

PSYCHOLOGY FOR PEACE ACTIVISTS:
A NEW PSYCHOLOGY
FOR THE GENERATION WHO CAN ABOLISH WAR

by
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Part 1 of 3

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Cover photo: Martin Luther King Jr. addressing the 1967 anti-Vietnam War rally in front of the United Nations.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

In the decade since the first edition was conceived, peace activism has greatly broadened its focus.

In the earlier period, the world was stuck in the "quagmire of anti-communism", to quote the Reverend Martin Luther King. The world was held hostage by the Cold War and the nuclear arms race which threatened to destroy the world from one minute to another demanding the constant attention of peace activists.

With the end of the Cold War, peace activists have been able to refocus their attention more on the root causes of the war system. Working in thousands of non-governmental organizations (NGO's) around the world, they are addressing the political and economic injustices which, since the beginning of history, have led to war.

The United Nations and its specialized agencies have emerged from the paralysis of the Cold War and begun to accomplish the tasks for which they were designed fifty years ago "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

As a result, the nation-state, long the monopolizer of organized violence and the bastion of the war system, has begun to yield power on both flanks - to the United Nations on a global level and to NGO's on a local level.

We can now see emerging the outlines of a global movement to replace the culture of war with a culture of peace. Disarmament remains essential to this movement, but it also links up with the struggles for democracy, human rights and for equitable, endogenous, sustainable development.

The first edition of this book focussed on the Cold War and on peace activists from one of the two super-powers involved, the U.S. Regrettably, an equal emphasis was not given to Soviet peace activists who, at that time, played an important role in ensuring that their country's dramatic transition took place without recourse to the terrible military force that was at their disposal.

Now that the attention of the peace movement has become truly global in scope, it is appropriate that this book should be expanded to include the perspective of a great peace activist from another part of the world: Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

The stages of consciousness development illustrated by Nelson Mandela in his autobiography, **Long Walk to Freedom**, are so similar to those described by American peace activists, that it makes a strong case for the universality of these processes - at least for the present moment of history. This is as it should be if we believe with Mandela and others that we are on the verge of a single global civilization and a global movement for a culture of peace.

As Mandela puts it, the changes in travel, communication and mass media have accelerated and now changes occur so fast it is difficult to keep up with them:

"What struck me so forcefully was how small the planet had become during my decades in prison; it was amazing to me that a teenage Inuit living at the roof of the world could watch the release of a political prisoner on the Southern tip of Africa. Television had shrunk the world; and had in the process become a great weapon for eradicating ignorance and promoting democracy."

Like other activists described in first edition of this book, Nelson Mandela is very explicit about the importance for him of the basic values of freedom, integrity and democracy received from his extended family, the tribe and culture. Throughout the most difficult years of his imprisonment, he shared a sense of purpose with his colleagues and resisted the attempts of the prison authorities "to exploit every weakness, demolish every initiative, negate all signs of individuality - all with the idea of stamping out that spark that makes each of us human and each of us who we are."

In a few pages of lucid prose, he explains how he came to be an activist:

I had no epiphany, no singular revelation, no moment of truth, but a steady accumulation of a thousand slights, a thousand indignities and a thousand unremembered moments produced in me an anger, a rebelliousness, a desire to fight the system that imprisoned my people. There was no particular day on which I said, Henceforth I will devote myself to the liberation of my people; instead, I simply found myself doing so, and could not do otherwise.

Even in prison he and his colleagues maintained their activism: "we regarded the struggle in prison as a microcosm of the struggle as a whole. We would fight inside as we had fought outside. As a result, "there were many dark moments when my faith in humanity was sorely tested, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair."

Mandela illustrates throughout his book the skills of affiliation. Although he often found himself on the losing side of policy debates, he would always swallow his pride and respect the collective decision. At times he learned from his errors and changed his opinion; at other times it was his views that eventually convinced the others and prevailed. It was always a process of patience, of listening, and of growth:

I have always believed that to be a freedom fighter one must suppress many of the personal feelings that make one feel like a separate individual rather than part of a mass movement. One is fighting for the liberation of millions of people, not the glory of one individual.

At the same time, however, there were moments when he had to make decisions alone - such as his decision to initiate discussion with the apartheid regime:

I knew that my colleagues upstairs would condemn my proposal, and that would kill the initiative even before it was born. There are times when a leader must move out ahead of the flock, go off in a new direction, confident that he is leading his people the right way.

Mandela describes the importance, the difficulties, the successes and failures of personal integration. Through two marriages and a law practice which was eventually destroyed, he

remained in touch with his need for family:

When your life is the struggle, as mine was, there is little room left for family. That has always been my greatest regret, and the most painful aspect of the choice I made.

Finally, we can learn much of leadership and world historic consciousness from his example. He was never sectarian. Despite differences with tribal leaders, despite challenges from a new generation, despite outright sabotage from the PAC and Chief Buthelezi, he always maintained a dialogue with them, seeking to convince them of the values of unity and learning whatever he could from their experiences and perspectives.

Mandela and his colleagues have added greatly to our understanding of non-violence through their constant struggle over the issue:

I saw non-violence on the Gandhian model not as an inviolable principle but as a factor to be used as the situation demanded. The principle was not so important that the strategy should be used even when it was self-defeating, as Gandhi himself believed. I called for non-violent protest for as long as it was effective.

In what is perhaps his greatest contribution, he sought out and maintained dialogue with the oppressors. In the spirit of Gandhi, he knew "that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed." In explaining how he could accept the Nobel Peace Prize jointly with South African President de Klerk, he says, "To make peace with an enemy, one must work with that enemy, and that enemy becomes your partner."

His leadership was always based on respect and close touch with the people, even during the long years in prison. "To lead one's people, one must truly know them." In his early days during the defiance campaign, he toured the country, sometime going from one house to another in the townships: "we had to win people over one by one." From the beginning he saw it was foolhardy to go against the people: "It is no use to take an action to which the masses are opposed, for it will then be impossible to enforce."

He describes his role as a "promoter of unity, an honest broker, a peacemaker" and his mission as one "of preaching reconciliation, of binding the wounds of the country, of engendering trust and confidence."

