

## A Season For Peace – 64 Days & 64 Ways to Practice Peace

**DAY 1 Jan. 30:** The thought for today is **COURAGE**.

"I can shake off everything if I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn."

-Anne Frank

When you discover that everyone is contained in you and you are contained in everyone, you have realized the unity of life, which is the divine ground of existence. Then you are not just a person; you have become a beneficial force. Wherever you go, wherever you live, those around you will benefit from your life. Even one unassuming man or woman in a community has the courage to lead a nonviolent life, she will make her contribution, and she will slowly inspire others to make the same contribution, because human nature responds to such an example.

When we can say, "Whatever comes, we will not be afraid because the divine Self is within us," then this resoluteness and faith will enable us to work free from tension, agitation, and fear of defeat. The person who works in this way is at peace, because he or she is not anxious about results.

**Today:** I will light a candle to symbolize my commitment to accept the courage to practice 64 Ways of living nonviolently.

**DAY 2 Jan 31:** The thought for today is **SMILING**. Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh said "If, in our daily life, we can smile...not only we, but everyone will profit from it. This is the most basic kind of peace work." A smile creates happiness in the home, fosters good will in business, and is the countersign of friendship and nonviolence. A smile not only improves our looks, it improves our outlook, and when our outlook improves, it is much easier to be at peace.

**Today:** I will share a sincere smile with everyone I meet, knowing that my smile contributes to peace.

**DAY 3 Feb. 1:** The thought for today is **APPRECIATION**. Author Louise Hay says "Praise yourself as much as you can...The love in our lives begins with us ... Loving yourself will help heal this planet." Peace in the world **begins inside each person**. Appreciating who I am raises my awareness of nonviolence. Life is filled with opportunities to express appreciation, yet how many times do we pass up the opportunity thinking "oh, I'll tell them later." When we tell someone that we appreciate them, we are promoting nonviolence.

**Today:** I will write down ten things that I appreciate about myself and my life. I will tell at least one other person what I appreciate about them.

**DAY 4 Feb. 2:** The thought for today is **CARING**. According to Peter McWilliams "Nonviolence toward the self is caring for oneself. Self love is a crowning sense of self worth; it is what the Greeks call reverence for the self."

When I regard my life as a trust, I realize that the first resource I have to take care of is my own body. This can be startling! Even my body is not really my own - it belongs to

life, and it is my responsibility to take care of it. Taking care of it is a demonstration of nonviolence.

**Today:** I will make a list of at least five ways that I can take care of myself, physically and/or mentally, and I will honor that list today through demonstration.

**DAY 5 Feb. 3:** The thought for today is **BELIEVING**. Author, Wayne Dyer writes about the impact that our beliefs have on our daily lives. Believe that you have all the resources you need to move your life in the direction of peace, happiness and nonviolence. Believe that you can be peaceful all day. Say to yourself "I am peaceful, I practice nonviolence."

**Today:** I will write what I believe about nonviolence. I will create an "I Believe in Nonviolence" t-shirt, bumper sticker, song, or art, and be aware of the simple demonstrations of peaceful responses.

**DAY 6 Feb. 4:** The thought for today is **SIMPLICITY**. To simplify is to invite peacefulness into your life. When we have lots of 'stuff' in our lives, it is hard to be peaceful. Close your eyes and ask "How can I simplify my life, what can I let go of?"

*"Live simply, so others can simply live."*  
-Traditional Quaker guidance

If we dare let go of our possessions and the will to control and dominate, we will cultivate a deeper spirit of peace within us because we can accept the present moment as a gift. By simplifying our lives, dropping less important activities and 'things', we allow more time for what matters most.

**Today:** I will write down three ways I can simplify my life and put at least one of them into practice today. I will give away something I have not used in the past year.

**DAY 7 Feb. 5:** The thought for today is **EDUCATION**. Knowledge strengthens your conviction and deepens your understanding and acceptance. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education." The complete education teaches how to live by the principles which benefit us and the people around us.

Learn about the power of nonviolence by educating yourself. Read an article, periodical or book; watch a video on a subject that relates to nonviolence. Learn about human rights, diversity, ecology, history, politics, forgiveness, spirituality, peace studies, biographies of heroes and more.

**Today:** I consciously expand my knowledge about nonviolence. I will share what I have learned with at least three other people, and invite them to learn, too.

**DAY 8 Feb. 6:** The thought for today is **HEALING**. Poet and activist, Maya Angelou turned a traumatic childhood experience into a catalyst for creativity and achievement. She used this experience as a reason to bring peace to the world.

We all have had such experiences, sometimes holding on to the experience for a very long time. A mantram is a wonderful way to resolve conflict we hold in our mind and one of the best times to repeat the mantram is while falling asleep at night. Tuck yourself in, close your eyes, and start repeating your mantram. Between the last waking moment and the first sleeping moment, there is an opening into deepest consciousness. You can send your mantram in through that opening, repeating itself in your sleep, healing old wounds and restoring your peace of mind.

**Today:** I will reflect on an incident in my life to find the "gift" it has brought me. I will write down two ways I can use this memory to become a more creative and peaceful person. Consciously, I share this gift with others.

**DAY 9 Feb. 7:** The thought for today is **DREAMING**. Martin Luther King, Jr., had a great dream. Follow your dream; follow your heart; follow your inner light.

