EMERGENCE magazine is a monthly e-magazine by the Metta Center dedicated to sharing stories about nonviolence movements worldwide.

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OUR MISSION

Our mission is to promote the transition to a nonviolent future by making the logic, history, and yet-unexplored potential of nonviolence more accessible to activists and agents of cultural change (which ultimately includes all of us). We focus on root causes (sometimes called “upstream” causes) to help people in any walk of life discover their innate capacity for nonviolence and use it more strategically for long-term transformation of themselves and the world. We work to challenge and replace the prevailing worldview with a much higher image of humanity informed by nonviolence and its implications for the meaning of life and value of the person.

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At the Metta Center, we tend to encounter three groups of people interested in our mission: activists, educators, and those who consider themselves neither but feel that nonviolence has something to do with who they are as human beings. —For each of these groups nonviolence is not only a principle of their lifestyle, but a feature perhaps the main one, of their interactions with the rest of life.

We do not promote nonviolence because it is “the moral choice,” or only because it is the most effective way to bring down a dictator in a political battle. We stand by nonviolence because we believe it is a birthright and untapped potential within human beings to live more harmoniously with one another and in balance with the rest of life. In other words, our efforts in nonviolence emerge from an extremely dignified view of the human being.

Let me be the first to admit that holding human beings to a higher image of who we are is no easy task. Human beings cheat, we wage war, we poison our wells of virtue from whence spring peace and well-being with atrocities of which we are ashamed. Yet we also sacrifice for one another, grieve for one another, love one another, and desire an end to sorrow and suffering, even if it begins as a wish for ourselves and our nearest and dearest alone. It’s a hard path to stand in the face of the violence we see and hold on, tenaciously, to those more noble human—ones could even say, more evolutionary qualities. But no one said that nonviolence was easy. Expanding our limits to embrace others living in the midst of a violent culture is hard, but it’s the work we were born to do—to nurture, not exploit, one another and the planet.

Satyagraha, the term Gandhi coined for nonviolent resistance, literally means “clinging to Truth.” Therefore, the Satyagrahi (the person who uses satyagraha), works to transform the world by seeing its hatred, but never losing her faith in the other person’s ability to respond to gentleness. As Martin Luther King famously said, “hatred cannot drive out hatred, only love can do that.” If you want to change a person’s behavior that you perceive as negative, it simply doesn’t help to make that person psychologically weaker telling him that he is a “bad person” beyond redemption. If we want to offer support to someone, we encourage them toward a vision that they are capable of achieving. And we work to support them to attain it. Imagine what the prison system would be like if we saw this restorative approach as the way forward instead of our current retributive system. Imagine what we could do individually and collectively in our families if we nurtured this higher vision of one another—imagine the effect on children to understand that they are fundamentally worthy of dignity and respect. We might not all be ready to work on as large of a scale as a Mahatma Gandhi, but we can all work in small ways every day to expand humanity’s capacity to do better.

In the words of my spiritual teacher, Eknath Easwaran, “Never give up on another person and never lower your standards for anyone.”

Including yourself
While creating a nonviolent future is a serious undertaking, one thing remains encouraging: we are not alone. There are countless organizations, groups and individuals already doing the great work, all striving for a shared goal. If you are reading this issue of Emergence, it is very likely that you are one of them. And it is precisely because it is not an easy task, we must join our hands together.

The “Roadmap” is Metta Center’s attempt to offer three things to help create an unstoppable movement of movements: unity, strategy, and nonviolent power. One very appealing aspect of the Roadmap is that we all can identify ourselves with it - we all belong here. Roadmap illustrates the interconnectedness of our work, and many issues that are often seen as separate. It also shows the trajectory of “peace from within,” starting from our “Person Power” at the center.

In this May issue of Emergence, we explore this Roadmap, especially focusing on Person Power and New Story Creation. As Metta’s Roadmap Fellow, I have had the greatest honor of serving as Metta’s point person for Roadmap for the last month and contributing to this issue. We hope that you enjoy the journey of navigating this issue with the Roadmap Compass.
Understanding the Roadmap

What is a Roadmap?

Unity, Strategy, and Nonviolent Power for an unstoppable movement

ROADMAP is a way of making the movement of movements visual, and set of tools activists (and those who wish to get active) can use to:

• Build Community
• Train in Nonviolence Principles
• Create and pursue strategic thinking toward the realization of campaign goals.

These tools include:
• the Roadmap MANDALA (see below)
• web-based ways to connect with one another and benefit from many resources, such as the COMPASS, and Study Guides, and finally
• ways to build a strategy for long-term change integrated into the model itself

USING ROADMAP: PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

• Find yourself in the picture: what issue(s) are you working on, or would like to? (The 18 sub-wedges are just examples).
• Ask yourself with whom you need to connect to make an impact with the issue you choose. Using Roadmap, identify: Whom have you tended to work with on this issue and whom might you add to make your strategy more robust?
• Articulate the “new story” central to your issue. E.g. Mass incarceration: “we do not get security from locking people away; we become secure by helping others to be secure,” etc.
• Build a strategic campaign to address your issue using the Mandala as a guide to full participation and big-picture thinking.
• Participate in the creation of a long-term STRATEGY for a “movement of movements.”
Roadmap
From spontaneous protest to unstoppable movement: a comprehensive strategy

We all belong here

New Story Creation
If we want to replace the present system, we must replace the worldview it’s based on.

Stage 3
Person Power
Build the power of the individual.

Constructive Program
Build independent institutions.