Mandela emerged from his experiences with a consciousness that is truly global in scope:

I was first and foremost an African nationalist fighting for our emancipation from minority rule and the right to control our own destiny. But, at the same time South Africa and the African continent were part of the larger world. Our problems, while distinctive and special, were not unique, and a philosophy that placed these problems in an international and historical context of the greater world and the course of history was valuable

Challenged to dissociate himself from the communists who had a similar global view, he refused to do so, despite pressure from the government, the international community, rival organizations like the PAC, and many in the ranks of his own ANC. Although he had begun his



Awarding of the Houphouet-Boigny Prize for Peace by Federico Mayor to Nelson Mandela and Frederick DeKlerk at UNESCO, 3 February 1992

photo credit: UNESCO/Dominique Rogier

activism as an anti-communist and even broken up communist meetings in his early years, his autobiography richly illustrates how he came to value the contribution that communists make to the struggle and the strength that comes from an alliance with them.

The reader is invited to compare this picture of the steps of consciousness development of Nelson Mandela with those of the other great peace activists described in the earlier edition of this book. I believe that the reader will find them so similar that it gives support to the possibility of a global consciousness for a culture of peace which can develop in cultures through the world.

At the present moment of history it is possible that an additional step is being added to those of consciousness development: a step of vision. Mandela exemplifies a new generation of peace activists whose actions provide a vision for a peaceful world. Not content to struggle against the vicious, anti-human system of apartheid, Mandela and his fellow activists in the ANC had the courage and foresight to develop the Freedom Charter which provides not only a vision for South Africa, but by extension for the rest of the world as well. [1].

As Mandela describes, the Freedom Charter was developed by a process that evoked suggestions from ordinary people throughout the country. They responded to a call asking them

"How would you set about making South Africa a happy place for all the people who live in it?" The Freedom Charter "captured the hopes and dreams of the people, and acted as a blueprint for the liberation struggle and the future of the nation."

The vision in the Freedom Charter is remarkably similar to that of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was formulated in those years by the United Nations. It is at once specific and universal, practical and visionary.

The vision of the Freedom Charter was further elaborated later by the ANC in preparation for the first free elections in South Africa. As Mandela says, "Some in the ANC wanted to make the campaign simply a liberation election and tell the people vote for us because we set you free. We decided instead to offer them a vision of the South Africa we hoped to create."

Today, to paraphrase Mandela, peace activists can do more than just be against the war system, but they can at the same time act to bring a universal vision closer to reality. In opposing the culture of war, today's activist can help construct a culture of peace.

PSYCHOLOGY FOR PEACE ACTIVISTS: A NEW PSYCHOLOGY FOR THE GENERATION WHO CAN ABOLISH WAR

Each new stage of history demands a new psychology - one that can explain and support the psychological development of the people who must undertake the most important tasks on the historical agenda.

In our time, a new task has risen to the top of the historical agenda - the abolition of war and the replacement of its culture by a culture of peace. This has occurred as a result of great historical changes as foreseen in the famous 1932 correspondence between Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud, in which Freud wrote:

These two factors - man's cultural disposition and a well-founded fear of the form that future wars will take - may serve to put an end to war...But by what ways or byways this will come about we cannot guess.

Although the process is still not clear, we may be sure that it will involve the mobilization of people at every level, of peace movements composed of individual peace activists, for whom the question of their consciousness is crucial.

History demands a new psychology. But history does not act in the abstract. Since peace will be achieved by movements composed of individual peace activists, it is for you, the peace activist, that the new psychology is needed, and it is to you that this book is dedicated.

To begin the development of the new psychology, I have sought in the first section to gain lessons from the lives of our fore-runners, the great U.S. peace activists of the 20th Century. In their autobiographies we find the steps of their consciousness development and the psychological difficulties that they faced at each step. Six steps - and corresponding sets of difficulties - may be distinguished, and we will consider each one of them in turn: values and purpose vs. alienation; anger vs. fear and pessimism; action vs. armchair theorizing; affiliation vs. anarchism; integration vs. burnout; and world-historic consciousness vs. sectarianism.

To foresee the questions that will be asked of the new psychology, in the second section I have sought its root causes in the economic and political changes that have brought peace to the top of the historical agenda.

The concluding section of the book outlines the tasks of the new psychology. The new psychology can develop only through the efforts of many people including activists, psychologists and, most especially, psychologists who are activists. Therefore the final section of this book is addressed not only to peace activists, but also to professional psychologists and young people who will become the psychologists of the future. All of us must work together to create the new psychology and carry out its great historical tasks.

LESSONS FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT PEACE ACTIVISTS: SIX STEPS OF CONSCIOUSNESS DEVELOPMENT

The new psychology is foreshadowed in the lives of the great peace activists who have gone before us. We can learn from them as they traveled the road that we must take in the struggle to abolish war.

I have taken a case history approach and chosen the lives of ten great peace activists to analyze. For the most part I have been inductive and let their autobiographies speak for themselves about important psychological issues. But, like any psychologist, I bring certain tools and theoretical approaches to the work. In previous studies, I have developed this approach through studies of other autobiographies, oral histories of local peace activists, statistical analysis of why students become peace activists, studies of the physiology and psychology of motivational systems, and study of the general principles of activity psychology as it was developed in the Soviet Union [2]. Also, I am a peace activist myself, and have studied the history of American peace movements [3].

In deciding which ten peace activists to choose, I have concentrated on Americans and sought a broad range of activists who rose to leadership from the various peace constituencies. Because my audience is primarily the U.S. peace movement, I have chosen our fore-runners in particular. They represent the broad range of the U.S. peace movement. There are five women and five men. Four were Nobel Prize winners, three of whom won the Nobel Prize for Peace. There is the remarkable Eugene Victor Debs, who received almost a million votes for President while confined to prison for opposing World War I. There are heroes of the movement to end the war in Vietnam in which many activists of my generation first got involved. And I have included two activists who helped organize today's mass peace movement in the United States, Helen Caldicott and Sandy Pollack. A special note is needed for Sandy who died at the age of 36 in a plane crash and who, as the eulogies in her book testify, was better known abroad than in the United States. She symbolizes a new and increasingly important aspect of the U.S. peace movement that may be said to have begun with Jane Addams, an internationalism that seeks to unify the peace and justice movements of the entire world.

