

What Comes Next?

Stephanie: Michael, we've gone through Person Power, Constructive Program, and now we're working on Satyagraha. So, we've moved through these three levels, now what do we do? Is Satyagraha enough? Is everything going to be fixed after we offer Satyagraha? What comes next?

Michael: Well, if you properly understand Satyagraha, I think, as a very deep change that comes from a different vision of the human being, even if you have a Satyagraha campaign and it rectifies one injustice or another, that will not have been the whole story. The ultimate aim of Satyagraha is to reunite people. Remember Gandhi making the discovery that the purpose of his profession – he was a lawyer – the purpose of his profession was to unite people who have been riven asunder. So, Satyagraha is the way that we can correct injustices and end up all being closer.

Kenneth Boulding once defined nonviolence as “Integrative Power. You can get things done by Threat Power. You can get things done by Economic Power, by buying what you want. But, ultimately, the way to get things done and to reunify this broken life of ours is through Satyagraha or nonviolence. So, I would highly recommend Satyagraha for every one of us and to look at all three of these steps in taking Satyagraha, or using Satyagraha, to get us to a much brighter world. Thank you very much.

Stephanie: And if anybody's interested in learning more about Satyagraha, my recommendation is that you go directly to Gandhi's writings. There is a book called, “Satyagraha, Non-violent Resistance,” which is a compilation that somebody else put together of all of his writings on the topic, sectioned off into, you know, “How to train for Satyagraha” to “It's philosophical basis” to “Satyagraha in politics,” so forth. You can read, “The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi,” which also does this – has something called “The Gospel of Satyagraha” in it. Any of his writings, you're going to hear Gandhi talking about, “What is Satyagraha?”

And more contemporary writings on Satyagraha would include Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan's book on “Why Civil Resistance Works,” which is about dislodging dictators and transitions to democracy. Michael, do you have any other suggestions for reading that people might learn more about this power of Satyagraha?

Michael: You've kind of put me on the spot with that question, Stephanie, because I'd love to recommend my own book, “The Search for a Nonviolent Future,” but in it and on our website you'll also find many other resources. I don't think that Satyagraha requires a lot of reading, but I think it definitely requires some.

We're so unfamiliar with this worldview that we have to expose ourselves to some of the people who've experimented with this and thought it through. Martin Luther King's “Strive Toward Freedom” is also very good. Gene Sharp's “Politics of Nonviolent Action” – though it includes some things that I think would make a real Satyagrahi a bit

uncomfortable, like humiliating the opponent – it gives you a wealth, a sense of the wealth of ways that Satyagraha can be practiced.

But we should bear in mind that it's useful in almost every human situation, not just in the dislodging of a dictatorship. If you want to put it that way, there's a little dictator inside every one of us, known as the ego. And the ultimate Satyagraha is going to enable us to dislodge that.

Stephanie: On that sublime note, I would just add Joan Bondurant's "Conquest of Violence," where she goes into several of Gandhi's Satyagraha campaigns and deconstructs them bit by bit to show, you know, "What was he doing with the media?" "What kind of tactics did he use?" "Was it successful?" "How was it judged successful?" so forth. Thank you.