



PHILOSOPHY OF THE MOVEMENT: NONVIOLENCE

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What can we understand about social movements by studying the strategy, tactics and philosophy of nonviolence?

LESSON OVERVIEW

During the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s leadership and commitment to nonviolence was steadfast, yet it was not without challenges from others equally committed to desegregation and racial justice. In this lesson students will learn about the philosophy, strategy, and tactics of nonviolence from the leaders who worked alongside Dr. King and supported his vision, and from those who offered other strategies and tactics for African Americans to achieve full equal rights.

Students will apply the reading skills of sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration of historical content, and broaden their skills and use of close reading strategies by analyzing documentary film, first-person interviews alongside the transcript, and historical images. As a demonstration of learning, students will write a point of view essay explaining their understanding of nonviolence and the tensions that arose within the leadership of the Civil Rights Movement. Through this process students will continue to build upon the essential habits of a historian and establish a foundation for critical media literacy.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will use skills in reading historic content, and increase their understanding of nonviolent philosophy during the Civil Rights Movement by:

- Analyzing primary source materials including photographs and documents
- Critically viewing documentary film and first-person interviews to inform their understanding of history
- Synthesizing new learning through developing questions for further historical inquiry
- Demonstrating their understanding of the lesson topic through a final writing exercise

MATERIALS

- Equipment for watching video segments
- Equipment to project photographs
- Copies of handouts

LENGTH

Two 50-minute class periods, with homework.

ACTIVITIES

- 2 Do-Now: Opening Exercise
- 2 Analyzing Film as Text
- 3 Close View of Interview Threads
- 4 Analyzing Images: Sourcing
- 5 Research: Corroboration
- 5 Closing Discussion Questions
- 6 Homework or Extended Learning

HANDOUTS

- 8 Do-Now Exercise: Nonviolence
- 9 Close View of the Film
- 10 Movement Building: Interview Thread One
- 12 Movement Building: Interview Thread Two
- 14 Movement Building: Interview Thread Three

ACTIVITIES

1. Do-Now: Opening Exercise

Understanding Nonviolence: Tactics and Strategy

Explore with students the difference between a philosophy (guiding moral principles) and tactics and strategy (actions taken to achieve a goal and the theory to accomplish the goal). Have students use their prior knowledge to build a working definition of nonviolence as a philosophy, and the non-violent strategies and tactics used during the Civil Rights Movement.

Read and analyze the quotes on nonviolence on Handout One. After discussing this material, return to the brainstorm on the philosophy of nonviolence and add to the class's working definition.

2. Analyzing Film as Text

Watching a Clip from the Film *King in the Wilderness*: Contextualization

Teacher Note: There are two film clips to watch from *King in the Wilderness* for the lesson on nonviolence.

WATCH

- Clip One: "Sick and Tired of Violence" (run time: 9:07)
- Clip Two: "The Nonviolent Approach is Radical" (run Time: 7:02)

Both clips are rich in content so leave time between each clip for students to collect their thoughts and write down notes.

Distribute Handout Two: The Philosophy of Nonviolence Note Catcher and review the Visual Analysis questions listed below. The questions will help students watch the clips with critical eyes and have a sense of what to watch for and how to take notes. You may elect to watch the clip more than once for students to collect detailed notes.

QUESTIONS

What did you hear and see?

- List words and phrases from **Clip One** that helped you understand the philosophy of nonviolence.
- List words and phrases from **Clip Two** that helped you understand the philosophy of nonviolence.

What did you learn?

- Why were the events in Chicago significant to Dr. King's commitment to nonviolence?
- Bernard Lafayette, Jr. shared that nonviolence psychologically disarms your opponent. What do you think he meant by that?
- What historical details did these film clips reveal that inform your understanding of the historical context of Dr. King's decisions and actions at this time?

Why is it important?

- Why is it important to hear different leaders' views on nonviolence?
- Why do you think different strategies and tactics developed to achieve the same goal during the Civil Rights Movement?

HABIT OF A HISTORIAN

After watching the two film clips, have students write down any questions that revolve around the philosophy, strategy, or tactics of nonviolence.

3. Close View of Interview Threads

Contextualization and Corroboration

The filmmakers conducted 19 interviews to make *King in the Wilderness*. Those complete interviews, and biographical information for each person, are available at www.kunhardtfilmfoundation.org/interview-archive. For each lesson, interview segments that were not used in the film, but which contain deeper information about aspects of each lesson topic, are edited together to create “interview threads.” There are three interview threads in this lesson that teachers and students can choose from, or use together, to deepen their understanding.