In considering the consciousness development of these great activists, it is not possible to separate the goal of peace from the goal of social justice. Jane Addams and Emily Balch won Nobel Peace Prizes for their work for peace, but each was involved in the movement for women's rights as well, and each began her consciousness development in social work on behalf of exploited people, including immigrant workers who came to America before the turn of the Century. Dorothy Day and Bertrand Russell are best known as peace activists, but both began their activism on behalf of women's suffrage. Day was imprisoned for participating in a suffrage march in 1917, and Russell ran for British Parliament in 1907 on a women's suffrage platform.

Day later founded the Catholic Worker Movement, and Russell, having become a world famous mathematician, philosopher, and writer, helped mobilize scientists' opposition to nuclear armament and later the CND and Committee of 100 for nuclear disarmament in England.

Both W.E.B. DuBois and Martin Luther King, Jr. came to the peace movement by way of their struggles for civil rights. DuBois founded the NAACP in the first decade of the 20th Century and edited its publication **The Crisis** for many decades. And the journey of Martin Luther King Jr. from civil rights to trade union struggles to opposition to the Vietnam War and the Nobel Peace Prize is a well-known story.

Both Eugene Victor Debs and A.J. Muste came out of the labor movement. Debs was the principal organizer of the great national railroad strike of 1894 and only later became a socialist, a Presidential candidate, and an anti-war activist. A.J. Muste, having resigned his pulpit over pacifist opposition to World War I, was thrust by chance into the leadership of a bitter textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, where his consciousness rapidly developed. Later he played a major role in the civil rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement. More recently Helen Caldicott and Sandy Pollack played leadership roles in the great anti-war movement of the 1980's. Caldicott first became active against the environmental effects of nuclear testing, and later worked with Australian trade unionists and American physicians against nuclear war. And Sandy Pollack, in addition to her work against the Vietnam War and the escalation of the Cold War in the 1980's, began her political work as a leader of an SDS housing committee in Boston which organized a tenants' council, rent strikes, and housing demonstrations. Later she became a leader of solidarity work with the revolutionary movements of Latin America.

Consciousness development is something that we all know about from our own experience, whether or not we are peace activists. To some extent, we all develop through similar steps, starting with the basic values and purpose that we learn from our family and friends and school. We become active, changing the world around us, and we affiliate with various organized groups, and develop a unique, integrated pattern of social relationships that we call personality and that is unlike that of anyone else. In this way, we become conscious of our self in relation to the rest of the world and to human history. The steps of this development may take place over a long period of time, as long as a lifetime, or sometimes they may occur very rapidly. Like the steps in a staircase - and unlike the stepping stones across a stream - each new step builds upon the preceding steps and interacts with them in a cumulative way. No development is lost, but each new step strengthens and transforms the steps that have gone before into a new and higher level of functioning.

In the autobiographies of the great peace activists, we find a pattern of consciousness development that can be described as six cumulative steps. They are: 1) acquisition of values and purpose; 2) anger; 3) action; 4) affiliation; 5) personal integration; and 6) world-historic consciousness. The steps tend to be taken in the order mentioned, although we should not forget

that they are cumulative so that each step continues to operate in combination with later steps at a higher level of functioning [4]. We will find it useful to consider each step in terms of its opposite, i.e., the difficulties that can hinder development at that step: 1) alienation; 2) fear and pessimism; 3) armchair theorizing; 4) individualism and anarchism; 5) burnout; and 6) sectarianism.

ACQUISITION OF VALUES AND PURPOSE VS. ALIENATION

The consciousness development of the great peace activists begins, as in all of us, as a reflection of the values of society. These are learned by imitation and through formal instruction. In the process, we come to see the purpose of our lives in terms of what we can contribute to society and to human history. It can be said that such consciousness is what links the physiological and psychological processes of our individual lives to the political and economic processes of history.

The acquisition of values and purposes is not a passive process, but it is an active process in which the growing person reaches out, grasps, and integrates social values and molds them into a personal sense of destiny and purpose. In writing about her husband, Coretta Scott King describes the process like the unfolding drama of a play:

Though I had been opposed to going to Montgomery, I realize now that it was an inevitable part of a greater plan for our lives. Even in 1954 I felt that my husband was being prepared - and I too - for a special role about which we would learn more later. Each experience that we had was preparation for the next one. Being in Montgomery was like a drama that was unfolding. Martin and I and the people of that small southern city were like actors in a play, the end of which we had not yet read. Yet we felt a sense of destiny, of being propelled in a certain positive direction.

The acquisition of values and purpose is a social process. It occurs within a social context, beginning usually in the family. The values that Martin Luther King Jr. integrated into his life purpose came literally from his mother's lap. King wrote how his mother told him about slavery, the Civil War, and the establishment of segregation, and "she said the words that almost every Negro hears before he can understand the injustice that makes them necessary: 'You are as good as anyone.'" The family of Sandy Pollack was politically involved and her parents "tried to bring some political consciousness into her life" by starting a social action club for teenagers where "kids discussed issues presented by speakers once a month...and held folk-song 'hootenannies.'" And the initiation of Eugene Debs into the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen was the fulfillment of his father's passionate commitment to the ideals of the French Revolution: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. From then on, it was "the spirit of the working class" that gave him commitment:

I rode on the engines over mountain and plain, slept in the cabooses and bunks, and was fed from their pails by the swarthy stokers who still nestle close to my heart, and will until it is cold and still. Through all these years I was nourished at Fountain Proletaire. I drank deeply of its waters and every particle of my tissue became saturated with the spirit of the working class.

The question of family purpose may recur later in life such as the renewed commitment that occurs at the birth of a child. For example, Dorothy Day began to emerge from her "long loneliness" of alienation when her daughter Tamar was born. Putting her quest for purpose in

religious terms, she wrote, "there had been the physical struggle, the mortal combat almost, of giving birth to a child, and now there was coming the struggle for my own soul." Helen Caldicott says that with the birth of her first child, she realized "that I would die to save the lives of my children. At that moment I accepted personal responsibility for stopping the nuclear arms race."