*We need men (and women) who can dream of things that never were, and ask why not.*  
-George Bernard Shaw

*There are those that look at things the way they are, and ask, 'Why?' I dream of things that never were, and ask 'Why not?'*  
-Robert F Kennedy

**Today:** I take ownership of my own dream for peace and nonviolence. I will write down and act on at least one thing to honor my dream today.

**DAY 10 Feb. 8:** The thought for today is **FAITH**. When Cesar Chavez was organizing farm works in California, he challenged them to say, "Si, se puede" - yes, it is possible - when they didn't know how they would overcome obstacles. Today, say "Yes, it is possible" even if you don't know how your goal will be realized. Have faith - you will find a way.

**Today:** I will say, "Yes, it is possible," to every obstacle I meet. I will write down three things I am having a challenge with and with each one write "It is possible for me to overcome this obstacle and be successful."

**DAY 11 Feb. 9:** The thought for today is **CONTEMPLATION**. For at least three minutes, relax, breathe, and let your mind be fed by whatsoever is good and beautiful. Many sacred texts tell us some variation of 'your thoughts shape your reality'.

"The ultimate value of life depends upon awareness and the power of contemplation rather than upon mere survival." -Aristotle

**Today:** I take a moment to relax, breathe and let my mind be fed by what is good and beautiful. As I think, so I am! I will write down my thoughts and share them with others.

**DAY 12 Feb. 10:** The thought for today is **GROUNDEDNESS**. Gandhi said "To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves." Black Elk reminds us "Some

little root of the sacred tree still lives. Nourish it, that it may leaf and bloom and fill with singing birds.”

This is how we are going to feel grounded, like a tree planted in the earth. Stand up straight and close your eyes. Imagine your body is a tree. Send down roots into the soil, feel the sun shining from above. Feel your branches and leaves blowing in the wind. When we feel grounded, we feel secure in our environment; and when we feel secure, we are more likely to respond to a situation in a nonviolent way. Being grounded helps us contribute to peace, to a culture of nonviolence.

**Today:** I will nurture a plant or plant a seed in, and for, the earth. When I am in a confrontational situation, I will recall that sense of being grounded and respond in a nonviolent way.

**DAY 13 Feb. 11:** The thought for today is **CREATIVITY**. The human soul’s natural desire is to create. The best thing you can do to a human soul is to express the natural desire to create. Your life is your creative expression. Creativity allows something unpredictable and joyous to express through you.

"Why should we use all our creative power? . . . Because there is nothing that makes people so generous, joyful, lively, bold and compassionate, so indifferent to fighting and the accumulation of objects and money." *-Brenda Ueland*

**Today:** I reflect on what I am creating in my life today by identifying at least five ways in which I can express my creativity joyously. I will create something that expresses my feelings about nonviolence.

**DAY 14 Feb. 12:** The thought for today is **HUMILITY**. Making mistakes is a part of learning and growing, simply an error in approach. Paradoxically, the only way we can begin to escape from the consequences of our actions is to stop running from them and to face them with fortitude and humility. In this sense, every difficult situation is a precious opportunity for learning.

When we humbly acknowledge our mistakes and reflect on what we have learned, it frees us from the need to be defensive. Being free from defending our position creates an opportunity for nonviolence.

"The seeker after truth should be humbler than the dust. The world crushes the dust under its feet, but the seeker after truth should so humble himself that even the dust could crush him. Only then, and not till then, will he have a glimpse of the truth."  
-Gandhi

**Today:** As I gaze up at the stars tonight, I am aware of how small I am, how my life is but a fleeting moment in the vast scale of time and distances of the solar system and the universe. And in that moment of humility, I acknowledge that I DO make a difference.

**DAY 15 Feb. 13:** The thought for today is **REVERENCE**. Reverence for **all** life is fundamental to Ahimsa; it is the ultimate rationale for nonviolence - **for how can one**

**willingly do harm to that for which one has reverence** - and towards which one has the love that reverence engenders?

"In the main, reverence for life dictates the same sort of behavior as the ethical principle of love. But reverence for life contains within itself the rationale of the commandment to love, and it calls for compassion for all creature life." -*Albert Schweitzer*

"Reverence is a virtue that prepares us well to belong to one another; it reaches out to those who have given messages of not wishing to belong. When we approach others with gentle reverence, we bring gifts and share theirs with us." -*Paula Ripple*

**Today:** I open myself up to a feeling of reverence for all forms of life, especially each and every person that I meet during the day. I'll take a walk outside and experience the beauty that surrounds me as I BE with the sky, the plants and animals, as well as my brothers and sisters.

**DAY 16 Feb. 14:** The thought for today is **GRATITUDE**. On her show, Oprah Winfrey frequently promotes the daily practice of gratitude.

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow." -*Melody Beattie*

**Today:** I will list five things for which I am grateful for and share these good things with another, then reflect on who and what made those experiences possible. **I will write a "thank-you" note to someone who would least expect me to thank them.** I'll journal about my feelings with regard to this.

**DAY 17 Feb. 15:** The thought for today is **INTEGRITY**. "Do the Right Thing!" Spike Lee used these words as a title for one of his movies. When faced with a choice, listen to your conscience, and be willing to act accordingly, no matter what others may say. You **know** what is right to do; you can choose to do it.

