driving a human being to do this. And bear in mind that that is going to tend to be the same from event to event. And that's where we're going to be able to turn this thing around.

So thank you very much. Thanks for joining us once again. And do give us your feedback and remember, as Mahatma Gandhi said, "If you find this interesting, we're all invited to join the experiment."

[End of recording 00:04:55]

Daily Metta Jan 11

Greetings! This is Daily Metta for January 11th. Last time we ended on a very high note. I was reading to you a section from, “The Cloud of Unknowing,” 14th Century mystical document that talked about the exalted dignity of the human being. I go on from there to say that this obsession with negativity that’s crept into our culture and that we take for granted now has ironically made it hard for us to understand where our negativity comes from. People keep saying, “We’ve got to pay attention to the dark-side.” But the way they pay attention to it, they don’t end up with coming to a solution for it.

And I went from there to discuss an episode that I feel even more strongly now than I did 15 years ago when I wrote, “Search.” And that is the episode where I was crossing campus and students were holding up signs saying, “Let’s fight back against Asian hate crimes.” And I said, “As long as we’re focused on Asian hate crimes, we’re not going to be able to solve them.” So this is a special case of what I was talking about last time, the being always on the surface and not seeing the underlying dynamic. And I suggested there, we got to take at least three big steps - from Asian hate crimes, to hate crimes, to hate.

Where does hate come from? Well, if you go back to that quotation from “The Cloud of Unknowing” there’s an interesting principle, that it talks about human dignity. It doesn’t talk about the dignity of one group or another group, the nobles or Christians even. And it turns out that our dignity is closely linked to our unity. And whenever there is a sense of disunity, our dignity is degraded even when we’re trying to build it up at somebody else’s expense.

So it’s an interesting fact that all the words for hate and fear in the Sanskrit language – a very old form of the language branch that our English language comes from – come from the word “Two” because it ultimately goes back to that sense of separateness between one human being and another, between one human being and her or his environment on the planet. So let’s think a little bit more about that theme, think about connections that you may have seen between – I guess most importantly between the inflicting a loss of dignity on another and suffering a loss of dignity one’s self.

And we’ll talk about that a little bit more next time. Meanwhile, once again, we are all invited to join the experiment.

[End of recording 00:03:09]

Daily Metta Jan 12

Hello everyone. This is January 12th and this is our Daily Metta. We’ve been talking about a perplexing episode that occurred to me on campus some 16 years ago when students were advocating that we do something about Asian hate crimes. And I was troubled then and I’m troubled now by the fact that you can approach a particular form of violence in such a way that it doesn’t really help that form all that much. Or if it does, it doesn’t help the general picture.

And as I pointed out in the book, the reason that Asian crimes are on the rise ultimately has nothing to do with Asians or crimes. It has to do with the rise of hate. And so the winning formula for any problem that we need to address – and I didn’t make this quite clear when I wrote the book, but I feel it very strongly now – the winning formula is every issue that we

address, we need to address it in such a way that it not only solves the issue itself, but it resonates with the entire problem of violence and hatred that we're falling into more and more.

So there's a particular skillful way of doing that and I'm going to be talking about it from time to time. And I'd really like to hear some of our thoughts and comments about that too. But I did point out that if we could get that hatred to subside, to that degree, all of the manifestations of it would subside. So this is really, as we say nowadays, "Going upstream," to the source of the problem. And I pointed out that it has a lot to do with the decline of human dignity.

Somehow, indignity is connected with separateness and dignity is connected with unity. Now a fact that I learned after writing "Search for a Nonviolent Future" comes from a psychiatrist, James Gilligan, who studied very disturbed criminal behavior for 25 years and found that the one predictor for people to become, say, serial homicides or something really antisocial like that, was that they were disrespected as children. And they're spending the rest of their life trying to regain that respect.

So let's just stop there for today. This is a lot to think about. And remember, we're all being invited to join the experiment and please get back to us with your comments. I hope we've fixed the sound volume for one thing, and more to the point, anything that you'd like to suggest about this very rich topic. Thank you.

[End of recording 00:03:09]

[Daily Metta Jan 13](#)

Hello everyone. January 13th and another episode of Daily Metta. So we're working our way still in the very beginning parts of "Search for a Nonviolent Future." I'd like to share a formula with you that would kind of frame the discussion we're trying to have here. In thinking about Martin Luther King Junior and what he achieved and what he wanted to achieve, it seemed to me, looking at his career, that he was able to delegitimize racism, but not delegitimize violence. He wanted to. He was working on it. But that problem was much too difficult and I think the kickback is what cost him his life.

This concept of delegitimization is quite important. It was formulated for our field by Kenneth Boulding who showed that if you can delegitimize a regime, it collapses very quickly. Delegitimizing racism doesn't mean that he got rid of racism, but it does mean that he made it, in a way, unacceptable in a formal way. And I think a lot of us have been kind of jumping on that bandwagon with a very reasonable notion that if a group has been disrespected, then by raising the dignity of that group, we raise human dignity. And that is inherently true, but I think it only really works if we do it completely nonviolently because it is the nonviolence that really starts to sound the keynote of human dignity. This is why Jimmy Carter, when he was elected President, the first thing he did was invite Rosa Parks to come to his inauguration because as he very astutely pointed out, she helped to raise the dignity of the south. She made it possible for a person from the south to become President.

Okay, well, I'm going to go on very shortly to talk about a remarkable experiment that should be giving us a pointer. And I think it's significant that this experiment took place in 1952. And there wasn't much attention paid to it then and there hasn't been much now. So next time, let's talk

about that – Davitz’s experiment, and of course, we’re all being invited to join our own experiment in a nonviolent life. Until tomorrow then...

[End of recording 00:02:51]

Daily Metta Jan 14

Hi, this is January 14th. This is the Daily Metta. And as I promised, we’re going to talk about an important experiment - probably would be difficult to perform today. It was performed by – done by a researcher named Joel Davitz and published in the “Journal of Abnormal Psychology.” Incidentally, I hope in a month or so the Metta Center will have an excellent science division on its Web site that will feature this study, and many others, that give us amazing insights into nonviolence today.

So what they did in this study, to put it simply, they separated two groups of school children. One group – I think they did nothing special. Another group, they gave cooperation training to – kind of Montessori here – the whole bunch. And then subjected both groups to an intense frustration, which I think would be difficult to perform today. It was almost kind of cruel. Send the kids back to the classrooms and observe them through the one-way mirrors and see what you see.

And they were expecting to measure how long it took for the cooperation trained kids to break down and be nasty little monsters because of their frustration. To their astonishment they found not only didn’t it break down, it increased. They cooperated more. Now this is an astounding insight into human psychology. And I think the way to interpret it is, they had created a channel, a pathway, a samskara, to be cooperative. When the frustration happened energy was roused and the more energy that was roused poured from that channel into the other channel.

Imagine what significance this could have for the reduction of violence in our society. And I’m going to cite next time another experiment – much more recent – done with two different types of monkeys that give us further insight into these pathways and how we can be using them for a safer world.

Meantime, again, we’re all being invited to join the experiment and we would love to hear from you, what your thoughts are on this topic. Thanks very much.

[End of recording 00:02:38]

Daily Metta Jan 15

Hello everyone. This is your Daily Metta for January 15th. And we’re getting scientific on you here. I promised that I would talk about an experiment that I did not know about when I wrote “Search.” And it is simply this, it was carried out by Franz de Waal – a very well know primatologist who’s written about eight or ten terrific books on animal behavior – and some colleagues.

And what they did was they took a colony of rhesus monkeys, which are rather aggressive. And they added into that colony a colony of stump-tail macaques who are much more peaceable critters. In a pinch, if there’s a conflict between two of these monkeys one will actually hand its

finger to another to get bitten and say, “Go ahead, work out your aggressions.” I’m not recommending that we do that kind of thing.

So they put the two groups together – gulp – to see what would happen. They expected the stump-tails would be wiped out by the rhesus types. And if you believe in the theory of innate aggression and that we’ve been designed to be competitive and so forth – that is what you would predict. And three amazing results ensued. For one thing, the stump-tail stood their ground without fighting back. Rhesus would jump on a branch and start getting close to a stump-tail, say – you know, push him over. The stump-tail would say, “I’m not leaving, but I’m not fighting back,” in monkey language, needless to say – and maybe hand the finger over to be bitten, but not abandon its position. So their nonviolent resistance work in the individual encounters. Fact Number 1.

Fact Number 2 now. Now get this – within a fairly short period of time the rhesus monkeys started to adapt the more peaceable culture of the stump-tails. Nobody had predicted that, just as nobody could have predicted that the children in the Davitz Experiment would be more cooperative as a result of their being terribly frustrated. So that’s two astounding serendipitous discoveries.

The third one, I think, is maybe in a way, the one that’s most hopeful – hopeful or all – and that is that after they took the stump-tails out and expected the rhesus to go back to their bad old ways, they didn’t. Having adopted a more peaceable culture, they liked it. They held onto it. They maintained it.

So ponder all of this and what it could mean for our own evolution and what practical insights it could give us to getting to a nonviolent future. Until next time, let’s joint the experiment.

[End of recording 00:03:17]

Daily Metta Jan 16

Hello everyone. We’re moving right along. It’s the Daily Metta for January 16th. What I’ve been emphasizing – and we haven’t moved very deeply into the book yet, but this is a very deep point. I’m emphasizing that violence is violence and nonviolence is nonviolence and getting absorbed in the particulars of a given situation isn’t necessarily going to help us resolve that situation or the others – the dots to which they are connected.

And I want to emphasize something else here that comes up in this particular section called the, “Search for Prevention.” And that is that since violence is violence and nonviolence is nonviolence, it affects all of us and we don’t need to be specialists. I hope I’ve made that clear. We don’t need to be specialists to be solving that problem. As I say in the book, “It doesn’t matter if we’re an activist who’s out there working for a whole career against an injustice – or injustice more generally – or we simply want to lead a more secure existence.” And that has become acutely more poignant since “Search” came out with this rash of massacres that are going on, to the extent that nobody can feel safe. In public, nobody can feel safe really, even just driving their car down the freeway.

So again, that shows another aspect of the universality of the problem, that we're all in this together and we can all work on it together from whatever perspective, whatever position we hold. Now I have a quote from an African statesman about a murder that took place in Natal, in South Africa, and he said, "Violence remains violence irrespective of motivation." What a useful corrective.

Think about that for a second. Every time you pick up a newspaper and it's reporting about a crime – and, of course, every time you pick one up it is reporting about crimes – what is the last sentence of almost all those reports? And that is, "Police are still searching for a motive." But what they're searching for is not really the underlying driving dynamic - the search for dignity, the sense of separateness. They're not asking those questions. They're looking for the particular triggers in that particular case.

So there again, it's a very useful corrective and I hope to continue this conversation with you shortly. In the meantime, once again, we're all being invited to join the experiment.

[End of recording 00:03:05]

Daily Metta Jan 17

Hi. It's your Daily Metta for January 17th. Stephanie has just pointed to me that I passed over something in the preceding pages which is really quite significant. So let me read the line that I skipped. I said, "We are going to have to change our way of thinking. We have to slow down our initial reactions when we hear about some form of violence. Not be any means the same thing as losing the intensity of our feelings about the problem, but on the contrary, in order to convert those valuable feelings from fear, panic, or resentment, into determination."

Converting our feelings from a negative to a positive, which I think is exactly what the possibility that that Davitz study shows up and that the rhesus and stump-tail studies confirm, that fear and anger which left to their own devices, are such destructive forms of energy. Both in our own psychic make-up and in their effects on those around us. And there's just abundant evidence of that now, scientifically - if it were not already clear - that they are ultimately forms of energy.

In other words, hate. This is kind of what we've been leading up to. Hate is not primarily hate. It's primarily energy that's gotten pushed through a distorted mirror. And that's where the distorted mirror of our culture and our mass media are doing us such an extreme disservice. They're carving a channel so that the energies that come up in our psyche tend to run in those separative, destructive, directions. And you may remember one of the quotes from Mahatma Gandhi that we've thought is so important, then was used in the Daily Metta last year, of course, that is, "That I have learned through bitter experience the one supreme lesson – to conserve my anger. And just as steam conserved can be turned into power." So anger conserved can be turned into an energy that can change the world.

So we've been seeing glimpses of that in the discussions that we've had up to now and we're going to be seeing more glimpses of it as we go forward. And now I think we're going to be moving

from these kind of distressing examples, to look at some more positive cases, how nonviolence did work, and why that is the most useful thing to look at if we want to really understand what nonviolence is - and if we want to join the experiment. Thank you very much. Until next time...

[End of recording 00:03:17]

[Getting Beyond the Moral Framework Daily Metta January 23](#)

Greetings. It's January 23rd and if you are familiar with the book "Tuesday's with Morrie" these are "Weekends with 'Search for a Nonviolent Future.'" And this is Saturday, January 23rd. And we are allowing ourselves the luxury of moving very slowly through "Search," Chapter 1. And I've been talking about the way that people promote violence in the mass media and don't notice - they don't draw, connect the dots when violence occurs, when there's a suicide or a massacre or whatever. Nobody looks at the causal factor because, A - people don't believe that we actually have a mind that controls our behavior. That's part of our worldview right now - that was not in search by the way. But B - in the old model of the human being, all this violence just seems inevitable. And if it feels good and is profitable, go ahead and use it.

And I quote from Wendell Berry who is a very well known social commentator and farmer. And he says, "This is not childish, this idea that we are ignoring the violence, that when we create it. It's not even 'human weakness.' It is a kind of idiocy, but perhaps we will not cope with it and save ourselves until we regain the sense to call it, 'Evil.'" And my comment on this is - okay, this is possibly playing with fire because for one thing, the moral framework is, today, not very useful in analyzing and solving problems.

And secondly, it's all too easy to slide over from calling something evil to calling people evil. And where this has recently become poignant is in the case of terrorism. You know, as a friend of mine said, "Terrorism cannot be condoned, but it can be understood." If you say that terrorists are evil you put them beyond the pale of understanding. So let's look into that a little bit further. How exactly are we to understand violence on the one hand and why it is that, as a culture, we seem to be almost deliberately obtuse about the simple fact that we're causing it in our cultural background. Until tomorrow then, thank you very much.

[End of recording 00:02:58]

[Daily Metta January 24--Strength to Defy and Forgive-](#)

Hello everyone. It's January 24th and this is your Daily Metta for the weekend. We are going through "Search for a Nonviolent Future." And with your permission I'd actually like to go back a step. I want to talk a little bit about the point I was making with the personality of Nelson Mandela who at that time was still alive and still President of South Africa. The point that I made was he had this very strong ability to defy prison authority which was quite unusual -took a great deal of courage.

And then when he was out of prison 25 years later he had the strength of character to step up to his life-long enemy, F.W. de Klerk and shake his hand and say, "I am proud to shake your hand."

Let us go forward together.” Now “Time Magazine” said that that strength that he had to defy the warden who was trying to humiliate him was, “Inconceivable.” And I say, “Yeah, it is inconceivable in the old story where everybody is aware only of their self. Their sense of self ends with the tip of their nose and they don’t have a rapport with other people.”

But actually this very week I was again interviewing Marco Iacoboni, the expert in mirror neurons. And it’s actually getting hard and harder for science to say where my self leaves off and your self – self of other people begins. And I did make the point that the strength to defy and the strength to forgive are part of a single emotional package which makes a person capable of nonviolence.

And Gandhi always said that he can make a nonviolent person out of a violent person. He cannot make a nonviolent person out of a coward. So it’s maybe not a little bit – maybe not quite intuitive, but I think we can start to grasp that the ability to resist, noncooperate with evil, even at some risk to ourselves, and the ability to cooperate with good – again, when we need to go against our own emotional inclinations – are part of the same capacity. And that’s what makes us human and that’s what makes us nonviolent.

So Gandhi went on to specify – and again, this is something not in “Search.” He went onto specify you have the capacity for violence in order to be made into a nonviolent person. Not the will, not the will to be violent, that of course, you completely set aside. So once again, thank you for joining us. We are very much enjoying the feedback and the comments we’re getting from you and using them to shape these discussions. So please keep them coming and as our man, Mahatma Gandhi would say, “You are all welcome to join the experiment.” Thanks very much.

[End of recording 00:03:32]

[A Life-Affirming Orientation Daily Metta January 30](#)

Hello everyone. It’s January 30th. It is, as a matter-of-fact, the 68th Anniversary of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi and so today starts the Season of Nonviolence which will run until, I think, April – with the assassination of Martin Luther King. We’re still talking about the first chapter in “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” And I have to say, I’m kind of enjoying this. And in this chapter there’s a quote from a young man, which I want to read to you. It’s more or less addressed to President Clinton.

“In my opinion,” this teenager said, “many young people who smoke and say they don’t know why are subconsciously choosing death. So telling them over and over that smoking will kill them is not the answer. If the president is serious, he’s got to find ways to help them imagine a future.” I didn’t mention it in “Search” but I was remembering an experiment where some school children were asked to depict the future. So they drew these futuristic cities and they said, “How many of you would like to live in this kind of future?” And virtually none of them did. And then they were asked what can you do to change it? And they virtually [all] said, “Nothing.”

So it’s this demoralization which some people have traced to WWI and WWII which has led to an unconscious death wish and, you know, Albert Szent-Györgyi, the Nobel Prize biologist, in his book, “The Crazy Ape,” he wrote, “A society which is death oriented is difficult to save.” So that’s our task. We have to rescue our society from that orientation, give it something to live for. And that’s why the rest of this chapter is about the discovery of life’s purpose. Since writing

“Search” it’s become even clearer and clearer to me that nonviolence is at the center of that purpose.

It’s through discovering our capacity for nonviolence. That means our capacity to offer it and our capacity to respond when it’s offered that we’re discovering something that is absolutely fundamental about human nature. So how to develop it in ourselves and use it as a basis for reimagining social institutions. That’s the job. It’s a big job. But as Mahatma Gandhi would say, “If it seems like an attractive job to you, we are all invited to join the experiment.” Thanks very much.

[End of recording 00:03:01]

[Discovering Nonviolence, Discovering Ourselves--Daily Metta January 31](#)

Hello everyone. It’s the last day of January – January 31st. We’re, as I mentioned, launching into the season of nonviolence. Before we quite leave the topic that I was discussing with you last time I want to talk about that quote from Houston Smith – a very dear friend of ours, very effective religion scholar. He said some years ago, “For our culture as a whole, nothing is going to happen until we figure out who we are,” talking about the fact that we have no agreed definition of human nature.

And that reminded me of a quote from G.K. Chesterton. Someone said to Chesterton, “Isn’t in terrible, G.K.C., if people don’t believe in God they won’t have anything to believe in.” And he said, “It’s much worse than that. If they don’t believe in God, they’ll believe in anything.” And that’s kind of what’s happened to us. We’ve taken up a belief in ourselves as a machine, which is the point that I make with that scientific article that I talk about.

So I want to add a dimension to what we said last time. Last time I was talking about discovering our purpose in life and our capacity for nonviolence, when you stop to think about it, if we’re machines, we have no capacity for violence or nonviolence. And so we are really limited in our ability to grasp what nonviolence is by the limitations on our image of who we are. So those two things are going to be building up simultaneously as we move through the book.

In the next chapter I start talking about some of the marvelous episodes that have happened in the history of nonviolence. And we’ll be adding to that – things that have happened since “Search” came out. And so that should be a much more upbeat and encouraging exercise and all the more reason to, as Mahatma Gandhi would say, “Join the experiment.” Thanks very much.

[End of recording 00:02:24]

[She saved her friend s life--Daily Metta February 6](#)

Greetings everyone. It’s Saturday, February 6th. We’re continuing to go through “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” And we’re up to the point where I tell the story of Karen Ridd. I’m subsequently met Karen. She’s a wonderful person and this did happen pretty much as I

described it and I hope you will be reading it in this opening chapter of “Search for a Nonviolent Future.”

She was arrested in El Salvador with a friend. And to make a long story short, she was freed because she’s from Canada and the Canadian Embassy got her released. She walked out of these barracks where they were threatened with torture and every imaginable thing. But on the way out of the barracks she saw her friend out of the corner of her eye and she said later, “It was a very picture of dehumanization. Marcella was handcuffed to a chair, pushed facing into the wall, bandaged, etc.”

And somehow that touched Karen so deeply. She didn’t want to abandon her friend. So she goes back in and, again, long story short, after a while, the soldiers released her and Marcella. So it’s – on one level, again, it’s a story how self sacrifice in a noble cause, and the ability to master one’s fear turns that fear into a creative force that overcomes the sacrifice so that, in a way, she operated against her instinct for “self-preservation” and actually ended up preserving herself and her friend.

And the way she did it was to touch on that element of humanization, of humanity, that was still resident in those soldiers, even though it was not to where you’d notice it. So this is an important thing that nonviolent actors have to do. They have to find the residual humanity in the opponent and awaken it through their own act of self-sacrifice. In her case it’s through this marvelous equation where she says to them, “You know what it’s like to lose a *compañero*,” so they could make this equation in their mind, “Us to our *compañeros* is Karen to her *compañera*.” So the same feeling that they have for their *compañero* they now transfer to Karen. They have empathy for the both of them through that human bond that they share with one another. And it awakens them and they are released.

So when I wrote “Search” I did not know yet about mirrored neurons. So in an appropriate time we’ll be talking about that too. These are the neural pathways by which my action of overcoming self, pushing back against that impulse to save myself at any cost actually triggers a comparable response in the brain of anybody watching me. But that’s hold that for another time and go on tomorrow to talk about our working definition of violence. And I hope that you are being intrigued. As Mahatma Gandhi said, “To join the experiment.” Thank you.

[End of recording 00:03:47]

Getting beyond crisis-mode [Daily Metta February 7](#)

Hello everyone. It’s Sunday, December 7th, and thanks to the patience of Fancy, our dog who’s on the couch there, I’m moving forward in “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” I wanted to comment though on one statement that I made about the Karen Ridd story because I said, “In our usual way of thinking, we have no way of understanding,” what I just explained about the touching of the humanization,” and so forth. And of what I now call our, “Usual way of thinking,” is usually referred to today as, “The Old Story.”

The framework, the worldview through which we see things. And I was just reading an article by Tom Englehardt who was part of the massive public protests against the impending Iraq War in 2003. And he points out that those who are protesting the way were exactly right. They could have saved trillions of dollars, millions of lives, gotten us out of this dreadful fear of terrorism that we're facing now. But the people who were wrong about the war are being listened to and they're still calling the policies. And the people who were right, are absolutely ignored. He said, "We're being written out of history."

And that's because of that worldview, that paradigm that is a way that we see the world, it's the window through which – the lens through which we see the world around us. It screens out the power of nonviolence and accepts only the pseudo-power of violence. One of the results of that is that we're always judging things in terms of very short-term results. And therefore, we're lurching from crisis to crisis.

So we're going to talk a little bit about what we mean by violence, that it is a human phenomenon that Fancy back there may chase rabbits and even do very unpleasant things to them, but I wouldn't call that an act of violence because she doesn't have a choice. It's her instinct. And violence means to bear in – the violara, the Latin word that it comes from means, "To bear in on something with force." And later definition in Classical Latin of the word "Violara" was to insult, damage, or violate.

So violence, by definition, violates something that could be. And only human beings have the capacity for true violence in that sense. Only we can be violent because only we can be nonviolent. So those are the thoughts and definitions I want to leave with you this weekend. I hope that you're reading along with me through "Search for a Nonviolent Future" and that you are enjoying it. And if you come up with questions before, or during, or after the part that I'm talking about, please let us know. We've been enjoying your comments. And until next weekend, if you have found this of any interest, you are invited to join the experiment. Thank you.

[End of recording 00:03:32]

[Empathy tells us something about nonviolence--Daily Metta](#)

Hello everyone. It's time to take another look at "Search for a Nonviolent Future." It's February 13th, 2016. We were up to Page – approximately – 35. We are taking our time with this book and I hope you're finding that it's rich enough. I was making the point that people would be likely to refrain from harming others if they knew that in so doing they were harming themselves. So let me expand on that a little bit because this is a beautiful example of how modern science is offering confirmation to what was said thousands and thousands of years ago in the wisdom tradition – the tradition of great sages.