Religion often extends and expresses the family values and purpose. For A. J. Muste, the church "was the center of social life and culture, as well as of worship and religious training" for his family as he was growing up. And later, as an ordained minister, facing the crisis of World War I, Muste found that "it was a problem which I could not evade because I had been brought up to take religion, specifically the Biblical teaching and Gospel ethic, seriously....the demand that is placed upon us because we belong to the family of man - that we be honest and pure and that we love all men." Similarly, Emily Green Balch, aged 10, responded to a "challenge" from her minister to "enlist....in the service of goodness" and years later she recalled, "I think I never abandoned in any degree my desire to live up to it."

The love of the family gives values an emotional warmth and power. All other values, in the church and in commitment to social justice, are based upon the love of the family, and it is against this love that all human relations are measured and by which they are judged. In the words quoted above from Muste, we must fight for peace and justice because we all "belong to the family of man." And in the words of Martin Luther King Jr.:

At the center of nonviolence stands the principle of love....When we speak of loving those who oppose us....we speak of a love which is....understanding, redeeming good will for all men....a recognition of the fact that all life is interrelated. All humanity is involved in a single process, and all men are brothers.

The question of purpose arises especially when young people leave home such as when they go away to school. Encouraged by the "broadening" influence of higher education students may inspire each other to reach out and take up a social purpose. W.E.B. DuBois, one of the generation of Black students who gained their education after the emancipation of the slaves, shared in a vision of his fellow graduates in a "program for freedom and progress among Negroes." "I replaced my hitherto egocentric world by a world centering and whirling about my race in America." Jane Addams, as one of the generation of women who went to college for the first time, shared in the enthusiasm of her fellow graduates for their "precious ideals....way of martyrdom and high purpose we had marked out for ourselves." The sense of purpose gained by Bertrand Russell at the university was more individualist, but no less demanding and idealistic: "I walked by myself in the Tiergarten and made projects of future work....one series of books on the philosophy of the sciences....and another series of books on social questions." It was a life's work that he never abandoned. Reading and studying makes it possible to reach out beyond the confines of family, church, and school and to adopt values from the whole range of human



W.E.B. DuBois, founder of the NAACP and opponent of imperialism: "In college I replaced my hitherto egocentric world by a world centering and whirling about my race."

photo credit: Schomburg Center of the New York Public Library

experience. For Dorothy Day it was the way to find her purpose in life. Already, at the age of 15, she was an avid reader of Carl Sandburg, Jack London, and Upton Sinclair:

though my only experience of the destitute was in books....[they] made me feel that from then on my life was to be linked to theirs, their interests were to be mine: I had received a call, a vocation, a direction to my life."

In autobiography after autobiography, one is struck by the passion with which the great peace activists read and studied in an active search for the acquisition of values, truth, and purpose.

The activists of today become the role models for the activists of tomorrow. Thus, the life of Eugene Victor Debs was an inspiration to A.J. Muste and Dorothy Day. Jane Addams was an inspiration to Emily Greene Balch. Bertrand Russell was an inspiration to Balch and to Helen Caldicott. W.E.B. DuBois was an inspiration to Martin Luther King, Jr. Even if this book does

nothing else, it should help supply role models to tomorrow's generation of activists. Not everyone has the opportunity to develop a life's purpose when growing up - and instead may simply "go to work for the company." The following description by a peace activist, recalling his life before getting involved in the movement, sounds like the classic description of the alienation of the wage worker:

I lived in a small town where there was never much comment on social concerns....I got married right away and we proceeded to have a family and that's almost totally consuming. I worked for a railroad company for a while and just let the world go by. That went on 12 years or so until the railroad went bankrupt....Otherwise I probably would have stayed there the rest of my life.

It is not only the worker who may lose a sense of purpose and become alienated. After Jane Addams graduated from college, she felt "disconnected" and "disillusioned" and she describes how she reached the lowest depths "of my nervous depression and sense of maladjustment." She later wrote perceptively about the alienation of young people with higher education who "feel a fatal want of harmony between their theory and their lives, a lack of coordination between thought and action." She described how some may become perpetual students and be "buried beneath this mental accumulation with lowered vitality and discontent." Her story is echoed repeatedly in the autobiographies of Bertrand Russell and Dorothy Day, including the title of the latter's autobiography, **The Long Loneliness**. Addams suggested involvement in the Settlement House movement as an answer to alienation, but she could equally have suggested involvement in the peace movement for a later generation.

Just as purpose is acquired in a social context, so, too, it may be lost and alienation may set in when a person becomes socially isolated. Having left the U.S. (and his Negro friends) to travel to Europe, DuBois noted in his diary, "I wonder what I am - I wonder what the world is - I wonder if life is worth the Sturm." Jailed and isolated for her part in a demonstration for women's suffrage, Dorothy Day recalls how "I lost all consciousness of any cause. I had no sense of being radical, making protest against a government, carrying on a nonviolent revolution. I could only feel darkness and desolation....I lost all feeling of my own identity....what was good and evil." Even Martin Luther King Jr. was deeply affected by prison and solitary confinement: "Those hours were the longest and most frustrating and bewildering of my life."

Reaffirmation of the social context may renew the sense of purpose and dispel the despair of alienation. When King was released from jail, he was restored to faith in the struggle by the greeting he received:

As I walked out the front door and noticed the host of friends and well-wishers, I regained the courage that I had temporarily lost. I knew that I did not stand alone....From that night on my commitment to the struggle for freedom was stronger than ever before.

The acquisition of values and purpose is only a beginning of consciousness development.

Further development depends not only upon ideas, but must come through practice as well, which is what the rest of this book will consider. But practice for justice and peace, in a society dominated by militarism and material gain does not come easily. It takes courage and motivation, the key to which is the emotion of anger.

ANGER VS. FEAR AND PESSIMISM

In one autobiography after another we find the same story - the initial action for peace and justice is motivated by anger against injustice. Like the spark that ignites the fuel in an engine, anger is the stimulus that initiates action [5].

It was anger that transformed W.E.B. DuBois from a scholar, brilliant but ineffective in a world of exploitation and racism, into a powerful activist for civil rights:

At the very time when my studies were most successful, there cut across this plan which I had as a scientist, a red ray which could not be ignored. I remember when it first, as it were, startled me to my feet....The news met me: Sam Hose had been lynched, and they said that his knuckles were on exhibition at a grocery store....I began to turn aside from my work....One could not be a calm, cool, and detached scientist while Negroes were lynched, murdered, and starved.