Integrity asks for firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values and denies any form of corruption. Integrity is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony. And when I am in harmony, I am a model of nonviolence.

**Today:** When faced with a choice today, I listen to my conscience. I'll recall then write a short story about a time when I listened to my heart when the people around me were doing something else.

**DAY 18 Feb. 16:** The thought for today is **FREEDOM**. Civil Rights activist Diane Nash said, "Freedom, by definition, is people realizing that they are their own leaders." Take a leadership role today in your own life. Find a way where you can express who you truly are.

"When people decide they want to be free, there is nothing that can stop them."

*-Bishop Desmond Tutu*

“To be free is to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.”

*-Nelson Mandela*

**Today:** I'll claim my definition of freedom. I'll write a haiku poem about freedom.

**DAY 19 Feb. 17:** The thought for today is **ACCEPTANCE**. “Resentment, fear, criticism and guilt cause more problems than anything else” says author Louise Hay. By choosing not to judge myself and see myself as unique, loving, capable and bright, and by accepting myself just as I am, I will be modeling nonviolence. Any time I can take down the walls of defense, I open myself up to a nonviolent way of living.

"Life has no other discipline to impose, if we would but realize it, than to accept life unquestioningly. Everything we shut our eyes to, everything we run away from, everything we deny, denigrate or despise, serves to defeat us in the end. What seems nasty, painful, evil, can become a source of beauty, joy and strength, if faced with an open mind. Every moment is a golden one for him who has the vision to recognize it as such."

*-Henry Miller*

**Today:** As I reflect on what is difficult for me to accept - in myself, in other people, and in the state of the world - I'll let go of any resistance or judgment, and allow myself to accept and acknowledge whatever I have been resisting.

**DAY 20 Feb. 18:** The thought for today is **SELF-FORGIVENESS**. When I judge myself, I tend to believe that who I am is what I have done or not done, what I have or do not have. I know that who I am is greater than all these things. I am greater than any mistake I have ever made. When we get even the slightest glimpse of the unity of life, we realize that sitting in judgment of other people and countries and races, I'm training my mind to sit in judgment of myself. As I forgive others, I am teaching the mind to respond with forgiveness everywhere, even to the misdeeds and mistakes of my own past. Practicing self-forgiveness is a foundation for practicing nonviolence.

**Today:** I will write an apology letter to myself for anything I have done to myself that I wish I had not, or ways that I have disappointed myself and not fully lived up to my potential. I'll mail the letter to myself and when it arrives, I will read it in a quiet place.

**Day 21 Feb. 19:** The thought for today is **INSPIRATION**. There are many people who inspire us. Take a moment to reflect upon who inspires you and what characteristics you most admire in them. See the potential that is also within you and choose to cultivate these characteristics in your daily life.

"Cease trying to work everything out with your minds. It will get you nowhere. Live by intuition and inspiration and let your whole life BE Revelation." *-Eileen Caddy*

**Today:** As I think of at least two people who exemplify the practice of nonviolence, I'll acknowledge what it is I admire about them, what inspires me about them. I'll practice

these behaviors today so that other people may be inspired and I'll share this insight with at least three other people.

**DAY 22 Feb. 20:** The thought for today is **MISSION**. "My life is my message" said Gandhi. Gandhi's mission was to be nonviolent. What do you want to stand for in your life? Do you know your life's mission?

**Today:** I will write down what I stand for in my life. I will note at least one way I can show, through action, that I stand for my beliefs. I will develop a personal mission statement and draw a picture of myself living my mission. I will share my mission with at least three other people.

**DAY 23 Feb. 21:** The thought for today is **PRAYER**. "Prayer from the heart can achieve what nothing else in the world can" said Gandhi. Begin and end the day with a prayer for peace. Let peace begin with me.

Saint Francis of Assisi said it this way:  
"..... make me an instrument of thy peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is discord, union;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
Where there is sadness, joy."

**Today:** I will begin and end the day with a prayer for peace. When I say goodbye to people, I will say "May Peace Prevail on Earth." I will create a space in my home dedicated to prayer for nonviolence.

**DAY 24 Feb. 22:** The thought for today is **HARMONY**. Choosing NOT to engage in any form of gossip today contributes to harmony. Choosing to see the good in others rather than finding fault leads to peaceful relationships. Look for the good in yourself and in others. By making these choices, we are contributing to a culture of nonviolence, we are being a model of peace.

**Today:** I will choose to see the good in others instead of finding fault. I will spend the entire day without criticizing anything or anyone; if I am tempted to criticize, I will write down the criticism rather than speaking it, then later discover where the criticism is coming from within me.

**DAY 25 Feb. 23:** The thought for today is **FRIENDLINESS**. To humorist Will Rogers, strangers were simply friends he hadn't met. View those you encounter today in that light. Every time I am friendly toward another, I help break down the wall of separation and I contribute to nonviolence.

**Today:** I will make a new acquaintance, befriend a stranger. I will go up to someone I haven't met yet and say "Hi friend."

**DAY 26 Feb. 24:** The thought for today is **RESPECT**. Gandhi taught "Language is an exact reflection of the character and growth of its speakers." Respecting yourself and others means making a choice not to use profanity or 'put downs'. Let our language be based on respect for those we address. The life of peace excludes no one. Let your words reflect your respect for others - speak from the depth of your heart and soul. The other side of respect is listening - listen to others with the respect that what they have to say matters. The act of listening has a calming effect on others, even if they are in a heated tirade, just listening models a nonviolent response.