And I've just been using a passage right now in my meditation which is from the Buddha, from the Dhammapada and he says, "If you hurt another person it's like throwing sand into the wind. It's going to come back and hit you." Well, now, of course, we have very concrete confirmation of this if we needed it – and I guess some of us do. From science, in the form, specifically, that

neuroscientists have discovered which is what they call, “Mirror neurons.” Such that if I were to inflict pain on another creature, the suffering of that creature has actually been represented in my nervous system.

So I may not be consciously aware that I’m suffering because my attention is on something else. Maybe I’m even finding this exciting if I’ve gotten that dehumanized. But it is registering in my being. And the difference now, of course, is some people would say that it’s the nervous system that creates the empathy whereas I am firmly convinced that it’s the empathy that causes the nervous system to grow in order to sustain and record those responses.

And in fact, recently I visited, again, a friend of mine in UCLA who studies mirrored neurons, and learned from him that mirror – the brain can make mirrored neurons. So when you feel more empathetic the plasticity of the brain is such that you create pathways to reflect that fellow suffering – which is such an important part of our being. So I’m going to wrap this up now and the next – tomorrow what we’ll be discussing are these different lenses or viewpoints to take on what violence is. And having dealt with that a day or two, we will go onto to really finally talking about what is nonviolence. And let me close by inviting you once again to join the experiment.

[End of recording 00:03:10]

[Three Lenses for Understanding Violence--Daily Metta \[February 14\]](#)

Hello again everyone and happy Valentine’s Day. Very appropriate day to be talking about nonviolence which Martin Luther King called, “Love in action.” And that’s maybe something we can talk about later on. But in this next section of “Search for a Nonviolent Future” I have a section called, “Three Lenses,” where I talk about three different models or viewpoints through which we can look at violence.

And I discuss a case where different groups of people in the same community were using totally different lenses. One moral and the other political and therefore they could not communicate and they couldn’t resolve the problem for that reason. So this is an early experiment in what George Lakoff has called, “Framing,” and what we now refer to as, “The New Story.” We’ll be discussing those things.

But as I said, there are three lenses, if you will, through which we can look upon violence. The first lens, which I’ve already dismissed a few days ago, is to think of it as an immoral act. The trouble with that lens is the meaning of moral, the meaning of evil has become very, very unclear and unagreed upon. So it leaves you with really no handle on the harm that violence causes and that makes you vulnerable to be so desensitized that you then consider violence entertaining.

So we don’t want to use that lens. The next one, which is much better, much more helpful, is called, “The Medical Model,” where you look upon violence as a kind of illness which would go pretty well with the Buddha’s teaching. He would call it, “Roga,” or a kind of illness of the mind. It’s a perfectly useful model. But I’m going to say that the most useful one is one we haven’t

really started using yet. And that is the educational model, the one in which we believe that in a very deep sense, if I can create an act – commit an act of violence or even have a violent thought, it's because of I'm ignorant of what that violence actually is doing to me and doing to everyone else.

And I think I mentioned in that section that someone once asked me to define violence, say, "What's the cause of violence?" And I said, "A failure of the imagination." Because we need our imaginative faculties sometimes to understand the dynamics of what we are doing to a system, to ourselves, and to others. And next time we speak I will be talking to about a remarkable episode that took place in a hospital in Los Angeles just before the first edition of "Search for a Nonviolent Future" came out." The episode of Nurse Joan Black and the emergency room.

But for now I hope you are finding this useful. From your comments, it seems that probably people are, so I will invite us, once again, to join the experiment. Thank you.

[End of recording 00:03:33]

[Power of Vulnerability--Daily Metta February 21](#)

We're reading "Search for a Nonviolent Future." We're up to an anecdote that was related to me by a friend who was in sub-Saharan Africa – this was quite a while ago – and had the opportunity to talk to a large group of village women. And he said to them, "How many of you here have ever practiced or experienced nonviolence?" And he got the same reaction there that we would have with an audience here, which is nobody knew what he was talking about.

So he was searching around for a way that he could express it, that they would be able to relate to. And what he came up with was, "How many of you have ever used a moral force against a physical threat?" And immediately a bunch of people put their hands up. And he called on one woman to tell her story. And she said, "I was victimized by my husband. He was quite unkind. He used to beat me quite a bit. And one day he was doing it and, I don't know, something inside me snapped and I just got up and I looked him right in the eye and I said, "Why don't you just kill me and get it over with." And to my surprise he stopped and has never hit me since."

So I think this story illustrates several things about nonviolence. One, nobody knows the name. Two, everybody is experiencing nonviolence, but because they don't have a name for it, it doesn't stick and you can't learn from it and build on your own experiences. And three, she spontaneously practiced what we would call today, "The power of vulnerability." That is quite often one of the ways you reverse you violent dynamic, is instead of trying to fend it off, you in a way, go with it and say, "Go ahead. Do your worst." And that often, if you do it right, in the right circumstances, it changes the dynamic so that you rescue the person from being violent and you rescue yourself from being victimized.

So on that other point of rescuing a person from being violent, I did mention in this chapter something called, "Perpetration Induced Traumatic Stress," and let's talk about that a little more next time. And in the meantime, come on and join the experiment. Thank you very much.

[End of recording 00:02:49]

Are we ignoring the lessons of nonviolence--Daily Metta February 20

And this your Daily Metta for today. Gosh, so many things have been started up already. We could be talking about a lot of different things. But I want to use the occasion to mention things that I've learned since the book – or parallels that have happened since the book – which is almost 15 years ago now. And in the book I tell a story about a nurse in an E.R. in Los Angeles, Nurse Joan Black. A deranged woman runs into the E.R. with a gun. And Nurse Black walks over to her, puts her hand on the hand with the gun, keeps it down. And starts saying to her things like, "You're going to be all right. We all have these difficulties. I've had some too." And in the end she calms the woman down and gets her to relinquish the gun and nobody gets hurt.

And very recently there was a much more dramatic case of the same thing with a woman named Antoinette Tuff who was the accountant – the bookkeeper in a very large school in Decatur, Georgia. And there were 825 students in the school. A young guy comes in, he's bipolar, off his medicine. And this time he doesn't have little revolver like the woman in the E.R., he has an assault rifle with a backpack full of ammunition and he says, "Everybody is going to die."

And she does pretty much the same thing. She says, "You're going to be all right, honey. I love you. I have some troubles too. Do you want to hear about my divorce?" And in the end, she saves 825 children. So it's exactly the same dynamic. And in both cases we see several things in common. For one, these women, without being consciously aware of it are using a pattern that was developed in the ancient world. You had Greek and Roman writers, thousands of years ago, telling you how to buck up a person who's depressed or talk down a person who's agitated. And they go through certain steps and these women are following those steps. And I outline some of them in "Search."

The second thing they have in common is that the press does not get it. In the case of Joan Black they got her to say, "That was the stupidest thing I ever did." Whereas in reality, it was the most heroic. And in the case of Antoinette Tuff, even though they gave her a lot of courage and they called her a hero, one of the networks pulled the program – pulled the coverage very quickly because, "Nobody got killed." So there's the whole point was that nobody got killed. But they felt that it was newsworthy for that reason.

And so looking at the bigger picture, my point then, and it's reinforced now with the second episode, is that we are seeing nonviolence working all the time and we're not getting it. We are ignoring the lesson. And the reason for that is that we don't have the pattern – the model – built into our mind so that we can recognize what these people did and how it works. So we say, "Whew, she was lucky. She was dumb. That was a fluke." And we write it off and we go back to the same old-same old.

Now just one other thing I'll mention. In the case of Antoinette Tuff, it was so obvious. You had all this elaborate equipment to protect the school. You had this electric gate that wouldn't let people in. So the would-be killer walked right in right behind a teacher. And the SWAT team – the SWAT team came and almost ruined everything. So in both cases you have an elaborate mechanical based system that failed and a human being that succeeded. And we need somehow to rebuild our model of the world and who we are so that we can understand what that

human potential is and develop it. Until tomorrow then. If you like what you're hearing, you are invited to join the experiment.

[End of recording 00:04:41]

[Seeing the Shadow Side Daily Metta February 27](#)

Hi, we're ready for another Daily Metta, continuing our way through "Search for a Nonviolent Future." We've talked about the etymology and the definition of nonviolence. I want to spend a little bit of time today on one of its major misconceptions and a famous talk that was given by a friend of the Indians in 1906 when the Satyagraha campaign had been started, but they didn't have the name for it yet. That name actually only came about in 1908.

And this well-meaning British person got up at a meeting and addressed the crowd and said, "The Transvaal Indians have had recourse to passive resistance when all other means of securing redress prove to be of no avail." Now that is an important part and that's true. You always try communicating first. You try conversation first, even if you think that your opponent is very unlikely to listen to you. It's important to have made that address, to have aroused in the opponent the idea of his possible communication on the verbal level. So that part's great.

But then Hoskins goes on to say, "Numerically, they are only a few. They are weak and have no arms. Therefore, they have taken to passive resistance which is the weapon of the weak." Now this is the beginning of Gandhi's career. But if you know Gandhi you will not be surprised to hear that he practically jumped out of his seat when he heard that. He was deeply convinced that what they were doing was, A – not passive resistance. Passive resistance was being done by the suffragettes in the U.K. and if you happen to have seen the recent film, you know that that was not a nonviolent movement. It eschewed violence when they thought it wouldn't work.

But the main part is that there's this complete reversal of expectations. It's a complete reversal of our world picture and our image of ourselves to think that nonviolence is the weapon of the weak when, in fact, it's the weapon of the very, very strong. So let's talk a little bit more about that next time. And I hope that you are all joining the experiment in your own way. Thank you.

[End of recording 00:02:48]

[Awakening Compassion Daily Metta February 28](#)

Hello again, this is our next episode of Daily Metta. Thank you for joining us once again. And we're really just going almost page by page through "Search for a Nonviolent Future." I haven't reread the book myself for a quite a while and I'm really quite pleased how much it puts together – and I haven't had a chance or a reason to turn my back on any of the theoretical points.

I said a while back that we would talk about Perpetration Induced Traumatic Stress. This is a concept that came up since the writing of "Search." I just barely mentioned it there. It is the idea that when we injure another person we feel that injury. Now this is something that's been documented and demonstrated scientifically by neuroscientists very, very recently. And it is one of the major elements that a nonviolent actor can appeal to, that you know that the other person

really doesn't want to hurt you, it changes your opinion of who they are and it allows you to mirror that more empathic, more sensitive person.

I myself remember being on campus one time threatened by four people who, you know, could have made short work of me. I had enough presence of mind to probably repeat my mantra and just walk through them without engaging. Happened to look back – they were under a street light. And I could see from their body language that they were very relieved. They didn't want to do that violence. It was social forces and conditioning that had pushed them into it.

So I just will mention that if you take a look at the quote from Franz De Waal on the bottom of Page 48, it tells us something about why we haven't realized how powerful nonviolence is. We haven't realized the two things that I point out in this section of the book. That A – it's a natural endowment. Everyone of us has this capacity for nonviolence within us. And B – it's very effective. We're going to talk more about that next weekend because, again, scientific evidence has finally come in to validate the claim that nonviolence is real and more powerful than violence. Thank you very much. See you next time.

[End of recording 00:03:02]

[Power is of Two Kinds Daily Metta](#)

Hello again everyone. This “Search for a Nonviolent Future coming to you from the Metta Center. We're working our way through this book. And I was commenting last time on a long quotation from Marshall Frady, the Southern writer who writes for the New Yorker. And this is from an article on Jesse Jackson about Martin Luther King and I think it encapsulates what nonviolence can do. And I ended on the phrase that, “An oppressor can be momentarily reborn as a human being.”

I don't know how to what extent Marshall Frady was aware of the significance of what he said, but this is the theme that I'm going to be emphasizing throughout and probably even more than when I wrote “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” In other words, the idea that in some way nonviolence is who we are. Nonviolence is the core of human nature. It's not just the mode of responding. It's a mode of being. And that, in a way, nonviolence is our destiny and we will never really truly realize who we are as human beings, as a race and as individuals until we learn that we are capable of responding to nonviolence when it's offered to us.

We're capable of learning how to offer it to others, and that that is the way that the world is going to go forward. And the human beings are going to grow to their highest potential. But because I'll be coming back to that again and again, I want to leave that idea in your minds right now and go on to discuss an accord of Gandhi's where he says quite simply – and he has a tendency to be simple – very direct. He says, “Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by fear of punishment and the other by acts of love.”

Now if you stop and think that we exist in a force field, in an energetic field, different kinds of forces are operating in that field, but in human terms, they can always be reduced to one of two forces. The ancient Jewish scholars and sages talked about *yetzer hara* and *yetzer hatov*. There is

a destructive urge and there's a constructive urge. Nonviolence, of course, is a way of employing the constructive urge. Violence is a way of employing the destructive urge.

And recently, long after writing "Search for a Nonviolent Future" I ran across an extremely interesting quote by a former Head of Shin Bet, the Israeli security agency who said that because of the militarism we are winning every battle and going on to lose the war. That quote struck me forcibly because a year or two earlier I had read a quote by one of the biographers of Mahatma Gandhi who said, "Nonviolence is the kind of thing where you can lose every battle and go on to win to the war." The exact opposite of violence. Because in violence you can, sometimes, get a short-term victory, but you will always get a long-term defeat.

In nonviolence you can, sometimes, get a short-term victory. There are actually – more often than not – if you do it correctly, very often. But even if you fail at your immediate goal in nonviolence, you will go on to accomplish a long-term result. And that explains why in trying to solve every problem through violence – domestic, international – we just keep lurching from crisis to crisis and things get worse. And again, recently, there has been a study showing that nonviolent insurrections lead to democracy and democratic freedoms more often than violent ones, even when the nonviolent ones fail.

That is the movement has expended itself. The same dictator is still there. Your friends are all in jail. Maybe you're in there with them, at best. And yet, the country is going to move a little bit towards democratic freedoms. Whereas you can violently overthrow a regime – and you don't need to hear me reciting all the examples of this. And yet, the country deteriorates into further violence. And more than often than not, you just have another dictator come and take his place.

So on this encouraging thought that you really cannot lose with nonviolence, except in the very short-term, we'll end it up for now and I'll go onto to talk some of the new developments in science and why it has been so difficult for us to see nonviolence even though it is ubiquitous. Until next week.

[End of recording 00:05:34]

[On humiliation and nonviolence](#) [Daily Metta](#)

Greetings everyone. And glad you could join us again for another episode of Daily Metta. We are going through "Search for a Nonviolent Future." We've reached page 52. So we're about 1/6th of the way through the book. And I have to say I am – you know, sometimes when you look back at things that you've written you're kind of appalled. That's what happened when I first read my own dissertation. But I am encouraged by the way this book worked.

And I talk about the fact that Karen Ridd and the episode we discussed last time, was able to accomplish something which the entire government of Canada and Columbia were not able to accomplish. And that gives us a sense of how much power nonviolence actually has when it's done correctly. Now this is not something that I go onto say that you can learn through intellect the way we learn other subjects. But there is a cognitive component to it and it helps very much to know what the basic principles of nonviolence are.

I always like to think of a literary scholar who once said – a literary critic who said, “The job of critic is to fix impressions by naming them.” And in a sense, that’s what “Search for Nonviolent Future does.” We’ve all experienced the impact of nonviolence on ourselves and on the people to whom we offer it. But because we didn’t have a name for it, it flits by and we don’t learn anything. We don’t go forward. We can’t build on our own experiences.

And then I talk about a marvelous description of Martin Luther King that was written by Marshall Frady and this is Pages 52 and 53. And I’m going on the assumption that you people have access to the book and you’re reading along with me. You can get it from us or a bookstore or online. So I won’t read the whole thing. It’s a longish quote, but the axiom of the high points that I want to comment on today.

“We tend to feel that what happens to our fellow human beings, in some way, also happens to us.” Now “In some way” can now be translated to the mirrored neurons in our nervous system. “So that no man can continue to debase or abuse another human being without eventually feeling it himself, at least some dull answering, hurt and stir of shame.” Now I want to talk about that word “Shame” a little bit.

There is a difference – qualitative difference between shame and humiliation – at least as used by nonviolence people. And shame is something that can be very useful. Humiliation, never. Shame is where you’re ashamed of something that you did because it’s not worthy of you. Humiliation is where you feel humiliated by what you did because you feel that it does represent who you are. We never want to humiliate another person in nonviolence and we never want to allow another person to humiliate us.

So again, shame, which can be useful to awaken an opponent is where you’re ashamed of something you did because it is not worthy of you. It does not reflect who you are. Humiliation is where you feel embarrassment about something you did because it does show who you are. So that’s why when we work with prisoners, for example, we often say to them, “You are not the worst thing that you ever did.” That’s the first step in rehabilitating a person.

And I wanted to share an anecdote. Somebody wrote to Gandhi and said, “A bully slapped me. I felt humiliated. I didn’t do anything. Aren’t you proud of me?” And Gandhi said, “I am not. You should have slapped him back.” Believe it or not, Gandhi said that. And he went onto explain, “Why did you feel humiliated? It was the bully’s problem. Not yours.” So once you feel humiliated you are accepting human degradation to that extent. And this is universal. If I accept degradation in myself, I’m implying that you also can be degraded to that extent. So I should never accept it when it’s offered to me and I should never, never use it as a mechanism of trying to affect change because what I would be doing, if it “works” I would be getting change in the short-term, but degradation in the long-term.

So that’s what I wanted to say about this particular topic that you can awaken a stirring of shame in another person and that often seems to happen when we accept pain, suffering, inconvenience of some kind without responding in kind. Because if we respond in kind, either through aversion or through reaction, trying to hurt the other person back or running away, we are accepting the

premise that one human being can shame another. Once we step above that, we show the other person what he or she or they is doing. And that's how we awaken them through nonviolence.

So Frady goes on to say, "Therefore, in the catharsis," good term, "of a live confrontation with wrong, when an oppressor's violence is met with a forgiving love," he's a beautiful writer, "an oppressor's violence is met with a forgiving love, he can be vitally touched and even momentarily reborn as a human being," and so forth. So I want to comment a little bit more on that in our next conversation. But we are now, as I say, on Pages 52 and 53 of "Search for Nonviolent Future." Until next time.

[End of recording 00:06:40]

[Nature, Nurture and Nonviolence Daily Metta](#)

So hello everyone. Here we are again - you, me, and "Search for a Nonviolent Future." We're on Page 55. You know, when I was teaching nonviolence at the University of California at Berkeley, all of my friends in the movement had the same experience. People used to say, "Well, I really like this idea, but..." And then they'd have one or two objections every time. They would either say, "It's not human nature," or they would say, "I read history so I know that human beings do nothing but fight each other."

So that was then. Now I'm happy to say both of these fields are changing. We'll be talking from time to time about some of the changes in science - which are really quite spectacular. There are changes in the discovery of history which are not as spectacular, perhaps. But then as we begin to get the ability to recognize nonviolent episodes when we see them, they become part of the media. Today, it's mostly in the alternative media, but it's slowly feeding into the stream that becomes the "news" which goes onto to become the history.

So even if you cannot find nonviolence in "history" you can go out and learn it from your own experiences and from alternative sources. But it's good to know that this problem has been with us for quite a while. In 1909, in his famous manifesto, "*Hind Swaraj*" or "Indian Home Rule," which incidentally a friend of ours in India today is using to convert people to Gandhian nonviolence in Jammu and Kashmir. So having a tremendous potential impact on the tension between India and Pakistan and therefore, on the whole world. So it shows you how influential this document is and I recommend it for everyone - "*Hind Swaraj*" or "Indian Home Rule."

Gandhi wrote it in one go on-board ship heading back from London to India. One of the things he has to address right away is this problem. And he says, "The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world," and women, I might add, "Shows that it," the world," is based not on the force of arms, but on the force of truth or love." You remember last time we talked about the two forces. Most of human interaction is based on the force that we're now calling, "Nonviolence." *Yetzer tov*, or the good urge, or what St. Augustine called, "The city of God, the awareness of a higher vision in which we are all one."

Little quarrels of millions of families in their daily lives disappear before the exercise of this force. And he goes onto to say when you have a quarrel, let's say between two brothers and they

make up, it's not news. Nothing happened. Because we're not calibrated to see that something really wonderful happened, something that we can build into a whole institution.

So this is also been recognized in other fields. For example, on Page 56 on the bottom there's a very interesting quote from someone who we've interviewed now a couple of times, a primatologist by the name of Franz de Waal who – and it would be fascinating to know how this happened in him. He was watching a group of chimpanzees as a scientist. They were having a quarrel which is not uncommon among chimpanzees, just as it is not uncommon among certain other two-legged primates.

And then they stopped. They stopped quarreling. They started grooming each other. They reestablished their pecking order hierarchy. And de Waal is watching all of this and he says, “You know, that's interesting. Fires start and then fires go out.” Now think of it in terms of what Gandhi just said. If a fire started and nothing would ever put it out, the world would have burned to an ash a long time ago. If there was no way of stopping quarrels we would not be here.

So needless to say, it would be extremely useful to know how “fires” stop, how quarrels are ended. And de Waal noticed this right away and he said, “Hmm, you know, this is interesting.” And like a good scientist he said, “I'll go and look up the literature on reconciliation. And guess what he found? I'm waiting for you guess. And you're right. He found absolutely nothing. Shelves and shelves on how chimpanzees fight or any other species fights, but at that point in time, absolutely nothing about how they stop fighting.

And myself had once seen a film of chimpanzees fighting and the narrator said, “The animals are angry. They are fighting each other.” A few minutes later, as it happened, they were grooming and they were not fighting anymore. And the narrator said, “They are exhibiting affectionate behavior.” In other words, anger is real, affection is not - in our worldview. So this is what we see and nonviolence is what we don't see. So de Waal, among others, has played a really significant role in refocusing science. And we can no longer say with the backing of science that nonviolence is not human nature.

The most accurate thing we can say is that in our nature we are capable of both violence and nonviolence. Which one gets expressed is a matter of nurture, not nature. It's what images we've been exposed to and I have a lot to say about that and what ideas we have in our mind and what circumstances we find ourselves in and we thrust ourselves into.

So the same is true for history and for science, that fortunately, we live in a period now where both of these two tremendous fields are changing to the extent that nonviolence is being recognized as a reality. And at the same time we're becoming aware that human beings exist in a field of forces. They are not just physical objects. We are acted upon mentally, spiritually, emotionally, by ambient forces.

Knowing all this and knowing that ultimately there are two such forces on the human level – violence and nonviolence – enables us to understand much more easily what's going on in our own life, and the lives of those around us. So more of the same next time we speak. Thanks very much.

[End of recording 00:07:45]

Transforming Anger into Nonviolent Power Daily Metta

Greetings everyone. We are moving along here. We are now starting Chapter 3 of “Search for a Nonviolent Future,” Page 60. We’re going to have to start planning our champagne party when we get to the end of the book and decide what to do next. But I start this chapter with an anecdote which happened in the life of my spiritual teacher, Eknath Easwaran when he was still back in India where he and a friend of his saw a caged bear. And you can come across these scenes in India today where bears or monkeys are mistreated and the friend was furious and he said he was going to go home and get his gun.

And Easwaran kind of – although he hadn’t really started meditating yet, he was still instinctively feeling that shooting the person to save a bear was not the equation. So he said, “Wait a minute, let’s see what I can do.” And he talked to the man and found out that he didn’t want to keep this bear in a small cage, but he couldn’t afford a larger one. Long story short, he managed to get a carpenter to build a bigger cage. The zookeeper or whatever you want to call that person was happy, the bear was happy, his friend was happy. All the people seeing this animal consciously or unconsciously were happier.

And I present this as a classic example of how nonviolence is sometimes what an African American activist recently called, “A Way out of No Way.” We tend to see situations, dilemmas in terms of fight or flight. Both of them are traps. Nonviolence is neither fight in the sense that you are not reflecting the suffering back on the opponent. They are not flight in the sense you are not complying with their unjust requests. You are not even complying with their implicit emotional demand that you fear them or get angry at them which sometimes feeds into their cycle. It’s just what they want.

So between your emotional flight from the situation or you’re fighting back, is the way of creative nonviolence. And now to talk about what is the dynamic there, what is the driving force? It turns out that both Gandhi and King were very articulate on this point. You’ll remember Gandhi said, “I have learned through bitter experience the one supreme example to conserve my anger. And just as steamed conserved can be turned into energy, so anger conserved can be turned into a force to change the world.

