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## **My own context:**

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*This book is dedicated to you hopeful readers out there who are willing to step back to see the wholeness and step up to make it so.*

## ***Preface***

We couldn't make music without learning the notes. We couldn't read without learning the ABC's. So, what makes us think we can attain peace or justice or fairness until we learn the skills to achieve them?

Nonviolence scholars Howard Zinn, Gene Sharp, Michael Nagler, Marshall Rosenberg; organizations like Pace e Bene, Fellowship for Reconciliation, Waging Nonviolence, World Beyond War, Common Peace, and more, offer training for nonviolence theory, communication and action. Over 300 colleges and universities study peace and nonviolence.

Every Day Nonviolence adds to these by showing us why nonviolence matters in our own lives and how it fits into the Big Picture.

People who are growing up with ecology and the World Wide Web as part of their worldview can easily imagine interconnected, interdependent networks or systems. They use Facebook every day. However, applying this holistic conceptual and organizational model to real life is still New Think.

All of us are horrified by the failures of traditional problem solving. We see fall-out from dualistic, either-or thinking every day. Many of us eagerly embrace "changing the system." What concerns me is that by continuing to "set up" problems-to-be- solved within the old, polarized framework, even this new generation risks unwittingly perpetuating the status quo.

The good news is that a holistic worldview is an insight all of us can now achieve.

The Tao of Nonviolence introduces this process-based, participatory problem-solving model. It will help us perceive of human relations and interactions as living systems; practice the skills of logical, demystified, non-moralistic nonviolence; and, thereby, become the "change we wish to see in the world," as Mahatma Gandhi urged. (5/16/16)

## ***Introduction:***

# **Extremism is So Last Millennium**

I became a student of nonviolence my second day on the job as director of a university's women's center. A faculty friend stopped me on the sidewalk and said, "Every semester I have students in class who've been raped. Not just one or two," she said, "but several. What are you going to do about it?"

Good question. What was I going to do about it? Suddenly, finding a way to attend to the endemic problem of campus and community violence was *my* problem. Two things helped me proceed: my own predisposition for holistic, systems perspectives; and the coincidence of reading that the U.N. would name the first decade of the new millennium, "A Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence."

As an anthropology student, myself, I learned about misuses and abuses of power on a global scale: between dominant and minority cultures, in colonial settings, and within various forms of personal and institutionalized unfairness. So it didn't take long for me to see that even in this local setting, systemic imbalance created by abuse of power is parallel across systems. On a campus, in a country, in a bedroom or a board room – a bully is a bully. If we were to be serious about reducing violence we not only needed culture change, we needed to update our worldview!

It was easy to see we needed a more integrative approach to problem solving, locally; that framing problems as disconnected events and reacting after the fact could never reduce the violence. What did surprise me was to realize the ineffective way we tried to deal with violence and other problems locally was a microcosm for dysfunctional decision-making globally – indeed universally – because dysfunction is set in motion by the way we are taught to set up problems in the first place, i.e. dualistically rather than holistically.

Drawing from the perspectives of anthropology and ecology as well as from the principles of biology and contemplative or philosophical Taoism, I could see that in the same way bullies in all settings share characteristics – the principles of a living system also are parallel.



Whether large like the world filled with people *in relationship* or just two people, within any living relationship, abuse of power causes *imbalance* and that characteristic is parallel whether we're talking about a human body, a community, a marriage, or even one mind or one ecosystem. All the seemingly separate parts of a whole system (e.g. body) and the smaller systems that compose it (e.g. endocrine, lymph) need to maintain the ebb and flow of organic balance to survive. The collective as well as diverse individuals or elements requires an opportunity to thrive or the whole organism becomes too out of balance and begins to fail.