A bit later in his autobiography, DuBois describes how anger eventually stimulated him into activity, the founding of the Niagara Movement which later developed into the NAACP:

But when Trotter went to jail, my indignation over-flowed. I did not always agree with Trotter then or later. But he was an honest, brilliant, unselfish man, and to treat as a crime that which was at worst mistaken judgment was an outrage. I sent out from Atlanta in June 1905 a call to a few selected persons "for organized determination and aggressive action...."

In recalling his activities on behalf of conscientious objectors in World War I, which began his long career of peace activism, Bertrand Russell explains how he had become "filled with despairing tenderness towards the young men who were to be slaughtered, and with rage against all the statesmen of Europe." Similarly, Helen Caldicott, inspired a generation later by the example of Bertrand Russell, took her first steps of peace action when "I became indignant."

Not all anger is useful for consciousness development. The anger that can be harnessed to action and consciousness development is anger directed against the institutions of war and injustice, rather than anger directed against individuals as such. "You must not harbor anger," Martin Luther King Jr. admonished himself at one point in his autobiography when speaking about a personal anger. But in describing the growing demand for bus desegregation in Montgomery, King made it clear that anger is essential as a motive for action, as "there had developed beneath the surface a slow fire of discontent, fed by the continuing indignities and inequities to which the

Negroes were subjected." Debs, upon his release from prison in 1895 where he had been confined in order to break the national railway strike, expressed it this way: "there has been no liberty in the world...for the maintenance of which man has not been required to fight." He was echoing the motto of Frederick Douglass, the American slave who fought his way to freedom and became a hero of the emancipation a generation before: "without struggle, there can be no progress."



Martin Luther King Jr., Nobel Peace Laureate: "the supreme task is to organize and unit people so that their anger becomes a transforming force"

Photo Credit: Robert Sengstacke and Shomburg Center of NY Public Library

If anger is not guided by the optimism of vision and clear humanistic values, it can be diverted into desperate and anti-human activities. The enemies of peace and justice often try to exploit anger in order to divert movements into such desperation [6]. We later learned that the FBI itself was involved in trying to provoke and divert the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., although we may never know who gave the order to bomb his home in 1956. The bombing threatened to turn the nonviolent movement for bus desegregation that he was leading into a "race riot" which could have become the "darkest night in Montgomery's history":

I was immediately driven home. As we neared the scene I noticed hundreds of people with angry faces in front of the house....One Negro was saying to a policeman, who was attempting to push him aside: "I ain't gonna move nowhere. That's the trouble now; you white folks is always pushin' us around. Now you got your .38 and I got mine; so let's battle it out." As I walked toward the front porch, I realized that many people were armed. Nonviolent resistance was on the verge of being transformed into violence.

King calmed the crowd and harnessed their anger to the work of the movement, calling for Christian values and optimism:

Jesus still cries out in words that echo across the centuries: "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; pray for them that despitefully use you." This is what we must live by. We must meet hate with love. Remember, if I am stopped, this movement will not stop, because God is with the movement. Go home with this glowing faith and this radiant assurance.

Anger is not the same as violence. While President Reagan has ordered many violent actions, including the most dangerous military buildup in world history, he is said to be almost devoid of emotions by those who have seen him in private visits. After visiting Reagan, Helen Caldicott described him as a man without empathy, "like a cardboard photograph." In contrast, Gandhi, the greatest teacher of nonviolence, explains in his autobiography how he learned to reserve his anger from minor encounters and harness it later "for fighting bigger battles." In adopting Gandhi's nonviolent methods to the U.S. struggle for civil rights, Martin Luther King, Jr. explained:

Nonviolent resistance is not a method for cowards; it does resist. If one uses this method because he is afraid or merely because he lacks the instruments of violence, he is not truly nonviolent. This is why Gandhi often said that if cowardice is the only alternative to violence, it is better to fight.... while the nonviolent resister is passive in the sense that he is not physically aggressive toward his opponent, his mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade his opponent that he is wrong. The method is passive physically, but strongly active spiritually. It is not passive non-resistance to evil, it is active nonviolent resistance to evil.

In the dynamic mechanisms of the human brain, anger and fear are opposing forces. [7]. This fact was recognized by Martin Luther King, Jr., who pointed out that fear can suppress anger, while anger can produce the courage that overcomes fear:

The long repressed feelings of resentment on the part of the Negroes had begun to stir. The fear and apathy which had for so long cast a shadow on the life of the Negro community were gradually fading before a new spirit of courage and self-respect.

It is on the battleground of the mind, with the weapons of fear and anger that many of the most important struggles take place between the forces of peace and the forces of militarism. On the political level, fear of the "enemy" is constantly evoked by government statements and is echoed by the mass media in order to justify the arms race. On the psychological level, fear is used to intimidate leaders and discourage people from affiliating with movements for social change. We have seen how the tactics of fear were used in the bombing of King's home in Montgomery. But that was only part of a coordinated campaign that was almost successful:

Almost immediately after the protest started we had begun to receive threatening telephone calls and letters. Sporadic in the beginning, they increased as time went on.

By the middle of January, they had risen to thirty and forty a day....as the weeks passed, I began to see that many of the threats were in earnest. Soon, I felt myself faltering and growing in fear. One day, a white friend told me that he had heard from reliable sources that plans were being made to take my life.

Of course, in 1968, such a threat was carried out and King was assassinated. But during the intervening 13 years, King had overcome the fear, turned resentment into courage, and led a nation towards justice and peace.

Anger and fear are often mixed together. Jane Addams traced her early involvement in the movement for social justice to a vision of the poor in London that filled her with "despair and resentment." Emily Balch had a similar response to "a man fumbling with his bare fingers in an ash barrel to try to find something to eat." For years she had seen misery and starvation and "sickening" experiences "so bad that she hated to appear to acquiesce" in the system of capitalism, but this vision was "somehow final, and led her to call herself a Socialist." And Dorothy Day responded to her imprisonment after the demonstration for women's suffrage with such a mixture of fear and anger that she was totally exhausted by the experience.