Teacher Note: Print and distribute the transcript of the appropriate threads (Handouts one-three) so students can follow along and take notes as they watch the segment collections.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BEFORE WATCHING INTERVIEWS:

- What do we learn from the first-person accounts that is different from other kinds of historical sources?
- What questions arise from using memories as historical sources?

As they watch, students will:

- Follow along on the transcript.
- Underline details that catch their attention.
- Jot down questions and insights that come to mind after viewing the threads.

Watch Interview Thread(s):

- 1 Thread One: “Nonviolence” (run time 12:32)
Featuring Diane Nash, C.T. Vivian, and Bernard Lafayette.
- 2 Thread Two: “Nonviolence as a Tactic” (length 7:36)
Featuring Jesse Jackson, Mary Lou Finley, and Cleveland Sellers.
- 3 Thread Three: MLK - “Respecting Different Views” (length 4:12)
Featuring Marian Wright Edelman and Andrew Young.

ASK THE CLASS

What do you learn from these interviews that you might not learn anywhere else?



4. Analyzing Images: Sourcing

Teacher Note: A Close View mirrors a Close Read exercise in which students use visual analysis skills to “read” visual sources as if they were employing literary analysis skills.

Project or print and distribute the photographs under the “Images” title on the Nonviolence Lesson page and have students discuss the questions in small groups.

- 1 Somebody paid the price for your right. Register/vote poster, 1968. (Courtesy Library of Congress)
- 2 The civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, March 3, 1965. (Courtesy Library of Congress)
- 3 Civil Rights demonstrators outside the White House, Washington D.C., March 12, 1965 (Courtesy Library of Congress)
- 4 Civil Rights march, Harlem, New York, March 1963 (Courtesy Library of Congress)

DISCUSS

- What do you see happening in each photograph?
- What story about nonviolence does each individual picture tell?
- What larger story about nonviolence do the pictures tell when viewed after your analysis of the film and interview threads?
- What questions would you ask the photographers about these photos?
- How can we know that these images are accurate?
- Do you trust what you see in the images? Why or why not?

HABITAT OF A HISTORIAN

After watching the film and interviews and then analyzing photographs from the time period, have students write down thoughts or questions that probe their new understanding about nonviolence.



5. Research: Corroboration

Teacher Note: After viewing and reading the interview threads, have students choose one or more historical details to practice their habit of sourcing and corroboration -- in other words research and identify a credible historical source that will verify the detail they selected from the interview. Here are some questions for students to keep in mind:

- Where did you find the document? Is it credible? How do you know?
- What is the date and who is the author? When is this important?
- How does the source confirm the detail selected from the interview?
- What other sources can you use to help you better understand memories and recollections as a historical resource?

HERE ARE SUGGESTED ARCHIVES TO USE TO FIND CORROBORATING EVIDENCE:

- 1 The King Center. (www.thekingcenter.org/archive)
- 2 Stanford University: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute. (kinginstitute.stanford.edu)
- 3 Library of Congress. (www.loc.gov)

6. Closing Discussion Questions

- What new information did you learn about nonviolence?
- What questions remain?



7. Homework or Extended Learning: “This I Believe” Point of View Essay

Taylor Branch, a Pulitzer-Prize winning author and scholar on Martin Luther King, Jr., who also conducted interviews for *King in the Wilderness*, writes a compelling opening paragraph on nonviolence in *At Canaan’s Edge: America in the King Years 1965-68*.

Nonviolence is an orphan among democratic ideas. It has nearly vanished from public discourse even though the most basic element of free government--the vote--has no other meaning. Every ballot is a piece of nonviolence, signifying hard won consent to raise politics above firepower and bloody conquest. Such compacts work more or less securely in different lands. Nations gain strength from vote-based institutions in commerce and civil society, but the whole architecture of representative democracy springs from the handiwork of nonviolence.

We also heard echoes of this idea of the power of the vote from others both in the documentary and within The Interview Archive.

“You, that is King, would not say to the parishioners, ‘You better go out there and vote for Lyndon Johnson.’ That’s not what he did. He would go out and say why you have your responsibility to vote, what it is that the vote does, see what we’ve gotten as a result of showing our power at the ballot box, and reiterating this message which was then taken by the people who listened to it other places.”