Nonviolent Resistance
Nonviolent Resistance
Now trained and prepared, we offer nonviolent resistance at key leverage points.

Stage 2

Constructive Program
Peace
Nonviolent Resistance (Satyagraha)

Environment
Urban planning
Local farming and consumption
Protecting wild areas

Climate Protection
Reforestation
Alternative transportation and manufacturing
Renewable energy (1-350)
Gandhian economics

Vibrant and Need-based Economies
Helping people practice nonviolence safely and effectively, and working toward a nonviolent culture.

How to Use this Model
This flow from the personal to the political is important but not necessarily chronological.
- Locate your project(s) on the map; sense your solidarity with everyone in this work
- Never neglect your own development
- Think of constructive alternatives first and then:
- Address all conflicts through creative nonviolence.

Some Strategic Guidelines
- Practice nonviolence in deed, word, and as far as possible even thought.
- Be constructive wherever possible, obstructive when necessary
- Focus on “keystone” issues that will really leverage change
- Don’t rely too much on symbols: be concrete wherever possible (the Salt March was about real salt)

Design: Lynda Banks • www.lyndabanks.com
Peace from within approach:
Integral to Roadmap is a “peace from within” empowerment model based on Gandhi’s famous concept of svadeshi, or ‘localism:’ we work on ourselves, work with colleagues, and then use that energy to work against oppressing systems (but not the persons operating them!). For some of us this will be more a set of priorities than steps in time.

New Story Work:
The topmost wedge of the MANDALA is “New Story.” We must outgrow the low image of the human being and the ruling idea of a meaningless, material world that is the dominant paradigm of industrial, collapsing societies. All of us can adapt the key points of the emerging “new story” (it has actually been around from time immemorial) for our own use, and share them wherever we can to explain where we are heading.

These points include:
• we are body, mind, and spirit
• as spirit, we are deeply interconnected: if I injure you (or any living thing), I injure myself
• we can never be fulfilled by the consumption of external things, but by deep relationships of service to the sacred life within and around us
• we have inner capacities, largely untapped, that liberate us from dependence on consumption and competition. They include our human capacity for nonviolence
If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a person changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him.... We need not wait to see what others do.

-Mahatma Gandhi

**PERSON POWER**

Person power is a term used to describe the development of the individual’s full capacity to contribute. It was coined to account for the fact that the popular term “people power” focuses on numbers, which fails by implication to recognize the importance of the individual in revealing nonviolent truth. Both terms are contrasted with — and often stand in opposition to — state power.

Nonviolence begins with an individual’s conversion of a negative drive to a positive drive. When one person transforms fear, anger, and aggression, into universal love, compassion, and resilience, nonviolence is born. For example, even though two million people were in the streets of Manila during the Philippines People Power movement, the movement ultimately consisted of “two million individual decisions” according to Cardinal Jaime Sin. Some proponents of strategic nonviolence tend to think about people power as the key factor in nonviolence movements — get enough people together on the streets and anything is possible. Indeed, anything is possible — and in a situation where a large group of untrained individuals are demonstrating, a lack of discipline can result in an unhelpful mob mentality known as the effervescence of the crowd.

In the scheme of the roadmap, person power is the core element of the new paradigm. Our consciousness informs how we see the world, how we interact with it and take action in it. As we develop person power, we align our consciousness with the new story and better enable ourselves to be active agents of positive change. It is important to note that the spheres of person power, constructive program, and satyagraha are not linear - you do not have to fully develop your capacity to contribute before you begin working on constructive program or nonviolent resistance.

Person power should not be viewed as a stage that you leave or a box that you check, but rather a capacity that you constantly and consistently develop throughout your life. We begin with person power because it is a priority. If you rush out into resistant action before working on yourself or figuring out how you can solve the problem, you will less likely be as successful as if you had invested time in personal development. When we start with person power, we will be able to act with more strength, discipline, and courage.

To explore the training for Person Power associated with the Roadmap, visit this link:

http://mettacenter.org/training-roadmap/
CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAM

You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

-Buckminster Fuller

Nonviolence can help us to dismantle systems of violence and oppression, and it can also guide us to create the systems and structures for a peaceful world. Nonviolence is often understood in its obstructive forms, such as demonstrations, boycott, and acts of civil disobedience, which we like to call “obstructive program”.

Obstructive program and constructive program are like two wings of a bird: both are necessary to loft us to a nonviolent future. Whereas obstructive program involves direct confrontation or noncooperation with systems of oppression, constructive program involves creating new systems, processes, structures and resources to take the place of the oppressive system. Where obstructive program involves “noncooperation with evil,” constructive program supports “cooperation with good.”

Constructive program requires us to use our imaginations and creativity to envision alternatives and put them into action. It is something that can - and should - be done on a daily basis, and that everyone can participate in, regardless of age, gender, education or skill. For example, in the nonviolent campaign for independence in India, all Indians could participate in some aspect of creating khadi (home-spun cloth), which met the basic needs of being clothed and employed, and also freed Indians from being dependent upon imported British textiles (and as such, from British economic domination). It can be inspiring and empowering when we discover that every single one of us has talents and skills that society needs to create nonviolent alternatives, and we can all actively participate in the construction of a new society.

