

Nonviolent
resistance: best way
of dealing with
oppression



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Nonviolent Resistance: Best Way of Dealing with Oppression When we talk about the United States, the ideal image is freedom and equal opportunity. The founding fathers built this country based on these basic values. However, discrimination and prejudices are examples of complete contradiction of such traditional values. Racial discrimination against African-Americans has perpetuated for years. This discrimination started around the 1800's, when African-Americans were brought to the U. S. against their will to be sold as slaves.

The dominant culture, white, treated the colored domain unfairly. African-Americans suffered many injustices, like for example unpaid labor, non-employment opportunities, inferior education that did not give them an equal opportunity to compete in the white society and oppression. Sometime later, slavery was abolished but the dominant culture did not agree, and a Civil War resulted. Wars turn out to be economically and socially destructive. Indeed, oppressed African-Americans fought against their oppressors to have an equal society.

Some people deal with oppression in different ways. In Martin Luther King's essay, " Three Ways of Meeting Oppression", he gives an overview of how people cope and react to oppression. They are acquiescence, physical violence and nonviolent resistance. It is his opinion that nonviolent resistance is the best way of handling oppression. After reading his essay, I agree that nonviolent resistance is the best solution for this social issue for the following reasons. First, nonviolent resistance is the best method because it is not cowardly.

For many years we have seen how cultures try to solve oppression. Many of them have fought against others on battles and wars getting temporary results (p. 238). Violence leads to destruction and separation of communities. Hatred that is tied into violence stays among the oppressed, oppressors and future generations. Martin Luther King states that acquiescence is the way of the coward (p. 238), therefore the way to handle oppression is with nonviolent actions. Even though people protest without physical aggression, they are still passionate fighters.

As Martin Luther King says “ The Negro must work passionately and unrelentingly for full stature as a citizen, but he must not use interior methods to gain it. He must never come to terms with falsehood, malice, hate, or destruction” (p. 239). He explains that African-Americans must work intensely with their minds and thoughts without using any other malicious technique. By this way, the oppressed people will persuade their oppressor that they are wrong. As a second reason, we can say that with nonviolent resistance, the oppressor’s friendship and understanding can be obtained.

People instead of using communication, they use physical violence. Violence leads to disgrace. Hence, using a persuasive dialogue, we can reach our oppressor’s mind easily. Martin Luther King mentions in his essay that violence is immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding (p. 239). This statement clearly explains that violence is not the best way out. The same way, cooperation helps to maintain the peace between cultures. In order to have a deal, both groups have to find a balance to achieve what is the best for both of them.

Doing other actions that are against the other group may cause the failing of a trade. Thus, groups should discuss and negotiate before choosing violence. Thirdly, another reason why I agree with Mr. King about nonviolent resistance is because we fight against the injustice not against the people as King concludes, “ Nonviolent resistance is not aimed against oppressors but against oppression” (p. 240). As individuals, we seek love, prosperity, joy and justice. We have to decide morally what is wrong and right during our lives. Therefore, if we are judged or discriminated, we should stand up and not allow the opponents segregate us.

In one part of his essay, Martin Luther King says that “ to accept injustice or segregation passively is to say the oppressor that his actions are morally right” (p. 238). It’s true that many of us fall into acquiescing and we don’t speak up; and in some way, we increase the arrogance of the oppressor. When we don’t take actions, injustice gains more power. But it’s not only that, the oppressors will never respect us. Accordingly Martin Luther King states, “ the Negro cannot win the respect of his oppressor by acquiescence. In conclusion, it is my opinion that Martin Luther King chose the best option, which is nonviolent resistance.

It makes the oppressed people act actively for their belief. Furthermore, it’s a way of winning the oppressor’s understanding. Lastly, it conveys that the battle is not against white people, but towards the system between justice and injustice. The lack of knowledge and education of other cultures can cause fear, which is expressed by discrimination. Fear is also a cause of physical violence, fear of losing land, power and independence.

Consequently, if we put aside all these fears and prejudices, we can have an equal society.