- Clifford Alexander, *King in the Wilderness*

“Resisting means some kind of boycott, some kind of action. The weapons we use --one, the effective use of one’s vote, one’s dollar, coalition, action, and to be morally right. Those are the weapons that you use, because at the end of the day, our biggest weapon is to be mostly morally right. Ms. Parks was mostly right. Those who marched in Birmingham were mostly right. Those who marched for the right to vote were mostly morally right. We couldn’t impose wrong on anybody. We had, in fact, to assert the rightness of our cause and the righteousness of our cause and be willing to suffer and sacrifice at the end. And nonviolence was both a strategy and a way of life. If we had been fighting with arms, we couldn’t have battled in arms. But then Doctor King said, ‘If you shoot and you get shot, then there are no winners, but if you can change without shooting, getting shot, then both can survive for another day.’”

-Rev. Jesse Jackson, *King in the Wilderness*

As an assessment or extended learning assignment, have students write a “**This I Believe**” essay of between 500 and 600 words explaining what they believe about nonviolence using one of these three passages as a point of departure.

ANCHOR STANDARDS

Reading Literature and/or Information: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- RL/RI.X.7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- RL/RI.X.8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
- RL/RI.X.9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

- SL.X.1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL.X.2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- SL.X.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- W.X.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- W.X.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

DO NOW EXERCISE: NONVIOLENCE

Read the following passages aloud one at a time. Have students choose one compelling phrase that adds to their understanding of nonviolence.

1 “I had not, before meeting Dr. King, ever taken the option of violence off the table. We are a minority living in the belly of the beast. When Dr. King stepped in, he methodically would look at violence and challenge those who would seek the gun as the solution, because morally, you cannot defeat the enemy by becoming the enemy.” - Harry Belafonte, *The King in the Wilderness*

2 “Nonviolence had the power to pull the worst fever out of them and show our moral strength. They had the stick, we had the Bible.”
- Jesse Jackson, *The King in the Wilderness*

3 REPORTER:

Mr. Carmichael, are you as committed to the nonviolent approach as Dr. King is?

STOKELY CARMICHAEL:

No, I'm not.

REPORTER:

Why aren't you?

STOKELY CARMICHAEL:

Well, I just don't see it as a way of life. I never have. I grew up in the slums of New York and I learned there that the only way that one survived was to use his fists. I realized the reality –

BERNARD LAFAYETTE, JR.:

When Stokely became chairman of SNCC, he had a different approach.

STOKELY CARMICHAEL:

For me, it's always been a tactic and never a way of life.

BERNARD LAFAYETTE, JR.:

He believed in self-defense.

Background Note: Stokely Carmichael was head of the SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) from 1966 to 1967.

CLOSE VIEW OF THE FILM

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MOVEMENT: NONVIOLENCE NOTE CATCHER

Instructions:

As you are watching these film clips from *King in the Wilderness*, consider the following questions and record your answers.

What did you see?

- List words and phrases you heard that helped you understand the philosophy of nonviolence from **Clip One**.
- List words and phrases you heard that helped you understand the philosophy of nonviolence in **Clip Two**.

What did you learn?

- Why were the events in Chicago significant to Dr. King's commitment to nonviolence?
- Bernard Lafayette, Jr. shared that nonviolence "psychologically disarms your opponent." What do you think he meant by this?

Why is it important?

- Why is it important to hear different leaders' views on nonviolence?
- Why do you think different strategies and tactics developed to achieve the same goal during the Civil Rights Movement?

Complete this sentence stem by listing questions that are in your mind about nonviolence: "After watching this clip I am wondering . . ."

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MOVEMENT: NONVIOLENCE

INTERVIEW THREAD ONE: PHILOSOPHY OF THE MOVEMENT: NONVIOLENCE

DIANE NASH

"I grew up in this violent society. And I stayed with those nonviolent workshops in Nashville for one reason, and that was, it was the only game in town. There was no other organization trying to eliminate segregation. I really doubted that nonviolence would work. But I also could not just do nothing about segregation. I found it so humiliating. Blacks could not use public libraries, swimming pools, hotels, motels, restaurants. It was possible for blacks to buy food at downtown restaurants, but you couldn't sit down and eat, you had to take it on a carryout basis. So, if you went to downtown Nashville during the lunch hour, the blacks that worked in the downtown area would be sitting along the curbs, along the alleys eating their lunch that they had either brought from home or purchased on a takeout basis from a local restaurant. When I obeyed segregation rules, I felt awful. I felt like I was agreeing that I was too inferior to use the accommodations that the general public used.