Likewise – and I don’t know whether he read this or not in Gandhi, but Martin Luther King was challenged one time that his movement had caused a lot of anger. We’ll talk about that. At some he actually unleashed some frustration, but he said, “We did lead to outbursts of anger. We harnessed,” this is the key language here, “We harnessed anger under discipline for maximum effect.” And that’s the idea I would like to share with all of us who are frustrated and unhappy with the innumerable injustices in our world.

The question we have to face in ourselves is, very often, what am I going to do about this? Am I going to try to express my frustration or am I going to try to change the problem? I can express my frustration by beating up on the other person or by going out and holding a protest. And in a

funny I'm classifying that as not really the nonviolent response. The nonviolent response is going to say, "What's the cause of this situation? What is my leverage to do something about it?"

In the long course of "Search for a Nonviolent Future," that is what we are leading up to. We're exploring the dynamic to situate ourselves so we can comfortably understand the forces that we're dealing with and then talk about the institutions that are forming conduits – channels, for this force. That's what I invite you to join me for in our next discussions. Thanks very much.

[End of recording 00:05:01]

[A force from within Daily Metta](#)

Greetings everyone. Time for us to move on a little bit with our rereading of "Search for a Nonviolent Future." And today we come to what has always been, for me, one of the most compelling and illustrative moments – episodes, in the history of nonviolence. It takes place in Birmingham, Alabama in 1964 during the American Civil Rights Movement. Of course, when there was a march by mostly black marchers, it was part of voting rights campaign. And they unexpectedly found themselves blocked by police and firemen who were well supplied with their firehoses and so forth. And probably have seen that these things can really deliver a pretty devastating effect.

And one of the reasons that I'm so interested in this episode – there are several, actually, but possibly in the long run, the most important is that it does away definitively - if you think about it logically - with the argument that nonviolence is weak and it'll only work against weak opposition. That's a devastating argument if it were true. Fortunately, it's the reverse. The fact is, that early researchers into nonviolence – I'm thinking about the 1930's and people like Richard Gregg. They coined a term, "Moral jujitsu," because the idea was that the more power the opponent came at you with, the more you could use that power to reverse his or her position.

Again, you're not against the wellbeing of the person, but you can use his or her power to dislocate what he or she is trying to do. So in those days we called it, "Moral jujitsu." I guess people don't do jujitsu much anymore. Anyway, today, the more relevant term for it, the more current term for it is the paradox of repression, where the more an opponent tries to repress you, the less successful he or she is going to be. If for no other reason, because of the blowback of the moral repugnance that people develop about that repression. But there's a deeper dynamic reason for it too.

So what happens here is the marchers are suddenly blocked and it looks like they are thwarted and they do what they do in those situations. They kneel down on the hot sidewalk to pray and suddenly, as they're praying, we have this precious testimony from one of the participants. It is as they become, "Spiritually intoxicated." And I don't know exactly what that means, but I do know that it is very important for developing a nonviolent response.

So this is, again, another interesting thing about this is it is a group phenomenon. We're going to be talking later about how it also was from deeply within the individual person – an example of person power. But spontaneously, without anyone giving an order or direction, they got up and

they walked into those police and fireman. And the segregationist police commissioner who was there gave them the order twice, “Turn on the hoses. Turn on the hoses.” The firemen couldn’t do it. It’s as though their hands were frozen on the nozzle of their hoses. They couldn’t do it. They were repressed, as it were.

Gandhi will call this later, “Forcing their higher judgment to be free.” No one, again, explained this to them. It wasn’t a conscious decision that they made. But in the face of those marchers coming at them. They simply couldn’t not fire their hoses at the marchers. So both dimensions are interesting. How does this arise within the people in an event to which they had not prepared? And then how does it affect the other person, the opponent?

So in this little episode you see, as it were, a cameo of the entire story of nonviolence. At the time that I wrote the book I was describing this as, “A peak experience.” That was common language used for it in those days. I don’t know what people would call it today, but I think if we just let this thing sink in, it will help us to understand the dynamic of nonviolence. The rest will be just a question of how to build that out. Thanks for listening.

[End of recording 00:05:24]

Peak experience Daily Metta

Hello everyone. Back again with “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” And we’re still talking about what I called last time, “A peak experience,” because I think we can say a little bit more about it, what makes it, “A peak experience?” When you have that kind of change in your consciousness which is a kind of intense focus. And if you go to Page 65, down on the bottom, I quote somebody who was pretty badly beaten up during the bus freedom rides – the bus rides – it’s still in the Civil Rights Movement.

And he’s asked to comment about being beaten up. “Doesn’t it hurt?” And he said, “You feel the pain, but you don’t become bitter. You don’t become hostile. You sort of lose yourself. You become involved in the circumstances of others.” So I think this is a profound secret. That you rise above yourself. It doesn’t mean you’re not aware of the pain anymore, but it does mean that it is now in a context. You have some perspective. And that gives you an ability to endure it.

And right now we’re talking about physical pain, but this could also work for emotional pain.

It gives you the ability to endure it and when you endure it, it is transformed into a creative force. And that is what affects those police or those firemen or whoever it is on the other side of the hoses. And when this happens, it always gives you a deeper sense of meaning. And this is the precise opposite, that we have talked about earlier in the book, the discovery by my colleague and friend, Rachel McNair, Perpetration Induced Traumatic Stress. If those police and firemen that we were talking about yesterday actually injured the marchers, they would have been injuring themselves.

So when you use nonviolence – sorry. When you use violence to injure another person, you injure yourself. Conversely, you know, this is only good science, when you use nonviolence to

non-injure another person, you elevate yourself. You get a higher sense of meaning. You rise a little bit above your personal framework which is exactly what enabled Gandhi to make that tremendous change when he was thrown off the train in South Africa.

Remember instead of saying, “I got to get even with those people,” he said, “This is man’s inhumanity to man. And I’m going to see what I can do about it.” Very good. Well, I’ve been appreciating your comments on these little sessions and please keep them coming. We’d love to be in contact with you.

[End of recording 00:03:37]

Person Power Daily Metta

Greetings again everyone. It’s time for another three-way conversation between you, me and “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” We were talking about the transformation that enables a person to generate nonviolent power and that we could say something about how that happens. And I was about to say – and will say now – that there’s a rather interesting paradox which I was not aware of, I think, when I wrote these pages. The paradox is, on the one hand, in order for this peak experience, this generating of nonviolent power, to happen, you have to rise above yourself.

But on the other hand being nonviolent means being more of yourself, that the person, the individual, is never oppressed or deleted in nonviolence the way we often are in violence. To do violence you have to put on uniforms and follow orders and so on and so forth. Think of the way that a dictator tries to impose uniformity and obliterate individuality. They always do that. Diversity is anathema to dictators.

Well, nonviolence is the exact opposite. We want to bring out the person in his or her full personhood. And paradoxically, that happens when the person decides to rise above themselves and look down at their own private agenda. Now there’s a way to explain this paradox and that is that we are not the separate person that we think we are. So that this is “*Ubuntu*,” when we involve ourselves in the wellbeing of others positively, making a contribution to their wellbeing. We became more our self. Our real self is a self with others, not a self by ourselves.

And so I talk about a woman who was mugged, Eileen Egan and how she rose above personal vindictiveness and how beneficial that was for her. And then I talk about something that happened or something was noticed during the Philippine Uprising in 1986, which is – and now I’m quoting from one of the prominent religious figures who was very helpful in that movement. He said, “It was amazing. It was 2 million independent decisions. Each one said in his heart, “I will do this.” And they went out.”

Now this lead, eventually, for the Metta Center to coin the term, “Person Power,” because people had talked about – in fact, this revolution is called, “A People Power Revolution,” because of the power of the people versus the power of the state. But in looking to the roots of principled nonviolence, we always have to get down to the individual person. And therefore it is really person power because that change, that spiritual intoxication, it can overcome a group. But it has to happen inside the soul of the individual person.

So again, that's an interesting slant on our paradox. More next time as we continue and wrap up the whole idea of what elicits nonviolent power from an individual. Until then.

[End of recording 00:04:02]

The High of Nonviolence Daily Metta

Hello again everyone. And I hope you agree with me that in our study of “Search for a Nonviolent Future” I feel that we're really getting down right now into the heart of nonviolence. And it's a very useful thing. I want to emphasize that often practitioners say that the peak experience, as I've been referring to it, the feeling of transcending your individual concerns and having a role to play, meaningful role in fixing things, changing society for the better, that that feeling actually is addictive.

Solange Muller, who is a daughter of the under secretary general of the U.N. at that time - back in the 70's, as a very young woman, found herself in charge of a refugee camp in Central America where there were 10,000 refugees. Incredible responsibility to dump on a 21 year-old girl. But she said later on, “When you find work like that, you never go back.” People think, “Oh, what a terrible experience.” But once you rise to that challenge, you can't go back to just an ordinary, you know, work for money employment.

So later on, of course, we will be discussing how this addictive can actually be true and that you can – this might be a simple way of overcoming the tremendous problem of substance abuse – drug addiction – that we're having in our country, primarily. It shows that people need that kind of intensity, that kind of drive and they're getting it in destructive ways, but they could get it just as powerfully, and in a more long-lasting way, from constructive work of the kind that nonviolence is famous for.

But we want to move now beyond the peak experience because practitioners and scholars have noticed that you can often create what's called today, “The effervescence of the crowd.” You can get hundreds of thousands of people in the Philippines. They got two million people out in the street. There was something like 12 million people worldwide who came out into the streets of various capitals to forestall the Iraq War.

It didn't work. A lot of these movements don't work if they don't go beyond that effervescence. And, in fact, one of the definitions of principled nonviolence happens – it's not one that completely works for me, but it's pretty common – it is that this principled nonviolence, as opposed to just being a strategy, is a way of life. So what we're starting to go into now is how do you turn this momentary uprising of person power into a way of life.

Before quite stepping into that I wanted to share with you a quote that I recently came across by a spiritual figure, Swami Vivekananda who was constantly told in the early part of the 20th century that – he's asking people to suppress their individuality. He got quite, well, contemptuous at one point and he said, “You people haven't found your individuality yet. How are you going to repress it?”

So bear that in mind as we talk about the kind of training that builds out to a way of life and we'll be discussing how that is done very shortly.

[End of recording 00:04:19]

Nonviolence resonates with our humanity Daily Metta

Another, for me, very powerful story is one that happened to a very close friend of mine, David Hartsough. I've made him tell this story many times. But it's going to help us here understand how we bridge a little bit from the peak experience to the more enduring campaign. Well, the story, as you know from reading the book is that he was sitting in a lunch counter in Virginia. He was quite young. He was attacked by a segregationist - pulled him off the stool where he was sitting, held a knife against his chest and said, "You've got one minute to get out of here." Called him a name I won't repeat, "Or this goes through your heart."

And David said to himself, "Well, I've got one minute. How am I going to use it?" And he looked at this in the eyes, which was very difficult because of the look of hatred that was in that person's face - contorted by hate, but he overcame his revulsion. This is going to be part of how he generates that power. He looked at him and he said, "Well, brother, you do what you feel you have to. And I'm going to try to love you no matter what." Completely overcame this person. The knife started trembling, and he turns and walks out of the lunch counter.

And notice that one of the things that David did was give this person agency. He didn't say, "I'm going to stop you." He said, "You go ahead and do that." And he implied, "Do that if that's the kind of person you are, but I'm going to do something different because that's the kind of person I am." And seeing it that way throws me back to an episode in my own life - don't worry, I was never threatened with a knife or anything of the sort, but I was listening to a rally on the radio that was taking place in the south. And one of the speakers got very upset and said, "Well, they're beating us. Why don't we beat them back?" And the person who was in charge of the rally said, "Because that's not who we are."

So this is a dimension that gives meaning to nonviolent action, that you define yourself as a different kind of person. And I think that we now can begin to understand why nonviolent action gives a sense of meaning because it resonates with our ultimate human destiny. I am among those who believe that nonviolence is the goal toward which humankind is progressing. So I have a kind of Teil de Chardin image that there's a beginning and an end point - an omega point for where humans are going to, and that is going to be a completely nonviolent state.

And so when we invoke that nonviolent energy and experience that state we're actually bringing to life the future that we all have to move towards. But one more point is significant here and that is that David Hartsough in that lunch counter, he didn't just drop in there. For almost two days he was repeating the Lord's Prayer to himself. That gave him a kind of preparation which was more durable than the experience of the marchers who were blocked and started praying. And within a couple of minutes, got spiritual intoxication.

He was – unconsciously, he wasn't aware that this is why he was doing it, but he was preparing himself spiritually for that episode. So we've gone from spontaneous event to a couple of days of training. And on and off we're going to be thinking now about how to turn that into a way of life. Thank you very much. I look forward to our next discussion.

[End of recording 00:04:32]

The Long Haul of Nonviolence Daily Metta

Hello again everyone. Moving ahead with “The Search for a Nonviolent Future.” We've talked about a spontaneous uprising of the nonviolence state. We've talked about someone taking a couple of days to get himself into that state. Although, he wasn't aware that that's why he was doing that. That's with my friend David Hartsough in the lunch counter. We can go on now. Page 74 - I pull out a testimony from Jawaharlal Nehru long before he became Prime Minister of India, when he was in the Salt Campaign. And he was being badly beaten with these bamboo *lathees*. It was a tremendous hammering. Quoting from him – I'm on the bottom of Page 74.

“I felt half blinded with the blows. I thought how easy it would be to pull down the police officer in front of me from his horse and to mount up myself.” And now here's the phrase which I put in italics. And the reason that I pulled out this testimony of his, he says, “But *long training and discipline* held.” Now they had been training for years for these moments. And it was very interesting the way it worked in India. You had a cadre of some 75 people who had lived with Gandhi at the ashram. Every minute of the day was training for them to be able to resist this kind of abuse without fighting back.

And then you had up to maybe a couple hundred thousand people who were following them, who had not had that kind of training before. But because they were close into those people and trusted them and were following their guidelines, they were able to maintain just about perfect nonviolent discipline. It had [taken] Gandhi 15 years to get the Indian people up to that point. I think it's poignant for to think about this now because very often when we have nonviolence demonstrations, there are people who come there who are not nonviolent and feel they have every right to break their windows or burn their trashcans or whatever they want to do.

They use this euphemism, which I think is a bit dishonest, that what they're doing is “diversity of tactics.” I don't think it's “diversity.” I think it's an opposite. And I don't think it's just a tactic. I think it's completely different mental state and a completely different kind of energy. But be that as it may, it is useful and interesting for us to observe that it took 15 years of rigorous training by a core group who had a good rapport with the masses in order to pull off a really large scale long-term, completely nonviolent movement. And when they did, they were free. The [Salt] Satyagraha is universally acknowledged to be the turning point for India's Freedom Struggle.

After that, and as it just happens, there was an American journalist reporting it in just those terms. Webb Miller was his name, phoning back to the Chicago Tribune that, “It's over. The West cannot maintain any kind of moral ascendancy over India anymore.”

So you see what a tremendous historical shift took place because of those changes that originate within an individual, built up through training, made part of a consistent style of living among enough people that it could generate a whole display or what Gandhi himself called, “An ocular demonstration of what nonviolent power could be.”

So today in the Metta Center we have developed a system called, “The Road Map.” If you go to our Web site and just look at the Road Map tab you’ll find it very easily. And inside that circle we have five suggestions that we make that are for an individual to train him or herself to participate in this nonviolent revolution. So I hope that you find this as intriguing as I am at the moment. And to be continued in our next conversation.

[End of recording 00:05:05]

Peak Experience to Way of Life Daily Metta

Hello again everyone. We are working our way through “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” I wanted to make a comment at this point that it’s taking us a long time. It’s going slowly. And this is not so much a comment on what a brilliant book it is – no comment necessary there, please. But just what richness the field of nonviolence is, how it gets you into the core of reality and therefore it’s a marvelous picture that unfolds.

Right now it met, as you know, in addition to these weekend talks, we’re doing a Daily Metta every day of the week in writing on our Web site. And I found it absolutely remarkable. I just pick up a page of Gandhi anywhere and I usually don’t have to read more than a paragraph or two before we hit into some kind of a brilliant insightful nugget that we unpack. So it’s a tribute to, I think, the depth of reality that this topic, Nonviolence, actually represents.

So we’ve been talking about the state of mind that a person gets into in order to carry out a nonviolent interaction – nonviolent moment if things structure that way around that reaction. And in the book I talk about it as a peak experience, which is not that different from what athletes go through or what an actor will go through, or what any one of us will go through when circumstances somehow get us focused. It’s a very deep kind of focus.

And my interest always is, in taking those gem-like, creative, constructive moments and elaborating them, building them out, turning them into a life – a way of life, a culture. So we were talking about two aspects of this, inner work and outer work. I’m going to use slightly different language here this time. Inner work and the culture. We have to prepare ourselves to be able to have those kinds of experiences on demand. We want to actually live on that plateau if at all possible. And in order for that to happen, reliably, for most of us, we need to have a supportive culture.

So we’ll be talking about both of those dimensions, if you will, of this change which is going to lead us to a nonviolent future. So the question then came up, what a little bit more about the nature of this experience. I had a couple of illustrations, among others, a testimonial about how Joe Montana was able to perform on the football field. It’s – on the other hand, it’s very sad, the kind of shape that Joe Montana is in right now because he was using – or rather we were using

his peak experience for a situation of symbolic destructiveness and competition. And that has led to many, many football players having serious brain injury and so forth. So what we want to talk about is how can we capture that experience and use it for constructive permanent purposes.

And to that end, at Metta, we have been developing this scheme called, “The Road Map,” which you can look at on our Web site. And it involves five practices which we can do as an individual to help get us into that peak state and keep us there. And then the second circle outside of that individual empowerment is “Constructive Program” which we’ll be talking about in a little while.

And then the outer circle is Satyagraha or direct nonviolent resistance. And the idea is that if you – that they should be done, more or less, in this order. We shouldn’t rush into disruptive protest activities. Sometimes we have to because emergencies come up, but in terms of a long range cultural change what we want to do is always be working on those five core practices for personal empowerment. Always looking for ways to build the world that we want in ways that are, at first, non-confrontational. And then finally where the bad structures, the unconstructive structures of society have not given way, that’s when we have to mount the nonviolent resistance.

So “Road Map” didn’t exist when I wrote “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” I recommend all of you go have a look at it and that’ll help prepare us for our next talk. Thank you very much. Until then.

[End of recording 00:05:41]

[Anger as Distraction Daily Metta](#)

Hello again everyone. We’ve been talking about inner work and its relationship to outer work in nonviolence. I have some reassurances that I offer in the book that when we do not act out of anger we are not necessarily repressing that anger. I want to just stick with that a second longer because I think that’s one of the most important dynamics in nonviolent action – any kind of social change action. Often, these actions come from a feeling of love, but they often come from a feeling of offended love, a feeling that something is terribly wrong and we have to get it right. And we face a very critical juncture at that point.

Are we going to act out of anger as anger, or are we going to look for a creative expression of that anger? So there’s an old African American spiritual called, “The Way Out of No Way.” And I use that phrase to describe the creativity of nonviolent acting and nonviolent states of mind, that they really are a perfectly safe – to say the least – a perfectly safe outlet for destructive feelings like anger and fear. But we have to train ourselves for those energies to go through that outlet.

And we talked earlier about an experiment that was done in schools that showed that children who were trained to be more cooperative, were super cooperative after they had been frustrated. Showing that negative energies can come up, but they can be trained to go in a constructive

channel. So we're talking about practicing how we do that individually and how to create a constructive culture to help society do that, in general.

And recently there was a very poignant episode in Beirut, Lebanon where a man named Adel Termos saw a suicide bomber who was about to blow up his vest. He had his little daughter with him – Adel Termos did. He threw himself on that bomber to take the impact of the explosion himself. And of course, it destroyed him – his body. He died. And he saved his daughter and probably dozens, maybe 100 other people.

And the journalists commenting on this said, "We'll never understand this. This is completely against human nature." The point that I'm leading up to is – no, this is another capacity within human nature. And just as we have an instinct for self-preservation, which I'm sure he had at that moment. We have an instinct for self-sacrifice. And it's on that second instinct that we have to draw sometimes when things get to that end-stage and we have to make a sacrifice for nonviolence. So I look forward to a day when a journalist will understand that this was a very deep capacity in human nature and reward it as such.

So we were talking about did Gandhi meditate? And on Page 79, I have an interesting anecdote about how he visits an ashram – spiritual community. And at the end of the day, when he leaves the head of the ashram, the preceptor said, "Today, we've been visited by a real yogi." And they say, "How did you know that?" And they think he's going to say, "Well, he had this aura or his feet were several inches off the ground or something like that." But he said, "No, did you notice the way he looked at everything?" He said, "The other people who were with him were like that. Five or six pairs of eyes were all over the place. But he gave complete one-pointed attention to everything he did." And it's that one-pointed attention that gives quality to everything.

And this is how meditation figures into the preparation for nonviolence because in meditation you eventually develop a feeling for where you are grounded and where you're distracted, where you're being pulled off that grounding. And it was an amazing discovery that I eventually made – actually, a friend of mine had to point it out to me – that when I'm getting angry, when I'm getting afraid it is a distraction. It's a distraction from my grounded state. So the practice that I do in meditation of not going with the distraction, coming back to my groundedness is precisely the practice that I need for acting nonviolently in whatever situation comes up or whatever situation I create in order to bring about social change.

So as to the question did Gandhi meditate? I think he must have. There is a photograph of him very deep in meditation. Sri Easwaran, my teacher, saw him at a prayer meeting. You know, he called it prayer and there was sound going on. People were reciting scriptures. But he must have had this innate instinct to draw himself very, very deep into the ground of his being. And we will remember his – I think, his most famous quote, kind of Metta quote that underlies all the other quotes which is where he says, "I do not have the shadow of a doubt that any human being, man or woman, can do what I have I done."

So let's explore that a little bit in our next time. Until then, good luck. Hope you enjoy your reading of "Search for a Nonviolent Future" and I'll be back with you shortly.

[End of recording 00:06:27]

Two-Fold Beginning of Modern Era Daily Metta

Hello everyone. We are making our way through “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” On Page 83 I refer to the discovery of X-rays. I want to be a little bit more precise about that now. You might remember the state, almost the end of the 19th century, December 28th, 1898. Two events happened on that day which are quite significant for our civilization. One is that Wilhelm Röntgen, who had accidentally discovered X-rays, gave a report on them to a physics society in Germany. And this is widely regarded as the beginning of the Atomic Age.

The other event was for the first time in history a film was shown in public in Paris. So you had the launching of the Atomic Age and the launching of modern mass media happening on exactly the same day right at the end of the 19th century. Very, very portentous changes. I’ve even recently argued at the U.N., as a matter-of-fact, that the film one was more significant because the tremendous impact of mass media on human consciousness, on human culture, is what determines how we will use that power that was developed in – out in the outside world.

And you know, Robert Oppenheimer said one time that the purpose of science is to take the powers of nature and put them at the disposal of the human will. And it’s kind of a typical mistake in our civilization. We don’t ask ourselves, what human will? Is it the will for violence or the will for nonviolence? Now that incredible [power] that we’ve discovered in the outside world is not going to go away. But we need to discover that incredible power, the inside world, in order to use it appropriately.

And that’s why I ended the chapter on Page 86 with this marvelous quote from Gandhi where he says, “It’s not that I am not incapable of anger, but I have learned the supreme lesson of harnessing my anger. See, not suppressing it, harnessing it. Because it’s a form – he regards it as a form of energy, which it is. Internal energy. And he makes this marvelous testimonial that the struggle which is going on inside of him all the time gives him a delight, a participation in the process of nature – I’m paraphrasing – which he has no power to describe. And Gandhi had pretty good powers of describing things. So if he’s talking about mental state which is beyond to describe, you can see how incredibly rewarding and how much of a break-out, a relief it must be for the individual human being to find a way to harness those negative energies in constructive action.

Okay. Well, thank you very much. That’s it for our session today. So until next time, carry on the experiment. I look forward to talking to you again soon.