"Courtesy towards opponents and eagerness to understand their view-point is the ABC of nonviolence." -*M.K. Gandhi*

**Today:** As I interact with and observe people during the day, I will be aware of ways in which I respect each person. I will draw a picture of someone for whom I have a great deal of respect, then frame the picture with words that describe this person.

**DAY 27 Feb. 25:** The thought for today is **GENEROSITY**. Mother Teresa said, "There is a hidden poverty more pervasive than lack of money. It is the poverty of the heart." Look at ways you can contribute to your family, friends and community through your generosity. You will see how your generous gift comes back to you.

The more generous you are today, the more generosity you will have tomorrow. The more love you give, the more loving you become. The more generous you become, the less need to defend what you have, the greater your capacity for nonviolence.

**Today:** I will find three ways to give generously of my time, talent and resources to others. I will create a 'Gift Certificate' for someone.

**DAY 28 Feb. 26:** The thought for today is **LISTENING**. Can you stop what you are doing and thinking, and take time to truly listen to the feelings behind someone's words to you? Being fully present for the conversation and interested in what that person is saying is a practice of nonviolence.

A component of Marshall Rosenberg's "Nonviolent Communication" involves listening with compassion. The listener attends fully to the speaker's words, while sensing the feelings and needs beneath the words. The listener is simply fully present, not trying to "figure out" what the speaker is needing, nor trying to "get it right." If I can listen to you with compassion, it is usually only a short time before you listen with compassion to me.

**Today:** I will be fully present to each conversation I engage in, and listen longer than usual - and with more patience - to what others are saying. I will give the other person my full attention, because nothing else really matters. I will look directly at the person who is speaking, without thinking about other things.



**DAY 29 Feb. 27:** The thought for today is **FORGIVENESS**. When we forgive, we do not condone hurtful behavior. When we realize that there is something within us that is more important than this hurtful experience, we are free to let go of the past and move on with our lives. In doing so, we open our hearts to the humanity of those we forgive. As we forgive others, we are teaching the mind to respond with forgiveness everywhere, even to the misdeeds and mistakes of our own past. And if I have treated a particular person badly, even if I can no longer win that person's forgiveness, I can still win the forgiveness of myself.

"The results of forgiveness is the stopping of the recycling of anger within ourselves and in the world. Peace will come to the world when each of us takes the responsibility of forgiving everyone, including ourselves, completely." -*Gerald Jampolsky*

**Today:** I am willing to let go of the past, and forgive those who have hurt me, and towards whom I feel anger. I will forgive myself too. Today, I will write a letter of forgiveness to someone (I do not have to mail it).

**DAY 30 Feb. 28:** The thought for today is **MAKING AMENDS**. The other side of forgiveness is making amends, when it is you who has been - or needs to be - forgiven for hurt or wrongdoing you may have caused. As with forgiveness, the gift of making amends - to yourself and to whoever has been hurt or wronged - is revealed when it is given unconditionally from your heart. **What would it be like if world leaders made amends?**

"Making amends may seem like a bitter pill to swallow, but for those serious about recovery it can be great medicine for the spirit and soul." -*Step 9 Forgiveness. The Twelve Steps*

**Today:** As I interact with people today, I will reflect on whether there are ways I feel moved to make amends; I will let my heart gently guide me, as I recall each person's unique ways of expressing his or her joys, fears and pains. I will be open to let my heart speak through words, actions, thoughts or prayers. I will offer a sincere apology to someone I may have hurt.

**DAY 31 Mar. 1:** The thought for today is **PRAISE**. Appreciation helps people to grow. Offer praise to the people you encounter today for their personal qualities, achievements or helpful service. Telling someone what you appreciate about them is paramount in nonviolent communication.

Praise is important for ourselves, too. Louise Hay says "Praise yourself as much as you can ... The love in our lives begins with us ... Loving yourself will help heal this planet."  
**Peace in our world begins with each and every one of us.**

**Today:** I will give sincere praise to at least three people today for their personal qualities, achievements, or helpful service, and then to myself. I will journal about the experience and feelings of each encounter.

**DAY 32 Mar. 2:** The thought for today is **PATIENCE**. According to farm activist Cesar Chavez, "Nonviolence is not non-action... It is hard work...It is the patience to win." When your plans seem delayed, choose to be patient by recognizing ways you can constructively use this time to support your goal. By practicing patience we can respond rather than react, and by doing so, stay centered and at peace.

Patience and passion both come from a Latin word meaning to suffer or endure. Whenever we practice patience - cheerfully bearing with somebody who is irascible, or enduring discomfort rather than imposing it on others - we are embracing those principles and creating an opportunity to model nonviolence. There is only one way to create a nonviolent world, and that is by being nonviolent ourselves.

**Today:** I will look for opportunities to practice patience. In a situation where there is friction, rather than run away, I will move closer to the core of the conflict and look for a nonviolent solution.

**DAY 33 Mar. 3:** The thought for today is **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**. Acknowledgement helps us see the oneness of all life, that we are part of a greater purpose, and by doing so, elevate our awareness of nonviolence. When I acknowledge someone, how could I possibly do harm toward them? When I tell someone what a difference he or she has made in my life and acknowledge that person for being there for me, I am affirming our connectedness.