Furthermore, we need not wait to begin constructive program - it’s something that we can start right now. Anything that is constructive is not necessarily part of a constructive program, however. An American wanting to spin cloth would not have the same effects as it did in the Indian movement. When action is disconnected from the local reality, it becomes rote and mechanical, something to be done in the spirit of the campaign but an act that does not necessarily contribute to one’s own liberation. It is more symbolic than real, and in nonviolence we always want to work with the real. To be a part of constructive program, an action should be grounded in the reality of the community’s needs. In addition, something that's a real part of CP should at some point really do something to dislodge the prevailing system (whether or not the keepers of that system understand at first that it has such potential. For example, the Salt Satyagraha in India broke the monopoly of the British Raj on salt, and beyond that the whole idea of their control over India’s resources. Merely palliative or humanitarian work, though useful, is not properly speaking CP, not revolutionary, if it doesn’t in some way threaten the oppressive system.

Constructive program also involves building community. No one can create new systems, structures, and processes alone, single-handedly. Of course, person power is at the core of this sense of community.

When we develop inner strength, learn about nonviolence, and use our innate talents, we can come together with others and become an unstoppable force for positive change.

To explore the training for Constructive Program associated with the Roadmap, visit this link: http://mettacenter.org/training-roadmap/. Also visit Emergence Volume 2 to explore Constructive program more deeply at: http://mettacenter.org/writings-blogs/emergence/
Satyagraha is sometimes considered Gandhi’s greatest contribution to the modern world. It literally means “clinging to truth,” and is often also understood as “soul force” and nonviolent resistance.

Gandhi’s early efforts in nonviolent action were often misunderstood as passive resistance, so he coined the term in 1908 to better encapsulate what he was doing. The truth that a satyagrahi (one offering satyagraha) clings to is the understanding that life is an interconnected whole, and that at some level the oppressor does not want to oppress the other because in doing so they are also harming themselves. The satyagrahi converts feelings of anger or fear into disciplined nonviolent action, and tries to awaken the oppressor to this vision of unity, which may involve taking on some level of suffering inflicted by the oppressor. While satyagraha can stand for nonviolence in all it aspects, we use it in Roadmap to mean active resistance as opposed, for example, to constructive program.

Certain aspects of satyagraha are perhaps the most commonly associated with nonviolent resistance: protests, boycotts, and other obstructive measures that involve noncooperation with oppressive forces. Satyagraha, at its deepest level, occurs when we hold on to the reality of our interconnectedness and refuse to have ill will towards the opponents- and taking it a step deeper, when we love our opponents.

Through engaging in satyagraha, we are actively expressing a higher image of a human being. Satyagraha also requires patience and endurance - it is not for the faint of heart, and requires satyagrahis to tap into the deep wellspring of courage that lies within them.

When we look at the effectiveness of satyagraha, we need to keep in mind the difference between short-term, visible benefits and long-term benefits that may not be immediately visible. To explain this concept, the Metta Center has come up with the distinction of “work” vs. work: violence sometimes “works” but never works, whereas nonviolence sometimes “works” but it always works. By “works,” we mean that your action gets you what you want with immediate, obvious results, and by work (no quotes) we mean that your action makes things better in the long run, and results may not be immediately visible. The Salt Satyagraha of 1930 is a classic example: it did little to change the salt laws, the immediate goal, but it signaled the end of British rule in India. Violence sometimes works in the short term, insofar as it might get you a result that you want, but it never works in the long run because of the harm that is done and quite often results in a cycle of perpetual violence and oppression.

Nonviolence, on the other hand, also “works” and might get you what you want in the short run, but it always works in the sense that it makes things better and has benefits that may not be immediately seen. Even when you don’t see an immediate result, when you act nonviolently, you know in your heart you have done the right thing and acted with the intention of bringing everyone closer together.

To explore the training for Satyagraha associated with the Roadmap, visit this link:
http://mettacenter.org/training-roadmap/
The Pathway to Personal Empowerment

Reviewing the 5 Practices in the Person Power Circle on the Roadmap

Finding ourselves in this great paradigm shift of human thinking, it is easy for one to be overwhelmed by the search for one’s own role in the Great Turning. We may look at the current world crisis and feel inspired to take action and bring great change to our community. But prior to looking outward and finding what we wish to help change in the world around us, we would do well to look inward and see what needs changing in ourselves. Before we jump into a constructive program or nonviolent resistance, we should make sure we have a well-maintained inner landscape. This is why the Metta Center has put person power at the core of the Roadmap Compass. No matter what your passion is in life, the work starts within. Person power, modeled on the term “people power” coined in the Philippine insurrection of 1986 is a term we coined to bring attention to the individual’s highest potential, and Metta Center has come up with five suggestions for daily living to help reach this potential that is within every one of us.

The first step is to unplug from corporate mass media, which provides a very degrading image of humanity. Often the local news is reporting mostly on murders and thefts, leaving us afraid of our neighborhood while the entertainment industry is bombarding us with images of violence and sexuality. Layered throughout these programs are advertisements, which are constantly telling us we need to buy something to feel satisfaction. Media seeps deep into our conditioning and we often process these messages subliminally, where they have a dismal effect on our view of self and others without our being fully aware.

Once you have turned off the television you will find yourself with a whole lot more time on your hands. The next step is to immerse yourself in a study of the theory and practice of nonviolence. A better understanding of the true power of nonviolence is what the world most needs today. Turn to the teachings of those who have mastered nonviolent action, such as Jesus, Gandhi, King, and Mandela, to learn how you can apply it to your everyday living, and then act! Studying material is one way to deepen your understanding, but the best way to become familiar with nonviolence is to go out and experiment with it.

