

## Touchstones Theme: Nonviolence



I do not like the “I hate it” feeling, but I have it. I hate it that there are too many good people who allow the ways and works of violence to continue; I hate it that too many people who know better simply talk and pray about justice and ...believe ...they have ...fulfilled the requirements of justice; ...I would be delivered from all this evasion and blindness, apathy and self-service. ...I will then let my hate for all that spoils the beauty of the earth, all that di-

minishes the life of the world, move me to thought and effort that celebrates and promotes peace, that honors and serves justice. ...Yes, I do not like the “I hate it” feeling, but if I must have it, I will use it to move my mind and heart where they can do the most good. *Albert Ciarria*

You may well ask, “Why direct action, why sit-ins, marches, and so forth? Isn’t negotiation a better path?” You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has consistently refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. I just referred to the creation of tension as a part of the work of the nonviolent resister. This may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word “tension.” I have earnestly worked and preached against violent tension, but there is a type of constructive nonviolent tension that is necessary for growth.

*Martin Luther King, Jr., Letter from a Birmingham Jail, August 1963*



## Join us in exploring Nonviolence

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