Thinking about relationships as living systems and how to make them more resilient became the basis for the practical, non-moralistic way to conceptualize and respond to problems that I call "every day nonviolence." Although conflict is natural and inevitable because life moves and changes, extreme imbalance is not healthy and is visible, for example, as abuse, discrimination, oppression, pollution – as *violence*. *Nonviolence* in this context is what we *do* to make and maintain the system, and becomes visible as increased fairness, health, peace. I add the phrase *every day* both because nonviolence is a common sense insight and a practice that everyone can apply; and because if we hope to get ahead of some of the violence in our lives and change conditions that lead to it – we need to practice it *every day*.

The urgency is this: no matter how passionately we hope for – and even struggle for – a peaceful world, safer homes or healthier selves, human beings will not be able to change from violent to nonviolent problem-solving until we learn to recognize and utilize systems. Every day nonviolence removes problem solving from personal emotion, from *good or evil*, even from being nice. It is about the logic of system sustainability.

In a nutshell, (1) all living systems must maintain dynamic balance or equilibrium or harmony to survive; and (2) it is not possible to achieve balance by adding imbalance (negative energy or force) but only by creating positive balance with the integrative force of nonviolence.

It is true that violence can maintain *imbalance*, at least for a time; but only nonviolence can move systems toward wholeness. No matter how sincerely we want to "end violence," we cannot do it until we learn to see the big picture and plan accordingly.

Like the daily news that conforms to it, our traditional worldview has led us to see the world as disconnected elements and events. It reduces problems to fragments rather than seeing them as part of an interconnected process. Like a strict *medical model* for understanding physical disease (which also reflects with the old model), tradition has led us to wait for blood to spill and react after the fact – often in kind and always allowing violence to be the organizing principle. In this manual I suggest a model and method that can generate what nonviolence proponents call a "third way" to achieve healthy balance – by organizing around nonviolence. It suggests a two-step practice: step back to see relationships as whole, living systems; then *step up* with actions intended to move them toward health.

Extremism is so last millennium! Nonviolence pioneer Howard Zinn put it this way: "*We are smart in so many ways. Surely, we should be able to understand that in between war and passivity, there are a thousand possibilities.*" (1a)

Martin Luther King, Jr. said it poetically: "*Darkness cannot drive out darkness; Only light can do that.*"

Every Day Nonviolence says, "*Violence cannot produce sustainable systems; only nonviolence can do that.*" (1b)

The primary reason for creating this manual was that when I wanted to teach a more anthropological, systems-based form of nonviolence through perspective-building and practical projects there was no book – so over a period of 15 years of developing projects, I wrote this one. The second reason is that until a critical mass of us has access to information encouraging us to change our minds about how we conceptualize the inevitable conflicts of life from dualistic to holistic, it will be impossible to bring about the adaptive shift in our worldview that can sustain us. This means making the ideas surrounding systems and nonviolence accessible to everyone.



The decision-making method of kings and tyrants is reflected, ironically, by a Marxist-Leninist educational principle: “*Many ideas in a few heads; few ideas in many heads.*” The underlying aim of public education – and the real blessing (and test) of American democracy – turns that elitist notion on its own head by insisting on getting as many ideas in as many heads as possible. Throughout history and increasingly in recent decades, as the consequences of a myopic worldview have become more apparent, the few people who “just knew” intuitively the importance of us all understanding we live in an interconnected world have tried to tell us about it with varying degrees of success.

Mystics, poets and, increasingly, integrative scientists have shared this open secret about interdependence in various ways. Some created religions and philosophies; some searched the heavens or experimented with natural laws. In the classic 1972 book, *The Tao of Physics*, physicist Fritjof Capra told us how mystics and scientists, using different tools, have been uncovering parallel stories about living systems and sustainability.

*The Tao of Nonviolence* doubles back from where Capra and others have been dropping conceptual breadcrumbs throughout the evolution of human perception to reach beginners – and it probably goes without saying that when it comes to shifting worldviews, we’re all beginners. My aim is to catch the attention of young people and people who are not naturally drawn to philosophy and physics or have the time to think about why updating our worldview matters. Anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson writes about the dangers of living longer and thinking shorter. This book shows us a way to think longer and live safer.