One easy way to do this is with our third recommendation for daily living: practicing personhood. Because we are conditioned to hold a poor image of the human being, this image often gets expressed in our day-to-day interactions with those we encounter.
Often we will sit down at a restaurant and view the person taking our order as someone who is merely there to serve us. This dehumanizing image of that person takes the humanity out of our interaction and prevents any real relation from forming. So the next time you leave the house to run some errands, try to greet and interact with each person as if they are someone close to you.

**The fourth step is cultivating inner strength through developing a spiritual practice.** You may already have a spiritual practice; if so, think about how it relates to nonviolence. If you do not currently have a practice, then finding one that aligns with yourself will be a personal task. One solid starting block is to find a daily practice of meditation you resonate with. Just as we do physical exercise to strengthen our bodies, we must also do mental exercise to strengthen our minds, empower our discipline. If this step is left out we can lose the nonviolence we have studied the next time we find ourselves in some intense situation.

**The final step is to find and pursue your passion.** Gandhi called this swadharma or personal dharma. While nonviolence is the highest dharma, one’s personal dharma is always beneficial to the whole. Discovering our strengths and weaknesses can guide us into our most effective path, which can often start with a constructive approach. There is a great amount of work that needs to be done in our world in all sectors of society, so you’re bound to find alignment with your interests. The six outer sectors of the Roadmap Compass will give ideas on where and how you can plug in.

We hope these five practices, will help you to deepen the peace both within yourself and your community.
Harnessing Person Power: What is Passage Meditation?

The person power circle of the Roadmap makes the radical suggestion (beyond freeing oneself from the low image of the human being in the mass-media), to find a spiritual practice, such as meditation. A spiritual practice like meditation is not about changing or finding a religion, it’s about learning how to harness the very real power we have within us, to transform negative patterns into helpful and practical habits in daily life, so we can become skilled at unleashing a fierce love on the world around us. It is the secret behind a strong commitment to the daily practice of nonviolence as a way of life.

While there are many forms of meditation around, the Metta Center recommends the practice of passage meditation, developed by Eknath Easwaran. It’s a daily 30 minute sitting practice, which you can do in a chair or on the floor with 7 supporting disciplines to support meditation. (When we reduce the time we spend on Facebook and consuming media, we can find 30 minutes easily.)
The method of meditation presented here can be followed equally well in any religion or in none. I think that is the real secret of its appeal. It belongs to no movement, asks for no change of beliefs: it simply allows you to take the ideals you respond to and gradually, gracefully, make them part of your character and your life.

— EKNATH EASWARAN

Below are the instructions in passage meditation as well as four passages from various traditions you might use.

For more information about passage meditation and to learn about the allied disciplines that support daily meditation practice, contact the Blue Mountain Center of Meditation at www.easwaran.org.

HOW TO MEDITATE:

• Choose a time for meditation when you can sit for half an hour in uninterrupted quiet. Early morning is best, before the activities of the day begin.
• Select a place that is cool, clean, and quiet.
• Sit with your back and head erect, on the floor or in a straight-backed chair. A back support may be helpful.
• Close your eyes and begin to go slowly, in your mind, through the words of a simple, positive inspirational passage from one of the world’s great spiritual traditions.
• While meditating, do not follow any association of ideas or allow your mind to reflect on the meaning of the words. If you are giving your full attention to each word, the meaning cannot help sinking in.
• When distractions come, do not resist them, but give more attention to the words of the passage.
• When you reach the end of the passage, you may use it again as necessary to complete your period of meditation until you have memorized others.
• Resolve to have your meditation every day — however full your schedule, whatever interruptions threaten, whether you are sick or well.

Recommended passages for meditation can be found at www.easwaran.org as well as in the books, “God Makes the Rivers to Flow,” and “Timeless Wisdom.”

Here are a few:

The Prayer of Saint Francis
Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
It is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life.
Let Me Walk In Beauty, Sioux tradition
O Great Spirit,
whose voice I hear in the winds
and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me.
I am small and weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty
and let my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset. Make my hands respect the things you have made
and my ears grow sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people.
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden
in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength not to be greater than my brother or sister but to fight my greatest enemy, myself.
Make me always ready
to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes

So when life fades as the fading sunset
my spirit may come to you without shame.

The Best, Lao Tzu
The best, like water,
Benefit all and do not compete.
They dwell in lowly spots that everyone else scorns.
Putting others before themselves,
They find themselves in the foremost place
And come very near to the Tao.
In their dwelling, they love the earth;
In their heart, they love what is deep;
In personal relationships, they love kindness;
In their words, they love truth.
In the world, they love peace.
In personal affairs, they love what is right.
In action, they love choosing the right time.
It is because they do not compete with others
That they are beyond the reproach of the world.

The Island, from the Sutta Nipata
For those struggling in midstream, in great fear of the flood, of growing old and of dying — for all those I say, an island exists where there is no place for impediments, no place for clinging: the island of no going beyond.

I call it nirvana, the complete destruction of old age and dying
I was honored when Professor Nagler approached me to write a foreword for this excellent book because of its timeliness — there is an urgent need for nonviolence in every possible application today — and because he is so eminently qualified to write it.
In the past twelve years, we have seen the use by the United States of military action to attempt to resolve political issues in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and Libya. The disastrous results of those military actions underscore the value of a different approach to conflict resolution on the national and international levels. Michael Nagler’s manual on nonviolence is a healthy reminder that there are alternatives to violence.

I’m writing this foreword to The Nonviolence Manual while on a trip in North East Asia. In two of the countries I’ve visited citizens are using nonviolent tactics to challenge actions of their governments – the very situation on which Michael Nagler primarily focuses (though many others come under review).