"So, my commitment was to eliminate the segregation. The nonviolent workshops were the only organization that I could find that -- the only people trying to do something about eliminating segregation. So, we had the success of the first couple of years, the lunch counters, and restaurants, and freedom rides. And then the violent poetry was surfacing and people who did not believe in nonviolence. And at a certain point I thought, "'Well, of course violence is more powerful than nonviolence.' And I decided I wouldn't be nonviolent. Well, about a year passed. The only thing that I had done was read a lot of poetry, have a lot of conversation about how blood had to flow in the street. And I had not been to the rifle range. I had not learned to make a bomb or let alone use one. I had come to the conclusion that you'd have to be kind of stupid to do illegal things with people that you did not know well. Therefore, it was not possible to build a mass-based movement using violence.

"And when I looked back on that year, I decided that I personally was more powerful using nonviolence. So, I came full circle, and moved from using it as a tactic to using it as a way of life. Because it makes sense in so many ways. Usually when people carry out violent movements, they're really trying to achieve something good, achieve a better world. And you don't do that by harming people. If you kill somebody's friend, or brother, or child, or mother, or father, it's not going to create good feelings and brotherhood and sisterhood and harmony like people would prefer. Very often when there's violence the press will cover the violence and ignore the issue. They will cover the violence in great detail. You know, I remember the convention, the Democratic convention in Chicago. If you read the accounts, they'll say on this corner, this violence was happening, and meanwhile across the street in Grant Park, and they'll describe some violence there. And then they'll go on. The whole article will be violence and the issues will be absolutely ignored.

"So, I took note of a number of things such as that and decided that nonviolence is a more powerful way of making change because often with violence you attack individuals and you leave the system or the real problem untouched. With the amount and the different kinds of violence that have been used over the centuries, if violence improved things, and made a better world, we'd be in Utopia by now. So, clearly, it doesn't bring a better world."

C.T. VIVIAN

"... is that we really didn't know the difference between Martin teaching us nonviolence and India teaching us nonviolence. Now Martin, from the very beginning, he had about six or eight books by Martin and the others that were involved in nonviolence in India, right, so -- because he knew that they had won against the same problems that we had to win. That was what Martin wanted to have happen, right? Remember, his house had just been bombed. He was -- there were a number of things that was happening at that time that was going to decide. And in fact, my wife and Coretta were very good friends. And she talked about how they were concerned for what to do, how to deal with the ministers, right? And Coretta was herself already concerned about nonviolence before they came to the church

and that sort of thing. She was concerned about winning the victories that would be necessary to be a leader in Black America, that she and people like her, my wife, were concerned. And it was quite wonderful to have come to a city that wanted that kind of ministry. In fact, the -- that church was particularly concerned about, it was the church of those that were better educated than most, right?"

BERNARD LAFAYETTE, JR

"Well, the whole issue of nonviolence is, is it varies, and that's important for people to understand, that there's non-violence with the hyphen, which is really an adjective: "non-violence," that is without violence, the absence of violence. Okay? And that is a way that people might interpret nonviolence. And the whole concept with Martin Luther King was advocating was the same as Mahatma Gandhi, and that was a noun, that nonviolence is a name of a philosophy or a system of thought and also a way of life. So, Martin Luther King embodied nonviolence in his approach to dealing with issues. And one of the things that he realized in his goal, was to bring about a peaceful reconciliation and not just resolution. Sometimes we talk about peaceful resolutions, or nonviolent resolution, which means that you separate the conflicted parties and then you don't have that conflict between the parties. But the conflict is not going away if it's still embedded in each of the parties; they're not just engaged with each other. So, reconciliation is the goal rather than just simply having resolution.

"The concept that we advocate with Kingian nonviolence is one that Martin Luther King arrived at from many different sources. Gandhi was one source, but Thoreau¹ was another source, and even Hegel², and that's one of the things that Martin Luther King embraced as he searched for himself -- the meaning of truth, what is truth. So, from a theological point of view, Martin Luther King wanted to -- for himself, continue to strive towards an ideal society and for Martin Luther King it was the Beloved Community. Every great philosopher has what we call a Utopia and Plato's, you know, Utopia was the Republic, for example, and others were the Kingdom of God. So, for Martin Luther King, it was the Beloved Community and that's [what] he strived towards."