Some of you may wonder what I “did about” campus violence. Determined not to become consumed by crisis-after-crisis, I first tried examine relationship violence within the biggest possible context. I identified the players, connections, patterns, and possible precursors. Then, over a period of years – in addition to crisis and advocacy work – kindred spirits throughout the community developed positive new projects and programs to address conditions that when left unchecked lead to system imbalance and violence.

As seemingly unrelated circles of interest groups began to overlap, slowly but surely, changes in awareness, expectation, and even behaviors became visible. People volunteered, trained, and thousands participated through scores of focused projects like SafeZone, Noontime Yoga, and the Season for Nonviolence. Some of them are discussed in this manual; all of them are replicable.

Still, many of us live in our own version of Kansas, with respect to the need for progressive change; and all of us live in a time when the forces of regression are strong. Knowing that, it is up to each of us to continue working for lasting, structural change that benefits everyone.

***Manhattan, Kansas, May, 2016***



## So what does every day nonviolence look like?

What do a meditative walk on a vast prairie, a gathering at the local peace pole, cleaning litter from a highway, organizing a pet neutering clinic, protesting war, and attending a nonviolent communication workshop with your partner on Valentine's day have in common? Although they appear unrelated, in fact, they represent a few of the ways my own community began to practice nonviolence, recognize the shared aim of creating healthy systems, and benefit from the overlapping nonviolent communities that developed from diverse efforts.



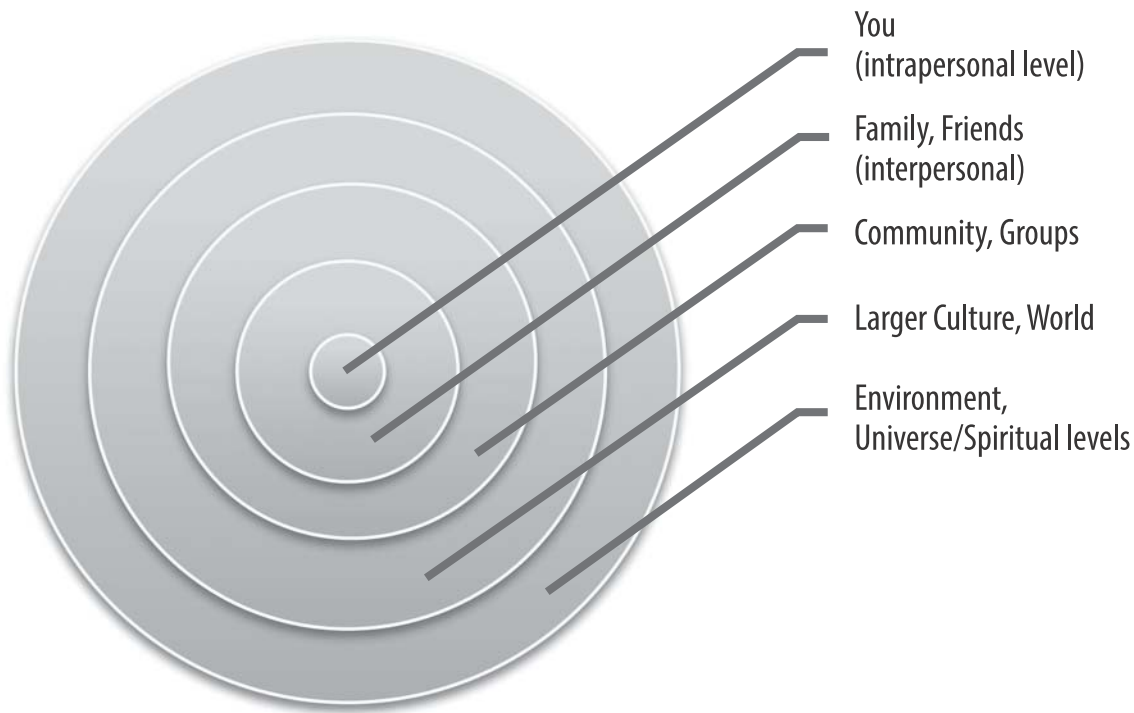
We are bombarded every day, in life and in the media, by thinking that limits options and leads us toward extremes. *Either good or bad, right or wrong, win or lose, my-way-or-the-highway.* Coming to see the world as interactive systems helps us see the rainbow of alternatives beyond black or white. As I use it in this manual, the word problem or problem solving goes far beyond waiting for a problematic event and then trying to “solve” it. Humans are problem-solving animals. We make decisions every moment of our life and, happily, if we pay attention, many options can improve our well-being and avoid or mitigate potential problems. Between extremes is where we find creativity, flexibility, tolerance for ambiguity, and resilience.