In Japan, where the renunciation of war article of the Japanese constitution is under attack, Japanese citizens have formed Article Nine defense committees in every village and every suburb of Japanese cities to rally support for the constitution that has successfully kept them out of the wars and military actions since World War Two. Jeju Island, in South Korea, is the site of a remarkable nonviolent struggle against the building of a naval base for South Korean and American Aegis missile destroyers. Here for the last seven years, the citizens of Gangjeong village have challenged their government’s destruction of the pristine marine area and mammoth, ancient lava rock formation for the construction of another naval base. They have used a variety of tactics, from building peace camps on the remarkable rock formation called Gurumbei, making human blockades at the entrances to the base, boarding barges bringing huge hexagon concrete blocks to make a breakwater for the base on unique coral heads, climbing and occupying huge construction cranes and forming human chains of thousands of people around the base.

So far these herculean nonviolent efforts have not succeeded in stopping the construction of the naval base, while on the island of Okinawa, for the past twenty years, where citizens have challenged the United States and the Japanese government on the use of Okinawa land for 75 percent of America’s military bases in Japan their decades-long protests have finally resulted in the U.S. government beginning the slow process of removing ten thousand military from the island.

Citizens around the world are looking for ways to challenge harmful policies of their governments and many other forms of injustice. The Nonviolence Manual points us to those ways. Anyone who can give us some pointers how to practice nonviolence more safely and effectively today is doing mankind a service. But Professor Nagler is not just “anyone” in this field. He has used his unusual expertise to ground the examples he draws on in the compelling, not to say inspiring theory of nonviolence, its higher vision of humanity, and selected key episodes from its dramatic history, concluding with a well thought out scheme – the Roadmap – to embed these best practices in an overarching strategy along Gandhian lines. In the end we have, exactly as the subtitle suggests, a guide to the kind of action that the world so urgently needs.

I know courage when I see it, and I have seen it more in the brave, determined citizens cited in the examples Nagler draws on – as well as those I myself have witnessed – than in the heavily-armed forces arrayed against them. That courage, complemented by the knowledge of how to use nonviolence skillfully that this handbook provides, is a recipe for a world of peace and justice. I hope that many people will use this book to help us build that world.

Signed copies of the Nonviolence Handbook are available from the Metta Center for Nonviolence by becoming a monthly supporter. For more information and to order your book, call us at 707.774.6299 or write us at info@mettacenter.org.
Stories are powerful. When I first started studying nonviolence, I was deeply touched by the story of Karen Ridd, a Canadian who volunteered for the Peace Brigades International in El Salvador in 1989. She was suddenly arrested by the Salvadoran National Guard, along with her friend Marcela from Colombia. Through a successful negotiation activated by the international network of PBI and the Canadian government, Karen was released a few hours later. But knowing that her friend was still captured and being interrogated, she walked back into the barracks she was just released from. To the soldiers who were surprised and startled, she explained why she had returned: “You know what it’s like to be separated from a compañero.” Shortly after, the two women were released together.

Karen’s story illustrates that nonviolence works at such a deep level in our interactions with others that we sometimes cannot comprehend. It also shows that nonviolence is not a weapon of the weak, but rather it’s a power yielded by the courageous. Her story is inspiring and dignifying.

At Metta, we call this “New Story.” Many aspects of Metta’s work puts a great emphasis on this concept. So much so that, for example, our Certificate in Nonviolence Studies follows the Roadmap and starts the curriculum with exploring New Story. In the Roadmap Mandala, New Story sits at the topmost wedge.

So what exactly is “New Story”? Before we answer the question, we must first explore the current narrative that dominates people’s worldview. Michael Nagler explains this in his short article on New Story:

"The explosive growth of scientific thought that began in the West with the Renaissance and ultimately led to industrialism on a global scale, has brought humanity many benefits, but at a mounting cost. The problems that seem to be rising on every side today, from personal to environmental, can largely be traced to an increasing lack of clarity about ourselves — who we are, why we are here, and how we are to relate, ideally, to one another and the natural world. The “story” that accompanies industrialism and has made it possible — the underlying narrative that’s implicit in our textbooks, newspapers, and films — has it that we are material entities compelled to seek satisfaction in the consumption of increasingly scarce resources. (http://mettacenter.org/nonviolence/newstory/)"
This raises some serious challenges. First, it implies that we are separate entities - from people around us and the planet we inhabit. Second, as Michael writes, it encourages consumerism and suggests that the consumption of material resources leads to happiness and satisfaction. No wonder why violence is considered a “natural” solution to conflicts. The current paradigm supports and justifies violence.

To counter this narrative, we need “New Story,” or what I also like to call story of truth, because the prevailing paradigm of materialism is far from being true. At Metta, we keep in mind the following key points in this work:

- we are body, mind, and spirit
- as spirit, we are deeply interconnected: if I injure you (or any living thing), I injure myself
- we can never be fulfilled by the consumption of external things, but by deep relationships of service to the sacred life within and around us
- we have inner capacities, largely untapped, that liberate us from dependence on consumption and competition. They include our human capacity for nonviolence.

Why is this important? For one, “New Story” gives rationale for nonviolence. If we realize that we all are interconnected, we can naturally conclude that violence is not the answer. Similarly, New Story illustrates why nonviolence works, by going beyond the analytic framework colored by the current paradigm (and unfortunately, studies of nonviolence at times faces limitations by trying to operate in this same framework).

New Story also helps us envision and articulate a world we are striving to create. For instance, if you are working on restorative justice, your story may convey: “we do not get security from locking people away; we become secure by helping others to be secure.” And most importantly, anyone can participate in New Story Creation, no matter where you are in your journey for nonviolence.

