

(Following self-tests on non-violence are reproduced with permission from Louise Diamond's The Peace Book, 2001 edition, Conari Press)

Self-Test on Non Violence

Nonviolence is not always a clear-cut choice. There are many ambiguities, conditions, and circumstances that affect us when we think about our commitment to nonviolence. Here is a simple self-test that will give you more information about your own relation to nonviolence. There are no right or wrong, good or bad answers – simply a fuller picture of where you stand.

NONVIOLENCE SELF-TEST

- (1) Rate each of the items below with numbers from the following scale:
1-I strongly disagree. 2-I disagree. 3-I agree. 4-I agree strongly.
5-I'm not sure what I believe.

- 1 Violence is never justified, under any condition.
- 2 Violence can be justified in the following circumstances:
 - To protect a stranger.
 - To protect a loved one.
 - To protect property.
 - To stop a crime from being committed.
 - To stop harm being done to the environment.
 - To protest injustice.
 - To protest or promote issues that I feel strongly about.
 - Other (Please specify).
- 3 There may be times when war is necessary to stop a larger evil.
- 4 I myself would fight in a war if I believed it was a "just" war.
- 5 I myself would never take up arms in a war, under any circumstances.
- 6 Words can be just as violent as action.
- 7 Nonviolence is, for me:
 - An important spiritual value.
 - An important secular, moral principle.
 - A pragmatic choice for effective social change.
- 8 I would take part in nonviolent action campaigns for a cause I believed in.
- 9 I would be willing to be arrested in nonviolent action campaign for a cause I believed in.
- 10 I would be willing to undergo a physical harm (tear gas, water hose, beating, pepper spray) in a nonviolent action campaign for a cause I believe in.

- (2) Now look at all the questions for which you answered 1 or 2, indicating disagreement. Does the pattern tell you anything about yourself?
- (3) Look at all the questions for which you answered 3 or 4, indicating agreement. What does the pattern suggest? Look at all the questions for which you answered 5, indicating ambivalence or lack of clarity. What do you notice?
- (4) Share this test with other people (family, friends, colleagues, social groups), and talk together about the results and the questions raised by those results.

Nonviolence Inventory of Your Home and Family

There are many situations in our daily lives at home with family where the choice for violence or nonviolence is present. Some of these are obvious, some less so.

Whereas the self-test referred to your beliefs, this inventory involves things that you actually do. Again, there is no right or wrong, good or bad response. An honest assessment of your lifestyle may give you useful information about how you choose to live your values.

NONVIOLENCE INVENTORY

Rate the frequency of each of the actions following with numbers from the following scale: 1—*Never* 2—*Rarely* 3—*Sometimes* 4—*Often* 5—*Always*

In my household I / we:

- ___1 Use hitting (slapping, spanking) for punishment of children.
- ___2 Use shaming and blaming words to correct behavior.
- ___3 Have rules or strong norms against hitting (or other forms of hurting)
 - ___ Children
 - ___ Adults
 - ___ Animals
- ___4 Enjoy watching television shows about murder, crime, or other depictions of violence.
- ___5 Enjoy watching action, suspense, or horror movies.
- ___6 Own a gun.
- ___7 Allow toy weapons, war toys, and violent play-acting.
- ___8 Enjoy playing violent video games.
- ___9 Kill bugs and other pests found inside or outside the house.
- ___10 Capture bugs found inside the house and release them outside.
- ___11 Have angry fights, using accusations, blame, belittling, or mean words.
- ___12 Talk about any of these things.

What did you learn from this inventory? What, if anything, will you do differently as a result of it?