"Acknowledge

1. a. To admit the existence, reality, or truth of.  
b. To recognize as being valid or having force or power.
2. a. To express recognition of: acknowledge a friend's smile.  
b. To express thanks or gratitude for. "

*-The American Heritage® Dictionary*

**Today:** In each of the four meanings quoted above, I will take time to acknowledge each person I meet or see today - including myself - in the spirit of ahimsa and forgiveness. I will take time today to acknowledge the realm of nature, the community of life on Earth, and the Earth itself.

**DAY 34 Mar. 4:** The thought for today is **LOVE**. Gandhi wrote, "nonviolence is based on the assumption that human nature ... unfailingly responds to the advances of love."

All the great texts encourage us to "love your enemy." The ancients understood that this is where the creative energy comes from. An enemy does not have to be life-threatening or violent; an enemy can just be a thought that gets us to look at something in a different way. Consider the power of befriending someone you previously thought was an "enemy". In a conflict, rather than putting your energy toward winning, see what channeling that energy toward a loving, nonviolent solution can accomplish.

**Today:** I will focus on what I can find to love in the person I like the least. As I meet people during the day, I will reflect on how love can enhance the relationship.

**DAY 35 Mar. 5:** The thought for today is **UNDERSTANDING**. Thich Nhat Hanh, Buddhist teacher says, "When you understand, you cannot help but love. Practice looking at all living beings with the eyes of compassion."

**Today:** When I find myself disagreeing with someone, I will focus on understanding what they are saying - and why. I will listen compassionately to them, with a silent thought of love, and tell them what I understand them to be saying. With empathy, I will say clearly and quietly what I believe to be true.

**DAY 36 Mar. 6:** The thought for today is **MINDFULNESS**. Mindfulness is thinking about what you're doing and knowing why you're doing it. If we just act in each moment with composure and mindfulness, each minute of our life is a work of art. Be aware of the motivation behind your action, the intention behind your words and the needs and experiences of other people. By doing so, you are making life more beautiful and you are more likely to make nonviolent choices.

"The most precious gift we can offer others is our presence. When mindfulness embraces those we love, they will bloom like flowers." -*Thich Nhat Hanh*

**Today:** Choose something simple to do, such as eating a piece of fruit. Bringing my complete attention to it, I will not allow myself to talk to anyone or think of anything else except what I'm doing. Notice what my hands do, the way the food feels in my mouth, the taste, the texture, the idea of nourishing my body. Is this different from the way I normally eat? I will practice being mindful in everything I do today.

**DAY 37 Mar. 7:** The thought for today is **GRACIOUSNESS**. Are we willing to make all sorts of gracious concessions on things that do not matter in life and yet stand unshakable on essentials? To do this, we have to be detached from our opinions. This doesn't mean being wishy-washy, or lacking strength in our convictions, but that we cultivate the forbearance not to force our opinions on others.

**Today:** I will create a skit with at least three other people to show the difference between graciousness and selfishness. I will observe and share with the others how graciousness adds to nonviolence.

**DAY 38 Mar. 8:** The thought for today is **KINDNESS**. Every day we hear of random and senseless acts of violence. By participating in the counter-revolution of kindness started by Anne Herbert you are contributing to a culture of nonviolence.

"Practice random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty."  
-*Anonymous*

"My religion is kindness"  
-*The Dalai Lama*

**Today:** I will do something kind for someone for no reason other than to be kind. I will bring beauty to a place where it may be needed without letting anyone know that I was the one who did it. I will write about how it felt and then share this story with someone.

**DAY 39 Mar. 9:** The thought for today is **DIALOGUE**. Marianne Williamson describes a healthy society as one in which “those who disagree can do so with honor and respect for other people’s opinions, and an appreciation for our shared humanity.”

We might not always agree with other people, but when we really listen to what they have to say we are having a dialogue. We never argue in a dialogue. We say what we think and then we listen to the other person so we can understand what they think and learn from them.

When we engage in dialogue, we seek not to prove we are right, or that the other person is wrong, but to state clearly - from a place of ahimsa and truth force - what we believe to be true. We listen deeply so as to be able to understand the perspectives of those who do not appear to share our understanding.

**Today:** I will speak my truth quietly and clearly, and not enter into the spirit of argument. I will listen with an open heart, with compassion, to the truth as perceived by others.

**DAY 40 Mar. 10:** The thought for today is **UNITY**. Differences give variety to life and are often only on the surface. Most communities are made of diverse groups of people who have different opinions, who look different, and who speak many different languages. Our challenge is to see beyond outer differences in opinions and appearances and find a meeting point of underlying unity that exists in diversity. There is peace and nonviolence in unity as we recognize who we are in others, a transformation from separateness to unity.

**Today:** I will look for three ways to see beyond outer differences in opinions, appearances, or goals. I will seek out someone who looks different from me; looking beyond these outer differences I will see the unity which is inside and journal about what I have discovered.

**DAY 41 Mar. 11:** The thought for today is **OPENNESS**. A Turkish proverb says, “he who builds himself a fence, fences **out** more than he fences in.” If you don’t listen to someone because they look different or have different ideas than you, you’re building a fence around yourself and you’re missing out on having a new friend and learning something new. When we refrain from acting on a negative emotion or selfish desire, we stop building the fence around our life - we can open our life up to others. When we can be open to the opportunity for growth, we can use this as a way to find nonviolent ways to resolve differences.

