

The Way of Martin Luther King Jr.

The primary goal of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change is to preserve and advance Dr. King's unfinished mission by applying his precepts of nonviolence in all areas of human activity. The basis for the work is found in the six principles and six steps that follow.

Six Principles of Nonviolence

1 Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.

It is active nonviolent resistance to evil.

It is aggressive spiritually, mentally and emotionally.

It is always persuading the opponent of the righteousness of your cause.

2 Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding.

The end result of nonviolence is redemption and reconciliation.

The purpose of nonviolence is the creation of the Beloved Community.

3 Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice, not people.

Nonviolence recognizes that evil doers are also victims and are not evil people.

The nonviolent resister seeks to defeat evil, not people.

4 Nonviolence holds that suffering can educate and transform.

Nonviolence accepts suffering without retaliation.

Nonviolence accepts violence if necessary, but will never inflict it.

Nonviolence willingly accepts the consequences of its acts.

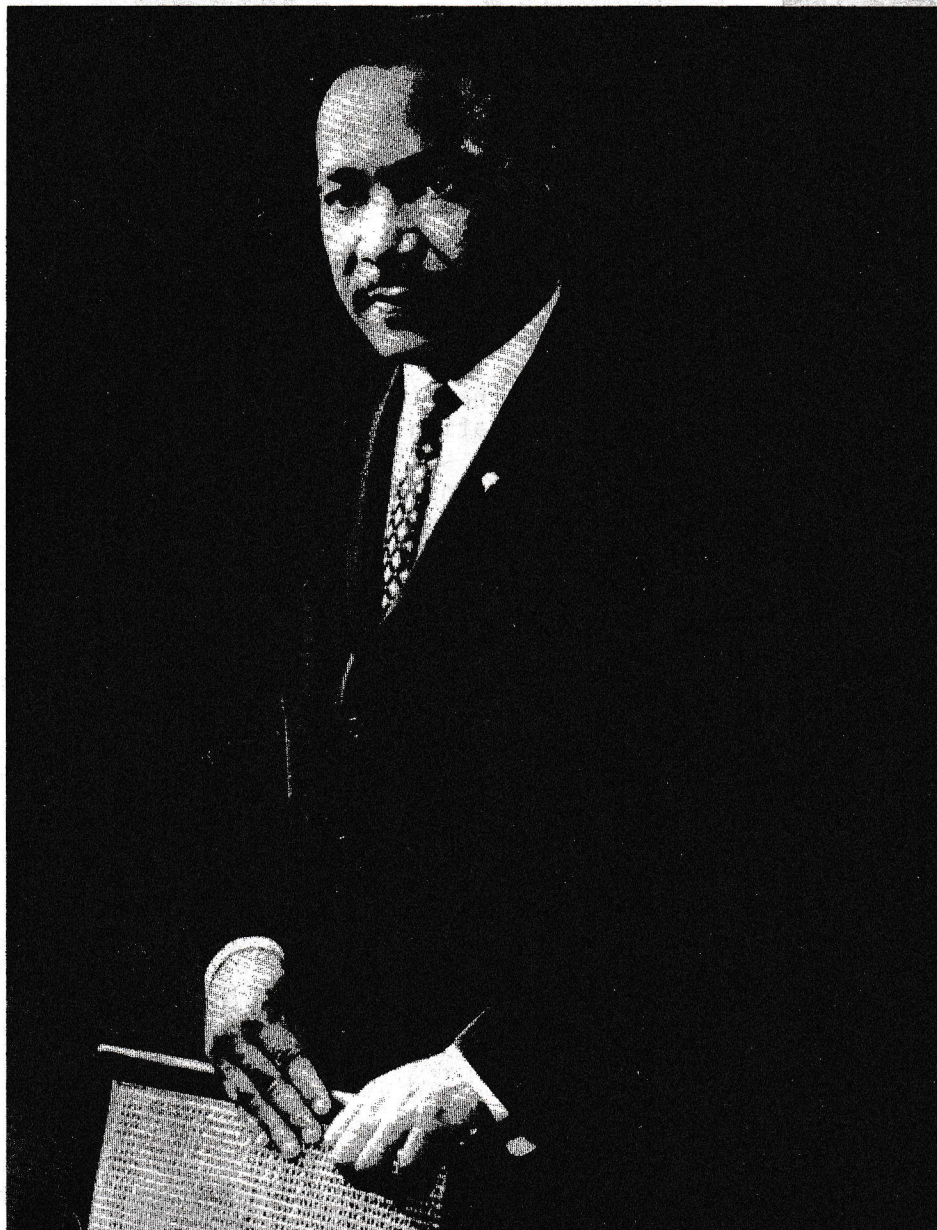
Unearned suffering is redemptive and has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities.

Suffering has the power to convert the enemy when reason fails.

5 Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate.

Nonviolence resists violence of the spirit as well as the body.

Nonviolent love is spontaneous, unmotivated, unselfish and creative.



Nonviolent love gives willingly, knowing that the return might be hostility.

Nonviolent love is active, not passive.

Nonviolent love is unending in its ability to forgive in order to restore community.

Nonviolent love does not sink to the level of the hater.

Love for the enemy is how we demonstrate love for ourselves.

Love restores community and resists injustice.

Nonviolence recognizes the fact that all life is interrelated.

6 Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice.

The nonviolent resister has deep faith that justice will eventually win.

Nonviolence believes that God is a God of justice.

Derived from "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence" in Dr. King's Stride Toward Freedom, Harper & Row, 1958.