

Words Matter

Communication Skills for Transcending Conflict in Daily Interactions



Principles for Nonviolent Engagement

- Martin Luther King, Jr. provided six principles of nonviolent engagement in times of public confrontation.
- Engaging these principles adds us to a long line of peace activists who engaged their faith in public.



Principles:

- Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people. As Christians we see the full breadth of our life as an act of faith-how we eat, work, shop and relate to the world.
- Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding. As Christians we open ourselves to the surprising possibility of enemies becoming friends.

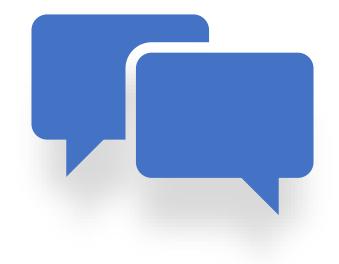
Principles:

- Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice, not people. We respond to others recognizing that every person is created in God's image, and that every person can be healed of their hatred.
- Nonviolence holds that suffering can educate and transform. We believe that God is at work to create communities to confront and end suffering through our nonviolent response to hatred.

Principles:

- Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate. Our prophetic anger toward injustice is always rooted in love for the other, even our enemies.
- Nonviolence believes that God is on the side of justice. Throughout the Bible, we discover a God who comes to the vulnerable and the despised. When we are on the side of the oppressed, we are continuing to tell this story with our lives.

Notes on each of these principles from **What is Bystander Intervention?** By Joy Shaver and Melissa Florer-Bixler, Mennonite Mission Network, Peace and Justice Support Network



Skills for Tough Conversations

Skills:

Active Listening-pay attention, stay in the moment

- Body Language-lean in, look away sometimes (no staring down eye contact)
- Allow silences
- Breathe
- Say more, I'm trying to understand
- Do you mean...?

Skills:

Be personable, be a person

- "I" statements—I wonder, I'm feeling, I'm learning, I'm coming to think, I'm concerned that, for me...
- Hold respect for the person they are bigger than the position they take.



Care to continue

- Be willing to continue another time-this is a relationship, not a contest
- I hope we can continue another time, I need to think about this, I appreciate your honesty

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