The global nonviolence axiom, “If you want peace, work for justice” translates locally to, “If we want safe homes, schools and communities we need to work for fair relationships at all levels.” Healthy balance is so fundamental to life as to be an equation:

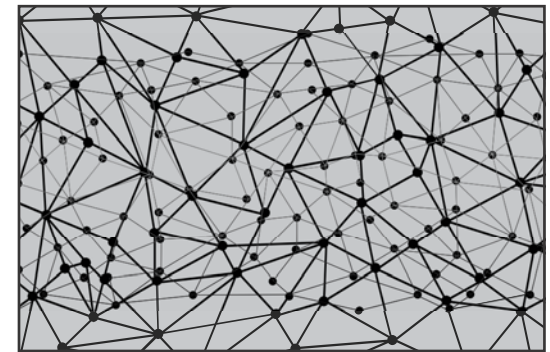
**Want sustainable systems?  
Work for organic balance.  
How? Practice nonviolence.**



# Concentric circles provide a simple outline of human relationship systems at every level



A Whole System that includes all connections is hard to visualize! Metaphors for wholeness include Indra's Net (see page 95) which looks something like a universe-wide Facebook or an electric power grid:



designed by Freepik.com

Visualizing problems by using levels of interaction helps us organize thoughts and plans. Instead of concentric circles you could imagine a spider's web, the worldwide web or the ancient yin/yang model. These holistic models allow us to see connections, patterns and parallels. Problems rarely occur at just one level, but sometimes big issues are easier to see close to home. Carefully applied, systemic realities transfer across levels. Picking the garden weeds before it is overgrown is much like taking care of seemingly small relationship issues before a crisis; calm waters are like the clarity of mindfulness. Imagining we can resolve global conflict with war is parallel to thinking we can resolve marital conflict with domestic violence. Both levels of violence add imbalance to an already imbalanced system. The key is to understand living systems and how to maintain them.

# ***Nonviolence is Course Correction***

The story of “Fred” illustrates what moving a Living Relationship toward healthy, organic balance looks like...

Before GPS (global positioning systems) began to be used in the 1980s, there was a little black computer used for navigation in the cockpit of airplanes. The pilots called it “Fred.” When the plane veered off course, Fred told the pilots how many degrees it was off track so they could steer the plane and correct the course. The reality is – as in human life including our relationships – planes are rarely exactly on-course. During a flight from L.A. to Hawaii, for example, a plane is “off-course” by absolute standards 90% of the time! No need to panic and react. Every few seconds, Fred notifies the crew to make a correction. (2)

Wouldn't it be nice if relationship cues were as clear! However, there *are* clues that signal imbalance and all of us can learn to see and use them. The ongoing adjustments necessary to keep a plane on course are analogous to the practice of “every day nonviolence.” When we decide it is important, given a reliable conceptual model and nonviolence skills, we can better adjust our relationships and keep them moving toward healthy, organic balance by cultivating agreements.