**Today:** I will be open to understanding ideas and people that I have previously opposed. I will find somebody who I never wanted to talk to before and find a way to have a conversation with him or her.

**DAY 42 Mar. 12:** The thought for today is **ACCOUNTABILITY**. In conflicting situations, personal accountability allows me to take responsibility for how I contribute to a conflict. I can then make a different choice that can lead to a peaceful resolution.

**Today:** I will be accountable for my words today. I will make a list of the thoughts I think and the words I speak that are violent. Every time I become aware of my violent thoughts or words, I will say to myself "delete" and start again.

**DAY 43 Mar. 13:** The thought for today is **UNIQUENESS**. Dale Carnegie says "The greatest need people have is for love and approval." Most of us cannot help comparing ourselves with others, at least now and then. This has become so entrenched in our culture that in order to have self-esteem, it seems almost necessary to say "I am better than he or she" implying therefore I am good. As long as we compete with each other and compare one with another, a certain amount of envy is inescapable. It is the very rare person who is completely free from jealousy.

But as our awareness grows, we will know that there is a uniqueness about everyone. The truly nonviolent person never tries to compare himself with others, or others among themselves. While being aware of our uniqueness, also being aware of our oneness creates a sense of nonviolence.

**Today:** I will do something that shows how unique I am. I may draw a picture, sing a song, dance or write a story. I will praise, compliment or honor the uniqueness of someone I know and by doing so, notice the positive impact I make by recognizing their uniqueness.

**DAY 44 Mar. 14:** The thought for today is **COOPERATION**. When we work together, we are stronger than when we work alone. When we find ways that we can cooperate more effectively with the people in our family or workplace, school or community, we are tearing down walls of separation; we are contributing to a nonviolent culture.

**Today:** Find a very heavy object. Try to pick it up by yourself. Now ask 3 or 4 other people to assist. How did working together with other people help make this task easier for you?

**DAY 45 Mar. 15:** The thought for today is **MASTERY**. Labor organizer, Cesar Chavez taught "If you use violence you have to sell part of yourself for that violence. Then you are no longer a master of your own struggle." To practice nonviolence you must learn to master your anger. Breathe deeply, silently counting backwards from ten to calm yourself and cool off before you speak or act with impatience or anger.

"We can do anything we want to do if we stick to it long enough."

*-Helen Keller*

This should not be surprising. After all, to attain excellence in anything we have to work at it. An Olympic swimming champion doesn't go for a workout once a week on Sunday afternoon, but practices for hours every day. The impetus to gain mastery over one's

mind and senses does not come from some Olympian height, or from a distant deity; it doesn't come from any monastic rule, or even from one's spiritual teacher. It comes from deep within yourself. You have had a fleeting glimpse of the shining presence within, and in its bright remembered light, all your flaws and blemishes are thrown into sharp relief. You can't wait to start removing them.

**Today:** When I think of something or get into a situation where anger comes up, I will acknowledge the anger then breathe deeply, silently counting backwards from ten, and then decide what action to take. Mastery of nonviolence will come as I continue to practice.

**DAY 46 Mar. 16:** The thought for today is **COMPASSION**. Mother Teresa implored us to "find someone who thinks he is alone and let him know that he is not."

"If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If **you** want to be happy, practice compassion." -*The 14th Dalai Lama*

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*

Compassion is about both relieving suffering and about celebration (which also relieves suffering by putting it in a context of gratitude). With compassion comes a greatness of heart. Compassion arises when we allow our heart to be touched by the pain and needs of others.

**Today:** I will engage compassion to lead my actions, my words and my life.

**DAY 47 Mar. 17:** The thought for today is **DISARMAMENT**. What if we lived in a world where there were no weapons? What if we used the resources for developing weapons for other projects? What if we really did beat swords into plowshares? Imagine such a world for yourself and your family, because until we believe it is possible, it cannot become a reality. Peace and nonviolence, does, and must, begin with each and every one of us.

**Today:** I will have a conversation with someone today about what the world would be like if there were no weapons, nor any need for them. I will define new uses for the resources freed-up by not developing weapons.

**DAY 48 Mar. 18:** The thought for today is **ECOLOGY**. Gandhi said "To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves."

Individuals like you and me who make the final decisions about what is bought and sold in the stores, how much carbon dioxide is pumped into the atmosphere, and what is dumped into the sea. Each of us can begin to heal the environment right away by changing our daily habits.

And what about our internal environment, which is as real as the one we see around us? This internal environment has a powerful effect on the external environment: the way we think affects the way we treat the earth. When we purify this inner environment, we are not only making ourselves more secure and fulfilled, but we are also making an important contribution to the health of Mother Earth. Nonviolence extends from ourselves, not just to our brothers and sisters, but to the earth as well.

**Today:** I will practice recycling by using at least one recycled product and by recycling a product. I will reduce, reuse and recycle the products I use.

**DAY 49 Mar. 19:** The thought for today is **HONOR**. "Those who are good and pure in conduct are honored wherever they go. The good shine like the Himalayas, whose peaks glisten above the rest of the world even when seen from a distance." -The Buddha

People who are as described by Buddha, who work for the welfare of others, will be very deeply loved, respected and honored wherever they go. It is a simple law of human nature that we love the highest, that we emulate such people, and we want to lead the kind of life they lead. This is the saving grace of human nature: when we see someone who is patient, kind, forgiving, and forbearing, we recognize their nonviolent ways, because we too, have those qualities. As we honor them, we honor ourselves.