1. Henry David Thoreau was a 19th-century American philosopher and essayist and early opponent of slavery. He is best known for advocating peaceful civil disobedience as a means to change society.

2. Georg Hegel was an 18th century German philosopher. He is regarded as an idealist and a believer in a collective consciousness.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MOVEMENT: NONVIOLENCE

INTERVIEW THREAD TWO: NONVIOLENCE AS A TACTIC

REV. JESSE JACKSON

"There was the joy of -- he would say the most difficult part of the movement, when you, when you leave the excitement of a march in Selma, where there's even violent reaction -- that's not the difficult part. The difficult part is that when all that's over, you got to get people to register and vote. The slow -- they call it the slow non-romantic dimension, when the lights are not there, the hardcore organizing, convincing people to change their minds, to change their situation. 'Cause at the end of the day, change comes when people change their minds. Most people who were on the occupation, whose backs are against the wall, have three options, and that's why it's so difficult to organize is our understanding this. Most people adjust- they have found their place, they have found their space -- where they live, where they can live, where they grocery shop, where they go to school, where they go to church, where they get married. They live in this circle and they have adjusted to -- they blank the outside world away. So, if you're in, in the ghetto and you're paying pension funds, and the pension funds are building the other side of town, they're building the big tall, buildings, but you just forget that. You're living in conditions where, you live there, but you don't control the economic resources, but you've adjusted. And some people -- beyond- they resent, they know better, but they don't feel empowered enough to change anything. So, they have a- often become very bitter. They, they've not adjusted, they resent.

"And then there's the third dimension called resistance. That's where the action comes in. Where you're not only -- you become maladjusted, as Doctor King would say, and you resent, but you also begin to resist. Resisting means some kind of boycott, some kind of action. The weapons we use --- one, the effective use of one's vote, one's dollar, coalition, action, and to be morally right. Those are the weapons that you use, because at the end of the day, our biggest weapon is to be mostly morally right. Ms. Parks was mostly right. Those who marched in Birmingham were mostly right. Those who marched for the right to vote were mostly morally right. We couldn't impose wrong on anybody. We had, in fact, to assert the rightness of our cause and the righteousness of our cause and be willing to suffer and sacrifice at the end. And nonviolence was both a strategy and a way of life. If we had been fighting with arms, we couldn't have battled in arms. But then Doctor King said, 'If you shoot and you get shot, then there are no winners, but if you can have change without shooting, getting shot, then both can survive for another day.'"

MARY LOU FINLEY

"So, this young man said -- the first thing he said when he came in the door was, 'Are you really Martin Luther King?' Doctor King thought that was pretty funny. And he assured him that he was, in fact, Martin Luther King, and they had a very lovely kind of conversation with Doctor King really saying, 'We want you to join the movement.'

"And so, finally, the young man left. And pretty soon later, there was another knock on the door. We opened the door again and here was the same young man, but there was like a whole train of them going down the stairs. And so, they all, we invited them all in. Doctor said, 'Invite them all in.' And the same young man, he came back and said, he said, 'Well, I went back and told my buddies that Martin Luther King moved in here, but nobody believed me. So, everybody else wanted to come and see you too.' So, we had a wonderful conversation. Doctor King was really wanting, again, to get them interested in the movement. And it wasn't a very long conversation, but it was a very sweet moment. I just felt -- it was amazing that I happened to be there when this actually happened. And what I realized later was that those young men came back a number of times to see Doctor King in that apartment. One time, they came late at night. There was something that had happened that was really upsetting, and they said, 'We don't know about this nonviolent stuff. We're trying to think, we don't know about this.' Doctor King stayed up until four o'clock in the morning telling them -- doing basically a nonviolence workshop for them, until finally at four o'clock they said, 'Okay. We're not sure about nonviolence in general, but we can at least go with nonviolence as something... Really, we would say as a strategy. We'll try it out, basically.'"