There has been so much social pressure against the expression of anger in our culture that it is often unrecognized or repressed [8]. And if anger is repressed, then fear may be left as the dominant emotion. Psychologists often find that their patients are unable to say that they are angry at injustice, but will label their emotion as "anxiety" instead. Such repression of anger can lead to helplessness. Dorothy Day became inactive for many years after her jail experience, and although she does not describe the process in herself, she describes it vividly in her husband Forster:

He personally had not been in jail, but his rage at the system which confined political agitators to jail ate into him. And yet he did nothing but enclose himself into a shell, escape out on the bay with his fishing, find comfort in digging for clams or bait, or seek refuge in tending a garden.

If fear wins out, the anger may be turned inward and lead to self-destructive behavior. When A.J. Muste was angered by the hypocrisy of patriotic support for World War I, he found himself "at the point where I must feel myself doing something that costs and hurts, something for humanity, and God, or go stark mad." Fortunately for us, Muste did not turn the anger inward, but became involved in union organizing where he expressed his anger by joining with workers who were on strike.

If fear wins out against anger, a person's thinking can come to be dominated by pessimism. Of course, some pessimism comes from practical experience. As Helen Caldicott puts it, "the international balance of terror, economic pressures, and the frustration of dealing with a biased government and unresponsive bureaucracy leave many Americans feeling helpless." But pessimism also takes the form of irrational ideas and myths, such as the myth that human nature

is intrinsically evil and war-like [9]. Alienated from working people because of their support for World War I, Bertrand Russell fell victim to the myth of the instinct of war and adopted a pessimistic view of humanity reduced "to primitive barbarism, letting loose, in a moment, the instincts of hatred and blood lust against which the whole fabric of society has been raised." Crippled by what he called "utter cynicism," Russell was unable to move forward to the next step of consciousness because "I was having the greatest difficulty in believing that anything at all was worth doing."

At higher levels of consciousness development, anger, unlike fear, can be harnessed by affiliation and put to work as a powerful force for social change. Rather than the emotion of a single individual setting forth into action, it becomes the battle cry of the movement. Martin Luther King saw this as a critical truth and a secret of the success of W.E.B. DuBois as a leader of the civil rights and peace movements: "History had taught him it is not enough for people to be angry - the supreme task is to organize and unite people so that their anger becomes a transforming force."

ACTION VS. ARMCHAIR THEORIZING

Action is the central step of consciousness development. In the peace movement, it distinguishes the peace activist. In psychology, it distinguishes the new psychology as a psychology of action. All other aspects of consciousness development may be distinguished in terms of whether they come before or after the initial action: some are precursors; other are consequences that come later as a result of action. As we have already seen, the step of values and purposes and the step of anger are precursors that lay the base and motivate action (although these steps continue to develop and intensify along with the other steps that come later).

On the question of peace, there are many people who never develop to the point of action. We have all met people who seem to share our values, purpose and anger for peace and justice, but who, for one reason or another, preach only "armchair theory" and "dry-as-dust gospel," as described by Martin Luther King Jr.:

A faithful few had always shown a deep concern for social problems, but too many had remained aloof from the area of social responsibility. Much of this indifference, it is true, stemmed from a sincere feeling that ministers were not supposed to get mixed up in such earthly temporal matters as social and economic improvements; they were to "preach the gospel," and keep men's minds centered on "the heavenly." But however sincere, this view of religion, I felt, was too confined....Any religion that professes to be concerned with the souls of men and is not concerned with the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them, and the social conditions that cripple them is a dry-as-dust religion.

King could easily have been speaking about certain university professors in the same words he used for religious ministers.

The first step into action may be quite dramatic for those who come from professions in the church or universities where armchair theorizing predominates. For example, the initial action of Jane Addams that launched her entire career of social work began when she was wandering "disconnected" and "disillusioned" in Europe following her vision of "despair and resentment" in London:

It is hard to tell just when the very simple plan which afterward developed into the Settlement began to form itself in my mind. It may have been even before I went to Europe for the second time, but I gradually became convinced that it would be a good thing to rent a house in a part of the city where many primitive and actual needs are found, in which young women who had been given over too exclusively to study, might restore a balance of activity along traditional lines and learn of life from life itself.

Similarly, the crucial decision of Martin and Coretta King to move from Boston to Montgomery, Alabama, was made because "in spite of the disadvantages and inevitable sacrifices, our greatest service could be rendered in our native South....We never wanted to be considered detached

spectators." As they anticipated, this move placed them right in the middle of the unfolding drama of the struggle for civil rights, and, ultimately, the movement against the Vietnam War.



A.J. Muste at a rally opposing the Vietnam War: His anti-war action during World War I had cost him his ministry at the time, but it had opened the door to his future development.

photo credit: Swarthmore College Peace Collection

Perhaps the most dramatic shift from theory into action was that of W.E.B. DuBois. For years he had worked in academia where "I tried to isolate myself in the ivory tower of race." As a scientist he had broken new ground, developing the new science of sociology and applying it for the first time to the Negro race, but his work was having no effect in the real world. It was only when his "indignation overflowed" that he turned to "aggressive action" and called a conference of activists that met near Niagara Falls. That started the Niagara Movement which then became the NAACP (National Association for Advancement of Colored People) where DuBois became a leading activist for civil rights and later for peace.

It is a basic principle of the new psychology that people are transformed by the actions that they initiate. Not only the consequences of the actions, but the very process of taking action changes the actor so that he or she becomes a "new person" operating at a higher level of consciousness. Values and purpose are reinforced. Anger is channeled into activity, rather than turned inward and allowed to fester into pessimism. Pessimism is dispelled by real results. As Sandy Pollack wrote, "I have to work for what I want, and that's where the beauty and joy

lies...when I'm engaged in 'struggle,' in accomplishing anything of any sort, I'm not depressed - but feel rather good."