**Today:** A simple way to raise my awareness of honoring others is to do so at mealtime. Before each meal today, I will stop to think about all the people involved with the food I eat and I will silently say to them, "I honor you." Likewise, I will bless and honor the earth for its abundance.

**DAY 50 Mar. 20:** The thought for today is **CHOICE**. Be aware of any jokes or remarks that show disrespect toward ethnic groups, women or men, classes of people, religious groups, gays or lesbians. By being considerate of every person's dignity and by choosing not to participate in disrespectful communication, I am contributing to a nonviolent society.

"The soul is dyed the color of its thoughts. Think only on those things that are in line with your principles and can bear the light of day. The content of your character is your choice. Day by day, what you do is who you become. Your integrity is your destiny - it is the light that guides your way." -*Heraclitus*

Do you think the statement "We always have a choice" is true? Do you ever think that you don't have a choice? Do you ever think you must be violent? Can you always choose nonviolence?

**Today:** I will write about the choices I face throughout the day and on how they translate my commitment to nonviolence into my thoughts, words and actions.

**DAY 51 Mar. 21:** The thought for today is **ADVOCACY**. “When someone stands up to violence” says Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh, “a force for change is released. Every action for peace requires someone to exhibit the courage to challenge violence and inspire love.” Thich Nhat Hanh's life is about nonviolence, and ours can be too.

When we choose to be an advocate for nonviolence and decide right now that we will be the one to stop the violence, we release peace into the world.

**Today:** I will be an ally. Without blaming or judging others, I will listen from my heart, and speak out with love for those who are disrespected, abused or not listened to. I will find out how I can be an advocate in current conflicts, such as in The Sudan.

**DAY 52 Mar. 22:** The thought for today is **EQUALITY**. Have you ever noticed the groups of people who are under-represented in your activities and lifestyle? The Constitution of the United States says that all people are equal, and all people have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Do you think everyone in our community is treated equally? If not, what can you do to change this?

"Unless man is committed to the belief that all mankind are his brothers, then he labors in vain and hypocritically in the vineyards of equality." -*Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.*

When you recognize as your equals those with whom you disagree, true opportunities for dialogue emerge - opportunities that are denied when you think of yourself as better than, or less than, others. Martin Buber wrote about the "I-Thou" connection, the ultimate equality, and the place from which nonviolence originates.

**Today:** I will be mindful of ways that I see myself as better than others. When I listen to people today, I will listen to them as equals; when I speak, I will speak to others as equals. I will enrich my life by considering how I can invite different people and unusual experiences into my life today.

**DAY 53 Mar. 23:** The thought for today is **ACTION**. “Each of us can work to change a small portion of events and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation” said Robert Kennedy. Imagine what actions Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy would be taking if they were among us today.

Truly nonviolent action is centered in love and compassion. Actions speak louder than words, it is said, yet it is not so much loudness as clarity and truth that matters; a gentle action can be far more powerful than a forceful one. So, too, the smallest actions - those closest to home - can be more meaningful than those expressed from a distance.

**Today:** I will explore actions from the heart I can take today to express my commitment to peace and nonviolence - in both my personal life and in the public domain. I will find a way to make one small change that will contribute to the well being of my home, school, workplace or community.



**DAY 54 Mar. 24:** The thought for today is **GIVING**. Practice generously giving by sharing time, talent, energy and material resources with others. Whatever you give, do it without thinking of getting anything in return. Do it as a service, not reluctantly, but with joy. That is a real gift.

Whatever you give, be sure it is from the heart:  
“Not in what we give, but what we share,  
For the gift without the giver is bare.”

**Today:** I will clean out my closet, bureau drawers, or garage and give away things I'm not using. I will give my time to a volunteer organization and my financial resources to a cause that supports and practices nonviolence.

**DAY 55 Mar. 25:** The thought for today is **RESPONSIBILITY**. The quality of your community starts with you. Take responsibility wherever you are. Whatever we are today is the result of what we have thought, spoken, and done in all the previous moments before now. The responsibility for both present and future is in our own hands. If we live right today, then tomorrow will be right. This applies to our physical, emotional and spiritual life; we each have the ultimate responsibility for our choices.

**Today:** I will pick up trash that is not my own, whether at home, at the office or on the street. If there is a conflict present in my life, I will take responsibility for my part in the conflict.

**DAY 56 Mar. 26:** The thought for today is **SELF-SUFFICIENCY**. People need the dignity of work and the opportunity to provide for themselves and their families. Economic self-sufficiency is a requirement for a nonviolent world.

"Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency."  
-*"Mahatma" Gandhi*

For Gandhi, economic self-sufficiency - symbolized by the spinning wheel - was a vital element of independence from colonial rule and from oppressive economic conditions.

**Today:** I will discover the satisfaction of making something for myself instead of buying something - and from spending time in self-sufficient quiet reflection or meditation. If I know someone who is looking for employment, I will offer to assist them with a resume, an application, making phone calls, or practice interviewing.

**DAY 57 Mar. 27:** The thought for today is **SERVICE**. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “Everybody can be great ... because anybody can serve ... you only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love.” How can you serve today?