[End of recording 00:03:47]

Work Versus Work Daily Metta

Hi! We’re once again rolling into “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” And we actually have reached Chapter 4. Chapter 4 has the awkward title Work versus “Work.” People have told me

that this is a difficult title, but I don't know, somehow I like the idea and I stick with it. It comes from a quote from Ted Roszak that I have at the top of the chapter, "People try nonviolence for a week, and when it doesn't "work" they go back to violence, which hasn't worked for centuries." That's how we are.

So I talk about the difference between getting something done that you wanted to do right now which is "work." It "worked." Versus doing good work, working on the structure, working on the social field to make things better. And, you know, I don't remember whether I mentioned it in the book, but one of Gandhi's biographers, B.R. Nanda, talks about a famous episode in which Gandhi seemed to lose face. It was called, "The Putna Surrender." In 1925 he had been in jail for a while and when he came out the Congress Party had kind of reversed one of his most important decisions.

Everybody thought, "Oh boy, those guys are in trouble. Now Gandhi's back and he's mad." But instead what he did was he looked at they had done. He said, "They made their decision based on their love of the country. I don't agree with their decision, but they came by it honestly. Not only," did he say, "I'm not going to resist them, I'm going to help them. So he joined them and everybody said, "This is terrible." And he said, "Don't worry. My surrender was my victory." And he said, "People see the fighter in me, but they miss my ability to surrender, which is my power springs." Now sure enough a couple of months later, the Congress Party came completely around to his side.

So this is a terrific example of work – without quotes. It seemed not to "work," but it worked. Just as the Salt Satyagraha, the climax of the Freedom Struggle in 1930. It accomplished basically nothing other than putting hundreds of thousands of people into jail, having them beaten, losing their properties. It didn't "work," but it did the biggest work of his whole career. It really showed the world that India could not be ruled and that as an American journalist, Webb Miller, who was on the scene at the Dharasana Salt Pan's said, "This shows that the moral superiority that we thought we had over the West is unreal. We cannot go on ruling the world in this way anymore. So that's probably the most conspicuous historical example of work versus work.

So B.R. Nanda, one of Gandhi's biographers said, "Nonviolence is the kind of thing where you can lose all the battles and go on to win the war." Very astute. Recently there's been a film called, "Gateways," in which six former members of Shin Bet, the Israeli security division are interviewed. And one of them made a very interesting remark about his work. He said, "We are winning all the battles and losing the war."

So this is a classic difference between violence and nonviolence. In violence you seem to win, but you're really lurching from crisis to crisis and eventually you collapse. Whereas in nonviolence, even if you seem to lose, what you're really doing is changing things for the better and eventually everybody will win. We even have now some scientific evidence for this. You can imagine how excited I was to hear this fact. Nobody knew why I was so excited, but you will understand.

In this great study of the difference between violent and nonviolent insurrections that was done by Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, which showed that nonviolent insurrections were twice as effective, took one third the time, so on and so forth, and lead to greater democratic freedoms. She discovered that they lead to greater democratic freedoms even if they fail – “work,” not work – than violent ones, even if they succeed. In a violent insurrection you overthrow Noriega, send him to prison, and guess what? You end up back in the same old-same old.

But in nonviolent ones, even if the dictator stays in power – we’re talking about that kind of insurrection – you have made things better and in the end it will be better for everyone. It’s incredibly simple. I used to actually apologize for this when I was teaching at the university because as a professor I’m supposed to take simple ideas and make them complicated enough so that intellectuals can understand them. That was my job description. But it’s really incredibly simple. There are two kinds of energy in the world. Violent and nonviolent.

The more we learn to use nonviolent energy, the better things will be for everyone. So with this encouraging, upbeat perspective, let’s launch into our next section, Chapter 4 of “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” Thanks very much. For now...

[End of recording 00:05:53]

Myths of Violence Daily Metta

Hi, we are now going to look into some of those beliefs that we have about violence and how it works. We had a very upbeat conversation last time about how wonderful nonviolence is so I hope that you are upbeat enough to bear with me for this investigation. I was mostly basing it a book by Jewett and Lawrence called, “The American Monomyth,” in which they explored the mythology of Superman, making the very plausible argument that on some level we actually believe that stuff.

I mean we don’t believe that there’s a man who comes, you know, crashing through the windows, but we believe the dynamic that his stories represent. This is a bit of a sidetrack here – is particularly embarrassing for me because I started my writing career by working for a friend of mine – an adult friend – who was writing Superboy comics. So I actually have some guilt here that I have to expiate with this little talk.

But Jewett and Lawrence, to get back to our point, so that if you look at Superman comics – today, of course, it would be Spiderman or what have you. They get creepier every year – if you look at those comics, what it says to us at a very deep level about how violence works, they analyze it into three things.

First, that violence is never misused. You never see Superman saying, “Ha, ha. I’m going to go and rob a bank because nobody can shoot me and stash all my money in a bank in Panama,” or something like that. As opposed to what really people do when they experience what they can do with violence.

Secondly, there is no collateral damage. Violence is clean. You know, Superman will stop a car that's going 60 miles an hour down the freeway and all the bad guys will tumble out and they have a little cross bandage on their forehead. You can tell I'm dating myself, but that's all right. So there's no collateral damage and innocent people don't get killed, which is horrendously opposite of what's actually happened in war practice since say, about the Civil War to the Vietnam War. There's been an increase where it was 5% or 10% of civilians were killed directly in the former era, and now we're up to 90% or 95%. So that's Point Number 2. And this is a "myth" in the sense that it's just a complete lie, that it's never hurting other people.

And thirdly, and most importantly perhaps, that there is none of what we call today, "Blowback." Once you have stopped the criminal and he or they are punished, end of story. Go onto the next issue. And what we're experiencing today both in the criminal justice system, and even more painfully in the war system, is that I believe this is becoming more and more the case. That just as more and more civilians are being injured in war – injured or killed, just as we have millions of refugees coursing the world today, it seems to be case that more and more there is blowback from wars.

So that a commander in Iraq said recently, "We are killing terrorists faster – we are making terrorists faster than we can kill them." And that was specified by a lower level officer in Afghanistan recently who calculated that for every four "terrorists" that we kill, ten rise up to take his place. A really good – good? A really vivid example of this was the *Sendero Luminoso* uprising in Peru where these rebels showed year after year – they had a terrific ability to kill people. And in the end, the Peruvian people rejected them completely because they did not want killing and killing and killing.

And it turned out every time they killed a "policeman," once again mistaking the label for the human reality – they killed a "policeman," they forgot that that "policeman" was also a human being who had a family. And so the blowback was very severe. But it's good for us to be aware of what we have been inculcated. And I admit, yes, it's partly my fault. I wrote Superboy comics. We have actually been inculcated to believe these fantastical things about violence. So thank you for bearing with me in that analysis. And let's turn now to the realities of nonviolence.

[End of recording 00:05:24]

Realities of Nonviolence Daily Metta

Thank you for bearing with me. We've been talking about how we acquired this mythology in our mind about what violence does. There's one phenomenon more that I'd like to mention, if you could bear with me. And that is the phenomenon called, "Victim Precipitated Homicide," where people often think they're going to defend themselves by flashing a weapon. The minute they flash the weapon they make themselves more dangerous and they get killed. And it's been calculated that maybe 60% – 70% homicides in our country are victim precipitated. That's how they're happening.

But there's no victim precipitated homicide in nonviolence. For example, during the Cold War, it was proposed that we should have only completely defensive weapons. And the most defensive weapon of all, was what was called, "Civilian Based Defense," which was completely nonviolent, could not offer a threat to anyone. So let me counter now the three myths of violence with the three realities of nonviolence, which is early on in Chapter 4 – slightly elaborated.

The first and most important thing that I'd like to mention is what nonviolence does for the person who offers it. It basically enables us to grow spiritually and nothing can be more important than that. Recently, I ran across a quote from a Kurdish activist in Northern Iraq, in Erbil, who was saying he wanted to have a nonviolent campaign. People told him this is very difficult. They exaggerated that.

He said, "I know it's very difficult, but you do not lose your humanity in the process. In fact, you actually develop your humanity in the process." So we have kind of developed the rule of thumb here at the Metta Center which is that whatever problem you want to solve, if you want to judge whether you're using the right methods to solve it or not, there's one criterion which is of paramount importance. And that is never degrade a human being. If you throw people in prison, put them in solitary confinement and degrade them, you're doing something wrong. That very fact tells you that your system is operating on the wrong energy.

So first reality of nonviolence is that it helps the person offering it. The second reality is that it often "works." And there have been some spectacular results, some spectacular successes of nonviolent campaigns where violent campaigns have failed. Just one example off the top of my head, the Solidarity Movement in Poland. It came at the tail-end of decade after decade of violent uprisings of one kind or another against Russian Rule – against Russian Communist rule – and they all lead to disastrous failures. The Solidarity, which basically nonviolent, was a much, much greater success. But thirdly, and even more importantly, even if they "don't work" as I was just telling you, from the study of Chenoweth and Stephan, even if they "don't work" in very important ways, they do good work.

Okay, well, I think we're in a very good position now to go on and look at the historical cases that I've chosen for Chapter 4, which I have chosen to illustrate kind of the array of different situations in which nonviolence can be applied. So that's what we'll be doing next. Look forward to talking to you soon.

[End of recording 00:04:08]

[Making nonviolent energy WORK Daily Metta](#)

Hello everyone. We are making our way through "Search for a Nonviolent Future." And I might as well take this opportunity to share some good news with you. I just heard this morning a gentleman who had been trained at Gujarat Vidyapith – it's that university that was founded by Mahatma Gandhi – has just undertaken to translate this book into North Indian languages – Gujarati and Hindi so our audience will be expanding, possibly by a large chunk.

So we are in the chapter called, “Getting Down to Cases.” And I’m really taking different approaches to one basic point, which is that there are really two kinds of energy in the world. Two kinds of energy that we can address ourselves to and employ and the results of using loving or nonviolent energy will always be good on some level. The results, on the contrary, of using violent energy will always be not good. They’ll always be destructive. So at that level things are very simple. It then becomes a question of how do we recognize one type of energy or the other. And that really boils down to a question of how do we feel when we’re doing something?

Do we have that little catch of anxiety that’s telling us that you’re alienating yourself and you’re alienating yourself from another person or do we feel not really acting that something is moving through us that’s going to have a good effect. So that’s why we’re trying to look at it from many different angles. And I talk here – we’re on about Page 90, about the Serbian War and the attacks on Serbia by the U.S. And I’d like to add a couple of things here. And pardon me if you’ve heard one or two of them before, but one of them is that the contrast, a beautiful contrast between the between the fact NATO bombed Serbia for 13 weeks at enormous financial cost, enormous human cost, enormous cost to the infrastructure and it ended up leaving Milošević still in power – President Slobodan Milošević who had started a number of ethnic cleansings and wars.

And then when the student uprising – student-lead uprising was launched – and this is very well described in a film called, “Bringing Down a Dictator.” That took one day to unseat him and put a more responsive, more democratic government in place. And I think this shows the difference in power, the difference in the amount of power between nonviolence and violence. Nonviolence is really much more powerful when you learn to recognize it.

I’d also like to add – and this getting back to our main point of what kind of energy are we dealing with – that since I wrote this book, there is another and horrible outlook for consequence of all the violence that’s been unleashed in the Middle East. And that is that we’ve been creating failed states. We’ve been creating vacuums into which ISIS and the Islamic State with all of its horrendous violence and terrorism has very happily run.

So while in the book I talked about the enormous human cost, the number of children lost, the destruction to the environment, all of those things, we’re now realizing there’s been another cost which is, in a way, even more devastating that we wish sort of, you know, wiping these governments, these systems off the map, creating vacuums, and then ISIS rushes into these vacuums.

And then Page 93 I bring in the concept I borrowed from physics of an event cone. And I would like to put that into contrast with the fantasy of surgical strikes. The idea – and surgical strikes that we are expected to believe by the military – is that you can go in and use a certain amount of violence and it’ll create a very, very narrow, very specific impact and everything else will be just fine. But in reality what happens is the exact opposite. That from that single act you spread out into an event cone of wider and wider circumstances.

And now it’s only good science to believe and to test this hypothesis that you get an event cone from nonviolence also. That one conspicuous intense nonviolent act will lead to an array of positive developments, many of which will be so far down the line that you may not be able to

connect the dots and realize them. And I suppose we don't have to know in detail what exactly results from our actions. It seems like the only thing we really need to know is what kind of energy have we put into them.

Then on Page 93 I talk about some basic principles to bear in mind. And they are, if you pardon me while I find that page – yeah. That evidently the deeper message is slightly more effective. What I mean here is – this goes all the way back to an essay by Vera Brittain who proposed and then somewhat studied the effects of intense bombing on the German people during WWII with the idea in mind that it would break their morale. It did exactly the opposite.

Here are the three principles. Acts of love, which is one definition that Gandhi had for nonviolence, that arise in a peak state of self-control. Do work. Beyond the psychological that they do within the actor, there's a fact that I feel more humane, really. More centered, more assured, more confident about my own capacities when I manage to do something nonviolent. But beyond that, three things result. They persuade people to change in the ways that we want them to change. And that very often does happen.

Secondly, contrary to all expectations it actually is safer to carry out nonviolence than to carry out violence. We think, "Oh my gosh, you have to have a gun to protect yourself." I'm reminded of a Peace Pilgrim who asked a police captain friend of hers, said, "I'm about to go hitch-hiking across the country. And not just hitch-hiking, walking across the United States. Should I take a gun to protect myself?" A lone woman. And he said, "That is the stupidest thing that you can possibly do." So often nonviolence has its own protection.

And thirdly, and most importantly – this is what we've been stressing – a nonviolent act will work on a much deeper level to change the soil so that better results of every kind will emerge. And if only we could do that more intensely and more consistently, we would see, guess what? A nonviolent future. Thank you very much. Until next time.

[End of recording 00:08:20]

[Stealth and Salt Daily Metta](#)

Hello again friends. Here we are now at, in a sense, what is the climax of "The Search for a Nonviolent Future" because we talk about the climatic campaign in the most iconic episode or struggle in modern nonviolent history. That struggle being the Indian Freedom Struggle and climatic campaign happening in the early spring of 1930 which was the Salt Satyagraha. The issue being that the British monopolized the manufacture of salt, even though you had a couple thousand miles of coastline.

And it was like a classic case of the way colonialism works. You take away a resource that people have used for millennia, in this case, and say, "No, we have to manufacture it for you, sell it back to you at a big price and make a profit." At this time there was a cartoon that showed an enormous cow with its head in India and its udders in Britain. So the feeding in India and getting all these resources drained.

So it was, in many ways, an iconic campaign and it illustrates so many things, a couple of which I didn't even work into the book at that time. One of the things that it does represent very nicely is what we call, "A nonviolent moment." A nonviolent moment is when a nonviolent campaign has been building and producing a response from oppressive actors and it always seems to be the case that at some point – and you never can really predict when – those two things go head to head and you really see what the nonviolence is made of and what the violence is made of.

And I need hardly say that if you get everything working very cleanly it will almost always be the case, that the nonviolence will both work and "work." That is, it will get what you want right then in the immediate environment and it'll also produce much better results. So the long march to the sea from Gandhi's ashram down to Dandi – 12 day march where thousands and thousands of people accumulate behind him. He picks up a fistful of salt from the sea and declares India is free. Turns out it was not an exaggeration. The interesting thing is it didn't "work" hardly at all. The salt laws stayed in place. Almost nothing happened except so many people being put in jail, but the world realized – partly thanks to an American journalist who was there – that India was now free.

So let me now add a couple of other things that this event represents. One of them is that it was what I call, "A stealth action." That is Gandhi and his followers were able to see something in the dynamic of their situation which the opponent could not see. And they were able to do something which the opponent would not recognize was dangerous to them until it was too late.

So you literally have a statement by the then Viceroy Lord Irwin – he wires back to London saying, "I am not losing any sleep over the Salt Campaign." Very, very self-assured and totally wrong. He ended up losing the entire empire over that campaign because by the time they reacted the campaign had gotten so huge that they had to undergo what we call, "A paradox of repression." In CIA language this is called, "Blowback." You do something to achieve one result, some violent thing, and it blows back in your face. That, we call it in nonviolent terms, "A paradox of repression."

So it illustrates a nonviolent moment. It illustrates a stealth campaign. And it illustrates what I now call, "Stage 2 of constructive action." Stage 1 constructive action is action which is non-confrontational and does not have any obvious immediate results in creating a response from the government – the oppressive regime. In this case a good illustration of that was the Charka, the Spinning Campaign. It was completely non-confrontational, had really millions of people doing it. It was undercutting the basis of the British regime, but it was completely legal and they didn't know it was coming at all.

But in the Salt Satyagraha you escalate this to where the opposition becomes clear and you're actually violating the law. So that is what they did. And if you've seen the Gandhi film, it was very, very accurate in that representation and very accurate in what the journalist Webb Miller wired – phoned back to his newspaper.

Then we also talk about another event in this section which is of tremendous importance for us in nonviolence which is the Rosenstraße Prison Demonstration where a couple of thousand Jewish or non-Jewish wives protesting against the Gestapo, actually rescue their Jewish husbands from

detention. So I just recommend that you go back and read that. I do not recommend that you see the recent film that was made about it because as in most “filmic” commercial, large scale productions, they missed the point they couldn’t believe, that nonviolence actually did anything.

But read about it. There’s a wonderful book called, “Revolution [Resistance] of the Heart.” By Nathan Stoltzfus which will give you some of the full dimensions. And if anybody asks you, and they will, “Well, nonviolence would never have worked against Hitler.” Simply whip out Page 95 or wherever we are and say, “No. As a matter-of-fact it worked very well against Hitler.” Because the Fuhrer himself refused to make a decision and the German propaganda machine had no response and they finally had to release those men and that saved the lives of tens of thousands of people across Europe. So until next time, that is what, I think, what we can mostly get out of this lesson. That when people say, “Nonviolence wouldn’t have worked against Hitler,” you say, “No. Pardon me, it was rarely tried. And when it did, even at a very low level, it worked brilliantly.”

[End of recording 00:07:33]

[Nonviolence is for everyone Daily Metta](#)

Hello again friends. We are in the chapter, “Work Versus Work.” And this is where we’re trying to bring the lens of different historical examples to bear so that we can, as I was saying last time, tune our own radar to picking up the dynamics of nonviolence in history and in our own experiences. And the two cases that I talk about now in this little subchapter called, “Taking it from the top,” will go to illustrate that nonviolence is not the prerequisite of a certain group of people or a certain social stratum, only it can be practiced by anyone. And the most surprising thing is it can even be practiced by rulers.

And this is why I don’t like the term “Civil resistance,” which is so much in use today among scholars for nonviolence because it doesn’t have to come from civil society. Usually, it does because it’s civil society that’s usually being oppressed. But, you know, there’s no union for oppressed dictators for them to guarantee their rights and so forth, but it’s by no means limited to them. So the first – historically, the first episode I talk about is the case of Emperor Ashoka who ruled a large part of what is today, northern India in the 3rd century of our era – is someone who saw first-hand the results of his own violence, was deeply affected, began a conversion to Buddhism and renounced war.

That is particularly significant today because we have just had a conference at the Vatican where after 1700 years highest papal authorities are reconsidering the “Just War Doctrine.” And probably we should say more about that in a little bit. But talk about talking it from the top. That’s the top of the Catholic hierarchy, 1 billion people, Holy Father, in Rome, had this conference take place where they were reconsidering Just War.

And they are considering nonviolent responses, nonviolent alternative. So that – maybe that’s enough said right now about Emperor Ashoka. He certainly was ahead of his time. I talk in greater detail about something known to nonviolent scholars as “The Holy Experiment.” It was

the regime that was under the control of William Penn in what is now Pennsylvania. And that William Penn was a direct follower of George Fox, the founder of Society of Friends, otherwise now known as the Quakers.

And how he began an entire regime on what we would call nonviolent principles, including outlawing war. There was no conflict between white settlers and the Native Americans in his area. And he promulgated this great law which was way in advance in terms of restorative justice, in terms of anti-militarism, in terms of religious tolerance, and even the most severe kind of racial intolerance at that time – that between Europeans and the Native Americans.

And the interesting thing to observe is that this regime, this enclave of nonviolence was not overwhelmed by outside forces of violence. Eventually, it collapsed under its own loss of idealism, loss of comprehension. That is really important for us because if you talk about creating a nonviolent system people will think, “Ah, we have no way of defending ourselves against violence from our surrounding area.” But in fact, as I’ve mentioned before, nonviolence is its own protection.

So I hope you enjoy reading about those two episodes - and you agree with me that the point is pretty well established. And you see in Gandhi’s case, that he was using nonviolence towards people socially beneath him, the untouchables, towards his equals, which were the Muslim contingent - the other community - and towards his “social” and political superiors – the British Raj.

So it can be done by anyone. It can be pointed in any direction. And it often will “work” and always works. Thank you very much. Until next time.

[End of recording 00:05:17]

[Conflict Escalation Curve Daily Metta](#)

Hi. We are now getting toward the end of this chapter, “Work” versus “Work”. I’ve spoken a couple of times now about the Salt Satyagraha because it is such a good example. It failed to “work,” but it did fantastic work. And at the conclusion of this section, we have a famous formula – I hope it becomes famous, anyway – that we’ve invented, that violence sometimes “works” but never works. Never makes things better. Whereas nonviolence also sometimes “works” but always works.

And that’s why if you dedicate yourself to violent solutions you end up lurching from crisis to crisis. Whereas if you dedicate yourself to nonviolent solutions or I should say, a little more accurately, to the extent to which you can dedicate yourself to nonviolent solutions because that’s an important point. It’s not simply a black and white matter in terms of your practical action, in terms of your mental state and so forth. But to the extent that you can be nonviolent it will always add to some improvements down the line.

So what I’d like to do now is move on a little bit to a famous iconic part of “Search for a Nonviolent Future,” and that is the escalation curve. Since coming up with this model and having

it on Page 108 of "Search for a Nonviolent Future" we have developed it to some degree. I think it's an extremely important analytical tool for people who are in non violence, both on the theoretical level to understand sometimes why something was effective or not. And secondly, of course, on the practical level to be ready to move onto the necessary responses and do the needful.

And a classic example of something that caught us flat-footed, as it were, was the resistance to the Iraq War that finally launched in 2003. It was one of the largest popular demonstrations ever recorded. 12 million people were on the march around the world. The then President of the United States publicly declared his intention to ignore them. He said, "I don't have to pay attention to these people. They're just a focus group." That should have been, if we were all really aware of how nonviolent dynamics work, it should have been a signal to us that, okay, we are no longer in Phase 1 where you are in dialog and you're being listened to and you can use the techniques of demonstration and petition.

We must now move onto Satyagraha. And we have a beautiful quote from Gandhi where he says, "Things of fundamental importance to the people cannot be gained by moving the head. Only you have to move the heart also. I might add at this point, that to even know that there is a heart, a deeper consciousness that can be reawakened and responded, to is part of what we call, "The New Story." And one of the reasons we haven't understood the importance of this boundary is we are so imbedded in the old story. More on that later.

But this curve does show that we need to have flexibility in our responses and we need to have the ability to match the degree of violence with a degree of nonviolence that we're ready to employ. And Stage Number 3, the final stage, is even if our self-imposed suffering has not awakened the opponent, there is something that we can undertake which is almost qualitatively different and that is the willingness to lay down your life. We sincerely hope that things will never get to this level especially if we have built up our constructive program well enough in advance to give us that momentum.

But if necessary, and if things are that important that they cannot be left alone – they must change and you're absolutely dedicated to that – you do have this final power that you can employ. Now I've just been talking about a mistake where we used Stage 1 tactics when we were in Stage 2. But there's also a kind of a mistake where we use Stage 3 tactics when we're still really in Stage 1 – and that is people go on a hunger strike and say they're going to lay down their life. They're often are not really capable of doing it. There are several rules for going on a hunger strike, fast unto death correctly. We can talk about them in a little while. People will start at the most extreme of the curve as though they were completely dehumanized in the eyes of their opponents instead of assuming their rationality until proven otherwise.

And I talk about Maximilian Kolbe – Maximilian Mary Kolbe who was a great – who is now a saint – Saint of Auschwitz and a great hero of nonviolence world. This is a case where he actually did have to forfeit his life in Auschwitz. Long story short, because you can read about it in the book – he volunteered to die for another prisoner and that completely contrary to the entire worldview and passion that those prisoners had at Auschwitz. You're struggling to survive with

all that you could command. And no one ever compromised their own safety. But here's somebody who goes in exactly the opposite direction.