People are transformed by their actions whether or not the actions are successful. If the actions are successful, activists learn that it is possible for an individual to influence the course of history, as Helen Caldicott has put it:

Many seem to believe that it has simply become impossible for an individual to influence the course of national and world events. I disagree. My experience in Australia from 1971 to 1976 taught me that democracy can still be made to work - that by exerting electoral pressure, an aroused citizenry can still move its government to the side of morality and common sense. In fact, the momentum for movement in this direction can only originate in the heart and mind of the individual citizen. Moreover, it takes only one person to initiate the process, and that person may be politically naive and inexperienced, just as I was when I first spoke out.

Unsuccessful actions can also play a positive role if they are assessed correctly and the struggle is shifted to a higher level. At a lower level, the struggle may run into problems caused by a higher level of the system, and only by shifting to a higher level of action can these problems be overcome. No one illustrates this more clearly than Eugene Victor Debs. His American Railway Union was able to win "clear and complete" in the initial phases of their strike, but then the government joined with the corporations to defeat the strike. Only by shifting the attack to the capitalist system itself could this be overcome:

At this juncture there was delivered, from wholly unexpected quarters, a swift succession of blows....an army of detectives was equipped with badge and beer and bludgeon and turned loose....startling rumors were set afloat; the press volleyed and thundered, and over all the wires sped the news that Chicago's white throat was in the clutch of a red mob; injunctions flew thick and fast, arrests followed, and our office and head-quarters, the heart of the strike, was sacked, torn out and nailed up by the "lawful" authorities of the federal government....The American Railway Union was defeated but not conquered - overwhelmed but not destroyed. It lives and pulsates in the Socialist movement, and its defeat but blazed the way to economic freedom and hastened the dawn of human brotherhood.

An especially difficult psychological shift due to action can be the loss of a career, which is what occurred to A.J. Muste and Emily Balch. Although it was painful at the time, it opened the doors to their future development. For Muste, it all began when he went to an anti-war rally at the start of World War I:

I returned from the great anti-war demonstration in Washington....to lead a union Lenten service in my own church....the fact that I had gone to Washington and had not declared my support of the war on my return made me a traitor....The tension in those days was too great. I resigned. Almost without exception, in World War I, pacifist ministers lost their pulpits, or, as in Seattle....the minister "kept his pulpit but lost his congregation."

Emily Balch accepted an invitation to sail across the Atlantic with an anti-war group of prominent

American women to meet their European counterparts opposed to World War I which was raging at the time:

Although they did not know it, the lives of several of the women on board the Noordam were to be completely changed by the trip. Jane Addams was to lose her tremendous national prestige, to regain it only in the course of time. Emily Balch was to forfeit her professorship, and her means of livelihood. Both were to be drawn into a new career, into international political work....And finally, to crown their pioneering though unspectacular labors, each was to receive the accolade of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Not all transformations are so dramatic; instead, each small step of action may lead to another, until one becomes deeply involved. For Bertrand Russell, on the eve of World War I, his first action was to circulate a petition against the war, then to write a letter-to-the-editor, then to attend anti-war meetings, and finally "I gave practically my whole time and energies to the affairs of the conscientious objectors." Similarly, Helen Caldicott describes how her involvement began with a simple act:

I began by writing a letter to a local newspaper. That letter generated some supportive correspondence, and a TV news program asked me to comment on the medical hazards posed by fallout. France had tested another nuclear device, and planned to detonate four more in the next few months. Each time the French tested a bomb, I appeared on television again, explaining the dangers of radiation. As the public became better informed, a movement to stop the French tests coalesced around the medical facts.

Other steps in consciousness development such as affiliation, personal integration and world-historic consciousness tend to come after the initial step of action rather than before it. Since this is not immediately obvious, it is worth considering this fact in the words from the oral history of a local peace activist:

When people look back over several decades, they tend to make more of a unity out of their lives than they might actually have had at the time, especially in this country where politics has been such an on and off thing since World War II. I think that a lot of us acted first and thought later. So later you say, "Oh, I see how everything fit together...." None of our activity came out of Marxism, socialism, or any kind of traditional radicalism at all. It was later that I began to learn about those things to see if I could theorize what I'd experienced in practice.

One source of evidence that higher steps of consciousness come later than action, rather than before it, comes from the fact that initial action for peace and justice often begins at a young age. Sandy Pollack was a teenager when she first became active:

On a winter Sunday the adults in her life met to discuss picketing at several high schools, including Sandy's, against military recruitment by the ROTC. Sandy listened, but was quiet and no one noticed her. Cecelia and Harry, driving past her school early the next morning, were therefore surprised to see their daughter carrying a picket sign, with three

adults, half-frozen in the winter damp. Sandy was beginning to shape her own life. She was acting not from a sense of "responsibility," but from a dawning sense of power, that one person's acts could, in fact, make an enormous difference.

Dorothy Day was 19 when she set forth on her own in New York to find a job and an apartment and ended up working for the New York **Call**, a socialist paper that engaged her fully in the peace and justice movements of the crucial years around World War I. And Eugene Victor Debs was 19 when he joined the newly formed lodge of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen in his home town and he was immediately chosen as its secretary. "Day and night I worked for the brotherhood," he wrote, and within three years he was chosen associate editor of their national magazine.

Action is the key that unlocks the door to higher levels of consciousness development. Through action one is led to affiliate with organizations where action can be collectively planned and effectively carried out. It is action that forces one to reorganize and integrate one's social relations around the issues of peace and justice. It is only through action that one can achieve world-historic consciousness. An armchair theorist can read and think all he wants, but without the test of practice and the collective wisdom of organizational action and assessment of that action, the armchair theorist will simply spin abstract ideas that diverge further and further from the real course of history.

AFFILIATION VS. ANARCHISM AND INDIVIDUALISM

We don't need any special psychological principle to explain why activists move on to the step of affiliation: quite simply they find that the power of their action is greater when they work in a group rather than alone. As Debs concluded at the end of his life, "Unorganized you are helpless, you are held in contempt. Power comes through unity."

Affiliation is not just a practical matter; it produces a psychological transformation. Purpose becomes shared. Anger is collectivized. Action becomes not only effective, but also more complex, with a division of labor. With all of this there comes a profound psychological change, as Martin Luther King Jr. has eloquently described:

If anybody had told me a couple of years ago, when I accepted the presidency of the Mississippi Improvement Association, that I would be in this position, I would have avoided it with all my strength. This is not the life I expected to lead. But gradually you take some responsibility, then a little more, until finally you are not in control anymore. You have to give yourself entirely. Then, once you make up your mind that you **are** giving yourself, then you are prepared to do anything that serves the Cause and advances the Movement. I have reached that point. I have no option any more about what I will do. I have given myself fully.