What really gives value to anything is its usefulness in serving others. Our life draws its value not from the money we make, or the prizes we win, or the power we wield over others, but from the service we give every day to add a little bit more to the happiness of

our family and our community. And when you serve, do it without thinking of getting anything in return. Do it as a service to the universe, not reluctantly, but with joy. By doing so, you are a model to others, and add to a culture of nonviolence.

**Today:** I will volunteer a minimum of two hours this week with an organization of my choice and share my commitment with at least one person. I will do one thing today to help somebody at home, at school or work, or in my community, and then write a paragraph about the experience.

**DAY 58 Mar. 28:** The thought for today is **CITIZENSHIP**. Robert Muller, former Assistant Secretary General to the United Nations urges, “Use every letter you write, every conversation you have, every meeting you attend, to express your fundamental beliefs and dreams.” Make a difference in your community by becoming involved.

To be a citizen means to help your community be the best it can be. You are a member of many communities: your family, your place of work or school, your place of worship, your city, your country, and the planet. Participation in your community presents an opportunity to model nonviolent action, peaceful resolution, and how each of us can and do make a difference.

**Today:** I will call or write one of my legislators and register my views. I will tell at least three people of my efforts and ask them to do the same.

**DAY 59 Mar. 29:** The thought for today is **INTERVENTION**. Alcohol and drug abuse is both a consequence of, and a cause of, violence. You can make a difference in someone’s life through intervention.

**Today:** I will have the courage to intervene in a caring way with someone who is using alcohol or drugs. Through my honest, straightforward, and nonviolent communication, I will encourage them to get educated, get help, get sober and free from substances.

**DAY 60 Mar. 30:** The thought for today is **WITNESSING**. “We are each other’s bond,” writes poet Gwendolyn Brooks. Those who practice nonviolence cannot close their eyes to injustice or cruelty. We are here to be a witness for justice and compassion. Those who practice nonviolence look at injustice or cruelty and know that it is possible for the situation to be different. You can stand up for truth by your presence, your words and your actions, and by doing so, make a difference.

**Today:** When I see injustice, I will say or take action to bring about a peaceful change. I will write down my thoughts about the action I took, and share this with another person.

**DAY 61 Mar. 31:** The thought for today is **PEACE**. “Practice watering seeds of joy and peace and not just seeds of anger and violence, and the elements of war in all of us will be transformed,” says Thich Nhat Hanh. You water seeds of anger and violence by deciding to stay angry and act violently. You water seeds of joy and peace by deciding to be

peaceful, no matter what is happening to you. Peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart, and then respond in a nonviolent way.

"Mankind must remember that peace is not God's gift to his creatures; peace is our gift to each other." -*Elie Wiesel*

**Today:** I choose to meet each experience with an intention for peace. I will be aware of any feelings of anger or irritation and replace the feeling with calm. I envision any areas of unrest transformed into safe havens for all people. I see beyond conflict and discord to the truth: peace is everywhere present and active.

**DAY 62 Apr. 1:** The thought for today is **COMMITMENT**. Until one is committed there is hesitancy, a chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans; that the moment that one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves, too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamed would come his way.

"Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it!  
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now!"  
-*Goethe*

And so it is with nonviolence. We set forth a commitment to nonviolence with an intention that we can act upon today. By doing so, we are presented with situations and circumstances that will allow us to model our commitment, to bring nonviolence to a situation.

**Today:** I will identify what I am willing to do as a consequence of my commitment to nonviolence. I will clarify and affirm my personal commitment to nonviolence by sharing it with at least two people.

**DAY 63 Apr. 2:** The thought for today is **RELEASE**. A Sufi proverb says "when the heart weeps for what it has lost, the spirit laughs for what is found." Release the weight of your past, the judgments of yourself and others, and **be the change you wish to see**. Make room for what is here in this present moment, release the hurts and resentments and mistakes of the past and be present to the nonviolent presence you are right here right now. In the presence of a man or woman in whom all hostility has been released, others cannot be hostile. In the presence of a man or woman in whom all fear has been released, no one can be afraid. This is the power of true nonviolence, as we can see in the life of Gandhi. Because he had released all hostility, he was a profound force for peace.

**Today:** I reflect back on how far I have come during this 64 day journey. I release the idea that World Peace is not possible by acknowledging that I really do make a difference. Say out loud, "I DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!"

**DAY 64 Apr. 3:** The thought for today is **CELEBRATION**. Margaret Mead said “never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Nonviolence is building the courage to speak and act with respect, reverence and compassion for our own being. Rejoice in the work that you have done. Celebrate the journey that you have made with countless others who believe that every individual can move the world in the direction of peace with their nonviolent choice and action.

**Today:** I celebrate my knowledge and maturity, my choice of nonviolence, and the journey I have chosen.

**CLOSING Apr. 4:** Every day, I join others in this prayer for World Peace.

With each kind thought,  
each choice for nonviolence,  
we plant a seed that shall bloom  
to bring forth rich fruit in its Season.  
Together, friend, we till the soil and  
plant the seeds that all creation may  
sing for joy and dance in the  
Garden of Peace.

May our prayers and practices  
during this Season be but the beginning  
of a new culture of peace, security and  
joy that shall endure unto our  
children’s children’s children.