I am sure there are many stories similar to that of Karen Ridd’s, that are waiting to be told. Imagine how encouraging it would be if we saw such stories in our news every day. How the world could be if this became the prevailing story. We will then realize that we are much more than selfish, violent, destructive creatures.

What is your new story?
Why is “new story creation” on the Roadmap?

I am among those who believe, in the spirit of Thomas Berry’s oft-quoted remark, that no lasting change can be effected without changing the “story,” or paradigm under which we are operating:

“The deepest crises experienced by any society are those moments of change when the story becomes inadequate for meeting the survival demands of a present situation.”
You have suggested that new story stands at the crossroads of the wisdom traditions and the new sciences. What do you mean by “wisdom traditions”?

This convenient term which I think was coined by Huston Smith identifies the unanimous consensus of the wisest people from both indigenous and ‘major’ religious – and other – traditions about the spiritual nature of reality. It had also been called the perennial philosophy (philosophia perennis), the title of a famous book by Thomas Huxley.

What are some of the discoveries of the new sciences that have reinforced the wisdom traditions? We’re not really talking about a “story” here are we? It’s more of a fresh look at our reality, is it not?

Yes, it’s technically more of a fresh or rather refreshed view of reality, but since stories have such an impact on our moral outlooks I guess the term has stuck. Well, these discoveries are now so numerous, and so inspiring, that it wouldn’t be possible to even list them in this space, but let me just mention a few:

- the world is made of consciousness, not matter. Therefore,
- all existence is interconnected (in “wisdom tradition” terms, “all life is one”)
- we live in a purpose-driven universe and human life has a deep, yet unfulfilled meaning, and finally
- we are fundamentally nonviolent.

You have suggested using four talking points in sharing the New Story: can you please explain why we need talking points, and how to use them, before we go into the points themselves?

In today’s information overload and degeneration of the arts of conversation (and thinking!) people need ‘sound bites’ to understand and to communicate. Of course, that puts deep thought and innovation at a disadvantage – but it’s a way to start the conversation.

Let’s start with the first point: “We are mind, body and spirit.” Why is this a radical idea and what does it have to do with the issue, say, of climate change?

It’s radical because in the post-industrial world the belief, or shall I say, delusion has taken hold that existence is matter and that we ourselves are therefore only some kind of walking machine. As such, who cares whether we have a life-sustaining environment or not? What is “life”?

In Point 2, you offer, “As spirit, we are deeply interconnected: if I injure you (or any living thing), I injure myself.” Explain what you mean about this point. Can you give an example?

Yes, a colleague of mine, Rachel MacNair, has developed a concept in psychology called “Perpetration Induced Traumatic Stress” (PITS), based on massive evidence that people who hurt others, even if they think they’re doing it for a legitimate reason, like soldiers or executioners, suffer internally – from psychological wounds. This was dramatically borne out by new studies of “mirror neurons” that showed that when we inflict, or sometimes only witness the infliction of pain, the same activation takes place in our own brain.
Your honor, years ago I recognized my kinship with all living beings, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on earth. I said it then, as I say it now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it, and while there is a criminal element I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.”

-Eugene Debs
In Point 3, you offer, “We can never be fulfilled by the consumption of external things, but by deep relationships of service to the sacred life within and around us.” Please comment on why you feel this should be a talking point.

A cardinal belief in the prevailing story, kept in force by massive and relentless advertising, is that we need to consume things to be happy. But as a great sage from 20th century India bluntly said, “there is no happiness in any object of the world.” Needless to say, this impossible urge to get happiness from objects is driving us to climate extinction and war.

In Point 4, you offer, “We have inner capacities, largely untapped, that liberate us from dependence on consumption and competition. They include our human capacity for nonviolence.” Talk about these inner capacities. Why are they untapped?

Gandhi called nonviolence “soul force,” emphasizing that it is the compelling power that comes from an indomitable will (undergirded, as we now know, by mirror neurons in the opponent’s nervous system). In a world based on consciousness, this and forces like it that come from within each and every one of us of course have great power. Moreover, the ultimate source of happiness is also within us, liberating us from consumption drives.

These capacities are ‘untapped’ because they are smothered by the conditioning of industrial culture, again primarily, but not exclusively, exerted through commercial advertising and its powerful technologies. We are, as the Gita says, like mirrors covered by dust: the source of love and wisdom is covered by ignorance.

What do you mean by nonviolence? And, why is nonviolence essential to this picture of reality?

Whew. Well a succinct definition of nonviolence is, ‘love in action.’ It’s the mobilization of the recognition of unity within us. May I refer you to my little book, the Nonviolence Handbook for more? I consider it essential because it is based, as Gandhi showed, on sat, the Sanskrit term for the real, the true, and the good; and because recognizing the power of nonviolence is the most eloquent way we could understand who we are and the power we have to change the world. I consider this a missing element in most work being done today on the “new story.”

Give us an example of these points in practice. Why do you, Michael Nagler, do the work you do?