When we realize we have the ability to tackle problems and conflict more sensibly (individually or by using the ‘people power’ of groups) when we adopt a holistic conceptual framework; when we learn to identify conflict early and act skillfully to improve the conditions leading to system failure – maybe we actually can do it before we crash.

Airplanes are a good analogy for interdependent systems, with all of those diverse but essential nuts and rivets holding a system together in a precarious environment, constantly moving and changing. Imagine the multitude of diverse parts of an airplane and how even the smallest bolt is critical to the overall well being. Imagine trying to fly a plane with one dominant wing and one wing that is under-valued. The phrase “only as strong as our weakest link” suggests human beings actually understand somewhere in the recesses of our brains that our interactions need to be fair to be stable.

The human body, itself, is the best example of an organically balanced system. But all human relationships are living systems and all of them require dynamic balance to thrive and survive.





# Nonviolence is...becoming a remover of obstacles



## Meet Ganesha: S/Hero of Every Day Nonviolence

The most famous little elephant in world mythology, *Ganesh* or *Ganesha*, embodies the heart of nonviolent action. Most people in the West have not met Ganesh, but we need him desperately today because s/he is a “Remover of Obstacles,” both material and spiritual. Ganesh is a gentle soul who reminds us of humanity’s key role on the planet, but he is no patsy. If someone needs checked, the Lord of Obstacles has been known to place an obstacle or two in the path, reminding many of us of social activist Mary “Mother” Jones who once said, “*My business is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.*”

Ganesh also reminds us of a healthy living system where yin and yang are harmonious; and of the “two hands of nonviolence,” upon which this book is based.

Eknath Easwaran, noted teacher of Mahatma Gandhi’s nonviolent message, begins his beautiful little book, *Your Life is Your Message*, by telling us, “*Conservation biologists call the elephant a ‘keystone’ species. Just as an arch cannot stand without its keystone, many other species, and sometimes entire ecosystems, would be lost without the elephant... Because of the elephant, a huge hungry animal with gentle habits, the entire ecosystem flourishes.*” (3)

That human beings play an equivalent role in the larger global system is now well understood. “*Our lives affect all other creatures, plants, and elements around us,*” Easwaran says. “*They all depend upon us for support and protection.*”

Like Ganesha, we who live on planet Earth in these first years of the third millennium are presented with the archetypal, double-edge “opportunity and challenge”: will we stubbornly cling to a status quo that threatens us? Or can we become “removers of obstacles” so our relationships and world can flourish?

*A human being is part of the whole, called by us “universe,” a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest – a kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.*

– Albert Einstein



*Two More Examples before we go on...* (more examples begin on page 84)

## ***Nonviolence is...demanding that abuse stops while inviting cooperation***

The Two Hands of Nonviolence idea was inspired by a metaphor created by the writer and peace activist Barbara Deming in her book *Revolution and Equilibrium*. It is used by PACE e BENE in its "Engage" Nonviolence training manual and course.

As PACE e BENE explains it: With one hand we say to one who is angry, or to an oppressor, or to an unjust system, "Stop what you are doing..." With the other hand, we acknowledge our connectedness and invite cooperation.



***The nonviolence way is to use both hands: to stop harm and to welcome cooperation. Nonviolence seeks a "third way" beyond extremes to address problems and conflict.***

## ***Nonviolence is...the only way to wholeness***

In a current conflict, gun advocates argue, "Guns don't kill people – people kill people." Nonviolence advocates might mirror that logic by saying, "Guns don't solve problems – people solve problems." How much good did six guns owned by the mother of the Sandy Hook school killer do for her or for the rest of us?

As the U.S. struggles to deal with endemic violence, it is useful to remember the nonviolence principle: violence multiplies violence. Only positive actions counter negative actions as only light counters darkness. Problems are complex and the ecological axiom, "you can't do just one thing" applies to every interaction. Policy, law, health care, opportunity to thrive and numerous other factors go hand in hand.