And this led me now to the conclusion that in addition to having an instinct for self-survival – which we all do have – we also have an instinct for self-sacrifice. It's embedded in nature and human beings will employ it, will implement it in the right circumstances or the “wrong” circumstances.

So he volunteers to die for another prisoner. He does, in fact, die a few days later and it doesn't look as if he accomplished anything. But if you get the testimonials from the men who are in the camp with him, he gave them a tremendous uplift of spirit and this is not just an emotional factor because the thing that kept you alive in Auschwitz is whether you had a will to live or not. So he probably ended up saving thousands of people.

And I'd like to just add the point now that we came so close to not even knowing this, but someone did manage to recapture some of the – to capture some of those testimonia. And so this shows us also how many cases of nonviolence there must have been which we do not know about, partly because our radar was tuned to pick them up.

Okay, good. So let's keep on tuning our radar and I'll get back to you soon with our next factors. Thank you.

[End of recording 00:08:14]

Recognizing True Power Daily Metta

Hello everyone. Good to be back with you. We are coming to the end of the chapter called, Work versus “Work” in “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” I must say, just on a personal note, I am pleased as I read through the book, first of all, that there no major theoretical issues that I would change anything in, even though the book has been around for a while. And secondly, that, you know, it does get its points across.

So the point that we were making up until recently – actually there were two points. One is that nonviolence can be used in any relationship which is why I thought the term “civil resistance” is too limiting. Nonviolence is a human capacity. Any individual can use it and therefore it can be used in any relationship. And we tend to notice it when it's used in the relationship of relative powerlessness because we think, because of our material orientation, we think that all power comes out of the barrel of a gun. We think a group that's being oppressed is “powerless.” And that is exactly the impression that the oppressor is trying to give.

But you are only powerless if you neglect your inner resources. Striking and startling when nonviolence happens from below, you know, in the behalf of the otherwise powerless people because when the other kind of power stripped away, then we see that we have only nonviolence to fall back upon. And a lot of people have gotten into nonviolence not because they're aware of it, not because they believe in it, not because they even think that they have a soul, however you want to call that. But because they have no other recourse.

Then when find yourself propelled into a situation where you had to fall back on your own resources, you're then in a position to really develop those resources and discover what they are and how effective they are in influencing others who also have that resonance, that resource within them. And this is where having the right frame of reference helps.

And this is what brings me to my second point – and I hope it hasn't gotten annoying in the book because I keep on making this point – that history and the mass media have let us down.

[End of recording 02:58]

[Nonviolence is the highest law Daily Metta](#)

There is a saying, proverb, in one of the early Sanskrit scriptures which says, “By means of this dharma, even a beggar can prevail over a king. And, of course, dharma is defined over and over again in the epics, in particular, in India, as, “Ahimsa paramo dharma.” The ultimate law of our being of the universe is a law of nonviolence which, of course, could not be a negative law. Could not be an absence, but it's often discovered in a negative way.

When we shun violence, when we back away from it, we don't want to use it, we stumble upon the power of nonviolence. Of course, it's also possible that we could be in a situation where violence would be inadvisable and we abjure it. And that may or may not help to help us make that discovery. That is because we may feel that as soon as I get my hands on a gun, I'm going to go back to violence and that usually limits our ability to discover nonviolence.

Okay, so I think our basic point is made that you can exert nonviolence even if you're in a position of political authority. You can exert it against political authority which Gandhi said was the ultimate grantor of democracy. That in any democracy the people must be able to use nonviolence against an abuse of law or authority and incidentally –

[End of recording 00:02:06]

[Civil Disobedience Legal Daily Metta](#)

Just last week in Grant County in Pennsylvania the city council passed a law making civil disobedience legal. So that puts us in a rather interesting quandary. Of course they did for a good reason. The people were doing anti-fracking and they had to do civil disobedience in order to carry that out. And the corporations were giving them a lot of trouble. The city council said, “You leave those people alone. They get to do that.” So in this case the city council was appealing to a higher dharma, if you will – a higher law.

[End of recording 00:00:59]

[Two Stories Daily Metta](#)

Hello again everyone. We are finishing up the chapter called, “Work versus “Work.” And I'm not sorry we're spending so much time on it because the recognition that nonviolence can

operate under the visible surface of things is extremely important and will lead us up to a very major conclusion in a little while. But I wanted to share with you two stories that are in this chapter. One, is the story of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon. It's a small village in the south of France. The pastor was André Trocmé. And when the Vichy Regime took power he called his parishioners together and he said, "What do you want to do about this?"

And, you know, they came from a Huguenot background so they had experience in their own remote past. They had experienced some persecution. And his charisma and influence was such that the entire community went along with him and said, "We're not going to participate." They proceeded to shelter Jews and others who fled from Nazi persecution all over Europe, particularly Eastern Europe. And in the course of the war, probably saved about four or five thousand people.

So the question comes up, how did the Gestapo fail to realize this with thousands of people coming through? Children going to school out in the woods and so forth. Well, the fact is that they did realize it, that the Commandant Schmalling was perfectly aware of what was going on, but he felt there was nothing he could do about it. And as he explained later to the Trocmé's, that he had said to the Gestapo – Colonel Metzger, who was in charge of the region, "This kind of resistance has nothing to do with violence, nothing to do with anything we can destroy with violence." So Schmaling said, "I'm a good Catholic, you know. So I understand these things."

The second story, some 20-odd years later, is now called, "Prague Spring." It was an uprising, a reform movement that took place in Czechoslovakia under the presidency of Alexander Dubček and the reforms of communism in Czechoslovakia at that time were alarming to the Soviet High Command and they eventually decided they were going to have to overcome it with military force.

Czechoslovakia, not a very big country, invaded from three directions by half a million troops in the Warsaw Pact. And the High Command had posed it would take about four days to crush the movement. And by military logic that was exactly correct. But once again, the military logic didn't apply. The Czechs didn't respond militarily. They didn't try to prevent the troops from entering Czechoslovakia, which is, in military terms called, "Shallow interdiction." They practiced deep interdiction which is thwarting them once they got into the country.

This movement, this uprising, which was supposed to last four days, lasted eight months. And it didn't really collapse from within. It was not overcome by external force. Just as Pennsylvania was not. Instead, there was some trickery and some cunning and the leadership was basically forced, tricked into accepting a phony compromise. It was quite a tragic result in terms of "work." It did, however do a lot of work.

And that is that later on in the Velvet Revolution, when communism in the Soviet Union collapsed, Czechoslovakia made a very graceful and nonviolent exit from the Soviet Block, very much because of what they had learned in Prague Spring. But anyway, two other things about Prague Spring are important. One, that it was marked by a great degree of inventiveness and humor. And many nonviolent movements have used humor to good effect.

At one point – I think this is probably not in the book. There was a parade which was, anyhow illegal. They were under curfew. And the people, the Czechs who were parading were pretending to be talking into radios, which was again, illegal. So the police swoop down and confiscated these radios which turned out to be blocks of coal. And they said on them, “Soviet Radio. Doesn’t work.” But a really clever thing that they did was they changed road signs around and painted them over so on one occasion an entire Polish army swept into Czechoslovakia out of Poland, followed the road signs at the end of a long day’s journey, found themselves back at the border where they had come in.

The other thing noteworthy about Prague Spring is that it became the icon for what’s called, “Civilian based defense,” which is how you defend your country against a foreign invasion. Thanks to Gene Sharp and his workers at Harvard, this is one of the two main modes of behavior through which nonviolence can be mobilized against a military situation – military danger.

But to wrap it up, let’s think now about the Rosenstraße Prison Demonstration, Le Chambon, and Prague Spring. And what we can derive from this unknown history is that nonviolence worked against the Nazi’s and against the Soviets. So the two huge threats – with the excuse of which we mobilized enormous military destructive power could, in theory, have been overcome by nonviolent resistance if it had started early enough and was done correctly.

So with that challenging but inspiring thought, leave you until next time and we’ll start Chapter 5.

[End of recording 00:07:01]

[Symbolism and Nonviolence_ Daily Metta](#)

Michael: Hello again. You know, in Metta Center we have a motto, an expression of our mission which is helping people practice nonviolence more safely and more effectively. But there is a point at which – a situation in which people practice it so safely that it isn’t effective anymore. And that is when they stick to symbolism when they should be advancing to more concrete methods.

As I was studying nonviolence over the years, I began to develop a kind of hunch, kind of intuition that we were overusing symbolism. And there was something wrong with that. And what bothered me was that if you have to fall back on symbols it implies that nonviolence doesn’t have any strength, doesn’t have any power.

So, you make a symbolic appeal to your adversary because there's nothing else that you can do. And I looked again closely at many of Gandhi’s most effective episodes and I saw that symbolism, mere symbolism without any connection with concrete realities was not ever used. And I ran this past none other than his grandson, Arun Gandhi. And Arun said to me, “You’re absolutely right. Grandfather never relied on symbols.”

So, people think, “Well, what about those marches?” Yeah, he did go on marches. You saw one in the film, *Gandhi*, Attenborough’s classic epic film. But those marches were necessary because thousands of workers had walked off their jobs in the mines and had nowhere to go. He needed to get them to his ashram, to Tolstoy Farm in the Transvaal. Not only that but in

order to do that, they had to cross an illegal border. So, it was an act of civil disobedience and a concrete relocation of people to the headquarters, the GHQ of satyagraha. So, it was not symbolic.

Now, when you think about it, if you just use symbols, you are in Phase 1, if you remember our escalation curve on Page 108 of *Search for a Nonviolent Future*. You are pre-supposing that the adversary cares enough about your feelings that he or they or she are interested and will be moved by what you are saying, whether you say it with words or say it with symbols.

But when you come to that point, as we did in 2003 when the president said in response to the largest popular demonstration the world had ever seen, something like 12 million people who mustered out around the world to plea that Iraq not be attacked. He said, "I don't have to listen to these people. They're just a focus group." So, he was signaling that we are now in Phase 2, but we were still using symbolic and other protests.

So, this is not to say that symbols aren't effective when you put a flower in the rifle barrel of a national guardsmen. It is effective when you plant corn on top of a missile silo, as Kathy Kelly and others did. It is effective, but you need most of the time to be able to back it up with something concrete. And this is what lead me to discover the great importance of constructive program.

Now, in this part of the book, I also hinted at a study that I'd like to tell you a little bit more about. It was done by a couple. The book is called, *In Common Predicament* by Sherif and Sherif. And what they did was – this was at a summer camp in Canada. The campers were divided into – I don't know, the eagles and the rabbits or something. And of course, immediately, just because of that artificial division, this shows you what symbols can do on the wrong side, they immediately started quarreling. And the tension was really getting very serious.

So, the counselors then tried to use different methods for bringing them back together. They thought, "Oh, if they see a movie together or if they eat at the same table, all kinds of entertaining things like that, that would reconcile the difficulties." It didn't work. But what did work was the truck broke down and they needed the truck to get into town to get – I don't know, pizza or another movie or something. And both groups of campers had to kind of get together to figure out what was wrong with the truck.

And then they immediately overcame a lot of the tension and a lot of the quarreling. So, it shows you two things, I guess, that working together is a powerful way of reconciliation and that should always be a part of, say, truth and reconciliation work as it goes on around the world. And it also shows you that things that are concrete are inherently more powerful. And I'm going to argue inherently more at home in true nonviolence than things that are merely symbolic.

So, let's mull that over and I think now we're coming close to end of Chapter 4. I just want to make one more point with you, which I'll do next time and we can go on.

[Predicting Violence and Nonviolence Daily Metta](#)

Hello again everyone. We are coming to the end of Work versus "Work" chapter and I wanted to just read you short paragraph, if I may. I have broached a daring proposition which I'll develop more fully later on. Which is, "When we have sufficient knowledge of how nonviolence works

and can think of the appropriate way to mobilize it, it can be used to make obsolete the scourge of war.”

We’ve seen half or so of that answer with our discussion of Prague Spring and Civilian Based Defense. We’re going to see more of it later on. But the point that I’m mostly making here is that since nonviolence is a science, it should be susceptible to prediction and control – and it is. But you need to know what you can predict and what you cannot predict. And we’re used to thinking, “If we crank up nonviolence to this extent, we will see this much of result.” And it doesn’t really quite work that way and this is kind of parallel to the whole topic of Work Versus “Work.”

The way it does work is when you use nonviolence, things get better. And we experience this so many ways. I was once part of a group that was convened by the Bishop of Oakland. We were responding to the Bishop’s – American Catholic Bishop’s Challenge – God’s Challenge and our response about the possibility of just war, which has now been revoked. So I was meeting with weapons scientists and with theologians and other professors.

And there was one person who was working in the weapons lab I’ll never forget. He gave me trouble all the time. And everything I said he would contradict. It was almost like what they say about Jinna, he had a problem for every solution that I came up with. But one day his guilt showed. He said – speaking as a Catholic – he said, “I guess we’ve been on the wrong side of this for 2000 years and I bear terrific responsibility.” And I said, “No, Bill, I’m not going to let you take all the blame. We’re all in this together. This is a responsibility we all share.” End of conversation.

Well, I thought was the end of it, but a couple of weeks later there was a meeting and I really wanted to be invited to this meeting because this was a meeting with funders. And I wasn’t invited. My perpetual search for funding was deeply grieved. And I asked folks later what had happened in the meeting and what had happened was that the team who went to meet with the funders sat down and had a quick discussion before they went in. And this fellow, Bill, he said to the rest of them, “What would Michael say if he were here?”

So it has happened so often in life and in nonviolence in particular, that when you do the right thing, you have positive results. You remember we made this point in connection with Gaviotans way back in Chapter 1, that because they chose nonviolence, all kinds of good things resulted. And I think it’s worth emphasizing this because we are constantly approaching – like gun control and issues like that – with this unrealistic expectation that if we take away half the guns it’ll reduce half the homicides or something like that.

Or can we identify the people – this is what really hurts us, I believe – can we identify the people who are going to go over the edge and commit mayhem of some kind and stop them before we get there. And the answer is, “No. We can never do that.” But we can predict that if we increase the violence that goes into our culture, there will be more violent episodes.

So it’s by way of trying to refocus us on the question that we can resolve that I make this point at the end of the chapter. So let’s reflect on that and next time we meet, we’ll be talking about, in a

way, a much more positive set of considerations and that is how to build the world we want through nonviolence.

[End of recording 00:04:58]

[Michael's Big Claim about Nonviolence Daily Metta](#)

Hi. So we're now starting a new chapter, Chapter 5. And the title of it is, "A Way out of Hell." And I don't quite remember, but I think I was probably thinking of that impressive scene at the end of Attenborough's Gandhi film where a man is stricken with guilt because he has killed a child and he says, "I know I'm going to hell." But Gandhi says, "I know a way out of hell," and tells him that he should adopt a Muslim child and raise him as his own.

I was sitting with a friend of mine from the Peace Movement this third or so time that I saw the film. And my friend was stunned. He almost couldn't speak after that scene. And he said, "I had never realized how shrewd the old man was." And he was shrewd, not in the sense of being cunning and not in the sense of being manipulative, but in the sense of his incredible insight.

So one of Gandhi's great discoveries which has been underappreciated up until now by us – us in the movement toward peace – is his discovery of constructive program. And it's this discovery that started extremely early in his career, the first year, in fact, that he was politically active - 1894. There's something, again, that I had a hunch about this, that intuitively building what you want fits better into a nonviolent framework than obstructing what you don't want, though both are necessary. And sure enough, Martin Luther King said, "It is important to non-cooperate with evil as important as it is to cooperate with good." Cooperating with good should have a kind of priority once we begin to understand that nonviolence is a positive force.

So I start the chapter with a story. My good friend, a Palestinian/American Mubarak Awad was taking in my nonviolence course at Berkeley and pointed out that when the first intifada began – I think probably 83 – they noticed. Mubarak is a psychologist and very interested in youth and children. He noticed that as soon as the Palestinian youth in the West Bank had the opportunity to participate in this uprising, which gave them dignity and gave them meaningful work, immediately, they stopped taking drugs and stopped abusing alcohol. The exact same demographic down in Gaza where they did not have this opportunity, they just went right on with the drugs and the alcohol.

And let me read you one of my favorite paragraphs from the book. I always read this when I do book readings. "You may be wondering at this point what I'm leading up to. Am I saying that the way to get rid of the drug problem is by a nonviolent revolution? Of course not. What I'm saying is much more outrageous. As far as I can see, we can get rid of all problems with a nonviolent revolution. Not just drugs, not even just crime itself, just about everything but death and taxes." That's on Page 132.

And I make a promise that if we start from the streets of Ramallah – one of the cities which was the headquarters of the intifada – and Beit Sahour, which was another one, we can thread our way to the answer through this question. Share with you very briefly a recent example, way too

recent to be in the book. There was a tough school in Boston, very tough. And principals were just leaving. And a young fellow came in to be principal of this school. Everyone told him, “You’re crazy. You’re stopping your career before it’s even started. Nobody survives in this place.”

Well, what he did was so counterintuitive from the normal framework. The first thing he did on becoming principal of the school was he let go of the entire security staff. And then with the money he saved from that, he started an art program – restarted an art program that had to be shut down to hire all of these police and cameras and so forth. And the result? Within a very short time this went from one of the worst schools in Boston to one of the best.

So for a while now we will have the great delight of working with that logic and figuring out how we can build it into institutions that will create a nonviolent future.

[End of recording 00:5:14]

The MEANING of nonviolence Daily Metta

Hello everyone. Just last month I saw on the Web a very interesting article by a man named Schumacher who talked about the demoralizing rise of depression in our country. And he said that most of this being misdiagnosed. That it isn’t really depression. It’s the word that I used before. It’s demoralization. And that civilization wide we’re going through some kind of crisis which has often been called, “A spiritual crisis.”

And at the heart of that crisis is a severe lack of meaning – which is why I was so excited about that story about the youth in the West Bank were able to drop drug-taking – which you can imagine, this is a powerful addiction – and we’re going to meet with that term again – they were able to drop that when they got their hands on something meaningful to do. And I’m leading up to the point which I’m sure will not surprise any of you, that I think that nonviolence is the most meaningful thing that we can do.

And in that sense, again, it constitutes the most effective, the most efficient, and powerful solution to all of the problems that we’re facing. So I wanted to give you a recent quote that I heard from a remarkable individual and then read two quotes that are not quite as recent from people that I recorded in the book.

The recent one is from a really remarkable fellow. I’m write in the process of trying to get in touch with him. His name is Ali Abu Awad. Not related to Mubarak Awad, to my knowledge. But he is a Palestinian and suffered very much in the occupation. He was severely wounded. He and his mother were imprisoned for a while. And tragically enough, his brother was killed. And he was a fighter. He was fighting the Israelis with conventional – with the normal means. But he went to a meeting one time where Israelis who were having the similar deprivation. They had lost a loved one and Palestinians like himself who had lost loved ones were sharing stories.

And he made such a remarkable and simple observation. He said, “It was the first time that he ever saw Israelis cry.” And that touched him. It rehumanized the Israelis in his eyes. And he

completely changed around to nonviolent resistance, renounced armed struggle, and started an organization which my friends tell me now has something like 10,000 people in it. But he said a remarkable thing in the course of a TED talk that he actually gave in Jerusalem – TEDx.

And what he said was, “I define nonviolence as the art of being a human being.” The art of being a human being, which is what gives it such depth of meaning for us. Now if we turn back to the era when “Search” was published – I’m happy to say this is already no longer true – but a research program surveyed the brightest young people in the United States. It found them overwhelmingly materialistic with an unprecedented concern with money, power, and status and big declines involving altruistic interests and social concerns. At the moment, those young people whom we now call, “Millennials,” had been reawakened. So I’m happy to say that this isn’t true anymore, but it does show us that without some sense of agency, some sense of dignity, some sense of meaning and purposeful work, people sink in a very bad state, indeed. And that nonviolence is probably the most efficient way to get all of those things – dignity, meaning, and purposeful work.

Nonviolence has taken the form called, “Protective accompaniment,” in many parts of the world, where trained people – often volunteers – go into areas of serious conflict where certain individuals have received death threats – credible death threats – and accompany them. They just stay with them 24/7 and they’re in touch with the wider world. So they’re like putting eyes and ears on those people. And it’s been remarkably effective in preventing the assassination of these people.

Peace Brigades International was the group that carried this out most systemically in Central America. And one of my friends from Marin County here was with PBI, that went into a village in Nicaragua to document low intensity conflict and see what the Hondurans faced – the Contras based in Honduras were doing in Nicaragua. And when they came back and debriefed they realized that every village they had gone to had not experienced violence while they were there. And so they decided they needed to go back. And it was terrifying.

And so I asked Sue, who, you know, just Marin County health worker – I said, “Sue, why aren’t you scared?” And she said that she was terrified until she got back on the ground. She was working with an organization called, “Witness for Peace.” And how come she wasn’t afraid? “The only way I can explain it is I felt I was in the hands of God. Not safe, that I wouldn’t be hurt. But that I was where I was supposed to be doing what I was supposed to be doing.”

Let me emphasize that. It’s not that nonviolence gives you guarantee that you won’t be hurt. You’re being hurt anyway, right? You’re just now using that hurt, that risk of hurt in a more effective way. And then she makes an additional point that I want to leave you with today, “I was where I was supposed to be doing what I was supposed to be doing. And this can be addictive. Maybe that’s why we kept going back.” So once we again we have stumbled upon a force which is as powerful as the addictive force of drugs.

So let’s that let sink in and we’ll move on further with constructive program and especially in the form of restorative justice next time.

[End of recording 00:07:26]

Restorative Justice the Key Daily Metta

Hello everyone. We are getting into one of my favorite topics. It had become even more favorite since I wrote “Search for a Nonviolent Future” and that is restorative justice because I actually believe that we can see a trajectory, three giant steps to peace I sometimes call it. Because we can have restorative justice in the school system, the amount of criminalization of kids in school has gotten much, much worse since I wrote “Search.”

And I remember hearing a talk from Van Jones who pointed out that in a certain school in Oakland, the minute there’s a little bit of a tussle kids are hustled off into a police car and there’s a better computer in that police cruiser than there is in the school. So the school to prison pipeline has become a meme since then. So overcoming that, we could build restorative justice in the schools. And when we’ve done that and when we’ve explained why it works – mainly because we are body, mind, and spirit and so forth – the whole New Story – then we can enhance the budding movement towards restorative justice in the prison system. When we’ve done that – and who knows how long that would take, the change would be so profound that I think we’d be well positioned to extend the same logic to the war system.

So get restorative justice into the schools, then get it into the prison system across the board, using all the indigenous resources from Navajo people on down to New Zealand and so forth. And then when that’s all built and we know why it’s working, tackle the war system.

So I started off in this section by talking about the, “War on Drugs.” And quoting from Ruth Morris who was an author who wrote a book called, “Penal Abolition,” getting rid of the prison system altogether. She says, “Our whole criminal justice system,” I’m on Page 137. “Our whole criminal justice system, not just the War on Drugs is,” and now I’m directly quoting from Ruth Morris, “An expensive, unjust, immoral, failure.” An expensive, unjust, immoral failure because it’s based on the wrong logic.

It ignores the source of the problem which are the cultural forces that propel people into crime and drugs such as we were just talking about recently, the lack of meaning in their life. And then we have succeeded in pushing some of those people over the line, we try to catch them and punish them which feeds them back into that system and makes things a little bit worse. And in some ways it would be so easy to break into this cycle and change their logic.

Since writing “Search for a Nonviolent Future” I participated in a program which was educating inmates in San Quentin Prison out here. It was a very interesting experience I’d like to tell you about some time, but I found out on inquiry that the rate of recidivism, as we call it, the rate at which people are going to recommit crimes and get themselves re-arrested after they’re released – in that group.

Now mind you, these men had been sentenced to 16 years to life. So we’re talking about people who had committed homicide, in some cases more than one. So these were, you know, serious offenders. I’m not calling them criminals because Gandhi said, “Don’t use that word. Don’t label

anybody as a criminal.” Okay, but they committed a very serious offense and they were in San Quentin for a long, long time. The rate of recidivism in this group was 2%.