Debs, in his eloquent style, makes a similar observation about his affiliation in the Socialist Party:

The little that I am, the little that I am hoping to be, I owe to the Socialist movement. It has given me my ideas and ideals; my principles and convictions, and I would not exchange one of them for all of Rockefeller's blood-stained dollars. It has taught me how to serve - a lesson to me of priceless value. It has taught me the ecstasy in the handclasp of a comrade. It has enabled me....to take my place side by side with you in the great struggle for the better day.

And Emily Balch put it quite simply that her affiliation with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom gave her "great exhilaration in the sense of active and organized comradeship with women working for peace all over the world." Affiliation provides not only inspiration, but it also provides a necessary psychological support to initiate and sustain difficult actions. For example, after being fired from his job as a minister, A.J. Muste joined "a group of radical Christian pacifists who were loosely associated in what we called The Comradeship." Stimulated by a group discussion that "somehow we had to translate the ideal of brotherhood into reality," Muste and other members of the Comradeship involved themselves in the difficult Lawrence textile strike of 1919:

The fellowship among us was constant. There was never the slightest doubt that our families would be taken care of if any of us were injured or failed. In the feverish atmosphere of a mass strike, amidst the practical decisions that had to be made daily about matters in which we had no previous experience and which involved "compromises" of a kind which would never arise in an intentional community, we were, on the one hand, under a real, though not externally imposed, discipline of the group and on the other hand, materially and spiritually sustained by that fellowship.



Once a person has affiliated, the same psychological process, previously internal, that led that person to join the group in the first place, now becomes externalized into the process of recruiting others. As an organizer Jane Addams was unmatched. Starting from her affiliation at Hull House that was "held together in that soundest of all social bonds, the companionship of mutual interests," Jane Addams and her colleagues established a network of organizations ranging from neighborhood cooperatives and clubs to national and international organizations that endure to the present day, including the League of Women Voters, American Civil Liberties Union, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Sandy Pollack who joined the Communist Party when she was only 19, was apparently a remarkable organizer as well, as described in this fragment of a poem by her husband:

My wife knitted united fronts, endured acid meetings, bore calumny, but wherever she worked, groups went from smaller to larger.

The largest of these groups, the June 12 demonstration of 1982, numbered over one million people, the largest peace demonstration in U.S. history. Seeing the size of the crowd, she asked, "What're we going to do next? How about a coordinated world-wide action?"

More than any other step of consciousness development, affiliation requires the learning of psychological skills. There are positive skills to be developed such as the patience of a Pollack, the willingness to compromise and accept group discipline of a Muste, and the courageous generosity of Martin Luther King Jr. The great skill of Jane Addams was not only critical to the success of the Hague Conference that brought together women from both sides during World War I, but it also served as an inspiration to Emily Balch, who described it as follows:

Difficult as it is to conduct business with so mixed and differing a constituency, with different languages, different rules of parliamentary procedure, and divergent views, Miss Addams and the other officials carried on orderly and effective sessions, marked by the most active will for unity that I have ever felt in an assemblage.

Affiliation also requires the overcoming of negative habits. W.E.B. DuBois, faced with the task of organizing the Niagara Movement, recalled that he was ill-equipped for his first major organizing role:

I was no natural leader of men. I could not slap people on the back and make friends of strangers. I could not easily break down an inherited reserve; or at all times curb a biting critical tongue. Nevertheless, having put my hand to the plow, I had to go on.

For the most part the negative qualities that hinder affiliation are not inherited, but are due to the lack of training for cooperation in Western society. After meeting and working with Peter Maurin, whose watchword was "community," Dorothy Day became acutely aware of our society's failing:

Man is not made to live alone. We all recognized that truth. But we were not truly communitarian, Peter said - we were only gregarious, as most people in cities are. Peter knew that most of us not only had not been trained to disciplined work, but we did not know how to work together.

Given his background in the world of academics, which encourages competition and individualism from the first grade on, it is not surprising that Bertrand Russell found it particularly difficult to affiliate:

Throughout my life I have longed to feel that oneness with large bodies of human beings that is experienced by the members of enthusiastic crowds. The longing has often been strong enough to lead me into self deception. I have imagined myself in turn a Liberal, a Socialist, or a Pacifist, but I have never been any of these things, in any profound sense. Always the sceptical intellect, when I have most wished it silent, has whispered doubts to me, has cut me off from the facile enthusiasms of others, and has transported me into a desolate solitude.

The negative tendencies of individualism such as those taught in the universities, can lead to anarchism in practice. The organizing of Helen Caldicott exemplifies this tendency, as she describes the "loose knit organizations" she formed while still in Australia:

Although we met once a week to report on what we had all been doing, there were no

rules and few agendas. Each individual was totally free to do what he or she considered necessary to further the cause. The organization imposed no restraints....

Later, when she came to the United States, Caldicott apparently found it difficult to work with already established organizations, and instead she founded her own group called WAND. Russell's reluctance to affiliate became a matter of great historical importance when, almost 90 years old, he split from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament that he had previously helped to establish, and he formed, instead, the Committee of 100 dedicated to civil disobedience. According to biographer Ronald Clark, Russell got a reputation "for abandoning campaigns when they reached the crest of the wave."

There is a special risk related to affiliation - the risk of sectarianism. If the analysis of the group that one has joined turns out to be sectarian, in other words, narrow and isolated from the common people and the course of history, then one's work becomes ineffective. At best, a sectarian group may be irrelevant, and, at worst, it may be counterproductive to the progress of peace and justice. In such a case, the activist is faced with the difficult necessity of changing the direction of the group or leaving it and affiliating with another.

Despite its risks, there is no substitute for affiliation in the development of consciousness. The isolated individual, no matter how brilliant, is incapable of making history. Only through affiliation and leadership in organizations can a person develop world-historic consciousness. We will return to this question after dealing with the next step of personal integration.

[Continued in Part 2]