

Notes from session 4

9/20

Submitted by Deborah Greene

General notes

Gandhi's life and its meaning

Who was this man?

What did he discover?

What was his impact?

selfless action:

1. correct act
2. performed w/ correct means (nonviolence)
3. renounce the results/fruit of action

the motivation for action leaves residue as karma. Learn to act in the correct spirit; goal is to minimize harm and maximize the good

When your nonviolence is "good enough" you don't need force.

Work=dignity.

"My surrender was my victory. My self-respect comes from my relationship w/ G-d"

Impact-decolonized India

We do what we despise in others when we fight in their means. Gandhi - I've used India as an ocular demonstration of the power of nonviolence.

In S. Africa, he recognizes the function of law is to unite ppl who have been rended asunder

Gandhi's characteristics

1. sincerity/integrity
2. grounded in what he believed to be true
3. life as an experiment
4. capacity for self-sacrifice

Recognized racism as man's inhumanity to man and didn't take it personally.

When you want power, you get it by renouncing it.

2 vows: 1. I will never own anything, and 2. complete self-control. Then opportunity arises for power.

Scientific approach - hypothesis, test, revise

You don't have to renounce possessions; you have to renounce possessor.

Look at where and how NV succeeds. Force is an illusory power, suggestive power. Threat can only work if you allow yourself to be frightened by its power.

Always start by assuming opponent will see reason, respond to s/thing milder.

Solve problems in your community and others will see it grow.

Gandhi deliberately chose s/thing he thought he cd make work vs taking on other issues elsewhere. He never lost sight of the future and used every opportunity to educate

5 rules of Fasting:

1. right person for the fast
2. right audience - the ppl have to care abt the faster
3. last resort
4. demand has to be do-able
5. consistent w/ campaign and w/ life

fasts awaken ppl to their unity w/ faster.

non-cooperating w/ evil. All activity rooted in insatiable love of humankind.

Not using violence + renouncing wrong = truth

Terms

avatar: G-d consciousness; s/one completely divested w/ divine power and devoid of ego

jnana: discriminating wisdom allowing you to see reality in the midst of unreality, to know

bhakti: devotion

karma: action

maharaja

brahmacharya

svadeshi - localism

panchamas- untouchability - who belongs to political community.

satyagraha - method where truth is revealed in a way that both sides win. When you attack me, the deepest part of you doesn't want to. When I step back and reveal that truth, you are relieved.

power of vulnerability

"work" v. work - don't always see the result you want, but to the degree that intention is NV, it has a good effect.

Books

Bhagavad Gita: poem of action. 1. Who is G-d, 2. Who are you, 3. What is the nature of action

Gandhi's autobiography 1926

Gandhi's Satyagraha in S. Africa - where he discovers his true vocation in life.

Jesus and the Disinherited. Howard Thurman

Conquest of Violence. Joan Bondurant

Young India, Day by Day with Gandhi
Goethe's Faust

People

Kathy Kelly - prerequisite for a world beyond war

Socrates

Derek Oakley - S. Sudan - use self-defense if necessary, but usu. safer w/o weapons.

Gilbert Murray - classics scholar

Swami Vivekananda

Asha Devi - teacher - no limits to human nature

MLK Jr. - move from a thing oriented society to a human oriented society

St. Augustine - deepest desire is to recognize our unity w/ others.

Smutts - In S. Africa, offered to start a commission to study Indians in S. Africa w/o any Indians.

Gandhi refused. he knew it'd be a step backwards.

Bardoli

E.F. Schumaker

Fundamentals - human unity can't be violated.

Events

Zulu rebellion: punitive raid carried out by Brits bc Zulu refused to pay taxes. Showed the depth of violence.

Polish resistance

Movie

Gandhi's India

Questions:

How do we develop singleness of purpose?

Self control/meditation.

What's the difference btw power of vulnerability and letting yourself be humiliated?

Look at why your humiliated. Surrender and take risk without feeling humiliated.

Are fundamentals the same today?

Yes. All life is one. I can't injure another w/o injuring myself. Everyone is looking for unity and respect. Everyone needs to make a meaningful contribution to human life.