Now you may not really quite appreciate what that figure represents. Because if they were not getting this course – and we were just talking to them about one thing or another. I, of course, was giving them a lecture on nonviolence. Other people were talking about Shakespeare and what have you. But normally outside of that kind of restorative program the rate of recidivism nationwide in the U.S. is 74%. So coming down from 74% to 2% just by treating people with a certain amount of dignity.

After all, as we saw from James Gilligan, Dr. James Gilligan, psychiatrist – the main thing that propels people into violent crime is a sense that they’ve been humiliated, a loss of a sense of dignity. Obviously, the way to restore that is to give them some dignity and to treat them as people who can learn, who have a mind, who have some intellectual curiosity. It just is almost magical.

So I talk about the fact that Martin Luther King and his famous Riverside Church speech, possibly the speech that got him assassinated, I’m sorry to say, because he turned his attention to the war system and that couldn’t be tolerated. Anyway, in that speech he said – let me quote his exact words. “Though we might prefer it otherwise, we must choose in this crucial moment of history.”

Now what Martin was talking about at that point was the Vietnam War – 1967. And I don’t think we chose. We didn’t make the right choice. It was exiting from Vietnam was forced on us. But I think we have another moral dilemma which would work as well. It’s as critical. And that is the enormous rate of criminal justice – I think I’ve heard that 2 million Americans at any given time are in that criminal justice pipeline at some stage or another. So it’s now called, “Mass incarceration.” That title wasn’t around when I wrote the book.

But mass incarceration is confronting us with the same kind of opportunity that the Vietnam War confronted us with. That is the opportunity to ask ourselves what is causing this problem and what is the sane way to solve the problem, bringing in nonviolent logic? We also talked about this being a kind of *sva-deshi* for America because if we could solve that problem here – as I said with my Three Giant Steps – if we could solve that problem here we would be very strongly positioned to solve that problem with regard to international conflict – war.

It’s exactly the same logic that is working against us in both of these areas. And I happen to think that the mass incarceration problem is more tractable. We can get our hands on it more effectively than the war problem simply because, for one thing, it’s closer to home. We’re developing this thing right in our own society, in our own culture.

And then finally, along about Page 139, 140, I tried something which was quite a cute trick back in those days which was to print out an email that I had gotten. You can see the different typeface, very slick technology going on there. It was about two men who were poachers in an Argentine forest and doing very, very harmful things to the animals and to nature in this area.

And the authorities had a – really faced with a problem. How were they going to catch these two guys?

I suppose in the back of their minds they knew that if they caught them and imprisoned them, four more would come up from the same community because these people are destitute and this is their only resource. So for some reason the authorities in this case hit upon what might seem a very counterintuitive approach. So take these two fellows who are poaching and make them the game wardens – which they did. And it worked brilliantly.

Well, for one thing, of course, they knew the forest so they knew who was doing what and what needed protecting. But much more importantly, instead of making enemies out of them and treating them as offenders, bring them over onto your side. And there's a famous restorative justice activist in the U.S. named Bo Lozoff. And I quote him – he has a very simple formula that can help us reorient our approach to criminal justice. And he says, “What we're saying now to offenders is, “Hey, get out of here.” And we throw them in prison. What we should be saying is, “Hey, get back in here.” You know, they have felt alienation from society. We want to bring them back in.” And that's exactly what they did with these two men, Cabrera and Cardoso. And I'll go on shortly to discuss a more domestic example of the same logic.

[End of recording 00:10:19]

Eyes on the Prize Daily Metta

Hello everyone. We are about in the middle of “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” And I've been talking about a very healing mechanism that is, in fact, beginning to creep its way into our social fabric. And that is restorative justice. I recently attended a meeting in Santa Rosa here which was a restorative justice going on in a school system. And I have never seen a meeting that big in the Peace Movement before. There must have been 300 – 400 people there.

And it was so heartwarming, what was being done. There was one young fellow who had been caught just spraying graffiti. And so he was told – I'm going to say sentenced – but he was put into this restorative pipeline, had conversations with the people whom he had offended, the whole community is involved. And he was told to go out and clean up some of those sites and some of the graffiti that other people had put on. They asked him to put in, I think, 25 hours. By the time of this meeting he had put in 50 hours voluntarily, and he was looking to do some more.

So when you play it right, you can bring about that marvelous conversion that we saw with those two poachers down, I believe, in Patagonia, Cabrera and Cardoso. That if you think people who are involved in offending in a particular area and give them responsibilities in that area, they can often really rise to those responsibilities. And it's wonderfully restorative for them, and, of course, for the community that they deal with.

Another example that I talked about took place in Los Angeles where a person, again, went against intuition. Which I guess what we're really saying, against the conditioning of our culture, and had a difficulty. She had a lot of disabled youth to take care of. She needed people to take care of them, wheel them around in their wheelchair. And what she did is an incredible thing.

She turned to gang members. And so in other words, she took the most dangerous people in LA and put them in charge of the most vulnerable. Okay? Counterintuitive. Worked brilliantly.

Those former gang members were thrilled. I'm not saying this is going to "work" – remember, "work" versus work – I'm not saying this is going to "work" 100% of the time, but the fact that it works at all, any percentage of the time is telling us something about human nature that we should be learning from and developing. And as a matter of fact, since I wrote "Search" I've learned a lot more about restorative justice in schools and about how people who, again, are involved in offending against society are often doing it because they feel alienated. You give them a chance to feel that they have a role which connects with the question of meaning that we've been discussing a little while ago. And they can rise to the occasion.

One recent example, there was a very, very tough school in Boston. It was so tough that principals were only lasting there for a short time. A young fellow applied for the job. Everyone told him, "You're crazy. You're ending your career right at the beginning." He said, "No, let me try it." So he comes into this school and the first thing he did, again, this wonderful counter-conditional – counter conditioning, but intuitively correct. Once you reorient your thinking towards nonviolence, the first thing he did was fire the entire security staff. And with the money he saved from that, he reinstated the art program.

And what do you know? In a short time this becomes one of the most violence free schools in Boston, not being from one of the most violent ones. Well, I don't want to stress this too much, but it's both inspiring and very, very instructive, I think. It tells something about human nature and about people who commit violence and the way that we can get them around it, get them out of it.

I quote from another experiment that's really rather widespread, which is people want to do student mediation to resolve conflicts in schools. They take the toughest, most troublesome kids who are making them the most trouble, and make them the mediators. And again, usually, works great. And one of these kids, I've quoted as saying, "There is a goldmine inside me and I didn't even know about it."

So this is very typical of how nonviolence works. You assume that there's a goldmine in everyone. Recently, I've been reading statements from the early days of the Civil Rights Movement where people said, "What we're trying to do is raise the conscience of America and we're finding out that they don't have one. Well, that is the wrong attitude. It may look like they don't have one and that may go on for a long time and it may hurt and may be very serious.

But you have to keep your eyes on your prize. Okay, we're reorienting that phrase now. The real prize is that goldmine inside of the other human being. That's the prize that we should be keeping our eyes on, always in nonviolence. Once you know that that's there, you can build a strategy around it and you're on your way to success.

I'll mention one other thing right here, and that is that sometimes people jump into this restorative idea from a kind of ideological perspective. They say, "Since you are put in prison, you've been victimized by society. All victims are innocent therefore they don't recognize that

these people often have very serious problems.” And we’re not saying that we can go to a prison free, a penal abolition system in one big leap.

So I quote this story of Norman Mailer who took one of these people out and let them, you know, live with him in his home. And in a very short time, he had killed somebody again. And shortly after that, when he was rearrested, he actually hanged himself in prison. So Gandhi once said, “Nonviolent action, if it is not combined with the head and the heart will not have the desired effect.”

So we’ve been talking about heart all along, but there’s head also. And Gandhi also said, “We must be as cunning as serpents and as gentle as doves.” So sometimes people think that nonviolence is being Mr. Goodguy. And once you put a smile on your face, you don’t have to do anything else.” But in fact, you have the opportunity to be as strategic or more so with nonviolence than you are with violence. The only difference being that your strategies are going to work. Until next time.

[End of recording 00:08:20]

[Restorative Justice begins in our mind Daily Metta](#)

Greetings everyone. Last time, at our last discussion, I repurposed the phrase, “Eyes on the prize,” and oriented it towards the gold mine within the human being. We’re going to continue with that theme a little bit and with the whole idea of restorative justice. What I want to do is to talk about its institutionalization. So I’ve been talking about individual examples here and there.

And at the time that I wrote “Search for a Nonviolent Future” the most prominent example of an institution that comes outside the mainstream, it’s sort of a grassroots institution, but is an institution who’s AVP, the Alternative to Violence Project. And the remarkable thing about it was that it was prisoner initiated. It wasn’t people outside the walls who thought we ought to go in and help these guys.

But these prisoners in Greenhaven State Prison in Upstate New York actually called upon a Quaker group outside to come in and give them some workshops to give them some skills. So since then, nonviolent communication and many other organizations have been working on giving people verbal skills so they don’t have to devolve into physical abusive conflict. AVP has spread to almost every country in the globe and other organizations have taken up the same challenge.

In a particularly interesting case, and there are now two documentary films on this. One is called, “Doing Time, Doing Vipassana.” Another is called, “The Dharma Brothers.” Very interesting case is teaching meditation in prisons. Because I think if education, as I was saying before, the mere assumption that a person is educable, that they can learn something, restores a certain amount of their dignity. Meditation does the same thing, perhaps even a little more.

If you say to a person that you have a capacity within yourself which you haven’t yet discovered, that you are not a helpless frozen individual, the result of your genes or hormones or whatever, I

think that immediately has a restorative effect, especially if you're in a culture that appreciates that sort of thing. In the first film that I mentioned, "Doing Time, Doing Vipassana," is about vipassana meditation in a very crowded prison in North India. And if you see that film you'll see the tremendous impact that it has on the men to be given a little bit of instruction in meditation.

Well, okay, on Page 147 I quote from Lila Rucker, who's another restorative justice advocate and scholar who makes a very interesting comment which I think we can use in this area and many others. She says, and I quote, "The sense of worth," she's at the University of South Dakota, professor there – or was when I wrote "Search for a Nonviolent Future." "This sense of worth is tied to our sense of connectedness to other human beings."

Hence the brilliance of Bo Lozoff's little formula. Instead of saying, "Get out of here," saying, "Get back in here." I think that's something pretty profound to be aware of in our human nature. That I can never build my dignity by separating myself from other people. This is where dictators go wrong. And I remember a former president of the United States – no names please – four letter name – talking to a bunch of very, very wealthy donors and saying, "Outside everybody considers you the elite, but I consider you my base." In other words, I am the tippy top of the pyramid. And he did not realize that he was actually downgrading himself in his own mind when he was doing that.

But more to the point, putting people in isolation and there's an appalling amount of this going on now in prisons, putting people in solitary confinement. It's exactly the opposite of what we need to do to have a restorative system.

[End of recording 00:04:59]

[What will make restorative justice work Daily Metta](#)

I want to say one more thing that wasn't in "Search for a Nonviolent Future" about how prisons work as an environment. A colleague of mine at Stanford, Philip Zimbardo, carried out an experiment which is quite famous now. They've even done a film about it called a, "Stanford Prisoner Experiment," I think – where he took Stanford students and arbitrarily divided them into prisoners and guards and had them just act out this role of prisoner/guard for a while.

And within a short period of time, I think we're talking about one week, one of his coworkers who then became his wife – and taught at Berkeley for a while – she said, "We have to stop this experiment." Because the "guards" were being so sadistic. And it reminded me on a much lighter vein of anecdote that my mentor at Berkeley, Allan Renoir, told me. That he was on the set as a little boy when his father was filming *Great Expectations*, WWI set film. And again, the extras came in and they were given different uniforms, perfectly arbitrarily, depending on what size you were when you got up to the window.

So you had a few men who were in "officers" uniforms. And after a couple of weeks on the set when there was a lunch break the officers would congregate all together. And if one of the "enlisted" men made the mistake of walking by an officer would say, "My good man, get be a carafe of red, will you?" Of course, he immediately obeyed. So this is by way of seeing once

again that merely constructing a system in which some human beings are put in cages and other human beings are in charge of them is a prescription for segregation, separateness, and disaster. And as people said in the Civil Rights Movement, “There is no such thing as separate but equal. Separate implies unequal.”

So finally, I started talking about the fact that the way our present system works, it waits until it’s too late. It waits until people have taken to offensive behavior and then tries to deal with them. And after all this talking about the restorative justice system that could be brought in first to the schools and then to the prisons, I then have to say, “But you know what? This is not really going to be enough.” We have to operate on the social forces that are causing people to feel so alienated in the first place.

And let me give you a more contemporary example now, the question of gun control. We recently have been through an event where Democratic members of Congress staged a sit-in in Congress and on our radio program we devoted a whole show to that because it’s such an interesting event. It brings so much to light about nonviolence.

But at the end of the show, I made this point, that people are talking technological solutions. You know, we have smart guns that only the owner can fire them. They’re talking, which is a little bit more intelligent about legal solutions where the U.S. would start acting like most civilized countries and make certain access to weapons illegal. That’s okay, well, and good, but the one thing that nobody has talked about yet is the human solution.

Why are so many Americans reaching out for guns? We now have more guns in this country than we have people. Why? What it is driving them and what could get them over that? So I guess I’d like to leave you with two thoughts today. Think back to those conversion experiences of Cabrera and Cordoso and those kids who were the biggest troublemakers, who become the biggest mediators. See if you can think of some examples of your own. And then think about the question, “What is in that causes people to feel they need to possess guns?” I know fear, of course, is going to come up right away. But what we’re leading up to is this discussion of what is real security. So think about that if you will, and I will be back with you next week.

[End of recording 00:05:15]

Restorative Justice as Constructive Program

Hello everyone. I’ve been getting awfully nice comments every now and then on the book, “Search for a Nonviolent Future,” and I’d like to hear from you also who are watching, sharing these discussions with us – joining – because we’re about halfway through the book now and we could adjust, change course and make things useful for you.

So the subject that I’ve been talking about is restorative justice and the role that education can play because education is just sort of a natural antidote to incarceration for various reasons. And I quote a Greek proverb on Page 152, “Όταν ανοίγει μια σχολή, κλείνει μια φυλακή.” Which means, “Every time you open a prison, you close a school.” [Search for a Nonviolent Future reads, “When a school opens, a prison closes.”] But that lead to a little bit of a discussion which

unfortunately still has to be done which is what is the state of education itself. And from the time when I entered the world of academia until the time that I retired, some of that demoralization that we talked about awhile back has really hit the educational system pretty hard.

And so if you ask people today what are you doing here either teaching or learning or being a janitor or whatever, you'll tend to get an answer that it's all about money. So the idea that there is a goldmine within us and that we can develop it through various techniques and that education might be one of them, that has been lost. I'm speaking in broad, generalizations, but I think that's something that we all need to take into account. And well, maybe we'll say a good deal more about how to restore education itself as we go on.

But I have been talking about meaning and I said – and I want to repeat it because it's so important – that there's almost no way as effective to restore a sense of meaning to life and to restore a sense of human dignity and to restore a sense of human community. All those three things fitting together in a very intimate way. There's almost no more effective way to do that. Maybe I'll take out the “almost.” I know of no more effective way to do that than with nonviolence.

Of course, the minute you begin to think in terms of nonviolence you see that there is a long, long way to go and you can be demoralized. And that's why I'm bringing in all of these examples of people who have accomplished things through nonviolence and showing how well it works.

So the last thing talked about in this section of the book is worth considering and enlarging upon a little bit. And that is that mostly social reformers who have a nonviolent spirit – and I would definitely count Archbishop Romero, Martin Luther King, and very conspicuously Mahatma Gandhi. They tend to be not against stuff so much as they are for some principles which are being overlooked or blocked. And then eventually if you go about doing these reforms you will come into conflict with the system.

Though I didn't mention here at this point in the book, what we're actually talking about is two different kinds or two different levels of what we call constructive program. Constructive program means primarily building what you need rather than waiting for other people to do it for you. Rather than protesting or along with protesting against things that you consider wrong, you yourself build what you consider right.

So two great examples from Gandhi's campaigns are the Charka or the Cloth Spinning Campaign. Maybe later on we can even bring you some khadi that we've made in the Metta office just for a little background here. And the other one was the Salt Satyagraha because both cloth and salt in different ways had been taken away from the Indians and were being remanufactured and sold back to them by the British, which is just a classic way that colonialism works. And what we do nowadays is you don't even have to conquer the country militarily in order to set up this kind of dependency.

And very often what a nonviolent actor will do is try to overcome that dependency by creating things. However, these two campaigns, khadi and salt had very different effects because nothing

was illegal about manufacturing your own cotton cloth, but it was definitely illegal to gather your own salt. So constructive program can be done in such a way that it stays completely under the radar, but there is a timing. Again, get back on this question of strategy. There is a time at which it becomes important for it to break through and enter into confrontation with the forces of opposition. And when you do that in this systematic way, not by being primarily against, but being primarily for, it puts the onus on the opposition that they are the ones who are obstructing.

Recently, in the episode that I talked about a while ago that took place back in June in Congress where Democratic representatives under the leadership of John Lewis staged a sit-in on the floor of the House of Representatives to bring about gun control legislation. It made the Republicans visible as the obstructing forces in that event. So that is how constructive program works. So far we've been talking about building up restorative justice in a way which is absolutely non-confrontational.

If we keep on with it, a point will come when people who are afraid and clinging to the old system who don't have the imagination to see this, they will start to push back against the development of restorative justice. And that is going to be a very, very interesting crisis. Thank you very much. Until we have our next discussion.

[End of recording 00:07:27]

[Gandhi's Secret Weapon Daily Metta](#)

Greetings everyone. We're back with "Search for a Nonviolent Future." And we are at a dramatic moment in the book. Because Chapter 6 deals with the signature contribution, if you will, of the Metta Center to the world of nonviolent action today. And that is to discover the importance of constructive program, the tremendous importance that Gandhi gave to it and to trace the development of his confidence in constructive program which he actually began in 1894, only the first year of his political activity in South Africa.

And I start this chapter with a rather dramatic little story about somebody coming to Gandhi in 1940 and saying, "What's it going to take to really get our freedom now?" And Gandhi says, "Phenomenal progress in spinning." So the rest of the chapter explores how and why he placed such a tremendous confidence in this constructive work. And now since "Search for a Nonviolent Future," back then we've enshrined the constructive program in the Road Map, a major offering of the Metta Center for strategy work.

And in-between personal empowerment and nonviolent resistance or Satyagraha, there's a belt called constructive program. And we propose that people move sequentially in a swadeshi way, in a way that goes from the inner resource to the outer work, that we go from personal empowerment to constructive program. And constructive program to resistance where it's needed.

And that each of these steps provides a kind of limiting factor on the next one. So if you're full of anger, you haven't done your personal empowerment, it'll limit the effectiveness of your nonviolent work, generally speaking. If you haven't first tried to do what you can for your own

community, it's going to be a limiting factor on your demanding somebody else do something for you. And some nonviolent thinkers actually believe that that's kind of an act of violence to say, "You've got to do this for me if you haven't first tried to do it yourself."

So for reasons that are very kind of deeply philosophical and also extremely concrete and practical, constructive program builds up to a very important role. And in another discovery that I made along the way, is that that famous comment that both Gandhi and King make about the psychological dynamic of nonviolence, where it comes from. That in many cases, it comes from anger which is converted into a creative response and not expressed as anger.

If you remember, King's way of putting that was, "We did not lead to outbursts of anger. We expressed anger under discipline for maximum effect." Well, constructive program is perfect for that because if you go from constructive program – sorry. If you go from anger to doing some constructive work, it's a beautiful conversion of that anger into a positive force.

So I'd like to read to you a couple of chunks from this conversation. "In terms of what we really need today," this is as true today as it was in Gandhi's day. "What we really need in terms of building the ferment and the dissatisfaction into a movement we need to have, first of all, a real grasp of the nonviolence principle." I'm on Page 166. "A real grasp of the nonviolent principle which will give us an articulate understanding of how to apply it." And you remember Gandhi saying, "Nonviolence is not the inanity it's been taken for. It may not be rocket science, but it is a science." "And we need some overall design. Some coherent but all embracing picture which would help us feel that we're all working together even if we're not working on the same project." So it was this breakthrough, this insight in this section of the book where we're studying constructive program that led finally to the development of Road Map.

And I'd like to just close this episode with this episode of Gandhi's life in 1928 where he visited the mills in Ahmedabad in Gujarat. And he stood on the floor of the mills and actually wept. So trying to penetrate what was going on in his mind, you and I would have just seen these noisy clanking machines. But he saw, if you will, the structural violence and the greed that put them there, the city dweller exploiting the simple villager, the impersonal corporation replacing what had been a wide network of personal relationships. The craze for profit overwhelming the dignity of work. He saw all of that.

And so his constructive program aimed, first of all, at restoring those natural decentralized human-based, human scale systems. And he once said very forcefully, "If you think that you're going to get India's freedom and then rebuild India's culture, you are dreaming." It's actually the other way around. By rebuilding India's culture, then it would be relatively easy to push back against the last inhibitions, obstructions to our freedom.

So that is an introduction to this all important subject of constructive program. Until next time.

[End of recorded material 00:06:59]

Gandhi's Basics of Constructive Program Daily Metta

Greetings. We're continuing to explore this very deep concept of constructive program and I mentioned swadeshi last time. The idea of building from within to wider circles without. And people complained about the primary project within constructive program about the hand spinning khadi, the cotton was not as fashionable, was not as comfortable as the manufactured stuff that they were getting from the U.K.

And Gandhi said to – I'm now on Page 169 – Gandhi said, "We must be prepared to be satisfied with such cloth as India can produce. Even as we are thankfully content with such children as God gives us. I have not known a mother throwing away her baby even though it appears ugly to the outsider. And khadi," that is handspun cotton, "is the concrete and central fact of swadeshi." Swadeshi being a cornerstone or a core principle in Gandhian economics. And we do touch on Gandhian economics a little bit right on this page.

Gandhian economics is a subject that I just love. It's the only kind of economics I understand. And I mentioned the fact that there is a qualitative difference in his scheme between the basic needs, food, clothing, and shelter and anything else that's less essential. Actually, there's a three-fold division in his concept of possessions. Food, clothing, and shelter are fundamental and they are the responsibility of society for every member of that society. So if you have a person going hungry, your economy is a failure. And imagine what kind of comment that is even on America's wealthy economy today.

The second rung is tools, what you need for your work. Society doesn't have the obligation to provide you with that, but you every right to acquire it. And above and beyond that, anything above and beyond that is superfluous. And it's a good way of organizing our thoughts about what we really need. Now our economy today is based on wants and not on needs. And that is something of a disaster. Just going from a wrong human perspective.

And then on the bottom of this page, I talk about the very great practical importance of concreteness in nonviolence. Because we have a tendency to rely on the symbolic. And the ideal combination is something that is concrete, but has symbolic valance. And the charkha or the spinning wheel that you see behind me was very good for that because it was very real, very concrete. He had Kallenbach design a wheel for him that he could use even when he was traveling. And yet, it was symbolic because the way the wheel is symbolic anywhere and was particularly symbolic in India where it had represented the wheel of the law as you see in Buddhism.

So we start to list then all of the things that made charkha such a brilliant discovery. And that's what we'll go into a little bit more next time.

[End of recording 00:04:08]

Constructive Action vs. Constructive Program Daily Metta

Hi everyone. We are still talking about charkha and that's not a bad thing to do. It deserves this kind of emphasis because if we could understand the brilliance of what it was or what it did,

what it represented, we really have a handle on how we can move things forward in our own situation. And I'm going to talk about that in a little while.

But I had mentioned the fact that charkha was very real with symbolic resonance. And that's kind of the idea. On Pages 170, 171 we walk about the other reasons why it was so powerful. For one thing, everybody could do it. It wasn't, you know, man woman and child can practice nonviolence. And this was a concrete way of expressing that. It meant that you were building community. In fact, you are building networks of communities because you had felt sensed connection between the cotton growers, the carders, the spinners, the weavers, the salespeople, and the customers.

So it was rebuilding Indian society to start with this product that everybody could do. You could do charkha every day and that's important too because so often when we go out and have a nonviolent episode it's on a special occasion we have to gather people together and it sometimes is a flash in the pan. But it's like the steady humming of the wheel that was going on day and night, was like tolling the death knell of colonialism. So you had this continuity and social space. Everybody was integrated in a network and you had this continuity in time which really gives us a sense of what makes nonviolence work.