CLEVELAND SELLERS

“Well, let me start you back with SNCC. SNCC was always a lot different from many of the other organizations. A lot of it had to do with our youthfulness and it also had to do with our experiences. Most of the people in SNCC were not nonviolent in terms of principles and beliefs. They saw nonviolence as a tactic and it was a very important tactic and it- in the public accommodation-testing phase of it, it saved lives and it saved harm to those who were participating in that. And so, it also gave America an opportunity to see what the resistance was like when the press wasn't there, when the news wasn't there, the TV wasn't there. So, we employed it where it was needed, but it was never a way of life for us, and Doctor King actually understood that we didn't -- we didn't embrace the nonviolence as he embraced nonviolence as being a preacher. It was a part of the morality to be nonviolent, turn the other cheek and that kind of thing.

“Well, most people across the south that we were working with, when, you know, you went to Mississippi, a lot of them would have shotguns up near the window and they would say that, 'I know you all are nonviolent and if somebody fires in the house, we going to fire back.' And they said, 'Well, we have a shotgun, a rifle over here for you, but you don't have to take it because we understand that you're nonviolent.' But they were willing as a probably a human principle to defend their families and that never left. Nobody, nobody took that away from them and we weren't prepared to take that away from them. So, I think that's where you began to see the whole notion about SNCC and nonviolence. We never were an organization that embraced nonviolence as a principle, as a way of life, okay? And so, it was very easy to change tactics 'cause that's what we saw happening. We were not sitting in at lunch counters in 1966, you know? We weren't riding the bus to open up public transportation operations. We had already taken care of that, not in 1966. And so, we were moving along, and we didn't see that as a radical change.”

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MOVEMENT: NONVIOLENCE

INTERVIEW THREAD THREE: RESPECTING DIFFERENT VIEWS

MIRIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

“Then I went to Mississippi to practice law. And the Meredith March was a part of that. At the time we went it was still a hell hole. The Mississippi Summer Project had ended in 1964, everybody had left for different reasons. The press left when the white kids left. And, and Meredith didn’t consult with anybody, he still doesn’t, bless his heart. He’s all gray and gorgeous now. I just took my grandchildren to meet him this summer, went on a civil rights tour. But at any rate, he did this march and it wasn’t on anybody’s agenda, he didn’t consult with anybody. And so, Doctor King and civil rights leaders rallied around that, and we all walked from, almost from Memphis, down to Jackson. And that’s when the first -- and every night, and again -- accessibility, listening, we would stop and sleep in people’s houses because motels were not available.

“And Stokely [Carmichael] and Willie Ricks and the SNCC kids -- I was now kind of a former SNCC kid who was now more part of just getting people out of jail [unclear]. Anyway, I was bridge. But we’d meet every night and it was amazing to me how after long walks he would listen to them vent, listen to all of us vent, and it wonderful to be a fly on a wall, with great patience. And I remember him often saying, ‘Stokely, is it that bad? Is it that bad?’ But he listened. And that was when Black Power first began to emerge, and I will never forget Doctor King’s face when in Greenwood [Mississippi], we had a rally, and Willie Ricks got up and started saying, Black Power. He looked like the most stricken man. But again, what I remember was the listening the patience, trying hard to understand, because he really was committed to nonviolence. How to connect. And I don’t know if I would have the patience to do that, but he listened in Chicago, he listened whenever there was an outburst. The Black Power thing reinforced itself in, in Canton [Mississippi] where they had gas canisters. And then in Jackson, but that was the first real breach in the nonviolence commitment that many of us had grown to accept. But he was not judgmental, he was always there to say, ‘I don’t go there, but I really want to understand why you go there.’ The patience, I mean patience of Job, which I didn’t have. And an ability to kind of just kind of be present.”

ANDREW YOUNG

“We had those kinds of things happening, that we were challenging age-old traditions. But the people weren’t bad people, and while one group of people were marching against [Chicago] Mayor [Richard] Daley, Mayor Daley had had maybe the second biggest fundraiser for us at the time of Birmingham, one was in Los Angeles, and Mayor Daley and [gospel singer] Mahalia Jackson had put on a fundraiser for us in Chicago to support our work in Birmingham and Selma. And so that was the way nonviolence was supposed to work, that we were supposed to be able to disagree without being disagreeable. And throughout that entire movement, we met regularly with Mayor Daley, and we disagreed, but we always kind of came to a new understanding, and we remained friends, and even supporters, because in the Democratic Party, Daley was part of the liberal wing. I mean, after all, it was probably the Daley machine that helped produce Barack Obama. We never felt enemies, like we were different, but we didn’t feel that way in the South either.”