I, Michael Nagler? I cannot believe that we are doomed to lie down before the juggernaut of our present culture and just let it push us to a disgraceful extinction. I believe implicitly in the Bhagavad Gita’s theory of action, resonant with the entire wisdom tradition, where we do what we can and let God (or however you think of the overriding power of the universe) “make something out of it,” as Merton said. Besides, if I might paraphrase Gandhi, I feel I was born for this work. It gives me a sense of fulfillment and even joy, despite all the frustrations, that “I have no power to describe.”
On Nonviolent Struggle:
An Excerpt From the novel
‘The Dandelion Insurrection’

Author’s Note: The Dandelion Insurrection is a story of nonviolent struggle to restore democracy in “a time that looms around the corner of today, in a place on the edge of our nation.” In writing the novel, I attempted to capture a strategic approach to nonviolent struggle, the philosophical underpinning of compassion, and the emotional experience of living through a struggle of such magnitude. All three are pivotal aspects of nonviolent movements for social change. This excerpt can give us only a taste of the whole journey, but hopefully it evokes a sense of familiarity in your heart if you have been involved in nonviolent action. If not, perhaps this taste will awaken an insatiable hunger to join in the struggles of our time.

At night, when the march rested, Inez, Ellen, and Natalie held meetings about the road ahead of them. Ellen spoke eloquently about the philosophies and strategies of nonviolent struggle. Inez drilled people in practical skills and tactics.

“If we meet violence with violence, a civil war will erupt,” Ellen told her marchers. “We must commit to nonviolence, passionately, and with great faith. Let me be utterly honest. We will be met with violence, possibly even extreme violence. People may die. Certainly, we will be subject to beatings, abuse, pain, and suffering. Before we take one more step on this journey, you must be clear about the monumental commitment you are making. Some of us,” she said with eerie conviction, “will not make it home.”

She looked at the field of faces glowing with nervous excitement, creased with grim determination, and shadowed with inner worries. Her heart swelled for the frailty of humans and for the courage that could course through such a tender structure of capillaries and skin. Their eyes would weep on this journey. Their mouths would cry out in pain. Their hands would reach for each other in fear and assistance.

“We are going into the battlefield,” Ellen told them, “armed with nothing but justice, courage, and committed love. Are we lunatics? Perhaps, but fools like us have shaped history more than once.
It has been shown, time and again, that change wrought through nonviolent means endures far longer than the havoc of war and violence. We approach our nation’s capitol not as armed insurrectionists, but as citizens dedicated to the foundational rights of our democracy."

She paused, for the commitment to nonviolent struggle was no small vow. It could not be just a lofty ideal. It had to become an inner conviction; a willingness to forgive in the heat of suffering; a deep fortitude to hold back the strike of retaliation. She asked them to bear the great cross of Jesus; not the wooden one or the crown of thorns, but the powerful, invisible cross that had been shouldered by a man who hung crucified and still found room in his heart to forgive. When the police callously shot people dead; when pepper spray was pumped into their eyes, when soldiers pointed bayonets at the innocent; when bodies fell in the streets; when women were bloodied and men crippled; at these times, Ellen demanded that the marchers step beyond the limits of human patience and walk in the realms of the saints.

Not all would achieve it. Not every hand would be restrained from fighting. Not every heart would bear outrage without yearning for revenge. Some would find their resolve crumbling in the face of terror. Others would feel righteous anger whip through them unchecked. Ellen knew, though, that if enough marchers could achieve such strength, they could carry many others along with them. Such self-governance and sincere leadership, together, would be the foundation that resurrected the nation.
Most of us take money for granted, that money is about as real and predictable as gravity or inches or trees. That money is a physical item and not merely a social contract. Think for a moment what money would be in isolation from other people? If we have nobody else to purchase goods from or who would pay for our services, money looses all its function and meaning, doesn’t it? This thought experiment also provides a kind of freedom, as we see that money is not real in and of itself, as our culture would have us believe.

It would seem that money is there for the sake of our sustenance, to help us provide food and shelter and other things needed to maintain the body, but the way of our times is that money has taken on both life and meaning of its own.

We want to earn more, have more, save more, spend more… without really questioning if this “more-ness” actually serves us, individually or globally.

What I think we are really after with our “more-mentality” cannot be bought with the current systems. Yes, money can put food on the table, and pay for the room to have the table in.

But – especially at times like these, when environmental crisis is converging with financial systems spinning out of control – money cannot with any degree of assurance give us anything in the future! No savings account or retirement plan is big enough to feed us if the conditions for creating food are no longer there. Like the old prophecy says: We cannot eat money.
So then, what is it we are trying to get? In Gandhian economics the vision is a system that “meet needs”, rather than “feed wants”. If we unpack some of what drives us individually into the lure of “more”, we find universal needs like safety/security, belonging, self esteem along with what our physical survival calls for. And of course, we’ve all been told that the pursuit of happiness is a shopping based activity.

Safety is not a commodity, and cannot be secured through fences or weapons. Real safety is free, and involves the simple act of relating human to human: It’s known that the best crime prevention in neighborhoods is to know the people who live on your street. A lot of our habits form out of… well, habit. On a more subtle level we do like others do, to identify with and participate with our group. To belong. Our psychological survival seems to be linked to our sense of belonging. In distant history it’s safe to assume that belonging with a group increased chances also of physical survival. Advertising has always known and leveraged the power of peer persuasion to make consumers out of ordinary people. So, most of us don’t stop and think about what we actually need in terms of stuff, but go with what we expect is the norm. A new cellphone every year or two, a wardrobe upgrade to follow fashion, a new car to keep up with technology…

What about that happiness, then? Research has shown that up to a certain income level, “more” actually is better. If you cannot provide for your own and your family’s immediate sustenance, then higher income correlates to increased happiness. But above that, the correlation levels out… On the other hand, spirituality says that happiness comes from within. And positive psychology shows again and again how people matter more than property to enhance quality of life and be happy.