The model we use when we examine a problem matters. How we focus our energy matters. Expectations matter. If we want healthy relationships we need to know what healthy systems look like. When we expect violence we live in a violent world. When a critical mass of us chooses to live in a less violent world we will make it happen. [For more about the word "nonviolence," go to page 49.]



Like the Two-Hands of Nonviolence,  
The model and methods of Every Day Nonviolence  
Also unite two steps...



**Perspective:**

**Step Back** *to conceptualize whole systems*

*[Our] general way of thinking of the totality, i.e. our general world view, is crucial for overall order of the human mind itself. If [we] think of the totality as constituted of independent fragments, then that is how our mind will tend to operate, but if we can include everything coherently and harmoniously in an overall whole that is undivided, unbroken, and without border (for every border is a division or break) then our mind will tend to move in a similar way, and from this will flow an orderly action within the whole.*

– Quantum Physicist David Bohm (4)

*We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive.*

– Albert Einstein (5)

**Practice:**

**Step Up** *with nonviolent actions intended to sustain them*



# Perceiving, Practicing, Becoming

Every Day Nonviolence is organized around the metaphorical platform of whole systems and the active process of “perceiving, practicing, becoming,” a paraphrase from the 1962 Yearbook of the National Education Association, *Perceiving, Behaving, Becoming*. (6) In that book, iconic psychologists Carl Rodgers, Abraham Maslow and educators Earl C. Kelley and Arthur W. Combs hearten us with the insight that people continue to grow and “become” all of our lives.

If we are to become “*part of the solution rather than part of the problem*,” as the 1960s generation advised, or to be “*the change we wish to see in the world*,” as Mahatma Gandhi famously put it, the first steps will be: *perceiving* of wholeness – whole, healthy systems like a fit body, bountiful lake, thriving community or an ecologically balanced planet – and acting on its lessons to maintain healthy organic balance. It also means learning we actually *have* a worldview, distinct from reality, and that how we view the world and our interactions within it (as objects or living systems, for instance) matter.

In *Perceiving, Behaving, Becoming*, the writers say brains must perceive in order to achieve. When people can *perceive* of what they want to *become* and then *behave* as if it were possible, the odds of *becoming* it improve dramatically.

## Perceive

In the quote that best frames this book, physicist David Bohm made a similar observation about how we unconsciously organize our world: when a worldview leads us to perceive in fragments we live in a fragmented world; but, when we think in whole systems and behave as though the whole system matters, “*from this will flow an orderly action within the whole.*”

The idea that how we think (our worldview and consequent problem solving methods) connects to how we behave and to what we become has parallels throughout society. Psychologists and educators focus on individual learning but, people en masse also perceive and behave and from that embedded, largely unconscious, view will flow what civilization becomes.

In the context of every day nonviolence: when we make a mindful effort to hold the idea of of whole systems in our minds, and then act and adapt intentionally to sustain them, we also improve the odds of achieving healthy selves and relationships at all levels.

Perception is central to how we *behave and what we practice* because we won’t learn the skills of nonviolence until we understand why and how nonviolence matters!

Every day nonviolence examines human interactions as though wholeness is expected; and where, like any living system, our relationships occur within a natural state of flux.

We may imagine we exist within a static state – of *okay-ness* most days – where anything that deviates is not okay. On the contrary, however, like everything else in the universe, we are part of a living world and even our relationships constantly move and change. Every choice and act moves us slightly or hugely toward or away from organic balance. This is normal. Until quite recently, historically speaking, human beings did not have the perspective to understand living systems; but, as we will see in the following pages, now that we do know, we can work in smarter ways to maintain them.



## **Practice**

Nonviolence is more comprehensive than individual behavior so I use *practice* instead of *behave* although it includes both sets of behavior; and, for positive behavior to occur, the key is education/learning. Longtime nonviolence educator, Coleman McCarthy, asked, “*Why are we violent but not illiterate?*” Then answered, “*Because we are taught to read.*” (7) His point is none of us has been taught the art of nonviolent problem solving; but all of us can learn it.