You know in Central America, South America they have this term, "*Firmeza permanente*," which means, "Determination – unyielding determination." And the charkha was not just a symbol, but an expression of that. charkha – and this is a significant aspect of constructive program, it was proactive. So in a way, it was responding to the fact that the British had taken away their cloth industry, but you weren't waiting for the British to do something, you were doing it yourself.

So the right formula was first, make your own cloth, then burn British cloth. You see? If you ask people to throw away their British goods without having their own goods to replace them, it just would be impractical. It wouldn't work. So there's an interesting side note here was burning British cloth a form of property destruction? And I think it wasn't because it was their own property that they were destroying.

You know, they were not breaking into stores and taking the British goods and throwing them out. It was – well, it was kind of in between that and the Boston tea party. But burning your own cloth was, again, something very concrete, but extremely powerful in its symbolic resonance because in India there's always been this idea of renouncing into the fire.

And finally, spinning was aimed directly at the colonial system. The way the colonial system worked was the colonizer had to get in between the Indians and their natural resources. Remanufacture them, send them back to them. So this will immediately put us in mind of salt and of – as well as khadir. And that leads me to my final point for this conversation. And that is there is a gradation – and I hadn't really noticed this when I wrote "Search for a Nonviolent Future" – noticed it later that there's a gradation between strictly non-confrontational constructive program and confrontational constructive program.

So charkha was non-confrontational. Even burning British cloth it was, you know, a powerful statement, but it wasn't illegal. However, when it came to manufacturing salt, they escalated and I went and raided the salt pans, as I'm sure you're quite familiar from the Attenborough film. So this shows you that there's something implicit in constructive program that is actually an affront and attack on an unjust system. And it came out in that transition from charkha to salt.

This is important because sometimes we think just doing something constructive is constructive program. It isn't unless it has the potential to disestablish something that's part of the obstructive – of the oppressive system.

All right, well, that's a lot to think about and I think we've illustrated how much was involved in this simple project and why Gandhi felt it was so incredibly important.

[End of recording 00:06:11]

Constructive Strategy Daily Metta

Hi again. So we're still talking about constructive program and we're still talking about Charkha. And I make the point on Page 172, "That Charkha only appeared non-confrontational." And I'm not sure I'm proud of this particular phrase, but I said, "It was really going for the colonial jugular." The colonial system depended on financial exploitation and this is where the Indians were saying we won't have any of that.

But, of course, it was not directed against the English personally. I have a quote here from Toynbee that I like very much. Arnold Toynbee, the British historian who said so well about Gandhi, "He made it impossible for us to go on ruling India. But at the same time, he made it possible for us to abdicate without rancor and without dishonor." This is critically important. I think it is the role of the nonviolent actor to give the opponent a graceful dignified way out. That, in a way, if you will, that's the emotional constructive program.

So if we're forcing somebody out or we're saying, "We won't take this from you." We'll also saying that this is impinging on your dignity to do this to us. Otherwise, you remember in the Philippines, they called nonviolence, [Ali-dung al] to offer dignity. And a classic example of this difference between the thing and the person comes up at the end of the Charkha episode on the next page where I talk about Gandhi's visit to the Lancashire Mills.

First of all, it was very typical of Gandhi, classic thing they said, "Don't go to Lancashire. The workers whom you have put out of work by boycotting British goods are very angry with you. My immediate reaction would have been, "Whew, yeah. Thanks for the warning." But that wasn't what he was like. On one occasion somebody said don't go to a particular village. The head man has vowed that he would actually kill you on sight.

Gandhi said, "Where is it? Let's go." Went right to the guy's house. Knocked on the door. The man opened it. You can imagine how startled he was. And Gandhi said to him, "I'm here to help you fulfill your vow." So the person actually started to strangle Gandhi in front of all these horrified people. And within less than a minute he had stopped and he fell at Gandhi's feet and

said, “This whole village is yours to command.” So that’s a very, very dramatic one on one episode.

But here we have him going to the Lancashire workers and patiently explaining to them why he was doing what he was doing, what kind of starvation they had in India which you did not have in Britain, even when you’re out of work. And he went on to say, “You must understand that we’re both victims. We’re both victims of an exploitive system. You’ve been roped into it in one way and it was delivered to us in another way.”

And so you have this famous photograph of Gandhi with these women in the Lancashire Mills, I call it the, “Hep, hep, hooray!” photograph because they’ve got their arm around him and they’re so happy with him and what he said. And there was one of the workers who said, “May I say, or need I say that I, as a Lancashire cotton working man who is to some extent suffering through the action of the Indian Congress leaders, have a profound admiration for Mr. Gandhi and a great many of my fellow workers share that spirit.” This is a wonderful little pastiche in which we can see the incredible power of nonviolence to convert the opponent. It’s like a concrete example of what Toynebee talked about.

Well, on that note, what I’d like to go on to talk about next is one of the simple concepts that Gandhi developed in the course of building his constructive program which is heart unity. Before I do that though I want to touch just one more moment on the fact that Charkha appeared non-confrontational, but actually was confrontational. Later on after writing *Search for a Nonviolent Future* we came up with a term for this. This is a stealth operation and you like to have those in nonviolence. The most famous one, perhaps, was the Salt Satyagraha where the British Viceroy literally cabled to London saying, “At the moment, I’m not losing at sleep over the salt campaign.” But in fact, little did he know, he was actually losing the whole empire.

So next time we will talk about heart unity and until then, let’s be thinking about what would be the Charkha for us? Thanks very much.

[End of recording 00:05:47]

Heart Unity Daily Metta

Hi everyone. So within the universe of constructive program Gandhi had a project called, “Heart unity,” and I’d like to land on that one a little bit. If you were to ask yourself what is the most agonizing problem going on in our country today I suppose you’d come up with one big one and one that’s very close to it. And the big one is racism. The differences and the conflicts and violence that’s happening between races in our country. It’s become really scary.

And the other one is the disparities in wealth which existed in Gandhi’s time. He pointed out to a Viceroy at one point that he, the Viceroy, was earning 5000 times more than an average Indian worker. But that’s gone to obscene proportions. In our day it was bad when I wrote “*Search for a Nonviolent Future*.” And it’s gotten worse and there doesn’t seem to be anything counteracting that trend really. It’s just going to take massive nonviolent resistance of the appropriate kinds.

And so heart unity was a brilliant concept that really embraces the division we've been talking about all along between what a person is doing to you and your respect for that person as a human being. We have one friend who calls this, "The two hands of nonviolence." I will not accept your injustice, but I am open to you as a human being.

So heart unity meant that you are able to find the essential human unity between yourself and anyone else despite any differences on the surface. Now some of those differences have to be resisted. They're unfair. They're unjust. But there's a fine line, but an extremely powerful one between resenting the advantage of another person and not accepting them as an injustice. So within Gandhi's economic scheme, for example, how would you approach the differences in wealth? Not by trying to level everybody out, because it's not just realistic.

Some people are more interested in acquiring wealth and more capable of doing it. What you wanted to do was bring in the concept of trusteeship. So that a wealthier person would regard his or her endowment as a trust that he or she needed to use for the good of the community. And so heart unity provides the basis of loving community which I say – which means, "Real community." You know, community without love is no community really.

So of the 18 projects in Gandhi's constructive program as a whole, almost five or six of them dealt directly with heart unity. That there must be unity between capital and labor, between, of course, the different religious communities, Hindu and Muslim. And that doesn't ever mean that a Muslim should become a Hindu or vice versa. But you would respect the other person and the other person's faith. So this hangs together with the very big concept of unity and diversity which seems to be difficult for us to understand, but it is critical that we understand it.

So the idea of heart unity provided a guideline for adjudicating these differences. For example, between the races. In my earlier incarnation as a folk singer in New York there was a song that we liked, but began to get suspicious of the words where it said, "There'll be no distinction there." [Singing] "There'll be no distinction there. There'll be no distinction there. And we'll all be white in that heavenly light," and so on and so forth. I think we rightly suspected that this was the wrong approach. And for us to resolve the issue of racism does not mean making the races the same. But it means having them have the same respect for themselves and for one another.

[End of recording 00:05:01]

[Heart Unity and Leadership--Daily Metta](#)

Now I have to stand corrected on one little point that I made on Page 175 because I said that Gandhi had been given dictatorial powers by the Indians as a general whole. And I was wrong about that. The reason I brought it up is that even differences of authority can be held within a concept of heart unity. So if you're the boss and I'm not, there's a fine line between my accepting that as a natural – well, let me put it this way, accepting it as a temporary arrangement where I've given you authority, let's see what you do with it.

And so for example, in the Mondragon Cooperatives in northern Spain there are managers, but anyone can become a manager. And if you don't do your managing job well, you are politely

escorted out and somebody else comes up into that position. So that even one of the most divisive differences of all, the difference in power, can be integrated into a heart unity framework.

So in that connection, I made the comment that Gandhi had been given dictatorial powers and I said this in public once in a meeting with Narayan Desai, Mahadev Desai's son, who's a wonderful human being. We lost him a few years ago. And he pointed out, "No, it was the media that said that. Congress never gave Gandhi dictatorial powers and he never would have accepted that idea.

But he was absolutely in control while the campaign was going on. He said, "I am your general as long as this campaign is going on." You cannot run a campaign the way we tried to run Occupy. But he said, "The minute you don't want me in this job, I'm out of here." So that said, I think we can understand the power of heart unity and again, by way of closing, I would invite us to think what would heart unity look like in our own personal lives. How would we find that fine line between not accepting an injustice and not feeling a loss of dignity because the injustice has been offered to us and definitely not offering humiliation or indignity to other people?

So think about that, if you will. And think about what would be the charkha for our comprehensive strategy, our coherent network of programs. I had an idea that came up in the course of writing, "Search for a Nonviolent Future," but I've modified it since then. So this is a real cliffhanger. Enjoy the book and the conversations and do some more next time.

[End of recording 00:03:27]

[Inner Culture of Nonviolence Daily Metta](#)

Greetings everyone. We are continuing "Search for a Nonviolent Future." We are in Chapter 6 where I'm talking about an all important topic which is taking charge of our own interior culture, you know, what goes on in our own head. And I quote the first line of a major Buddhist text, the Dhammapada, where in Sri Easwaran's translation it goes, "All that we are is the result of what we have thought.

In other words, if we take some control over our thought process and the content of our thoughts we are actually controlling our destiny. And to that extent, influencing the destiny of others for good or for ill. And I begin – I'm on Page 178, by the way. And I begin by touching on an issue that's very, very sore right now in the United States. And that is the issue of racial prejudice. And I'm happy to say that since the book came out a very important study has been done by two women at Princeton, Mary Wheeler and Susan Fisk.

And the background to this study is that if we were suddenly to flash on this screen that you're looking at, the face of a person from a different race, you would have a fight or flight reaction coming from the midbrain. So very, very deep, you know, below the cerebral cortex in the limbic system. It would activate. So unfortunately this means that what I was saying here about all racial prejudice just being conditioning that happens later in life, it's not entirely true. It's a little

bit confusing. But be that as it may, this negative reaction, fight or flight to a “different” person is very deep in the nervous system – in our central nervous system.

And these two women decided this can’t be the whole story. So they set up a very clever experiment, extremely simple, to try to override it and it worked beautifully. So what they did was the subject would sit down and instead of saying – just show the face, they would say, “Okay, the point of this study is we want you to guess whether this person likes coffee or tea or smooth peanut butter or crunchy peanut butter.”

And by golly, that limbic system did not fire off when they saw that face. So if you think about it for a minute – and innocently this study is called something like, “Breaking up Racial Stereotypes,” or something like that. It’s not hard to explain why this happens and that is because when you get down to those individual preferences you’re thinking of the human being that you’re looking at as a person, as an individual, and not as a member of a “class,” not as a, “type.” So what you are actually doing is rehumanizing that person in your own eyes.

And the good news is that we can all do this just by a matter of practice. When you see somebody, no matter what your instantaneous reaction is, you can just ask yourself, “I wonder kind of person he or she is. You know, does she like this that or the other thing?” And eventually this becomes a habit. So we’re going to talk now for the rest of this chapter and I’ll be re-joining you shortly about how these individual efforts to take charge of what goes on in your own consciousness can build out to an actual culture of nonviolence.

So stay tuned. Look forward to continuing with you soon.

[End of recording 00:03:58]

Constructive Program Review Daily Metta

Greetings everyone. Welcome back. And what I’d like to do now is wrap up our conversation on constructive program and ask ourselves what we can learn from it. You can read about the 18 projects. Some of them will be directly applicable to our own situation. Some will be applicable with a little bit of modification. For example, he approached the “drink evil” and for us it would be more like a “drug evil.”

Some will maybe not be applicable at all, but all will be applicable in spirit. For example, he talked about women and he talked about students and we are abusing students today in our civilization by burdening them with an impossible debt before they get out of our educational system. But I think the most important thing that we can learn is to do constructive program as well as we can before we do resistance.

Now that doesn’t mean that we don’t respond to urgent needs. Joanna Macy has this division that I find very convenient and very compelling. She says, “We must limit the worst of the damage.” We have to work on climate change, for example. We haven’t got the time to build up a whole opposite system. We should be building up a whole opposite system based on alternative

energies, but we must also be stopping the fracking, stopping the mountaintop removal, and things that are absolutely urgent to do.

But in general, do constructive program wherever we can, do constructive program when we can't do obstructive program. We can't do active resistance and be willing to go back to that quickly. So the big question then that I want to leave you with is what would be the equivalent of charkha? It's been almost impossible for us to think of a single project which is concrete, which is proactive, which everybody could do that can be done every day. And yet, would be really aimed at the disestablishment of the wrong system that we have today.

And the idea that I came up with when I wrote, "Search for a Nonviolent Future," was to repossess the mass media. And I still think that that's critical, but we refined it a little bit in the course of developing "Roadmap." So it's this idea that I want to leave you with, that the core idea feeling that has to change to get us into a new story, a new paradigm is the image of the human being, everything that we can do in any way to restore human dignity.

And, of course, this is not as concrete as spinning cotton. I wish it were. But our world is a little bit different and I can't think of any concrete single thing that we could do that would have the equivalent power, but everything that we could do to restore human dignity, and of course, nonviolence is a powerful way to do that – and to embed that new vision of a human being within an overall story where we are aware that we are mind, body, and spirit. We are not physical objects. We're not material beings doomed to compete for scarce resources. We're not separate from one another. And above all, that we are in charge of our own destiny and we have – we are now far from having completed the destiny of human potential.

So it's, I think, still to be worked out exactly how to do this, but we are recommending that whenever people get active, that they have in their mind this – an elevator speech about the New Story and be ready to use it as an explanation of why they're doing what they're doing. And we can look into that a little bit more in our next conversation. Thank you very much.

[End of recording 00:04:49]

[Getting Real Daily Metta Weekend Video](#)

Hello again, we're continuing with Chapter 6 in this section here called, "Getting Real." And this has become an important conceptual tool that the Metta Center has developed which is the inner circle of the "Roadmap." And in that inner circle we have five steps that we recommend to people. The first of these, and most controversial, perhaps, is we're now calling it, "Take charge of your own inner culture." That is, monitor what goes on in your mind and use your critical judgment about viewing violence and vulgarity on the media.

And I'd like to add here just a little bit of an analysis that I owe to Professor Franz DeWaal of what it is that the media is exploiting in us to create this culture of violence. "And if you go through a park," he said in an interview where we filmed him, "And you see a number of scenes. You might see like a hundred different things going on, people talking, eating peanuts, feeding

pigeons, maybe couples. But there's one fight or worse that's happening. Your attention will be riveted on that fight, okay?"

Now the mass media that we have today absolutely depends on your attention. If they don't get your attention, they've got nothing. So what they do is they gravitate towards this arousal scene. And that's one of the reasons. Not out of malevolence, not out of an affiliation or an affection for violence, but just to make their system work, they're going to gravitate towards what creates that instantaneous reaction.

And then I go on to talk in a little bit about what I call, "Our need for human connection," our need for what I call, "Human space," instead of geographical space. And I mention a study where children grew up in a housing development that was planned and gave them lots of space to play around in. And it turned out that they didn't do very well psychologically because what they need is not physical space to run around in, but they need to expand into the being of one another – to become aware of one another as human beings. It's a little bit like what Thich Nhat Hanh calls, "Interbeing." And so it can create a great deal of loneliness in children to give them all this space.

Now I've noticed since this chapter that in science, a lot of evidence has been developed about our need for socialization, for human interaction, and especially our need to have relationships of trust and service. Where we trust one another and where we have the opportunity to care for one another is actually now one of the most important factors that's recognized in human health.

So I'll let that sit with you for the time being and go on to consider more how we can take charge of our inner culture and create a world of nonviolence and peace. Thank you.

[End of recording 00:03:47]

[The Inner Work Daily Metta Video](#)

Hello again everyone. We are still in Chapter 6 and I wanted to take a moment to say more about that inner circle of Roadmap which we've spent quite a few years developing in collaboration with quite a few people. And for which is given a big boost early on by none other than Marshall Rosenberg, the founder of nonviolent communication.

And the way we think about it now is on the background of the spiritual tradition where they say we have to have a balance between contemplation and action. Now this balance will differ from person to person. Some more contemplative, some more active. But I'm firmly convinced that in the present age the idea of going off to a cave in the Himalayas or maybe a vipassana retreat somewhere, and for whole life and doing the best that you can for society from that venue I don't think is realistic. If anybody could have done it, it would have been Gandhi. And yet, no one was more active than he. 15 hours a day, 7 days a week for 50 years.

So we break our five points down into breathing in, the part where you work on the influences that you're taking in and breathing out where we work on the influences that we're having on the world around us – first, on our immediate relationships and secondly, on culture as a whole. So

those first three – we’ve spoken a little bit about the first one which is be very, very careful about the imagery that you take in.

The second one is to spend as much time as you can afford learning about nonviolence. And we would add today, learning about nonviolence in the context of what we call, “The New Story.” I’ll be saying more about that in a little while. The third step is mentioned here in “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” And that is to – if you don’t already have one – take up some kind of spiritual practice because if the mass media have exaggerated our tendency to gravitate towards violent imagery in our mind, it’s not like they invented it. There was a lot of violence before there were commercial mass media.

And so we have almost an evolutionary inheritance of these fight or flight patterns. And as human beings, an evolutionary inheritance towards compassion, cooperation, and justice, service of one another. And we need to get in at a very deep level and create an automatic flow. Or if you want to call it that, “A decision making process,” that will shunt most of our energy towards those positive avenues.

And remember early on in the book we talked about an experiment done in 1952 with school children, the Davitz experiment that showed that children can be trained to even process negative energy, like frustration, into positive channels like constructive program.

So more about that in our next episode.

[End of recording 00:03:55]

[Conversion Happens_ Daily Metta Video](#)

Michael: Hello again everyone. We are talking about one’s own personal inner cultural environment. And I tell a story around Page 186 about a family called Weissers and how they very courageously convinced somebody to drop his very, very hateful posture. He was a member of a hate group, actually. And renounced all of that. And I focus on – his name was Larry Trapp. And I focus on a very important observation that Larry is able to make.

Let me just read it to you. So, he is talking about his former associates in the Klan. And he says, “I denounce everything they stood for. But it’s not the people in the organization that I hate. If I were to say I hate all Klansmen because they’re Klansmen, I would still be a racist.”

So, he was able to penetrate – and he had no background whatever in nonviolence. Quite the opposite. He was able to penetrate into the core principle of nonviolence which is as Barbara Deming used to say, “I will not cooperate with your injustice. But I’m open to you as a human being.” So, that’s an important distinction Larry Trapp was able to make.

I’d like to just add on another story here that we heard recently from friends of ours who work with an organization called, “Metta Peace Teams.” These are people who, you know, they just wear a yellow vest or a T-shirt and they go out into intense and possibly very tense events where there might be fisticuffs. And they are trained monitors and interposers to keep the peace. And the police have even come to respect and admire what they do.

Well, on this occasion, there was somebody who had racist tattoos all over his body. There are people who “hate racists” and not as clever as Larry Trapp. So, they attacked this guy and hit him over the head with a bottle and he fell to the ground unconscious. And immediately, Metta Peace Team came onto the scene to protect him from being killed by this anti-racist crowd. They picked him up and walked him to a waiting ambulance.

As he was getting into the ambulance, one of the members of the Metta Peace Team said, “I just want you to know that your life was saved today by a Jew, a communist, and a homosexual.” He himself was not in a position to speak, but his girlfriend was with him. And she was very shaken, very moved, and she said, “You know, I have hated you people all my life. But now I’m beginning to see you have the same blood in your veins as we do.”

So, that’s another story of the remarkable capacity for conversion and re-seeing and re-discovering of our humanity that can be brought about, for example, by deliberate nonviolent intervention. Thanks again and until next time.

[It took one hour Daily Metta Video](#)

Glad to be with you again. We are now on Page 189 of “Search for a Nonviolent Future.” I talk about another kind of intervention that a friend of mine in the peace world carried out in the Balkans where there was such terrible wrenching, dehumanizing conflict in the 1990’s. And how he worked with some young people to try to get them over their aversion to one another – Croatian and Serbian students.

And Jan Oberg, my friend from Transnational Foundation found out that they were – it took less than an hour. Less than one hour to overcome what had been years and years of prejudice that had been created by state run media. Less than one hour. So I reflect on that. If we could only take the time to reach out to these young people, we could save so much agony that’s going on in our society instead of waiting for the outbreaks of violence, being vituperative about that, trying to arrest someone, and so forth.

But again, I’d like to – if I may, add a story. And in this case, a very personal one. My brother, who lives in Canada – because he didn’t want to die in Vietnam – was sent – he’s a folk musician and he was sent to this area after the conflict had died down a little bit, to play a concert in a high school. And when he got to the high school the only place available for the concert was in the courtyard because the classrooms were way too small.

The teachers were saying, “You’re going to have to do two concerts because we have Croatian kids and Serbian kids and they’ve never interacted. Never interacted. They came into the school by different entrances, went to different classrooms, went home by different exits and never seen each other.

So Erik, my brother, consulted with his group and said, “Uh uh. There’s going to be one concert. So they started playing a concert for the Serbian kids and in no time, of course, the doors opened up and all the Croatian kids came in. And they loved the concert. But even more, they loved one another. They were so thrilled to be able to meet with one another and they were hugging and laughing. “And it was quite remarkable,” Erik said, “to notice all the teachers and the principle around the perimeter scowling.” You know, “This isn’t supposed to happen.”

So I thought I would share that with you to illustrate once again that if we play our cards right, it should be possible for us to overcome even these deep seated prejudices. We started by talking about deep seated in our own central nervous system. We're talking now about how they were embedded in a culture deliberately as a policy of divide and conquer which led to untold agonies and how, in some cases, as I say, if you know what you're doing, have confidence in nonviolence, play your cards right, it is possible to overcome them.

So next time we'll go and look at some next steps in creating a nonviolent culture.

[End of audio 00:03:50]

Nonviolent Moment Daily Metta Video

Hello again. We are almost taking the leap and getting into Chapter 7, but I wanted to pick up one little thing that was left over from Chapter 6. And that's where I referred to nonviolent moment as an epiphany. To remind you, a nonviolent moment is where there has been an interaction between, let's say for example, an oppressor and a nonviolent resistance. And they work and work. They jostle. They negotiate with one another. And in the course of time this almost always comes to a head. It comes to a crisis where their violence and our nonviolence are pitted against one another. For example, in the Salt Campaign during the Indian Freedom Struggle.

So a nonviolent moment will almost always become what I call an epiphany. That is, that nonviolent energy which is resident in life, resident in nature, resident in our consciousness, suddenly comes forward. And I've quoted quite a few examples of that up to now in "Search for a Nonviolent Future." The unfortunate thing is so far we haven't got our framework so that we can recognize these things and know them for what they are and build on them, which is what we're leading up to.