Luckily, there are myriads of initiatives and groups that are slowly but surely creating new financial infrastructures. This is essential work: nonviolence stresses the importance of constructive program where nonviolent action focuses on building new systems that can replace the dysfunctional ones when they collapse or are overthrown, while also creating more justice, freedom and dignity for all. We have bartering systems and time banks and alternative currencies. We have the “gift economy” and philanthropy, and the “sharing economy” with couch surfing, carpools and seed swaps. We have socially responsible investing, impact investing and slow money. We have green entrepreneurship and triple bottom lines and greener goods. We have ecovillages and intentional communities and cohousing, all exploring and practicing and learning how to live and thrive with less stuff and more human connection. And we have guerrilla gardening and permaculture and urban farms and rapid expansion of local farmer’s markets.

No. We cannot eat money. Thank goodness, it’s *food* we need for eating! The freedom then, to work constructively – in local, interconnected initiatives – for a sustainable “real” economy that works for all.

Maja Bengtson is member of the Board of Directors, Metta Center for Nonviolence
Roadmap in the Classroom

There are so many fun and engaging ways you can use roadmap in the classroom! In fact, you could build an entire course around the roadmap (Metta has done this through our Certificate Program in Nonviolence Studies). Roadmap offers a framework for teaching about peace and nonviolence, and helps students to see how they can use their talents and passions to contribute to the movement for a just and peaceful world.

The image makes it very adaptable for classroom use - you can even download a poster-sized version for your classroom here:

http://mettacenter.org/roadmap/roadmap-poster/

In this lesson we will explore ways you can use roadmap, including sample activities on introducing the roadmap, exploring the Person Power section of the Roadmap, and having students locate themselves on the Roadmap.

Part A: Roadmap introduction
1. Show students the Roadmap image, and ask them to share initial reflections or insights. What do they think Roadmap is? How might it be used? What is their first impression?

2. Use the Roadmap Prezi to introduce the Roadmap:
http://prezi.com/bwq1fqcqycxr8/roadmap-to-an-unstoppable-strategy/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy

image@public domain/pixababy
3. Revisit the questions:
   • What is the Roadmap?
   • Why do we need a Roadmap?
   • How can we use it?

Part B: Person Power overview
The Roadmap offers a “peace from within” approach, which is why Person Power is at the center of the image. Before discussion Person Power, read (or have students read) the Person Power section of Metta’s web site:
http://mettacenter.org/nonviolence/person-power/

1. Write the following quote on the board:
   “If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. ... We need not wait to see what others do.”
   -Mahatma Gandhi

2. Ask students to discuss and reflect on this quote.

3. Then discuss:
   • What is person power?
   • What is the relationship between person power and nonviolence?
   • Why is person power at the center of the roadmap?

Part C: Find your passion
1. Have students (in class or for homework) take the “My Life Is My Message” Questionnaire:
2. Have students write the message that they want their life to convey. Then have them journal on the following questions:

- How does my life already reflect this message?
- What aspects of my life do not reflect this message?
- What changes can I make so that my life reflects my message?

3. Artistic extension: Have students make a visual representation of the message of their life (a collage, draw a picture, etc) and post them around the room as reminders.

Part 4: Finding Yourself On the Roadmap

1. Based on their findings in the questionnaire in Part 3, use the roadmap wedges (New Story Creation, Peace, Democracy & Social Justice, Vibrant and Need-based Economies, Climate Protection, and Environment) to have students form small groups around the room (you could put signs on the wall for each wedge, and then have students congregate around the sign). Have students choose their location based on their interests and passions as they wrote about in their questionnaire answers (either things that they are already studying and working on, or things they want to study and work on).

2. Once in their groups, have them discuss the following questions:

- Why does your work fit into this wedge? Why did you choose this wedge?
- How can you be constructive in your work?
- Given that within your group, you might be working on different projects within that wedge, how can you connect and collaborate? Who else can you collaborate with to be more effective and strategic?

3. Have each group share back to the rest of the class what they discussed. As a class, try to see the connections between the wedges, notice patterns, and explore ways you can move forward to put your ideas into action.

Bonus extension: Have students articulate their work or project in relation to the “new story” of belonging and interconnectedness. For example, if you are working on issues relating to the prison-industrial complex, you might say, “We do not get security from locking people away; we become secure by helping others to be secure.” For an extra challenge, try to do it in 140 characters or less, and have students share their work on Twitter!

For additional resources and lesson ideas: check out our Roadmap trainings, which can easily be adapted for the high school or college classroom:

http://mettacenter.org/training-roadmap/

If you think of additional ways to use Roadmap in the classroom, or if you or your students still have questions about Roadmap, please email your ideas to education@mettacenter.org. We’d love to hear from you.

Stephanie Knox Cubbon is the director of education at Metta Center
More Roadmap Resources on the Web

Visit http://mettacenter.org/roadmap/ to explore the web-based Roadmap Compass.

Become familiar with “New Story” and articulate it in relation to issues you are working on: http://mettacenter.org/nonviolence/newstory/.

Go to http://mettacenter.org/training-roadmap/ to view Metta’s training resources on Roadmap and educate yourself.

Join our Roadmap Facebook Group, a portal that brings you to resources, a lively conversation with like-minded people, and above all a way to get connected with them: https://www.facebook.com/groups/roadmap.main/.

Share your “big ideas” and “big questions” via our Roadmap “Slow Discussion” Moderated Email Group: http://mettacenter.org/roadmap/roadmap-slow-discussion/.

Want to learn more or bring a Roadmap training to your community?
Contact us at info@metta.org