Most English-speakers think of nonviolence as “not violence.” More about this later, but the point of every day nonviolence is that simply abstaining from violence is not enough. Entropy happens. Conflict is inevitable. However, as all of science from physics to biology teaches: life counters entropy; culture counters disorganization; and, I will suggest, nonviolence can counter abuses of power that lead to violence, crisis and system failure.

*Practicing* means organizing lives and communities around nonviolence. Since the ends we achieve always mirror the means we use to achieve them, what we *expect* matters. When we expect violence, violence is our organizing principle: we hire police, military, therapists; we create social and environmental “clean ups” – and we live in a violent world. If we come to expect wholeness in our affairs, and make even small, ongoing efforts to create healthy relationships, then we will live in a more healthy, resilient world.

## **Become**

Words, words, words are one thing, but people learn and live by doing and being. Nonviolence is something we *do* and *become*. When people participate in nonviolent actions and events – however large or small – and become mindful of the overarching aim of organic balance– we can feel the power of positive action and are more likely to apply it in other parts of our life.

Another nonviolence scholar, Michael Nagler, teaches about two kinds of force/energy and three kinds of power. (8) *Negative energy* is seen in abuse of power and violent actions; and even countering it with negative energy perpetuates imbalance. *Positive energy* is seen in life forces that counter entropy or disorder, including nonviolence; and because it seeks mutual benefit and uplifts the whole system it generates well-being, “even for perpetrators of the violence.” Positive force is in “the rising tide that lifts all ships.” Power, he says, is essential and comes in three main varieties: *threat* (survival of the fittest/violence), *exchange* (trade this for that, often leading to weak/strong, dominant/submissive dualities), and *integrative* (shared power that values system health through mutually advantageous actions). Nonviolence studies and practices positive force and integrative power.

There are lots of ways to define nonviolence. Why another? The ideas presented here are about a non-moralistic, unemotional and demystified practice all of us can learn and apply every day. We humans have come to an historic moment when it is possible – for the first time in history – to move from problem solving methods based on either winning or losing and that lead to extremism and violence; and toward problem solving methods based on the expectation, not for eternal peace/health/life, but for ecological sustainability. The catch is, most of us – a critical mass of us living on planet Earth – will need to change our minds and our expectations, and *choose to evolve*.

Within the living memory of people reading these pages, it has become possible to actually transform the way we understand and resolve conflict. Violence and power-over methods were necessary to enforce an imbalanced, unfair world; but we live in a time of transition. Today, we can perceive of whole systems, come to expect healthy relationships, and learn to practice the skills to make them so.

Whatever we do, it will add up.



## **Why tao?**

I use the word “tao” (with a small t) in the way some people use the word Nature with a capital N. It is shorthand for the interconnected and interdependent nature of our world. I am talking about healthy wholeness, not religion. There are no Masters or Holy Books. The reality of tao is the reality behind ecology, anthropology, and other holistic notions, but tao is even more inclusive and organic. It evokes a world where everything (people to rocks to ideas) is composed of the same essential energy with diverse but necessary purposes; and where all of the systems-within-systems that we see and know (solar, bodily, cultural, personal) and those we have yet to discover are embedded within One Big System.