So today, as it happens, there are quite a few movements and conferences taking place on beyond war. And they're capitalizing on the awareness that I mentioned in our last talk that people are beginning to realize that the war, knee-jerk violent response isn't working. But even these conferences, I'm afraid, people are not acknowledging how deeply embedded in our economic, political, and emotional and entertainment systems war is, and that they are going to have to do exactly these two things that I was talking about. Which is get them to understand. Connect the dots between, let's say, war in something like football. Or let me say the violence in something like football and the violence in war. Connect those dots, but simultaneously show then, that there would be a nonviolent way to practice sports and a nonviolent way to do international relations.

So that's what we're building up to and I mention in the beginning of Chapter 7 a remarkable episode. There was a carry-out by Mother Teresa. And I'm happy to say that now she is Saint Teresa of Calcutta. And that also in the Vatican, thanks to Pope Francis, all this stuff is brand new since "Search for a Nonviolent Future" came out. The Vatican has actually conducted a

conference to reexamine and clearly to reject the Just War Theory which has been an intellectual prop for war-fighting within Catholic social teaching for 1200 years. That is huge.

And there's a billion Catholics in the world. And with that kind of spiritual authority to examine this system which was, of course, deeply flawed and was used for many, many wars which no one in their right mind would call, "Just." Of course, people are not in their right mind when they talk about war anyway. But examining that system, I think, is going to be a major help in disestablishing the entire war system.

And I have some new thoughts to share with you on how to do that in our next talk.

[End of recording 00:04:30]

Three Giant Steps Daily Metta Video

Hello everybody. I left you hanging off a cliff last time and I'm going to rescue you this time. We talked about the cease fire that was brought about by Mother Teresa, now Saint Teresa, in 1982 in Beirut and how that gives us a clue to the fact that war, which seems so absolutely inevitable and unstoppable can be deconstructed. But I don't think that it's possible to simply dismantle the system.

Among other things, people are in a very deep state of fear right now, especially in the United States. And they believe, wrongly, but they're pinned on that belief that their military capability is going to make them secure. And because they don't know of an alternative, even though this has been disproven time and time again, the belief is not shaken. So I'm leading up to a major point about shifting the paradigm and that is it cannot be done only through reason. You have to be able to, as Gandhi said, move the heart also.

Okay, so that's for a future conversation. But right now I want to talk about how could we possibly undermine the war system. If we can't dismantle it from the top, we can undermine it from below. That is create a system which serves the purpose of making us secure and then the old system which isn't working will more or less just fall away. Even if it doesn't just fall away by itself, it will be a pushover. It would be easy to get rid of it when we have an alternative.

So without being able to put a timeline to this, here's what we've come up with. We call this, "Three giant steps for peace." The first step is to establish restorative justice in the nation's schools. We've talked about restorative justice before. To remind you, it's instead of a punitive system, when a child, a pupil has misbehaved in some way, you get him or her into a dialog with the people that or she has offended, injured. And together, work out as a community and building community in the process what would be a good restitution.

And we like the idea of starting there because it's almost done. And this is how you want to proceed in a long-term strategy. Start with things that are doable. We're almost there already. Build on them to the next stage. And what would be the next stage in this case? Well, at this point in time, as you're probably aware, we have almost 2 million – 2 million of our fellow

citizens are in prison or in part of the prison system. And that is a dreadfully retributive system which is not working at all.

We're being forced to release people from the prison system because they're so overcrowded, but that does nothing towards restoring them. So if we do this restorative justice in the schools and – this is a critical addition – and explain why it's working. Because people respond to dignity. They respond to respect. They always want to be reintegrated into the community, however much they may deny that.

We could move from restorative justice in the schools to restorative justice in the criminal justice system, which would not only bring the United States in-line with other international countries, but put us on a trajectory where we could get from that second stage to the third stage where we bring in the alternatives to war and create a system along restorative lines so that when there is a dispute between nations they are agreed to and adjudicated in civilized process of conversation, building on the fact that we've now done it in our school system and even in our prison system.

I see that as a plausible pathway to the end of war. And I look forward to celebrating the conclusion of that process with you.

[End of recording 00:04:57]

[Time to start nonviolence Daily Metta video](#)

Greetings everyone. We are working our way through Chapter 7 in "Search for a Nonviolent Future." And it's in this chapter where we discuss, as it were, the acid test of nonviolence, how to apply it at the biggest scale which is to say against the war system. And toward the end of this chapter I have a quote. I'm not on Page 200. The quote from none other than Robert McNamara who since the publication of "Search for a Nonviolent Future" has come out and said, "I think I made a big mistake by supporting the war in Vietnam." Wonderful hindsight, but it does lead one to ruminate on the fact that there are so many good people who are sucked up into the war system and they do a lot of damage and a lot of violence and disruption against their better wishes and their better judgment because that's where the system is pointing.

And in my terms, the terms that I've developed all along here, the system draws upon violent energy. It operates on a threat system rather than an integrative power. And so nothing that you do is really going to change the ultimate outcome until you change the input, that energy. And it's in that spirit that I'd like to quote this remark of McNamara's about the fact that Mother Teresa of Calcutta, now Saint Teresa of Calcutta, was given the Nobel Prize for peace.

And some people didn't quite see the connection. Here are these two dots, you know? Okay, so she picks up indigent dying people on the street and gives them a death with dignity. What does that have to do with peace? Well, he caught it. He said, "Mother Teresa deserves Nobel's Peace Prize because she promotes peace in the most fundamental manner by her confirmation of human dignity."

And I've been thinking about this a lot recently because of the November 8th, 2016 presidential election. I'm sorry I won't be mentioning that again. But I've been thinking the very unfortunate, very unhappy image that occurs toward the end of "Brave New World" if I'm not mistaken where he says, "If you want to see the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face forever." In other words. The desecration of human dignity is the input and the outcome of our present systems.

And what that suggests to me is that anything we can do to elevate human dignity will undercut that system and create a new one. And on the bottom of the next page, the last sentence in this section, I came up with something that has become kind of a meme. It was repeated in many different places and I think it's good to think about. So our job, I say here is not to be always thinking how to stop war so much as how to start nonviolence. Nonviolence, the ultimate elevator of human dignity, which as we've said several times in these talks, practitioners of nonviolence are sometimes quite aware of that they're doing what they're doing because they don't lose their soul, they don't lose their humanity, that nonviolence really is an elevation of, and a utilization of a drawing upon human dignity.

So intuitively that tells us that nonviolence should be a way to end war. And just have to continue to figure out the implementation of that.

[End of recording 00:04:32]

[Nonviolence is human nature Daily Metta video](#)

So I go on to talk about something that has become all the more important for me and for all of us at Metta over the last 10-15 years. And that is the "human image." Who do we think we are? If we think we're separate fragments living in a competitive and essentially meaningless universe we'll never get out of the war system or any other system of violence.

But if we recognize ourselves as, "Body, mind, and spirit," which is the subject of the next session of the book, then we begin to realize that we have much greater possibilities. We have much greater interconnectedness. We have vastly greater resources within us. And therefore the stress on the environment that we're causing now is completely unnecessary. Competition between and among ourselves is unnecessary. And above all, we have a tremendous capacity within us for nonviolence.

Remind me, I may have mentioned the case of Adel Termos who was in a crowded Beirut marketplace when a suicide bomber blew himself up and everyone was panicking, looking around. Termos was there with his 9-year-old daughter and he saw that the bomber had an accomplice. And he tackled the man, knocked him to the ground, laid on top of him, absorbed the explosion and sacrificed his life for the lives of many others, including, of course, his own daughter.

And the journalist in responding to this said, "He broke human nature." Well, that's what we call, "The old story." In the old story, human nature was competitive and separate and so forth. But in the New Story we're deeply interconnected and a great act of sacrifice like that for the benefit of others is not breaking human nature. It's an expression of human nature.

So I'd like to read for you a quote that comes from a spiritual teacher who visited this country in the 50's from India, Swami Ramdas, delightful saint. I've read all of his works and spent a week or so at his ashram in South India. But he, in the course of many other conversations in the West he had this to say about the human being. Now, of course, if you'll forgive me, this is the 1950's. So when he says, "Man," and, "He." When he says, "Man," he means, "Person." When he says, "He," he means, "She or he." But for the sake of mellifluous reading I'll just read what he wrote.

He said, "On the physical plane man is but an animal. On the intellectual plane he is a rational being. On the moral plane," notice moral is above intellectual. "On the moral plane, he is a force for good. Still higher then, on the spiritual plane is a radiant being full of divine bliss, love, and light." And then he has a very powerful conclusion. "Humanities ascent from one plane to another is it's natural movement." So that, for me, is a profoundly true and profoundly visionary image of the human being. And if we have that in mind it'll be easier to understand the entire theory of nonviolence.

And I went on to discuss various things that a person can do to train him or herself as a spiritual warrior. And these have now been systematized in our Roadmap proposal in that section of our Web site. www.Mettacenter.org/roadmap you'll find it all spelled out. In the Roadmap, as I've mentioned before, we have a circle for inner – personal empowerment and then you progress from there to constructive program. And you progress from there finally to direct nonviolent resistance. And so what I say about meditation here has now become Step 3 in that inner circle.

And Step 5 where we invite people to assess what their strengths and weaknesses are and to go into action where they feel they can do the most good. We're also proposing another dimension to that step. And I'm more and more convinced of the efficacy of this additional dimension. And that is to tell the new story whenever you get a chance. Explain why you're doing what you're doing, why you think it works.

And the cumulative effect of us all telling the same story, no matter what issue we're working on, I think will bring us rapidly to a tipping point. So thank you very much. Next time that we talk I think we can be wrapping up this chapter.

[End of recording 00:05:48]

[Transforming war culture Daily Metta video](#)

Greetings again everyone. We're still talking about applying nonviolence to rid mankind of the scourge of war. And I talk a lot in the following section, Pages 212 and following, about our culture. As a friend of mine said some years ago, "We have a war economy, a war president, and a war culture." And it's particularly the culture that I'd like to focus on. Somebody recently said about the president-elect – I'm talking to you toward the end of 2016 – said that this candidate is, "An indictment of our character."

And what I said in response to that is, "Now that would give the sense that we can't do anything about it." But really it's an indictment of our culture. What in our character are we going to cultivate? And so I talk a good bit here about how we talk, what kind of language do we use? We constantly humanize war-making and it's machinery. Like I talk about the atomic bombs that

were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They were called, “Little Boy,” and “Fat Man.” They were made living, cute, beings, people. Whereas the human beings who lived in the city, they were dehumanized to targets.

So there are many ways in which habits of language have made it possible for us to do something which inwardly we find completely abhorrent which is, to perpetrate mass slaughter on other human beings.

Now it isn’t easy at all to imagine how we are going to change our culture. And since writing "Search for a Nonviolent Future" I’ve hit upon a kind of condensation or a zooming in on key elements which I will share with you now. These are not in the book. So there is something about our culture which can give us a leverage to change that culture. And that is, what is its core narrative? It’s fundamental description of reality, it’s concept of what is a human being.

So we want to change the narrative. And in order to change the narrative, as I’ve just hinted, the core of that narrative – we don’t have to go into a whole explanation of where the universe come from, etc., etc. The core of the narrative in practical terms is what it tells us about who we are. And to zoom in one final step, the fundamental thing that we need to know about who we are, the one thing which if you were in an elevator with somebody and wanted to change his or her mind in two floors of that elevator ride, the fundamental thing would be what I was saying earlier, about Adel Termos and human nature.

That we have the capacity for nonviolence which is a double capacity. It’s the capacity to master one’s negative impulses and offer nonviolence. And on the other hand, it’s the capacity to respond to nonviolence when it’s offered. Right now, for example, there’s a big standoff happening at Standing Rock. Oceti Sakowin, Dakota camp in North Dakota. And a number of police who have been ordered to break up the blocks of demonstrators and so forth have handed in their badges and said, “I cannot do this,” and walked off the job. I’m not sure how many, but some have done that.

I’ll just add one other thing for now, and that is the discussion that you’ll find on Page 213 about labeling. That the way the journalistic language presents us constantly with the case of violence is, “Was it a terrorist act or not?” You know, what kind of labels should be put on it? But the never, never say this was an act of violence. Why is there so much violence? What can we do about it?

Thank you very much.

[End of recording 00:04:40]

[Framing our values Daily Metta video](#)

Hi again. We are continuing to talk about nonviolence and its application to the war system. We had to back up and look at our culture as a whole because that’s where war is cultivated and where it comes from. On Page 212 I talk about the work of a colleague of mine, Carolyn Merchant who wrote a book called, “The Death of Nature.” She makes a very important point in

that book which I don't think enough people have recognized. And that is, in the big shift of paradigm that took place with the Individual Revolution where we shifted from an image of the earth as a living being, Gaia, our mother, to an image of the earth as inert object, just sitting there for us to exploit.

She says that that shift took place not because there were a lot of scientific discoveries, but rather because people wanted to create the Individual Revolution, that image of the earth as a living being was getting in their way. They ditched it and went over to the image of the earth as inert object. It's a fascinating process. I'm absolutely sure she's right about what basically happened. How it happened, I don't think anybody knows. How does an entire civilization decide to shift it's frame and look at life in an entirely different way?

We know a little bit about that now, we know about tipping points and paradigm shifts a little bit. We know that if, as I was saying last time, if we constantly promote the vision and the rhetoric of the a new paradigm, it can suddenly shift. But what I'd like to add to that discussion now is that clearly just articulating it, just giving the statistics about how much more effective nonviolence is, even saying that nonviolence is our nature and we don't lose our soul when we're doing it, all of those important things which I've been advocating and which I think we must do, will not be enough because we need to shift people's desire.

So then you hit upon the idea that Gandhi articulated – and if you remember way back on Page 108 we were talking about the escalation curve and how you can move from petitioning, expressing your feelings and opinions to actually blocking, doing Satyagraha, risking suffering, undertaking suffering, as people are doing just now at Standing Rock. Because Gandhi said, “There comes a time when it is not enough to appeal to the head. You have to be able to move the heart also.”

So there are two very powerful ways that nonviolence relates to the big shift in culture to the “Great Turning” and the introduction of a new story. One is as content, nonviolence is an essential component of the New Story and I've been feeling more and more lately that that story is not complete until we integrate the new awareness of nonviolence. But the other is that quite apart from content, nonviolence also gives us the motive power to make that story shift.

And I'm actually describing that in another book. But right now one last thing about Chapter 7, on top of Page 217, I mention because – this is about Senator Tom Hayden who has now recently passed. He was a good friend. And I said at that time during the 1994 gubernatorial race in California, Senator Tom Hayden was asked what he thought of his opponent, Kathleen Brown. He startled the journalist by saying something like, “She's not my opponent. She's my friend. We're running for governor. It isn't a sport.”

That was a profound reframing of what politics is all about. And that has become so much more true in the intervening years where in effect, the political process is no longer even a sport. It's degenerated to a fight. And we've completely lost sight of the fact that is a decision making process and people should be judged according to their competence and according to their policies.

So good, that was another example of how correct framing can be brought in through our speech and all be part of a big shift to a new story. Well, my next talk with you will be about our last chapter. And I don't think I'm going to need to comment on that chapter or want to comment on it in such great length. I just will want to say a few things to help us orient our way through that chapter.

Thanks very much. Until then.

[End of recording 00:05:49]

[Unarmed Peacekeepers Daily Metta Video](#)

Greetings everyone. I slightly misspoke or rather, miscounted last time when I thought we were coming up to the final chapter. We weren't quite. Chapter 8 continues the concept of institutional buildup, employing nonviolence for the creation of stable peace instead of lurching from war to war as we're suffering through now.

And I just want to read the beginning paragraph of Chapter 8. "By liberating our own minds from the culture of violence," and I keep coming back to the mass media here. "And by consciously making our own thoughts and speech peace worthy we are preparing ourselves to act effectively for peace. It is now time to consider what that action might look like."

And in the next pages I talk about the early development of what was called the Shanti Sena or Peace Army by Mahatma Gandhi. He never having had much time to develop it into an institution. He was assassinated the day before he was about to do a big meeting about it. And then it was called for a while, "Third-party nonviolent intervention." And now it's called, "UCP," which stands for Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping or Unarmed Civilian Protection.

Both are pretty accurate. I have had some objection to the term, "Unarmed civilian peacekeeping" because although it is true that almost all the people involved in it are civilians and that it's coming from civil society instead of the military, it overlooks the deep underlying difference which is that it draws upon nonviolence where the traditional systems draw upon violence.

So one of the things I go into early on in this chapter is a quite unfortunate episode that took place in 1930 during the Salt Campaign, when that was going on down in India, up in the Northwest Frontier province you had the formation of the Khudai Khidmatgars, the servants of God under the direction Abdul Ghaffar Khan who was such an important figure in the eventual development of peace armies. And this event was called the, "Qissa Khwani Bazaar Massacre." It took place in the city of Peshawar.

And I don't like to dwell on it, but it has some utility because people often tell us – one of the standard objections to nonviolence, "Well, it only against the British because they were so polite." If you know, however what went in on Kenya, if you know especially what went on at the Qissa Khwani Bazaar you will see that because empire rested upon a system of domination,

inevitably it drew upon the power of violence, not nonviolence. And in some circumstances then that power was going to come out in all of its naked fury.

In fact, what Gandhi often did, what he felt the role of a Satyagrahi – person who does Satyagraha – often was, was to actually goad the opponent into dropping the mask, “Dropping the fig leaf, and displaying the bloody claws of the lion,” as he put it. So that you can build up to a nonviolent moment where it’s very clear what the violence is and it’s very clear what the nonviolence is. When they go head to head nonviolence will always prevail if it’s been done right.

Then I also talk about another institution which hasn’t been studied or developed very much. It’s called, “Civilian based defense.” So you have UCP and CBD. The difference being in UCP you have trained teams that go across border, but they can also operate domestically. Right now as I speak, Nonviolent Peace Force which operates across the globe is also operating right here in the U.S. at Standing Rock.

But you have a team of people who go in and provide an intervention whereas in civil based defense, you organize the whole society to defend itself. And the classic example of that, if you look on Page 235, is what happened in Prague, in the spring of 1968 when a massive invasion by Warsaw pact armies – three armies, half a million troops invaded Czechoslovakia from three directions to put down what they were calling, “Communism with a human face.” They didn’t like the human face. Remember that image from “Brave New World.” And it took them eight months and a dastardly kind of trick to put down that movement which they had planned to do in four days. And if there had been military resistance it would have been done in four days.

But then getting back to UCP, I talk on Page 240 about one of its special functions that it’s developed over its years. And that is called, “Protective accompaniment.” And I tell a couple of stories about that. But there’s a much more dramatic story that happened this year. In April of 2016 there was an attack on an United Nations camp in South Sudan where the violence has been atrocious and the U.N. refugee camp was garrisoned and it had a defensive perimeter, but they were ordered not to shoot.

And the militia poured in. It happened that there were two people there from Nonviolent Peace Force. Very dramatic story and you can see more and read more about it on the Nonviolent Peace Force Web site. But these two fellows – make a long story short – were in a hut with four women and nine children. The militia burst in. They were startled to see them there. And I talk about how that shock effect, often it gives you an opening to do something nonviolent.

They were startled to see these non-Sudanese. They ordered them out. But Derrick and Andres were well trained. They knew what to do. They glanced at each other. They simple took out their badges, said, “I’m sorry. We are international protection officers and we are not leaving.” Amazingly enough, the militia turned and went. Not only that, that happened three times. So that is an attack which lasted 20 minutes. 60 people were massacred outside of that little hut. But where you had UCP operating, nobody was harmed. Speaks very, very strongly of the good training that Nonviolent Peace Force people get and the effectiveness of nonviolence when institutionalized in that way.

A final note – and that will be our final comment on this chapter and this topic of nonviolence versus war. I talk about how institutions condition people. So that if you go into an institution which is inherently untruthful, inherently violent, such as the colonial domination of India, and you go in with the best of intentions you will in a short period of time end up bringing out the more brutal aspects of your nature.

And again, there's a famous experiment that happened after this book came out – or I learned about it after the book came out – called, “The Stanford Prison Experiment,” where a very, very well known, very distinguished psychologist created this, an experiment where he had Stanford students divide arbitrarily into guards and prisoners and just play those roles and see what happened.

And in a very short period of time the guards “were being extremely brutal” so much so that his partner in the experiment said, “You have to call this off. We can't go on with this.” Within a couple of weeks they had to stop the experiment. And it wasn't even a real prison. It just shows you the impact of your mental framing and how it can bring out the best or the worst in us.

Well, I don't want to end on that note so I'll end on a rather more amusing one. My colleague at Berkeley Alan Rinoire, my mentor, was a young boy when his father John Rinoire was filming “Grand Illusions.” And you had a similar situation where a mass of people were arbitrarily divided into officers and enlisted men in the French army, WWI setting. The officers had different uniforms, but that was the only thing different. They were getting the same amount of money. Within a week of being on that set, when there was a lunch break, the officers would congregate together. And if a “enlisted man” walked by, they would hand him some money and say, “My good man, get me a carafe of red, would you?” And hand him a ten franc note or whatever.

So again, I'm just trying to illustrate how we can do what our psychologists today would call, “Priming,” develop out of our selves the better part or worse part of nature. And that means we have both an obligation and an exciting challenge to find out how we can bring out of ourselves – everyone of us, individually, all of us, collectively, the better parts of our nature.

Until next time when we talk a little bit about the final chapter. Thank you.

[End of recording 00:10:56]

[Restoring dignity to the Earth Daily Metta video](#)

So greetings everyone. This is the last of our discussions about, “The Search for a Nonviolent Future.” It's not that the last chapter and the action plan don't merit – in my view –some analysis and some thinking about, but I think we've done enough now so that you should be more than ready and able to go into it on your own if you want to. I did want to mention that the psychologist that I was talking about last time was none other than Philip Zimbardo who's probably the most cited psychologist in American psychology today. And that he went on to do an opposite project called, “The Heroic Imagination Project,” the acronym of which, I'll hope you note is HIP. It's a very hip project.

But then in Chapter 9 it's kind of more of a lyrical chapter about Mother Earth which I have not been talking – did not have a chance to talk about very much heretofore. And I started off by quoting one of my favorite lines from the poet, Homer, whose work I spend decades learning and teaching about when I was professor at Berkeley. It's a line that occurs when the hero, Achilles, has killed in battle his nemesis, his archenemy, Hector. Hector is his archenemy because he, in turn, has killed Achilles' partner Patroclus. And so the horrible logic of war is playing itself out.

But in the conceptual – the conceptualization of the time, if you killed somebody in combat it was not an offense against the natural order, but you had to obey certain rules. You had to obey certain restraints. And that is once your opponent laid dead, you had to respect the body. If you didn't do that, you are desecrating humanity as a whole. So then you get this famous line which is uttered by the gods when they look down and see that Achilles has not relinquished the body for proper burial. He's, in fact, desecrating it. He's dragging it around the city of Troy at the back of his chariot.

And incidentally there was a horrendous picture that came out – a photograph – during the Vietnam War of this being done to a person at the back of an American tank. But the line I just wanted to quote to you in Greek and say a little bit about it, “Κωφὴν γὰρ δὴ γαῖαν ἀειχίζει μινεαίνων [Ku-fane gar day guy-on a-akidzay men-i-nown].” Very beautiful poetry.

Κωφὴν γὰρ δὴ γαῖαν ἀειχίζει μινεαίνων [Ku-fane gar day guy-on a-akidzay men-i-nown]. [A-akidzay] means he is torturing or desecrating or dishonoring. And what he's dishonoring is [ku-fane guy-on], the mute Earth who cannot speak for Herself. And [men-i-nown] means “in his fury.” In his battle rage he has gone beyond the acceptable norm and he is desecrating the Earth itself.

And I treat that and I think we can all use that as an image especially for, if you will, the environmental degradation that happens during the preparations and the practices of warfare in our time. And I would point out now that there is an alternative interpretation of this line that [ku-fane guy-on] – I don't think this is correct, incidentally, but it's an interesting point – that it might refer to Hector's body, this mute earth, this inert physical thing. Whether it does or not, I think what we would need to do now is absorb that feeling of horror, of desecration when we commit this kind of violence and forget the idea that we can create rules that make it an acceptable and healthy thing to do.

Well, okay friends, I have very much enjoyed these rather one-sided conversations with you. I've gotten some feedback and I hope that you now feel in a better position to make use of "Search for a Nonviolent Future." Thank you very much for your attending to some of these discussions and please continue to be in touch with us at Metta Center. Thank you.

[End of recording 00:05:19]