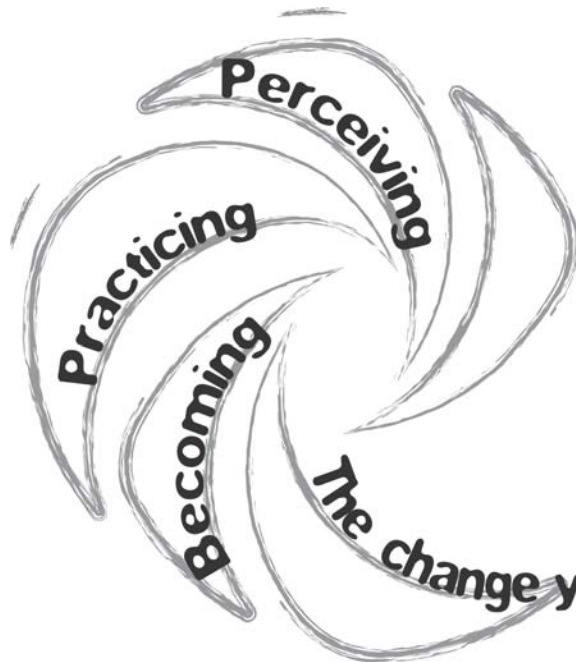
Today, we are finally learning to understand systems by dissecting the details (a quintessentially western pursuit) and by identifying the processes and patterns (a quintessentially eastern approach). We’ve also come to understand that system sustainability requires us to remember the whole and “heal the split.”

The metaphorical platform of the tao suggests a natural world that is in living relationship; where human beings belong as members not overlords; albeit, because of our big brains, as stewards of personal and global relationship “gardens.”

In the context of problem solving, the principles of tao illustrate the art-and- science of creating win-win outcomes, not for sentiment but for sustainability. The aim of this more anthropological take on nonviolence is to help us see our interactions as complex wholes formed from interrelated parts; and, from the wisdom of natural and analogous systems, learn to manage them in sensible, safer ways.

If sustainability is the ambition of our species, we first need to do something unheard of in these high-speed times: pause, right here in mid-evolution to reboot the human Operating System; modernize our worldview from the one inherited from cave dwelling ancestors, whose only problem solving possibility was “fight or flight;” and toward one based on the modern knowledge of systems; from one where the notion of wholeness was accessible only through intuition to one where large masses of people can see with our own eyes the interdependent nature of our lives and plan accordingly.

The aim of this manual is to provide a shared model and language for the varied, specific personal and social trainings and classes whose aim is to make and maintain healthy human interactions.



**The change you wish to see in the world**

# 1968

No one can know for sure but I think December 24, 1968 – immediately following winter solstice when the darkest day of the year turns back toward the light – legitimately marks the day after which nonviolence became possible on a grand scale.

If you were writing a novel about human development, you just couldn't make this stuff up...

## *Why so meaningful?*

Lots of momentous things happened in 1968. Some were set backs. For example, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy were killed, the Vietnam War raged. But one of the most positive events in human history also occurred that year. 'Earthrise,' the famous photo taken by the crew of Apollo 8, gave humanity our first look at Earth from space and made it possible for the entire global citizenry to see for ourselves, in a much more tangible way, that we live in one interconnected/interdependent world.

Before that day, we had to learn about unity and connectedness from the few mystics and poets who somehow "just knew it." We are familiar with the famous ones who have tried, mostly unsuccessfully, to teach about "oneness," by various names, through the force of their own moral authority. Some versions of this 'open secret' about the unity of the universe were more successfully translated and communicated than others. But it is safe to say that most people have struggled with the abstract teachings.

However, the day before Christmas in 1968, suddenly "Spaceship Earth," the "Big Blue Marble," and the friendly white home of those traveling moon rocks that were carefully shared throughout the world, became real – something we could touch and see for ourselves. This new information made intellectual insights like ecology and sustainability possible; and, I would argue, it also gave people a logic-based motivation to adopt nonviolent problem solving.

That perspective from outer space – along with concurrent perspectives from inner space (from the 1965 electron microscope revealing DNA and informing us about our commonality as well as the systemic requirement for diversity, for example) combined with the even newer global circulatory system to share it (digital and electronic images, the network-building internet, wireless and less controllable communication, fast travel) – have made it possible for human beings to *choose to evolve...* and to change our minds about how we attend to conflict.

*To see the earth as it truly is, small and blue in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see riders on the earth together, sentient beings on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold – people who know now they are truly one.*

– Paraphrased from Archibald MacLeish, December 25, 1968 (9)

